

Q&A with **LEN SHORT** CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, LOTLINX

Q *Auto Remarketing:* How can dealers utilize artificial intelligence in their business operations, and how does LotLinX help them get there?

A **Len Short:** More and more dealers are seeing how beneficial artificial intelligence is when applied to their marketing strategies. Data is being accumulated online at an exponential rate — and attempting to aggregate and analyze it can be incredibly inefficient and expensive. Artificial intelligence is able to analyze massive datasets accurately and quickly.

Dealers can take advantage of AI to derive new insights, create greater efficiencies and take advantage of new business opportunities that they might not have even known existed. Successful dealers know that higher efficiency means higher profitability which, of course, is the ultimate goal.

LotLinX has developed an AI platform that drives down shopper acquisition cost and increases sales. A third-party study stated that shoppers targeted by LotLinX AI were 19 times more likely to purchase a car than shoppers targeted by other digital marketing solutions. AI also dramatically reduces costs.

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A **JG:** The name of the game for automotive marketers, whether at the dealer or OEM level, is to identify in-market car buyers and have a meaningful interaction with them. Experian Marketing Engine is a soup to nuts solution that helps marketers make more informed decisions across the spectrum. It helps them build segments of people that will likely be interested in a specific make and model, communicate with them through preferred channels and measure the effectiveness of the campaign. But what sets Experian Marketing Engine apart is

Q *AR:* Why should the auto industry, particularly dealers, not fear AI?

A **LS:** We honestly have not seen any fear of AI in the auto industry. Quite the opposite — it is being welcomed with open arms. The reason for that is simple: AI delivers a result that every sector of every industry has chased for hundreds of years — to do more in a faster and more cost efficient manner.

AI technology leverages data collected from previous campaigns — with both positive and negative outcomes — to make better-informed decisions moving forward. For example, if the platform spent too much on a shopper that didn't convert, the machine would remember that as a negative path and use that information to avoid waste in the future. AI is constantly learning and evolving over time, until it determines the 'optimal solution' — converting the shopper to a buyer. That is definitely something to be embraced, not feared.

Q *AR:* How has AI become such an important marketing tool for auto dealers so quickly?

the ability to measure the effectiveness of campaigns based on actual sales results.

Q *AR:* In a news release about the product, you mention that consumers base their car-buying decisions on different criteria than they did in the past. What are some of new points of criteria they use?

A **JG:** The automotive industry, as well as consumer behaviors, have undergone significant change over the past few years. With ris-

A **LS:** There are a myriad of reasons — the availability of cloud computing and large data sets are among the most significant. Certainly it is true that, up until a few years ago, there was no way to crunch all this data in real-time and come up with an accurate prediction model. AI has made this possible. Imagine asking AI, 'based on the following data, please run the most efficient campaign that results in the most profit for this 2017 Honda Accord.' That's what LotLinX can do for dealers.

Q *AR:* Lastly, what's the future of AI in automotive? What are some logical next steps?

A **LS:** The growth of LotLinX really mirrors the accelerated growth of AI. In the past five years, our company has grown by 67,000 percent, which landed us at the top of the *Crain's Chicago Business* Fast 50 list. We don't see this slowing down anytime soon. Over the next several years, AI will make its way into nearly every sales and marketing tool or solution that a dealership uses. From CRM systems, DMS, chat tools and service reminders to every form of advertising, AI will be incorporated in one way or another.



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“ We leverage our existing identity and marketing capabilities to help automotive marketers better connect a person's online and offline identities — meaning they can bridge the gap between a person who is looking to buy a car and their digital personas.”