COMMERCIAL TRUCK DIGITAL PLAYBOOK

FORD MOTOR COMPANY
JANUARY

2020

PREPARED BY SINCRO

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THIS PLAYBOOK

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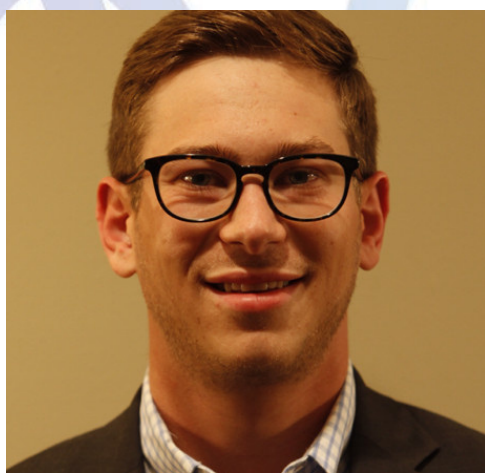
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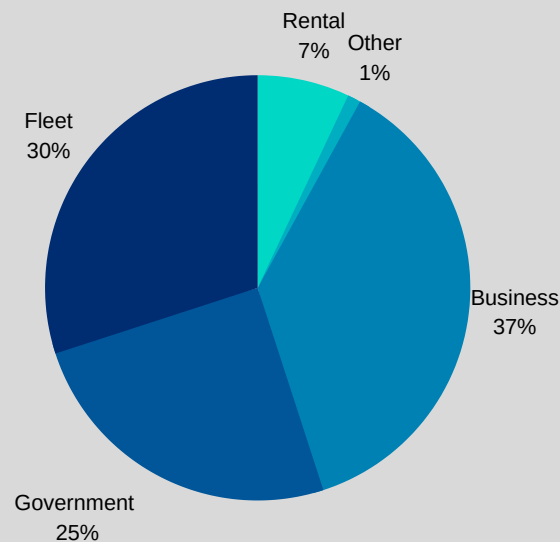**DANIEL DEUTSCH**

Website Performance Manager

IN THIS PLAYBOOK

Market Profile

WHO USES COMMERCIAL VEHICLES?

Businesses are the largest users of commercial vehicles in the United States, followed by Fleet and Government customers. These three groups make up more than 90% of commercial vehicle use.

Pie chart:
- Rental 7%
- Other 1%
- Fleet 30%
- Business 37%
- Government 25%

WHO IS A SMALL BUSINESS OWNER?

There are 30.2 million small businesses in the US. Over 80% of small business owners are from the Gen X and Baby Boomer generations; 73 of which are male. Baby Boomers have a strong work ethic, are self-assured, competitive, and resourceful. Business owners from Generation X value work-life balance, are technologically adept, individualistic, and flexible.

EXAMPLES OF SMALL BUSINESSES

- Construction
- Plumbing
- Heating/Cooling
- Food Distribution
- Pest Control
- Cable TV
- Landscaping
- Farming
- Cleaning Companies
- Shuttle Services
- Boat Transport
- Delivery Services

EXAMPLES OF SMALL BUSINESSES

Small business owners are budget minded. One in three business owners will finance their business with cash. Other less common financing methods include use of retirement funds or lines of credit. They are likely to be diligent and cautious when deciding whether purchasing a commercial vehicle is a cost effective option for their business. They will consider several purchase options like new, used, lease, and finance.

INDUSTRY RECAP
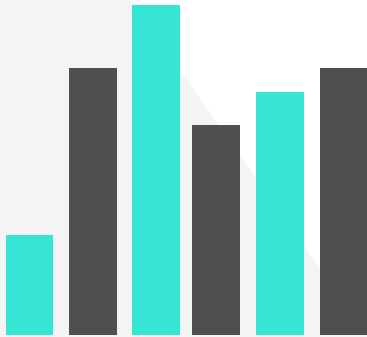
Medium-duty (Class 3-6) truck sales in the US has seen a steady increase year over year since 2009. In 2019, medium truck sales were 5.7% higher than in 2018. In addition, light truck (Class 1 -2) sales in the US increased to 12.2 million units in 2019, the highest number on record. In 2020, American Truck Dealers are projected to sell almost 16,000 fewer units, but expect sales to rebound in 2021 due to low fuel prices and interest rates.

