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Digital Dealership Tools

October 18, 2016

Executive Summary

LiquidHub interviewed employees at three auto dealerships in order to document the end-to-end new vehicle sales process. LiquidHub also conducted secondary research on dealership technology used by four luxury car and non-luxury OEMs. Development in several key areas will improve customer experience at the dealership and allow employees to work more effectively.

- Personalize customer experience by tailoring recommendations to clients' specific needs.
- Cultivate deep product knowledge for sales consultants to meet client expectations.
- Speed up the financing process and reduce paperwork using digital solutions.
- Integrate dealership systems into a single client view to give all employees access to client data and increase efficiency.

Overview

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Project Team

Project Team

Libby Kaufer Research Consultant

Erin Thibault Senior PM Consultant

Mark Ziegler Principal Design Consultant

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Project Goals & Objectives

Project Goals & Objectives

- Conduct secondary research to gain a comprehensive understanding of the best-in-class competitive landscape.
- Interview employees at auto dealerships to understand the current-state experience.
- Examine the current state of technology in the luxury car competitive environments.
- Provide a better understanding of the comprehensive in-store purchase experience.

03

Competitive Landscape Review

Personalized client interactions
Seamless movement between channels
Pricing transparency and paperwork reduction
From salespeople to product experts
Rethinking the traditional dealership
Strategic partnerships and new venues
Ongoing client relationship

Method

Conducted secondary research on four luxury OEMs and two non-luxury OEMS, focusing on in-dealership experience and technology.

Full list of sources can be found in the Appendix.

Luxury OEMs

Audi	LEXUS
Cadillac	Mercedes-Benz

Non-Luxury OEMs

TESLA	HYUNDAI

Personalized client interactions

Industry research indicates clients want recommendations for vehicles and features relevant to their needs and lifestyle.

Tailoring the appointment

Infiniti's mobile app, ICAR-X, collects data on a client's vehicle interest and location, so a salesperson can tailor their appointment to client preferences. The client can also select the features they want to review during the final walkaround.

Virtual customization

Audi dealerships use tablets to show customization options and how features work. Audi is also developing a "Virtual Engineering Terminal" – a touchscreen tabletop and wall monitor to show how technology features work.

Interactive screens

Tesla showrooms use large touchscreen displays to let clients customize cars.

Seamless movement between channels

Clients prefer resuming their online experience in the dealership rather than starting over.

Send preferences to dealer

Lexus clients can send a configured car directly to a dealer.

Save configurations

Lexus, Mercedes, and Audi clients can save a configured car in online accounts.

Based on industry research, we recommend collecting client browsing history and preferences in order to recommend the salesperson show relevant cars, accessories, and financing options.

- Send recommendations to the client's online account if they have one, so all the information is in one convenient place.

Pricing transparency and paperwork reduction

Clients expect transparency and efficiency during financing.

Real-time finance review

With Infiniti's ICAR-X app, salespeople handle a client's credit application and review financing and leasing options in real time. The app reduces the need to walk back and forth between different parts of the dealership.

Mobile financing

Salespeople in Sonic Automotive dealerships use iPads to show clients different financing options, rather than sending clients to F&I.

Online financing

Jaguar's new Rockar digital store will allow clients to arrange their financing and trade-in online.

Quick results

Pearl Tech's touchscreen "Genius Stations" expedite financing by using pre-screening technology to quickly calculate loan payments, prequalify clients and compare rates from different lenders.

From salespeople to product experts

Understanding that clients have already done a fair amount of research, many luxury OEMs have shifted showroom roles from traditional sales to product experts.

Knowledge experts

Mercedes trains Product Concierges who will help clients understand their vehicle before sale and after purchase.

Training for better interactions

The Lexus Difference program aims to attract different market segments to the dealership by training sales and service reps to be more sensitive in client interactions.

No-pressure environment

Tesla Product Specialists don't pressure clients for a sale: the success metric is if clients return and have good experiences.

