

# SUCCESS STORY

MAY  
2017 · NO 15

**BOBBY  
MAYNARD**

GENERAL MANAGER  
SIMS HONDA

SIMS HONDA OF BURLINGTON, WA  
**SALES UP 25%**  
YEAR-TO-DATE

---

**CULTIVATING A TEAM ENVIRONMENT AND EMPOWERING  
SALESPEOPLE WITH TARGETED MARKETING TOOLS**



# SALES UP 25% YEAR-TO-DATE

CULTIVATING A TEAM ENVIRONMENT AND EMPOWERING SALESPeOPLE WITH TARGETED MARKETING TOOLS

**Sims Honda, located in Burlington, Washington, is on a roll. Sales are up 25 percent year-to-date, profits are up and the dealership commands a whopping 73 percent share of the local Honda market. “We’re just up and up and up, and it seems to keep going that way,” said Bobby Maynard, General Manager of the Honda dealership.**

Even with the dealership’s key metrics trending upward since 2012, Maynard is quick to remind his staff that things can turn south in a heartbeat. Take March 2011, for example, when an earthquake and tsunami in Japan suddenly choked off the global flow of automotive parts and components, shuttering assembly plants and inflicting more pain on an industry that was still licking its wounds from the Great Recession. The parts shortages hit Toyota and Honda particularly hard.

As painful as those times were, Maynard believes they helped Sims Honda become stronger. When there were just a handful of new cars on the lot after the disaster in Japan, the dealership shifted its focus to selling used vehicles. Today, the used-car business is “thriving because of those challenges,” Maynard said.

“Challenges teach you how to get better,” he said. “I tell everybody at the service meetings and the sales meetings, ‘Hey, it’s good right now, but we need to keep getting better.’ Because when it’s not so good, that’s going to show how good we really are. You can never stop improving,

and you can never stop treating people right and doing the right thing. When things get tough, a customer coming back and doing business with us again is determined by how great we are and the level of trust we have with our customers.”

Trust is especially important in Burlington, which Maynard describes as “a tight, farming community” about an hour north of Seattle. “Word of mouth goes a long way,” Maynard said. “Repeat and referral business is very important to us.”

## THE POWER OF LOVE

Vern and his two sons Dan and Lance opened Sims Honda in 1979. Maynard, a native of nearby Mount Vernon, joined the dealership as a Sales Associate in 1998, earning a promotion to Sales Manager just three years later. After 13 years as Sales Manager, Maynard became General Manager in 2014.

Maynard is a lifelong soccer player, an avid golfer and a member of the Skagit Valley Flag Football League. His competitive nature bleeds into his work at the dealership where he strives to cultivate a team atmosphere.

“I hate turnover,” Maynard said. “I will take people and just love on them. You love on people a lot, you find people’s strengths and you put them in a position to win.”

Knowing that “the car business isn’t the easiest world to thrive in,” Maynard goes out of his way to make sure that his team members enjoy coming to work every day.

“People come onto our showroom floor and they say, ‘This isn’t like a car store,’” he explained.

“They go back in service and they say, ‘This doesn’t feel like a car store. How come everybody is so happy?’ It’s something we hear every day from our customers and we see in our reviews. This is a fun place to work.”

## RACE TO THE BOTTOM

Sims Honda has staked its fortunes on the fundamentals: great products, strong customer service and a motivated sales staff. In particular, Maynard emphasized that the sales team is the foundation of the store’s success.