Engaging Commercial Customers on Your Website

Once a customer visits an online business, it's essential to grab their attention immediately. Showcase commercial specific content throughout different areas of your website to provide the best possible user experience.

INCLUDED:

- Streamline the Journey to Commercial Content

- Inventory Merchandising

- Additional Website Content Suggestions

MARKET ANALYSIS

Streamline the Journey to Commercial Content

PERSONALIZATION ENSURES RELEVANCY RIGHT FROM THE START:

Customers choose whether or not they are going to engage with a website within two seconds.* Capture a customers' attention by showing relevant commercial content "above the fold", or near the top of the page, so it's visible without any scrolling.

Sincro's Audience Management Platform has information on about 80% of the shoppers that visit a dealership's website.* The platform uses that data, along with the customer's behavior on the website, to dynamically update site content for a personalized experience from the first click. If a customer lands on the home page and is interested in a commercial vehicle, then the website shopping tools and vehicle sorting will all automatically update to put that relevant content in front of them.

PRO TIP: Tap into Sincro's library of content blocks for an easy way to include SEO text, custom imagery, and links to commercial truck profit centers (inventory, finance, and service). Content blocks are pre-built so dealers can construct a landing page in under five minutes. They also incorporate structured data to make them more easily readable on the search engines and are exceptionally designed.

NAVIGATION:

In the main navigation bar of the site, add a menu item to labeled "Commercial Trucks." This immediately tells shoppers that this is a focus for the dealership and can demonstrate expertise in the segment. Within the "Commercial Trucks" tab, be sure to include all of the important shopping tools for commercial truck customers.

RECOMMENDED FORMAT:

- Primary Tab: "Commercial Trucks"
  - Sub-tabs:
    - "Commercial Trucks"
    - "Shop New Commercial Trucks"
    - "Shop Used Commercial Trucks"
    - "Service Commercial Trucks"
    - "Schedule Service Appointment"

HERO SLIDES:

Sincro's hero slides (also referred to as "home page banners") have the ability to personalize for a shopper who has demonstrated broad vehicle segment intent, as well as for shoppers who have narrowed their search down to specific models of interest. This allows dealers to customize their home page experience for both high and low funnel consumers.
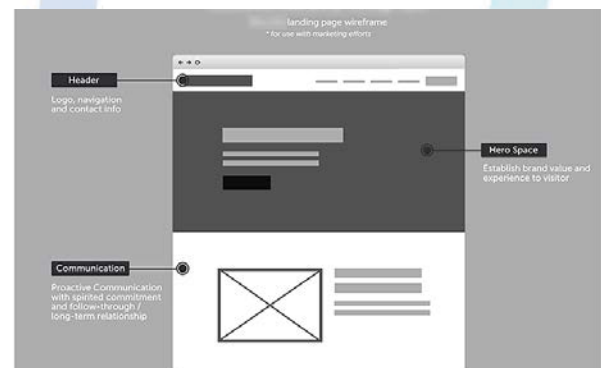
WHILE 76% OF RECENT VEHICLE BUYERS SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR THE DEALER WEBSITE TO BE PERSONALIZED, ONLY 26% OF RESPONDENTS AGREED THAT DEALERS PROVIDE A HIGHLY PERSONALIZED EXPERIENCE ON THEIR WEBSITE.

Inventory Merchandising

In addition to a dynamic homepage that personalizes content based on the shopper, it's also critical to personalize the inventory pages. Sincro's inventory page personalization automatically sorts inventory to show the most relevant model first, based on a shopper's online behaviors.

