



Program Success Story

Background:

Pape Chevrolet has been selling and servicing vehicles in South Portland, the retail capital of Maine, for over 30 years. Founded by Frederick W. Pape Jr. and now owned and operated by Frederick Pape III, this multi-generational dealership is the flagship of the Pape Automotive Group.

As part of the Chevrolet Dealer Council, Pape Chevrolet was one of the first dealerships to learn about the GM iMR Program. Manny Mendes, a nine-year veteran of the dealership, was entrusted with leading the implementation of the iMR Program. Manny, who has worn many hats at Pape Chevrolet through the years, is presently in charge of eCommerce and all IT initiatives, as well as serving as HR Director.

"I was excited to learn about the iMR Program and that Cobalt was chosen as the exclusive provider because our previous experience with Cobalt had been very positive. Consolidating vendors should yield significant savings in time and money," said Manny.

A Changing Market:

"Over the past two years we've gone from 120 cars per month to around 90. You can really see how our market has changed," said Manny. "Our traditional advertising is not as effective anymore." With walk-in traffic declining and traditional advertising losing its impact, the rollout of the iMR Program was very timely and openly welcomed by Pape Chevrolet."

"Executing online is challenging, so the iMR Program has been a perfect solution for us," said Manny. "To do it right you need a full-time, highly skilled team to keep your website updated, optimized and converting visitors to leads. It's impossible for a dealership to have the resources in-house to do it thoroughly."

Keys to Success:

Before the iMR Program, Pape Chevrolet's struggles resembled most

dealers; driving website traffic, improving organic search rankings, increasing website conversions and keeping content current. "GM had the right idea with the iMR Program," said Manny. "Through paid search and website optimization, more traffic is being driven to my website. Thanks to my Account Advocate my website is a true marketing tool that encourages consumers to take action and delivers results. If you look at my website conversion ratio, it's increased 415%. That's simply amazing."

Having a dedicated point of contact to handle online marketing has saved Manny time to focus on other aspects of the business. "The time savings is huge," said Manny. "I don't view my Account Advocate as someone that works for the iMR Program. I view her as an enthusiastic off-site employee of Pape Chevrolet. She has taken the time to understand our business and has been proactive in improving our online marketing performance."

GM iMR Program Results:

Asked to describe his feelings on the before and after results to date of the iMR Program, Manny sums it up with one word: "Ecstatic," he replied. Examination of the numbers proves why Manny is so ecstatic. Email and phone leads have increased 455%, website conversions soared 415% and search engine referrals climbed 43%.

"The iMR Program has made a considerable impact on our bottom line. It has allowed us to reduce our print advertising allocation by 20% without any impact to our floor traffic or sales," said Manny. "I believe, without a doubt, that in the current state of our business climate our sales would be down 50% without the iMR Program."

With the increase in phone and email leads as well as walk-in traffic, the iMR Program has provided Pape Chevrolet with the opportunity for increased sales and reduced advertising spend. "I am incredibly satisfied with the results and

equally excited with the opportunity presented by the iMR Program," said Manny.

Key Highlights



Manny Mendes
IT Director
Pape Chevrolet
South Portland, Maine

Franchise

- Chevrolet

iMR Program Components

- GM Dealer Website
- ProActive Dealer Care
- GM Tier II Paid Search

Results

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- Website conversions: up 415%
- Search engine referrals: up 43%

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