Rethinking the traditional dealership

Luxury OEMs are experimenting with new dealership models.

Virtual customization and training

Audi

The Audi 360 VR experience will allow clients to customize color and other options and see internal workings and interior of a configured car. Potentially, salespeople and clients can use VR to troubleshoot or train.

No inventory dealership

Cadillac

Cadillac virtual dealerships will offer VR headsets and only have cars available to test drive, not purchase.

Fully digital showroom

HYUNDAI

Hyundai's Motorstudio Digital has no cars on display, instead using life-size photorealistic 3D screens and video walls and models of exterior colors and textures to let clients feel car details.

VR at home or in store

At Vroom, an online used car dealer, clients can use VR in a pop-up store or at home with their own headsets to look at vehicles, hear sounds, and see how different features work.

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Strategic partnerships and new venues

Luxury car manufacturers are also going outside the dealership to reach clients.

On-demand luxury

Residents of certain condos and residences in California can book an Audi on-demand.

Taking the brand to the client

Tesla is piloting a gallery in Nordstrom to build brand awareness especially among women. The Tesla Explores program travels across the country with a mobile pop-up shop.

Scheduling convenience

Hyundai partnered with Amazon for its *Prime Now. Drive Now.* promotion, which delivered an Elantra to the client's location of choice for a test drive.

Mobility services

BMW's ReachNow app lets a client in select cities book a BMW vehicle to be delivered to their location for chauffeured ride or a short-term rental.

Ongoing client relationship

Personalized service doesn't stop once the sale is complete. Many luxury OEMs have dedicated apps that offer services such as remote commands, vehicle locators for parking, Wi-Fi hotspots, and diagnostic monitors that prompt service appointments if required.

Mercedes-Benz

Mercedes Mbrace

Audi

Audi MMI

Cadillac

MyCadillac

LEXUS

Lexus Enform Remote

INFINITI.

Infiniti Connection

TESLA

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04

OEM Summary

OEM Comparison

	Audi	Cadillac	LEXUS	Mercedes-Benz	TESLA	HYUNDAI
Product experts		⚙	✓	⚙	✓	⚙
Tablets in dealership	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Touchscreens in dealership	⚙	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
App for vehicle	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Personalization	✓					
Digital or online financing	✓		⚙	⚙	✓	⚙
Virtual reality	⚙	⚙	✓	⚙	⚙	

✓ = implemented

⚙ = under development or pilot

(blank) = not in development or could not confirm

Audi

Audi

Tablets in dealership

Using tablets with Audi’s Sales Assist app, clients can see dealer inventory, watch feature demos (e.g., adaptive cruise control), compare Audi and non-Audi vehicles, and configure vehicles. The salesperson can flag features that may need follow-up or training after delivery.

Touchscreen in dealership

Audi’s Virtual Engineering Terminal will be a large touchscreen tabletop and wall-mounted monitor, which will show how various vehicle features work. Due to high cost, this will likely not be used in dealerships soon.

App for vehicle

Audi offers several apps to clients: myAudi IQ (video tutorials, FAQ guidebook, and owner’s manual), MMI connect (vehicle locator, stream music, traffic reports), Audi roadside assistance, and E-tron connect (Audi A3 vehicle status and function management).

Audi

Audi

Personalization

Using consistent customer data and CRM, ERP, and marketing automation systems, Audi has a single customer view to deliver personalized content across channels.

- Audi uses defined customer personas to better target communications and marketing.
- Audi is developing MyAudi, an online portal for clients to view service data, loyalty-program status, and information about product launches.

Digital or online financing

Audi's Sales Assist app includes finance tools for price negotiation and can pre-populate information on digital forms to save time during F&I.

Virtual reality

Audi is developing a large-scale virtual showroom. A static demo uses Oculus Rift, while the mobile version uses HTC Vive. The client can see a 360° view of the car in great detail and select color options.

- Six dealerships are part of the VR rollout, and development will continue for another two years.