- 76% of online shoppers want a personalized shopping journey, but only 26% report getting one (Affinitiv, 2019).
- When a shopper is served a personalized experience on a Sincro website, they are 80% more likely to submit a lead.

INVENTORY MERCHANDISING RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Commercial-specific Pricing:** Clearly state the cost of upfits and additional features.
- **Sincro Rapid Search:** Place the Sincro rapid search bar in a place on the website that is easy to locate and use. This search bar enables users to search for commercial vehicle features with more specificity. E.g. "rear symmetrical doors" returns only vehicles with that feature.
- **Commercial Search Filters:** Add filters that allow shoppers to sort inventory by commercial vehicles, as well as by specific features. Making the online shopping experience easy to navigate is essential to holding shoppers' attention, limiting bounce and exit rate.
- **Real Vehicle Photos:** Show customers real photos of the vehicle they are interested in (versus stock images). Make sure to include photos highlighting the commercial upfit features, as these are popular searches for customers in this segment.
  *VIN leads are 1.9x higher when actual vehicle pictures are used versus stock images**
- **Commercial Truck Specs:** Highlight specifications on inventory that are important to commercial truck customers. Make specifications on details pages and search results pages collapsible to limit the amount of scrolling needed to view additional inventory.
- **Access to Shopping Tools on Relevant Inventory:** Use logos to highlight commercial-specific shopping tools. Customers shopping for commercial vehicles have specific needs. Special financing and future vehicle servicing are typically important to them. Make sure to highlight information about those features in a way that is easy to locate.
- **Showcase Unique Offers:** Sincro will generate unique offers for commercial vehicle inventory to enable dealers to discount the sale price and feature specific vehicles based on multiple filter settings. This makes it easier for consumers to shop. To create the best shopping experience, pre-filter website search results for:
  - Year, make, model, trim, days in inventory, custom price filtering, model codes and option codes.
- **Inventory Page Personalization:** Sincro's tagging capabilities on the inventory pages can enable dealers to showcase specific inventory sets based on user behavior data.

Additional Website Content Suggestions

THIS SECTION INCLUDES MORE IDEAS ON HOW TO ENGAGE A COMMERCIAL VEHICLE CONSUMER WITH WEBSITE CONTENT STRATEGIES.

- **Vehicle Lineup and Model Details Pages:** Sincro websites have pre-built commercial model lineup and research pages. These give commercial vehicle shoppers detailed information on each vehicle, like; price, color pallet, and tax deduction information.
  - **PRO TIP:** Highlight 179 tax deduction information for customers to read and offer direct links to the commercial finance department for customers with questions.

- **Finance:** Highlight commercial finance options for customers. Include direct links to help shoppers easily contact the dealership about business credit, loans and bulk purchasing.

- **Service and Body Shop:** Create custom commercial parts and service specials that can be tailored to commercial shoppers. Manage these offers on a yearly basis to keep them relevant.

- **Commercial Staff Section:** Add a commercial staff section with biographies that introduce each employee. Provide relevant experience to commercial vehicles, as well as links to email, or click-to-call a given staff member.

- **Sincro's Blog Platform:** Commercial-specific blog posts can help with search engine performance and show dealership expertise in commercial vehicles.

- **Commercial-specific Dealership Reviews:** Include the Dealership Reviews card on the home page and any landing page created for Commercial Vehicles. Sincro websites recognize commercial customers and offer relevant reviews from commercial sales and service. This card also has built-in schema to highlight dealership reviews on search engines.

Keyword Targeting Recommendations

Keywords can and should be customized to fit the unique needs of each dealer.

When building keyword sets, remember to consider the end user and how they will find a website. With a business-to-business marketing strategy, it's important to incorporate keywords that target both the professional that knows exactly what they are looking for (ie. F-350 Diesel With Hydraulic Hoist Assembly), as well as the higher funnel research shoppers who may be searching with less specificity (ie. work trucks).