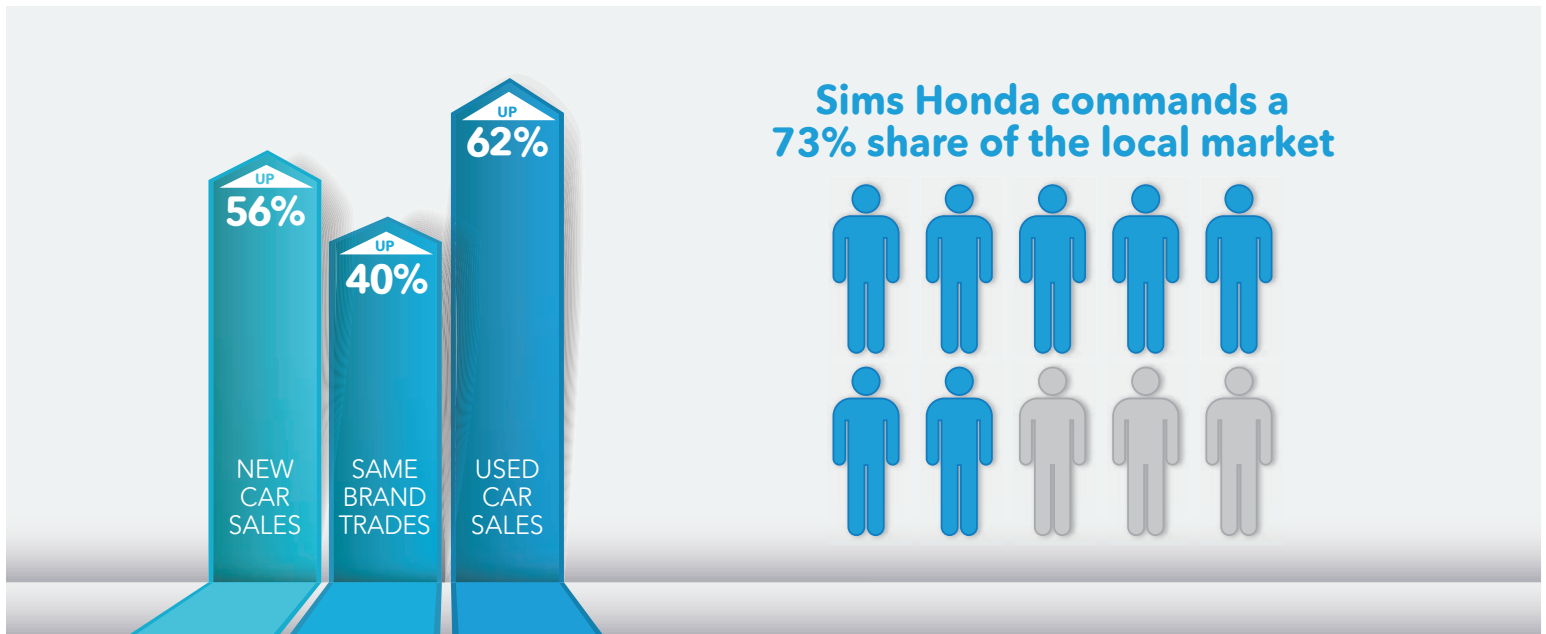
“I believe wholeheartedly in great salespeople more than anything in this business,” Maynard said. “The biggest difference between you succeeding and failing is a salesperson. I really believe that still.”

Not all dealerships see it that way. While Maynard’s performance is judged on the dealership’s profitability, some stores only want to sell the most cars — regardless of how they get there. When stores employ a “scorched-earth” approach to achieving their aggressive sales goals, it puts pressure on other dealerships — such as Sims Honda — that emphasize value over volume.

“They’ve given up on finding and creating great salespeople,” Maynard said of dealerships that strive solely to be volume leaders. “It’s all about price, price, price and this race to the bottom.”

## TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

For Sims Honda, the Apollo Technology Platform is an affirmation of the sales team’s importance. The platform provides the sales staff with critical insights into the online activity of ownership-verified prospects who are statistically most



likely to buy a vehicle or come in for service in the next 90 days. Team Velocity Marketing, the agency Sims Honda selected to spearhead its marketing efforts, refreshes the dealership's marketing dashboard every night, giving the sales team updated lists for email, mail, Google, Bing and Facebook ads.

"We can log into Apollo all activity for anyone who either owns a Honda or has been to our store for sales or service," Maynard said. "Whether the customer made a phone call, viewed a coupon, or looked at their custom offers, we see all activity our customers take every day. Training the management staff on utilizing the tools in Apollo has been a point of emphasis for me

because that's where we track our customers' activity. If we know what our customers are doing and what they are looking at, then we know how to sell to them, or schedule their service. It's all right there."

Apollo automatically creates state and OEM-compliant sales and service offers, distributing them through every advertising medium, including digital advertising, direct mail and email. Sims Honda has been reaping the benefits of using technology to drive their marketing strategy. Recent data attributes 44 percent of monthly new-car sales and 79 percent of monthly service ROs to the Team Velocity Marketing program.

Direct mail has been effective as well. By ranking ZIP codes based on factors such as the number of active customers, market share, distance and cost per sale, Team Velocity Marketing defines the dealership's "perfect market," enabling Sims Honda to launch targeted direct-mail campaigns. Apollo uses data from the dealership's DMS to determine historical trade patterns and then configures relevant, hyper-personalized offers for the make and model their customers are most likely to purchase.

"It's really been paying off," Maynard said, noting that new-car sales are up 25 percent year-to-date.

Sims Honda signed on with Team Velocity Marketing a few months before Maynard became General Manager. Today, the dealership is "full-on Team Velocity," Maynard said.

The numbers speak volumes about the impact of Team Velocity's data-driven marketing services. Since the dealership signed on in 2013, new-car sales are up 56 percent and used-car sales are up 62 percent.

"We just turned on their car-review service and we've been killing it," Maynard added. "In the first month, they scheduled 28 appointments and we closed 15 deals."



All of Sims Honda targeted marketing is managed from a single platform, Apollo™. This allows them to deliver consistent branding and offers across all of their media channels and monitor the results from all of their campaigns from a single, Web-based dashboard.

To learn more about Sims Honda and the strategies outlined in this article email: [successtories@autosuccessonline.com](mailto:successtories@autosuccessonline.com)

**For more information  
on the strategies and companies used by Sims Honda,  
please email [info@TeamVelocityMarketing.com](mailto:info@TeamVelocityMarketing.com)**

Reprinted from AutoSuccess May 2017 for:



**[www.teamvelocitymarketing.com](http://www.teamvelocitymarketing.com) 1-855-213-3586**