

Dealertrack 

# **TECHNOLOGY THAT DRIVES YOU:**

## **A VOICE GUIDE FOR DEALERTRACK TONE AND MESSAGING**

# WHY OUR VOICE MATTERS

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Our voice matters. It's what separates us from our competitors. It makes people feel like they're doing business with other people. And people like people. Otherwise, the robots win.

Through our voice, we will create content that resonates with our audience, whether we wish to inform them, educate them, or inspire them to take action. We will always communicate our brand story through multiple channels, so it's important that we convey a consistent and unified voice across all means of engagement. This includes our website, direct marketing, print and electronic advertising, and social media. This does not mean that we need to say the same things in the same way every time. The message just needs to sound like Dealertrack, regardless of where it's being featured.

This guide is designed for anyone who creates Dealertrack brand content: communicators, writers, editors, creative directors, and public relations professionals. As you go through the creative process, individually or with your team, keep in mind that we do our best work together. We encourage you to seek feedback and send content to marketing leadership for review—a process that ensures our most refined work reaches our audience.

We all appreciate language, but we're sometimes under the gun to produce content quickly. So here are three things to keep in mind when we're in a pinch:

- 1. “Having the confidence to adapt to an ever-evolving market” drives all of our messaging.**
- 2. Sound like a human. That means being clear and direct in favor of complex industry jargon.**
- 3. Write the way we would speak to our audience. We're not boring, so don't sound boring.**

# BRAND POSITIONING

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Dealertrack provides innovative technology that is critical to the success of any automotive dealership or lending institution. Our unmatched product suite fosters efficiency through integration and enables growth-focused decision-making that yields measurable results. The powerful combination of Dealertrack products and our large-scale network of dealership clients and lending partners improves both the car-selling and -buying experience.

## BRAND PROMISE

With Dealertrack, you will always have the confidence to thrive in an ever-changing automotive market.

## TAGLINE

Technology that drives you.

## BRAND ATTRIBUTES

- Innovative technology that's built to adapt to evolving dealer and lender needs.
- Informed decision-making using systems that account for the current business climate and performance levels needed to be successful.
- A powerful sense of confidence driven by valuable insights, efficiencies, and utility that enables dealers and lenders to handle business operations and interactions with certainty and purpose.
- An open integration platform that fits within dealers' growth strategies, offering the freedom to choose additional tools and means to refine and enhance operations.
- The stability associated with partnering with Cox Automotive.

# BRAND POSITIONING

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## DEFENSIBLE POINTS OF DIFFERENTIATION

- Integrations with multiple systems
- Connections to other Cox Automotive brands
- Efficient workflows
- Business insight and strategy
- Full solutions suite
- Largest title network
- Largest dealer network

## RATIONAL BENEFITS

- Insights into dealership performance
- Improved business management
- Efficient and robust sales workflows
- Connectivity and integrated networks
- Vast scale of business opportunities
- Visibility and support

## EMOTIONAL BENEFITS

- Trust
- Partnership
- Confidence
- Efficiency
- Performance
- Control

# BRAND TONE & PERSONALITY

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## **THEME: CONFIDENCE**

“Confidence” is not only about how Dealertrack positions dealers and lenders for success today, but also how it helps them adapt to an ever-evolving market. It’s the difference between reacting to change with uncertainty and embracing new circumstances with clarity and conviction. When dealers and lenders are equipped with the right technology from Dealertrack, they are confidently prepared for the unexpected and will continue to thrive, regardless of the environment.

Dealertrack enables our audience to make informed and intelligent decisions using our innovative technology. And while our systems are advanced, they shouldn’t sound complicated or cumbersome. Keep the following tone in mind while writing any type of Dealertrack content.

**Be positive, optimistic, and empowering—without being naïve about pain points.**

**Be leading, bold, and advancing—without being arrogant or inflated.**

**Be passionate, committed, and energetic—without being pushy or overbearing.**

**Be knowledgeable, expert, and direct—without being insufferable and uncaring.**

**Our tone says: “Together, we can do great things.”**

# TIPS FOR STRATEGIC MESSAGING

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The type and amount of content will vary based on the communication channel. While brevity is often best, there will be times when we need to expand on our message to suit the objective of the piece. In all cases, be mindful of how content and design components work together to create harmony, rather than discord, for an optimal reader experience. Lastly, write based on where the prospect or customer is on their journey with us. Our audience will likely receive multiple communications, so resist the temptation to say everything at once.

Here are some tips to help you write for Dealertrack, based on the audience feedback and preferences documented in our automotive research studies.