After considering the different phases of the online buying journey and building a comprehensive keyword list, use industry-leading tools like SEMRush and Google Ads to refine it. These tools have data to show how many people per month are searching for those keywords and can be used to determine a website's potential to rank for them.

Doing significant research prior to building content or turning on search campaigns will result in a more effective strategy with more opportunities to rank and engage relevant traffic. Also, being strategic with keyword selection while advertising will help keep more budget available for terms that will actually put eyes on commercial inventory.

The lists below can help dealers get started with the customization process:

PAID SEARCH

- Work Trucks
- Commercial Trucks
- Commercial Vans
- Ford Commercial Vehicles
- Ford Fleet
- Fleet Vehicles
- Box Truck
- Ford Commercial Vehicles
- Super Duty Work Truck
- Ford F-650 SD
- Ford Transit Connect
- Ford Cutaway
- Cargo Vans
- Flatbed Trucks
- Utility Trucks

ORGANIC SEARCH

- Work trucks near me
- Work truck dealer
- Commercial truck dealer
- Commercial vans dealer
- Contractor vehicle dealer
- Contractor vehicles near me
- Ford Commercial Vehicles
- Ford fleet trucks near me
- Fleet vehicle dealer
- Fleet vehicles near me
- Box truck dealer
- Box trucks near me
- Ford Commercial Vehicles near me

Search Engine Optimization (SEO), cont.

SCHEMA AND STRUCTURED DATA

Choose a website platform that prioritizes automotive schema. Schema is the back-end language used by search engines to read a website. Using schema and the right structured data on inventory pages - including reviews, photos and location - can help display inventory more prominently on search results. This leads to higher click-through rates and better opportunities for rankings.

SITE SPEED

Search engines will always rank websites higher if they have a better user experience. Speed is an important factor in that experience, so it is important to choose a platform that can load your site quickly. Good automotive sites require inventory feeds, high resolution images, 3rd-party tools, and other applications, which can slow them down significantly. Of all automotive industry websites currently on the market, Sincro is the fastest.*

SINCRO WEBSITES TEST BEST IN THE INDUSTRY FOR SITE SPEED AND STRUCTURED DATA

Recently, Google conducted an analysis of website speed across all current website providers for multiple OEMs. Google leveraged WebPageTest to analyze Load Time and Speed Index across each site. Each site was tested multiple times and the median results of the tests were reported to ensure consistency. Sincro websites outperformed all competitors.

Google also tested Sincro and competitor websites for Structured Data. Sincro again rose to the top with 96% more structured data items compared to the nearest competitor and zero errors or warnings (the closest competitor had 186).

Digital Advertising

A STRONG DIGITAL ADVERTISING STRATEGY IS WELL-ROUNDED AND TARGETS THE RIGHT AUDIENCE WITH THE RIGHT MESSAGE.

Digital Advertising can help grow a dealership's online presence by guiding a potential commercial shopper's purchasing decisions throughout their buying journey.

PAID SEARCH:

Discover customers searching for keywords that match the Commercial Vehicle business by targeting model-specific search terms (ie. 2020 Ford Transit Connect or Ford F-550 Flatbed Truck) or non-branded terms for customers who are less OEM loyal (ie: Work Truck or Commercial Van). Make sure search content is relevant, and updated with offers whenever possible.

2020 Ford Transit Connect | Commercial Cargo Van | Abundant Interior Space

Ad www.excellenceford.com 888-672-2140

See Our Selection Of Commercial Trucks And Vans At Excellence Ford. The Transit Connect Has Room For Cargo And People, Plus Has Fuel-Efficient Options For Your Business Needs. In Business Since 1955 · Award-Winning Service · Extended Business Hours

Commercial Vans
See our lineup of cargo vans to meet your business needs.

Commercial Trucks
See our lineup of work trucks to meet your business needs.

Used Commercial Vehicles
Check out our selection of pre-owned work trucks and vans.

Service
Work with our certified technicians for all your maintenance & upkeep.

