

AutoTrader.com Makes It Easier for Dealers to Use Co-op Funds for New Car Advertising Online

ATLANTA, Feb. 7, 2012 [/PRNewswire/](#) -- AutoTrader.com is taking co-op compliance for online advertising to the next level with make-based new-car advertising packages, a new display advertising unit and dedicated specialists to assist dealers. With the majority of new-car buyers utilizing the Internet as their leading source during the car-shopping process, these changes will enable dealers to extend their new-car presence on the site and connect with those shoppers.

(Logo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20110425/CL88097LOGO>)

"At AutoTrader.com, our goal is to support our dealer's online advertising efforts, and the ability to utilize co-op funds for their advertising on AutoTrader.com will help them extend their reach with the millions of new-car shoppers who visit our site each month." said Chip Perry, president and CEO at AutoTrader.com. "We've taken numerous steps this year to take our co-op compliance to the next level, and we will continue to work closely with our dealer customers to determine what they need for each brand they represent and help them get all of the co-op reimbursements they've earned."

AutoTrader.com's foray in to offering co-op assistance began nearly five years ago, when the company began creating custom solutions for various OEM partners. Currently, AutoTrader.com has custom co-op solutions for GM, BMW and Mini, which are the direct result of exclusive, OEM Tier III partnerships. These custom solutions provide additional branding and merchandising solutions tailored specifically for each brand.

One dealership that has seen great success using co-op dollars for their advertising on AutoTrader.com is Woody Folsom Automotive in Hazelhurst, Georgia. Working closely with their AutoTrader.com representative, they were able to extend their reach and grow sales by using co-op dollars to increase their new car advertising on the site.

"Our AutoTrader.com rep came in and showed us how we could be using co-op funds for advertising our new cars online, and we were able to significantly grow our business without increasing our out-of-pocket expenses," said Billy Gregory, general manager at Woody Folsom Automotive. "Instead of just advertising used cars on AutoTrader.com, using co-op dollars enabled us to feature our new car inventory and double our advertising throughout the state and country. Before that, we were selling more used cars, but our new car sales increased so much that we're selling almost as many new cars as used. Last year, our GMCs were up 64%, Buicks were up 26% and Chevys were up over 50%. In fact, 2011 was the first time we've ever sold over 1000 new vehicles, and the only thing that we changed was increasing our new car advertising on AutoTrader.com -- something that wouldn't have been possible without using co-op money."

For 2012, AutoTrader.com is enhancing its co-op assistance with the following new offerings:

- **New "New Car" Packaging:** Co-op compliance is based on brand exclusivity, so it's important for dealers to be able to differentiate their online spending by vehicle make. To accommodate this and make it easier for dealers to utilize co-op funds, AutoTrader.com has revised all new-car advertising solution packages to be eligible for purchase and

provision by vehicle make.

- **New Display Advertising Unit:** While there are variations in which online advertising options are eligible for co-op spending, one constant is display advertising. New for 2012, AutoTrader.com is making an additional "Skyscraper" ad unit available to dealers who subscribe to the top new-car advertising package. This new unit is dynamic and will pull in vehicles that closely match the user's search.
- **Dedicated OEM Tier III Co-Op Specialists:** In 2012, dedicated specialists will be partnering with AutoTrader.com's sales team to identify OEM Tier III opportunities for new car and franchise dealer customers. These experts are both knowledgeable and experienced with OEM programs and will add significant value to the consultative services AutoTrader.com provides its dealer customers.

According to AutoTrader.com estimates, co-op business represents a more than two billion dollar marketplace. Unfortunately, a significant portion of co-op funds go unused every year. While most co-op dollars are spent on traditional media, the Internet is the leading source new car buyers utilize to shop for their next vehicle. The 2011 Automotive Buyer Influence Study, which surveyed over 4,000 new and used vehicle buyers, showed that of the 11.5 hours new car buyers spend online, they spend the most time -- 3.5 hours -- on third-party sites like AutoTrader.com.

"It's critical that dealers have a robust Internet marketing strategy, and being able to utilize co-op funds for their online spend will help them achieve that goal. With the changes in packaging, new display advertising options and dedicated specialists, dealers should be able to more easily take advantage of co-op dollars for their advertising on AutoTrader.com," Perry continued.

About AutoTrader.com

Atlanta-based AutoTrader.com, created in 1997, is the Internet's ultimate automotive marketplace and consumer information website. AutoTrader.com aggregates in a single location millions of [new cars](#), [used cars](#) and [certified pre-owned cars](#) from thousands of auto dealers and private sellers and is a leading online resource for auto dealers, individuals and manufacturers to advertise and market their vehicles to in-market shoppers. The company also provides a robust suite of software tools for dealers and manufacturers to help them manage and market their vehicle inventory and display advertising on the Internet. AutoTrader.com continues to grow key business metrics, including revenue, profitability and site traffic. Today, AutoTrader.com attracts millions of unique monthly visitors who utilize the site to review descriptions, photos and videos of vehicles for sale; research and compare vehicles; review pricing and specials; and read auto-related content like buying and selling tips and editorial coverage of major auto shows and automotive trends. AutoTrader.com operates one other auto marketing brand, AutoTraderClassics.com. AutoTrader.com also owns used vehicle management software company vAuto, Kelley Blue Book (Kbb.com), HomeNet Automotive, a leading provider of online inventory management and merchandising solutions for the automotive retail industry and VinSolutions, a leading provider of end-to-end solution platforms for dealers. AutoTrader.com is a majority-owned subsidiary of Cox Enterprises. Providence Equity Partners is a 25 percent owner of the company and Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers is also an investor. For more information, please visit www.autotrader.com.

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