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Cadillac

Product experts
Virtual dealerships will be staffed with product concierges.

App for vehicle
The customizable MyCadillac app provides clients with diagnostic information, remote commands, a Wi-Fi hotspot, and data management. Clients can also locate dealers, schedule service appointments, and send destinations from their phone to the vehicle's navigation system.

Tablets in dealership
Using tablets with the GM Dealer SalesAssistant app, salespeople can show clients vehicle specs, options, accessory information, dealer inventory, incentive information, payment estimates, and how-to videos.

Touchscreens in dealership
Digital Dealership System offers Cadillac-branded touchscreen kiosks that can be customized with dealer inventory, accessories search, car comparison, appointment check-in, and trade-in appraisal.

Cadillac

Virtual reality

Cadillac is working on converting low-volume dealerships into virtual showrooms with no inventory and low overhead.

- Clients will use VR headsets to look at vehicles, features, and options. An order for a car will be expedited from regional inventory centers.
- Product concierges will travel to a client's home or office with VR headsets or touchscreen building tools.
- Virtual dealerships will have service departments and vehicles to test drive or loan to those whose vehicle is undergoing service.

Lexus

Product experts

The Lexus Difference program aims to help dealerships attract women, millennials, and multicultural customers.

- The program trains sales and services people to be more sensitive in customer interactions (e.g., acknowledging the women in a group first). The program began as a pilot last year and is now available to any Lexus outlet in the US.

The Lexus Plus program offers no-haggle pricing: a client works with a single consultant during the entire transaction.

- The process is more transparent to the client and reduces time in the dealership.
- The pilot program has been successful and will expand to additional dealerships. Sales managers have reported good numbers for sales and customer satisfaction.

Tablets in dealership

At some Lexus dealerships, salespeople use custom apps on iPads to help explain features during product demonstrations.

Lexus

Touchscreens in dealership

Digital Dealership System offers Lexus-branded touchscreen kiosks that can be customized with dealer inventory, accessories search, car comparison, appointment check-in, and trade-in appraisal.

App for vehicle

The Lexus Enform Remote app includes remote controls (lock and unlock doors, start engine, adjust climate control), vehicle locator, monitoring systems for guest drivers, and vehicle status and alerts (e.g., fuel level).

Digital or online financing

Part of the Lexus Plus program, Lexus is developing a financial app to reduce sales transaction times.

Virtual reality

Viewing a Lexus app or YouTube video via Oculus Rift or Google Cardboard, clients can simulate driving a Lexus sports car around a track. Lexus plans to film additional routes and locations in the next year.

Mercedes

Mercedes-Benz

Product experts

Mercedes piloted a Product Concierge program in Hamburg, Germany.

- The Product Concierge is not a sales role: their only role is to help the client understand the product before the sale and after they've left the dealership, so there is less pressure during the interaction.
- Mercedes is training 500 concierges in China.

Tablets in dealership

Mercedes was one of the first OEMs to bring iPads into dealerships. A custom app shows the latest deals and speeds up credit applications and lease turn-ins. Clients can complete and sign forms (e.g., lease inspection, odometer report) on the iPad.

Touchscreens in dealership

Digital Dealership System offers Mercedes-branded touchscreen kiosks that can be customized with dealer inventory, accessories search, car comparison, appointment check-in, and trade-in appraisal.

Mercedes

Mercedes-Benz

App for vehicle

The basic package for Mbrace includes safety and security features (e.g., roadside assistance), remote commands, and vehicle locator.

- The plus package includes personal concierge, family driver monitoring, turn-by-turn route assistance, and location-based traffic/weather.
- The app also communicates diagnostic information and will prompt a service appointment if something in the vehicle needs attention.

Digital or online financing

Mercedes is partnering with AutoGravity for the public beta of their online (web and mobile) auto financing platform.

- Clients can select a car, view dealerships nearby, apply for financing, and select an offer (up to four offer will be returned).
- Clients then go to the dealership with their personalized offer to finish the purchase or lease.