RETARGETING AND DISPLAY:

Retargeting helps keep a dealership's brand top-of-mind for customers who have previously visited their website. With dynamic inventory ads, customers can easily revisit the vehicle viewed or similar vehicles that may be of interest based on site engagement.

Display ads with customized audience targeting helps introduce a dealer's brand to customers early on in the consideration and buying process.

It's important to work with a partner that has technology to optimize your budget across channels for maximum performance against your goals.

YOUR ULTIMATE BUSINESS PARTNER

Explore Inventory

EXCELLENCE FORD   Go Further

Digital Advertising - Audiences

REACHING THE RIGHT AUDIENCE IS AT THE CORE OF EFFECTIVE COMMERCIAL VEHICLE ADVERTISING FOR DEALERSHIPS.

Taking an audience-first approach to advertising will help dealers build a strategy that incorporates the channels and tactics best suited to reach a commercial customer with a more refined and personable experience.

Whether the intent with the advertising strategy is to focus on customer retention or new customer acquisition, utilizing 1st, 3rd, and lookalike audience data will help the budget work smarter and deliver more effective results.

Digital Advertising - Audiences

1ST PARTY: DEALER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM DATA

- A Commercial Vehicle dealership is committed to serving their customer for the long haul. Tapping into customer data from a Dealer Management System (DMS) to create custom audiences can help dealers increase customer retention across profit centers and channels. **This data can be used to:**
  - Re-engage individual fleet purchasers with service and parts messaging.
  - Deliver a tailored message that fits the style of vehicle that was previously purchased. For example, a customer who bought a van compared to a truck is more likely to have a positive response to an ad when the image or message is tailored to their likes/interests.
  - Reach customers nearing end of finance terms to accelerate them back into the buying cycle and help a dealer's brand stay top of mind.
- Dealers can also use their DMS audience segments to find new customers by building lookalike audiences. A look-alike audience is a custom audience assembled by an advertiser (i.e., Google, Facebook) that will mirror a given audience with other potential customers who have similar online behaviors.

1ST PARTY: WEBSITE BEHAVIOR DATA

Dealerships can also partner with an advertising provider that uses pixel technology to collect real-time shopping data from high-intent website users to find potential customers with similar online behaviors. The lists generated from this type of audience collection strategy can help dealers segment audiences, target them with specific content, and layer in channels based on how those potential consumers are spending their time online.

3RD PARTY: AFFINITY AUDIENCE DATA

Finally, dealers can also tap into the power of 3rd-party data with the use of affinity audiences. These are audiences that are made available by advertisers to enhance audience identification based on lifestyle, industry, browsing and in- or near-market purchase predictors. This can help remove the guesswork out of reaching a relevant market. The more that a dealership can start honing in on their targeting, the more they will be able to better focus their resources on prospective customers with the highest likelihood to purchase.

Digital Advertising - Audience Application

The customer journey does not end when they leave the dealership or begin when they first see an ad. Using audience data as the foundation for advertising across search, social, audio and video creates a holistic strategy that maximizes the effectiveness and reach during every touchpoint.

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3RD-PARTY DATA FOR NEW BUSINESS ACQUISITION

- Dealers can tap into industry-based business-to-business audience segments on platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook and various digital video providers. These segments can act as the base of a strategy to ensure ads are reaching a relevant commercial audience. **Examples include:**
  o Company Size > Small (21 - 100 employees), Company Size > Medium (101 - 500 employees), Company Size > Medium-Large (501 - 1,000 employees)
  o Decision Makers > Finance Decision Makers
  o Industry > Agriculture, Industry > Construction, Industry > Energy, Utilities & Waste
  o New Vehicle Shoppers (In Market) > Style > Commercial truck
- For a true new business acquisition strategy, a customer list from the DMS based on past purchases could be used as an exclusion list to help ensure that specific campaigns would only reach people who have not bought a vehicle from the dealership.