## **KNOW OUR AUDIENCE**

When crafting our message, always keep our audience in mind and remember that what's important to us may not be as meaningful to them. Focus on what our prospects find relevant, and show empathy to convey an understanding of the challenges they face. Then, address those challenges by discussing not only what Dealertrack has to offer, but how it will benefit their dealership—highlighting our differentiators along the way. Stay away from negative content and disparaging specific competitors, as it will only reflect poorly on us. When it's necessary to mention the competition, briefly touch on their inadequacies as a way to focus on Dealertrack. Most importantly, be clear about the pain point(s) we are solving.

## **SPEAK THEIR LANGUAGE**

Keep our message simple, direct, and easy to understand. Use our messaging to have an honest conversation with dealers and lenders about their pain points, addressing them head-on while still being optimistic about how Dealertrack helps them adapt. Though we are experts in our field, be mindful to avoid industry jargon, clichés, and pretentious language; focus instead on getting our message across quickly and clearly.

# TIPS FOR STRATEGIC MESSAGING

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## **DRAW ATTENTION WITH HEADLINES**

Headlines should be short and speak directly to the reader, drawing them in to the rest of our message. Headlines come in many flavors, such as news, a “how-to,” a question, or a command. Give our content more personality and humanize Dealertrack, positioning us as a valuable resource focused on dealers’ and lenders’ best interests.

## **AVOID CONFUSING THE READER**

Though we want our communications to have personality, overly clever approaches can result in readers having to think too hard to get the message. Always communicate in a clear, concise, and straightforward manner. If it feels too cute, vague, or cumbersome, then it probably is.

## **BE BENEFITS-FORWARD**

Rather than focusing on features, present how Dealertrack benefits dealers and lenders by addressing challenges, filling a need, or providing a much-needed edge over the competition. Remember to highlight what makes us different. Decision makers are willing to invest in a tool or service if it doesn’t duplicate what they already have, or if it is a significant improvement over what they currently use.

## **RESULTS SPEAK VOLUMES**

Nothing speaks louder than results. They immediately answer the question: “What’s in it for me?” Results substantiate our claim, creating a realistic perception of how we can help the dealers and lenders become more successful. Include results, statistics, or testimonials that tie into the communication’s specific message so that they have purpose within the context of the piece, instead of appearing as an afterthought.

## **DIRECT READERS WITH A CLEAR CALL TO ACTION**

Never assume that readers know what to do next. Always punctuate our message with a strong and visible call to action (CTA) that provides clear direction to keep dealers and lenders moving swiftly through the sales funnel. Like the rest of our content, the CTA should also highlight something that our audience will find beneficial.

# TIPS FOR MERGING VISUAL AND VERBAL COMMUNICATION

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As you develop our content, keep in mind how our audience will interact with our message and how the design can help us reinforce that message and its meaning. Here are some tips to help you think about how your writing fits into the content piece as a whole.

## **USE SIMPLE BUT IMPACTFUL IMAGERY**

Simple yet unexpected imagery helps our communications stand out, especially if our competition uses industry-specific visuals and content that the audience may find predictable and bland. Our imagery should be different and arresting while staying relevant to the message and avoiding negativity.

## **EMBRACE WHITE SPACE**

White space benefits the overall layout, working with the other design elements to frame the content so that the entire composition is visually appealing. If our communication contains a lot of white space, resist the temptation to fill it with more information. Excess clutter forces the audience to work to decipher our message, resulting in abandonment and missed opportunities for our business.

## **SHOW THE PRODUCT**

Complement our benefits-forward messaging with images of the actual product whenever appropriate so that dealers and lenders can see what they're getting. If our audience is likely to use our product on a mobile device, then show it so they can get a better idea of how our product fits into their lives. When featuring our product in a real-world setting, ensure that the people, vehicles, and the environment shown are accurate representations of our audience's reality. Otherwise, our message—and our prospects—will feel disconnected.

## **LEVERAGE LOGOS WISELY**

Our logo should always be present, but it should never dominate the communication or shift the message away from our intended audience. The Dealertrack name may influence the buying decision because we are often viewed as an industry authority, but it's the value conveyed in our message that ultimately makes the sale.

# FINAL THOUGHTS

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We aren't like other automotive brands, which is why we don't want to sound like them. We're not breaking existing rules; we're making up our own based on what our audience finds meaningful, relevant, and honest.

Even though we sell technology, we focus on how our products and services instill confidence to adapt to an ever-changing market and improve the lives of real people. Together, we can do great things. So let's not keep that a secret.