Virtual reality

Mercedes opened a VR showroom where clients view interior and exteriors using VR headsets at a bookstore in Tokyo. The cars are in the parking lot to test drive, and staff are available to answer any questions.

Tesla

Product experts

Tesla Product Specialists are knowledgeable about Tesla's technology. They are not on commission and do not ask clients for a sale. Instead, their metric of success is if a customer had a good experience and returns to the showroom.

Touchscreens in dealership

Large touchscreen display in Tesla showrooms and galleries shows Tesla's charging-station locations and allows clients to customize cars.

App for vehicle

Using the Tesla Motors app, clients can stop or start charging, check real-time charging progress, locate and track their vehicle, adjust climate controls, lock and unlock doors, and activate the horn or lights.

Tesla

Digital or online financing

Clients custom order and design a Tesla, select financing (i.e., loan, lease, cash), and indicate if there is a trade-in online. They can also check their order status online.

Virtual reality

Tesla has a “Meet Model X” VR video on YouTube that clients can view using Google Cardboard, however, there does not appear to be VR development for use in dealerships.

Hyundai

Product experts

Hyundai's Rockar store pop-up is staffed with product experts, not salespeople.

At Hyundai's digital Motorstudio, a product expert or "guru" is available to answer questions about the vehicles.

Tablets in dealership

Some Hyundai dealerships use tablets such as Microsoft's Surface to show color options and dealer inventory. Salespeople can also log into their CRM and respond to leads 24/7, even when at home, improving response time for internet leads.

Hyundai

HYUNDAI

Touchscreens in dealership

Hyundai’s digital Motorstudio in Seoul, Korea does not display any cars.

- With floor-to-ceiling video walls and life-size 3D screens, clients see photorealistic images of cars and can build a car at a touchscreen table with realistic sound effects.
- The “Touchable Closet” has hand-size models of exterior colors and interior textures so clients can feel them.

Digital Dealership System offers Hyundai-branded touchscreen kiosks that can be customized with dealer inventory, accessories search, car comparison, appointment check-in, and trade-in appraisal.

App for vehicle

Hyundai’s BlueLink app offers emergency assistance, monthly vehicle diagnostic report, remote commands (lock/unlock, start), and stolen-vehicle recovery.

Digital or online financing

With Hyundai’s partnership with Rockar, clients can buy a car and arrange their trade-in, financing, or cash online.