1ST-PARTY AUDIENCE IDENTIFICATION & SEGMENTATION

- Once traffic starts coming into the website, most advertisers can segment for potential customers and their interests based upon on-site and off-site online behaviors. Using this data, dealers can start to personalize advertising messages with model or offer specific content depending on their demonstrated purchase intent.
- Shopper profiles reflecting vehicle interest can also be made available to exclude or target based on dealer specific goals. This can allow for more strategic bidding across search and other channels.
- 1st-party audience data can also be shared across search, social, and video platforms to deliver a more relevant message across channels. These channels also provide dealers the functionality to build lookalike audiences from those lists for more strategic customer acquisition.

Digital Advertising - Audience Application, cont.

USE DMS DATA TO PROVE ADVERTISING ROI

Dealers can start to match-back advertising influence to vehicles sold by comparing lead and engagement data with offline sales. Many media providers will make customer match-back data available, assuming the dealer can provide or directly integrate their offline sales data. Some media vendors can even match users down to advertising impressions. This type of measurement allows dealers to capture the effectiveness of their strategy and quantify a true ROI.

INTEGRATE DMS DATA INTO CUSTOMER RETENTION STRATEGIES

Once a dealer has earned the business of a commercial vehicle customer, the advertising strategy can shift to encourage repeat purchases and customer loyalty. Dealers should partner with an advertising provider who can dynamically use DMS data to advertise back to those customers with service, parts, and brand-related messaging intermittently depending on where they are in their purchase cycle.

Appendix

Sources

CONSUMER PROFILES

- Who Uses Commercial Trucks: https://www.bts.gov/content/us-automobile-and-truck-fleets-use
- Small Business Owner Finances: https://www.guidantfinancial.com/small-business-trends/
- Baby Boomers: https://elearningindustry.com/8-important-characteristics-baby-boomers-elearning-professionals-know
- GenX: https://www.thebalancecareers.com/common-characteristics-of-generation-x-professionals-2164682

MARKET INSIGHTS

- https://www.nada.org/atdtruckbeat/
- https://www.statista.com/statistics/261416/class-3-8-truck-sales-in-the-united-states/
- https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/04/business/auto-sales-price.html

SEO

- Google: Sincro Site Speed Test Study, 2019

WEBSITES

- Sincro Business Intelligence 2019: Sincro A/B testing, Dealer Command Center
- https://www.autodealertodaymagazine.com/359452/survey-dealer-websites-fail-consumers-in-3-key-areas
- https://www.autosuccessonline.com/auto-dealerships-online-shopping-experience-affinitiv-study/

