

Merchandising/VDP Best Practices



Why Merchandising Matters

The average car shopper spends 14 hours conducting online research before visiting a dealership. When dealership visits do happen, they're typically focused on test drives and signing the final paperwork. The best opportunity to reach shoppers is online – and merchandising is one of the best ways to do that.



Providing Compelling Vehicle Information

VDPs are your opportunity to describe what makes each vehicle unique. Uncommon features, option packages, awards won – these details help make your vehicles stand out.

Our Tips

1. Use the 'Dealer Description' field of your VDPs to share compelling vehicle details
2. Don't use OEM copy – write your own for every vehicle
3. Was the vehicle single-owner? Is its fuel economy particularly good for its class? Does it have high-value features like a moonroof or an upgraded audio system? These details are what compel shoppers to take a closer look
4. Include sufficient detail, but not too much: 100 to 200 words is a good amount

The Value of Photos

On both desktop and mobile, viewing photos is the No. 1 activity for CarGurus® users. Plus, listings with one photo generate 15% higher conversion rates than those without any.

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Our Tips: Exterior Photos

1. Take your first exterior photo at a ¾ angle (showing the front and side of the vehicle)
2. Include 8 exterior photos total – 4 ¾ angle photos and one of each side
3. Ensure a consistent background for each photo and use your logo in the background, if possible
4. Capture the best-looking wheel and tire
5. If the engine compartment is clean, include one or more engine photos
6. Highlight any unique badging (FX4, King Ranch, Denali, etc.)
7. For trucks/SUVs: make note of features like bed liners, trailer hitches, power rear windows, etc.
8. For Jeeps: take one or more photos with the top off

Our Tips: Interior Photos

1. Include 8 interior photos
2. Capture the dashboard, steering wheel, odometer and radio
3. Sit in the back seat for dashboard photos so your legs don't appear
4. Capture any additional options that you want shoppers to see (navigation, backup camera, moonroof, etc.)
5. When taking nav-screen photos, turn the map on or put the vehicle in reverse