



How Fitzgerald Auto Mall Frederick is creating a “hassle and haggle-free” customer experience with Upstart



Source: https://www.vw.com/en/builder.html/_app/atlas.app

Products

Online and In-Store
Digital Retail

Market

Frederick, MD

The Challenge

Fitzgerald Auto Mall Frederick has a long history of serving customers with transparency and trust by offering their “no haggle, no hassle” best price upfront. However, their existing digital retailing tools made it difficult to deliver the level of transparency they wanted.

Although they had an online tool, there was no in-store functionality, making it hard for customers and sales staff to have a seamless experience. Madison Cantello, Internet Sales Manager at Fitzgerald Auto Mall Frederick, explained, “We were using a bunch of different tools, but they were hard to navigate, and customers would often give up halfway through the process.”



Upstart simplifies the sales process, showing customers exactly what steps they need to take.

Madison Cantello

Internet Sales Manager at Fitzgerald Auto Mall Frederick

The Solution

Fitzgerald Auto Mall Frederick decided to switch to Upstart’s online and in-store digital retailing solution since it enabled customers and salespeople alike to have a quick and transparent process online to in-store. Cantello noted, “Upstart simplifies the sales process, showing customers exactly what steps they need to take. This has led to more high-quality leads because customers can easily follow the process, and our team gets detailed information that helps us close deals.”



Increased CTA clicks by
45% from 182 to 264¹

Upstart auto-fills lead information and integrates directly with their VINsolutions CRM, providing far more detailed lead notes than previous platforms. For instance, while other tools show basic information and require the sales team to dig through dashboards for more details, Upstart shows when a customer has completed specific steps like trade-in or application submission, allowing for very personalized and warmer follow up than before.



Grew number of leads by **74%** from **39** to **68**²



Boosted conversion rate from **21%** to **26%**³

To improve their online experience, the dealership also streamlined the calls-to-action (CTAs) on their Volkswagen site, reducing them from 3-4 options to just 2, leading to some impressive results:

- Increased CTA clicks by 45% from 182 to 264¹
- Grew number of leads from 39 to 68²
- Boosted conversion rate from 21% to 26%³

The results with Upstart have been so successful for the Volkswagen and Chevy brands that the team is planning to implement Upstart for their Cadillac brand after trying two other digital retailing providers that they were unhappy with.

The Implementation

Cantello, who oversaw the in-store training process, shared that while getting everyone iPads required change management, the team was easily able to handle this shift with proper training. Their dedicated Dealer Success Manager from Upstart guided the team through an in-person training session using test leads. According to Cantello, this approach was the best way to ensure the team fully understood the new process, making it easy to adopt and boosting confidence in using the new tools.

The Solution

The tool has been a game-changer for the used car department, making transactions faster and allowing sales associates to handle 6-7 trades at once. The new

process, which includes scanning driver's licenses, auto-filling credit applications and pushing trade-in information directly into VAuto, has become a requirement for all used car deals.

Sales associates like how Upstart's platform lets customers enter their own information on an iPad, making it more secure and less stressful. "Customers are surprised they don't have to share their social security number over the counter," Cantello noted. This process not only keeps things accurate but also reduces liability for the dealership. Plus, if customers leave to think about the purchase, the dealership sends the customer a follow-up link that alerts sales when clicked, helping the sales team turn warm leads into sales. In fact, the number of in-store deals has increased from 109 to 131 at Fitzgerald Auto Mall Frederick, which Cantello attributes to this improved follow up process with Upstart's platform.⁴

Since switching to Upstart, Fitzgerald Auto Mall Frederick has seen impressive sales results. Their Volkswagen sales hit record highs, with the dealership selling 50 cars in one month—almost double their usual 30.⁵ Cantello credited this success to the new tools and processes, saying, "The way we have things set up with Upstart is seamless, and our customers appreciate the transparency."



The dealership is selling **50** cars in one month—**almost double their usual 30**⁵

By adopting Upstart's digital retailing solutions, Fitzgerald Auto Mall Frederick has not only improved its sales but also enhanced the customer experience. With simplified processes, better tools, and a focus on customer satisfaction, the dealership continues to uphold its commitment to transparency and trust.

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¹Findings reported are based on information collected from internal Upstart data from February to July 2024.

²Ibid.
³Ibid.

⁴Findings are reported based on information collected from internal Upstart data from March to August 2024.

⁵Findings reported are based on information collected from Fitzgerald Auto Mall from August 2024.