05

New Vehicle Sales Process

Method

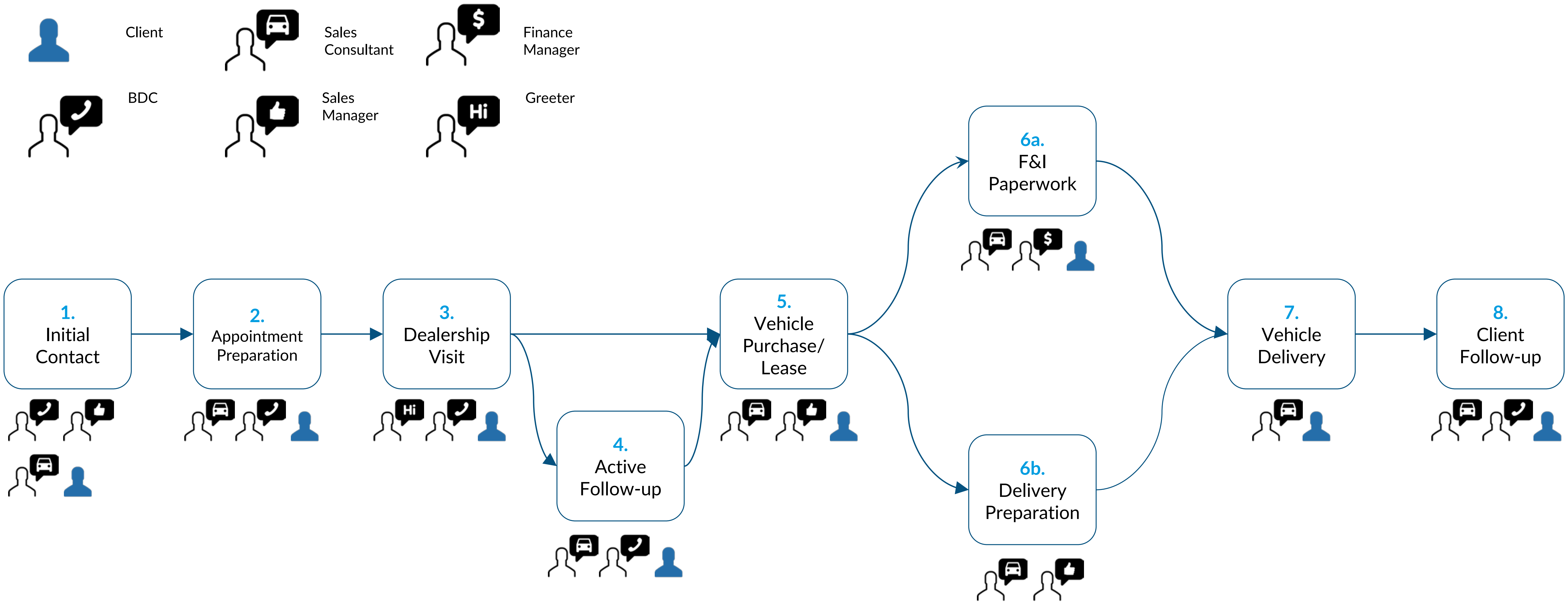
Visited three dealerships for on-site observation and interviews:

- One standalone auto dealership in Wayne, NJ
- Two dual dealerships in Palatine and Naperville, Illinois

Interviewed the following roles at each dealership to document each step of the new car sale or lease process:

- Operations manager
- Greeter (if applicable)
- Sales consultant
- Sales manager
- Finance manager
- Any other personnel relevant to new vehicle sales process at the dealership (e.g., used car manager)

New Vehicle Sales Process



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Overall Sales Process

Findings

- Some sales consultants want to show vehicles without using technology (e.g., videos), as clients can do this on their own.
- Sales consultant recruiting, training and compensation structure are key considerations for dealerships. For example, dealerships may compensate sales consultants based on volume, not dollars, to improve performance.
- The best time to sell F&I products is an ongoing question. Clients prefer knowing the all-in price during the vehicle negotiation, while finance managers prefer a separate negotiation to optimize their commission.
- Dealership systems (e.g., DealerConnection, DMS, CRM, RouteOne) are not fully integrated, creating inefficiencies as users move data between systems and manually update data in multiple places.
- It's difficult for dealership personnel to give feedback on OEM processes or requirements to corporate.

Recommendations

- Conduct field research in average and below-average OEM dealerships to gain additional perspectives on how F&I products are sold, and sales consultant recruiting, training, and compensation structure.
- Evaluate if a different compensation structure for sales and finance may ease the client-dealership relationship.
- Create videos and tutorials on features that sales consultants can email to clients after delivery instead of showing during the product demonstration.
- Develop a client view (e.g., Showcase) that aggregates all system information, providing a uniform client profile to all dealership personnel. This should include connecting to the OEM app, which will expedite account setup and facilitate personalized cross-selling after the vehicle sale.
- Create an accessible avenue for dealerships to provide feedback to corporate to improve processes and requirements.

1. Initial Contact: Findings

1 — **BDC** receives monthly campaigns from OEM; creates online marketing (incl. social media).

2 — **Client** inputs vehicle interest, contact and/or trade-in information in an online form or email, or calls dealership.

Email responses sent automatically for internet leads.

3 — **BDC** or **sales manager** sends personalized email back to client within 15 minutes.

BDC or **sales manager** assigns sales consultant based on availability & seniority/expertise.

Paper-based system often used to see schedules and determine sales consultant assignment.