AD Creative Examples

DISPLAY
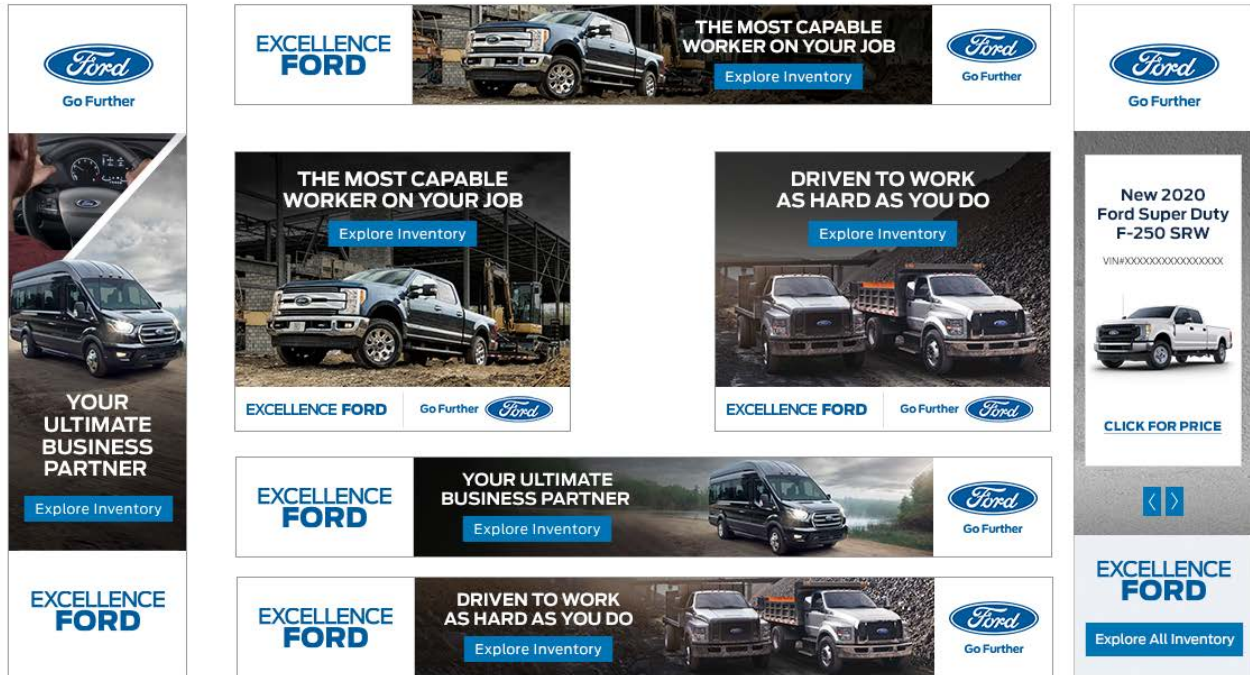
GMAIL HEADER

FACEBOOK
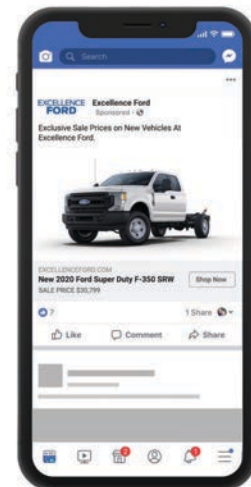
Dealer Website Example

COMMERCIAL VEHICLES LANDING PAGE
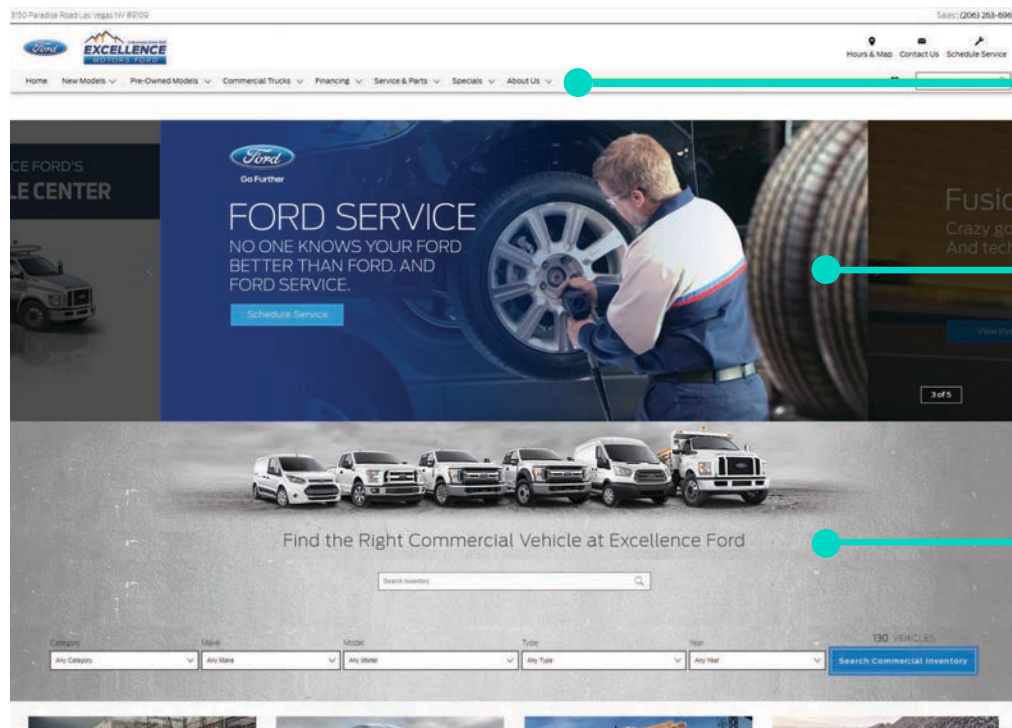
NAVIGATION