4 — **BDC** or **sales consultant** calls or emails client to find out what vehicle they're interested in.

BDC or **sales consultant** makes client appointment in CRM.

Client can fill out credit application or trade-in information online.

If no appointment made, **BDC** follows up with client via phone and/or email.

Dealership can call client for up to 90 days but can email until client tells them to stop.

1. Difficult to get leads from social media; email is more effective

2. Clients may put bogus information into online form, which will pollute CRM

   This likely indicates a lack of trust and hesitancy to give out personal information for fear of receiving unwanted phone calls or mailings.

3. If BDC misses an inbox notification, will need to keep refreshing CRM dashboard to see if new Internet leads came in

4. No notification in CRM if the sales consultant doesn't contact client, BDC has to look for notes in the CRM; if client was not contacted, BDC will follow-up

1. Initial Contact: Recommendations

Client can fill out credit application or trade-in information online.

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Make client appointment in CRM.

If no appointment made, follow up with client via phone and/or email.

Dealership can call client for up to 90 days but can email until client tells them to stop.

1. Enhance CRM functionality to enable marketing email blasts to a targeted group of clients based on product interests.

2. Allow clients to indicate when and how they would like to be contacted by a dealership; follow those preferences to foster trust with the client.

3. Add real-time updates for new Internet leads in CRM so users can respond within 15 minute window.

   Create CRM app to allow users to see and respond to new leads while away from desk.

4. Incorporate schedule functionality in CRM to quickly enable client assignments.

5. Incorporate a workflow into CRM that pushes task alerts to relevant roles at appropriate times, e.g., an alert to BDC if sales consultant hasn't reached out to a client.

2. Appointment Preparation: Findings

What is client currently driving, what do/don't they like about it?

1

BDC or **sales consultant** calls or emails client to assess needs, find out what vehicle they are interested in, and establish price band.

2

Sales consultant uses DealerConnection site or CRM inventory to find vehicle for client.

If client interested in a specific vehicle, **sales consultant** will reserve it in CRM so it doesn't get sold before visit.

If vehicle not in current inventory, **sales consultant** will arrange a dealer trade to obtain it.

Dealer trades may make up a large percentage of a dealership's business (e.g., Up to 45-50% of sales at the Naperville dealership).

Sales consultant cleans and fuels vehicle in advance of appointment.

1

BDC or sales consultant may write information on paper while on the call and need to update the CRM afterwards.

Layout of CRM may not allow user to easily find the correct fields while on the phone.

2

The search functionality of a DealerConnection site is limited.

A user can only select one filter at a time and each selection takes a long time to refresh.

BDC at Wayne dealership uses a binder of window stickers to quickly find vehicles because the DealerConnection site is too slow.

2. Appointment Preparation: Recommendations

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Sales consultant cleans and fuels vehicle in advance of appointment.

1 Incorporate needs assessment into a CRM workflow to make it easier for users to interview clients and simultaneously update relevant fields.

Integrate payment calculator in CRM so user can calculate which vehicles fit the client's price band and show rebates or incentives that apply to the client based on information entered.

2 Improve search filters for DealerConnection sites.

Improve refresh rate for DealerConnection search.

3 Investigate how dealer trades are conducted to see if the process can be made more efficient.

3. Dealer Visit: Findings

1. **Greeter** or **sales consultant** welcomes client and offers beverage.
2. **Greeter** checks paper schedule for sales consultant availability.
   - If **sales consultant** is unavailable, the client is shown to lounge or shown vehicle.
   - For walk-in clients, available **sales consultant** takes care of client or **greeter** will assign a sales consultant.
3. **Sales consultant** introduces self.
4. **Sales consultant** conducts (further) needs assessment, enters information into CRM and discusses monthly payments. (1)

   May use a paper worksheet and enter data into CRM after the appointment.
5. **Sales consultant** checks dealer inventory in CRM or on dealer's website to find vehicle to show. (2)
6. **Sales consultant** conducts product demonstration of vehicle features and technology. (3)
7. If client is interested, **sales consultant** and client will go for a test drive.