HERO SLIDES
Homepage banner to present brand values, promos, and a personalized customer experience

INVENTORY SEARCH

VEHICLE SEARCH RESULTS
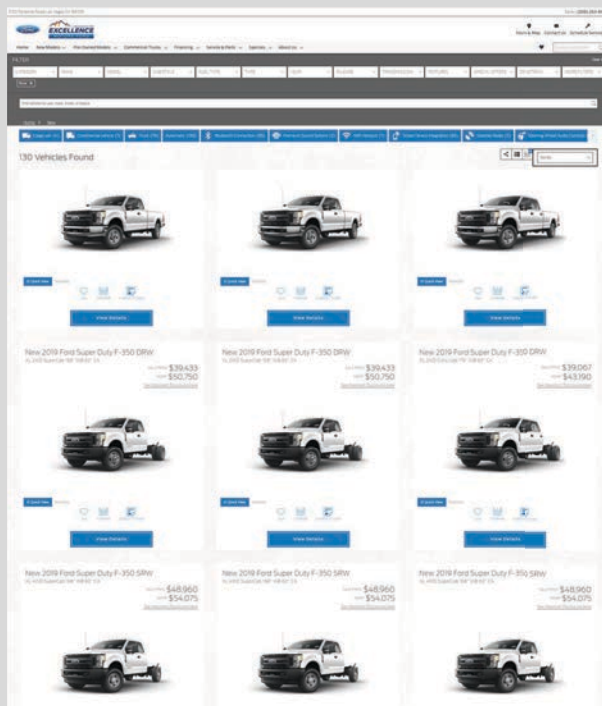
VEHICLE DETAILS PAGE
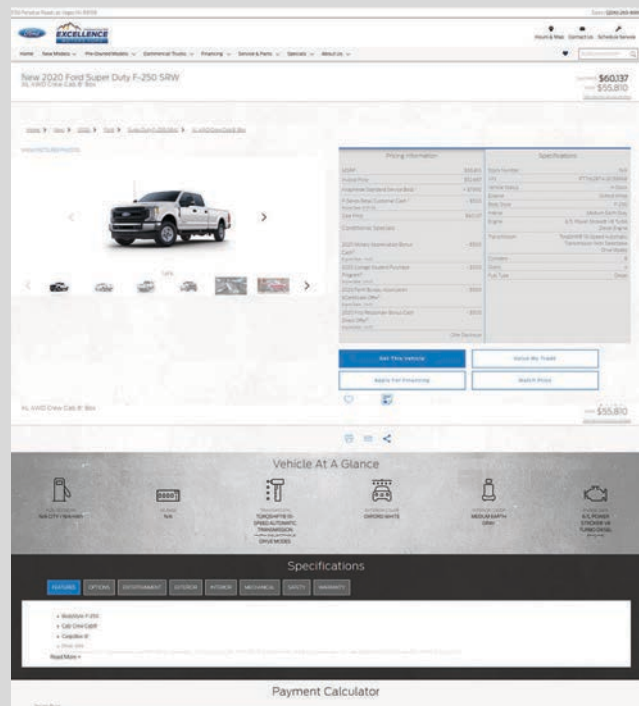
Dealer Website Example

VEHICLE SEARCH RESULTS (VSR)

Dealer Website Example

VEHICLE DETAILS PAGE (VDP)

QUESTIONS?
ASK US
ANYTHING.

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