   Sales consultant photocopies driver's license and may take client's insurance information depending on the dealership.

   Sales consultant is not required to go on test drive with client, but usually does to continue product demonstration.
8. **Sales consultant** confirms vehicle is the correct product for client.
   - If client doesn't like vehicle, **sales consultant** goes back to assessment and selection.

1 Technology doesn't define a good customer experience and a successful sale: personal connection with the client does. Needs assessment and active listening are key skills that may not be taught at every dealership.

Some clients may be put off by sales consultants digitally entering information.

An updated CRM tool is updated is vital to capture client data: "If it's not in CRM, it didn't happen." Sales consultants may neglect to go back and enter data into CRM after appointment.

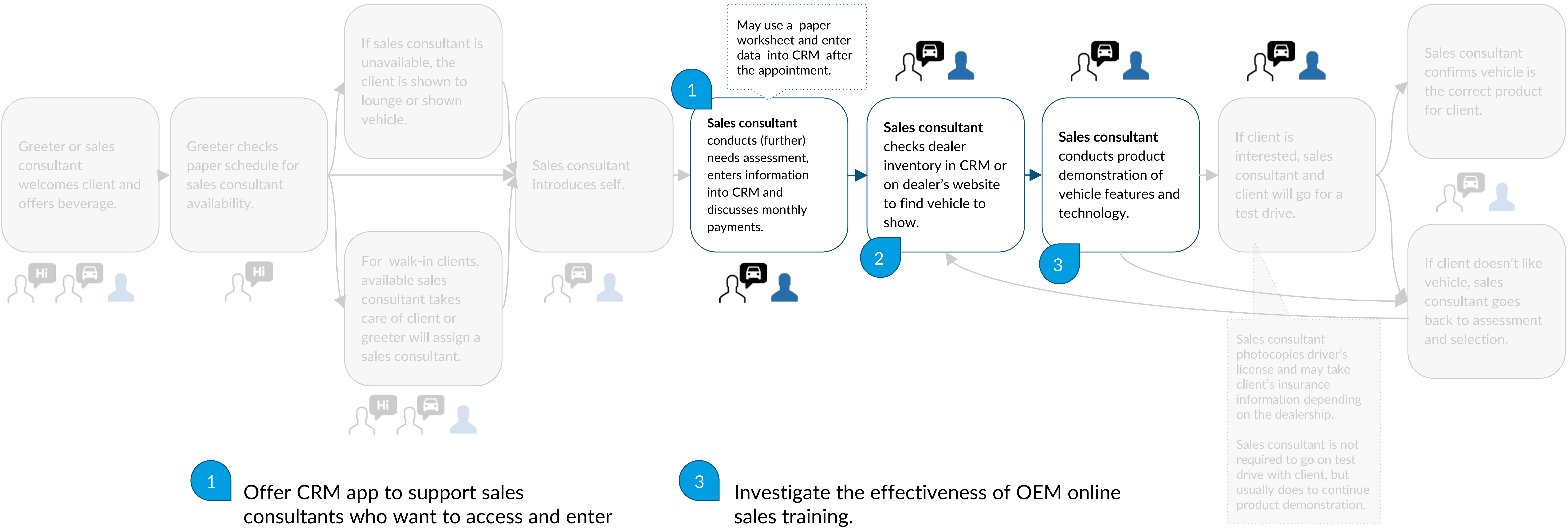
2 Sales consultants did not use the Showcase app because the inventory lagged 1-2 days, rendering it useless to them.

3 Clients want product expertise and are frustrated when sales consultants aren't knowledgeable about the product.

Deep product knowledge is fundamental, sales consultants need to truly know the product to effectively explain to clients

Some dealerships said OEM's online quizzes don't match the questions clients ask and trainings are less valuable than hands-on experience.

3. Dealer Visit: Recommendations

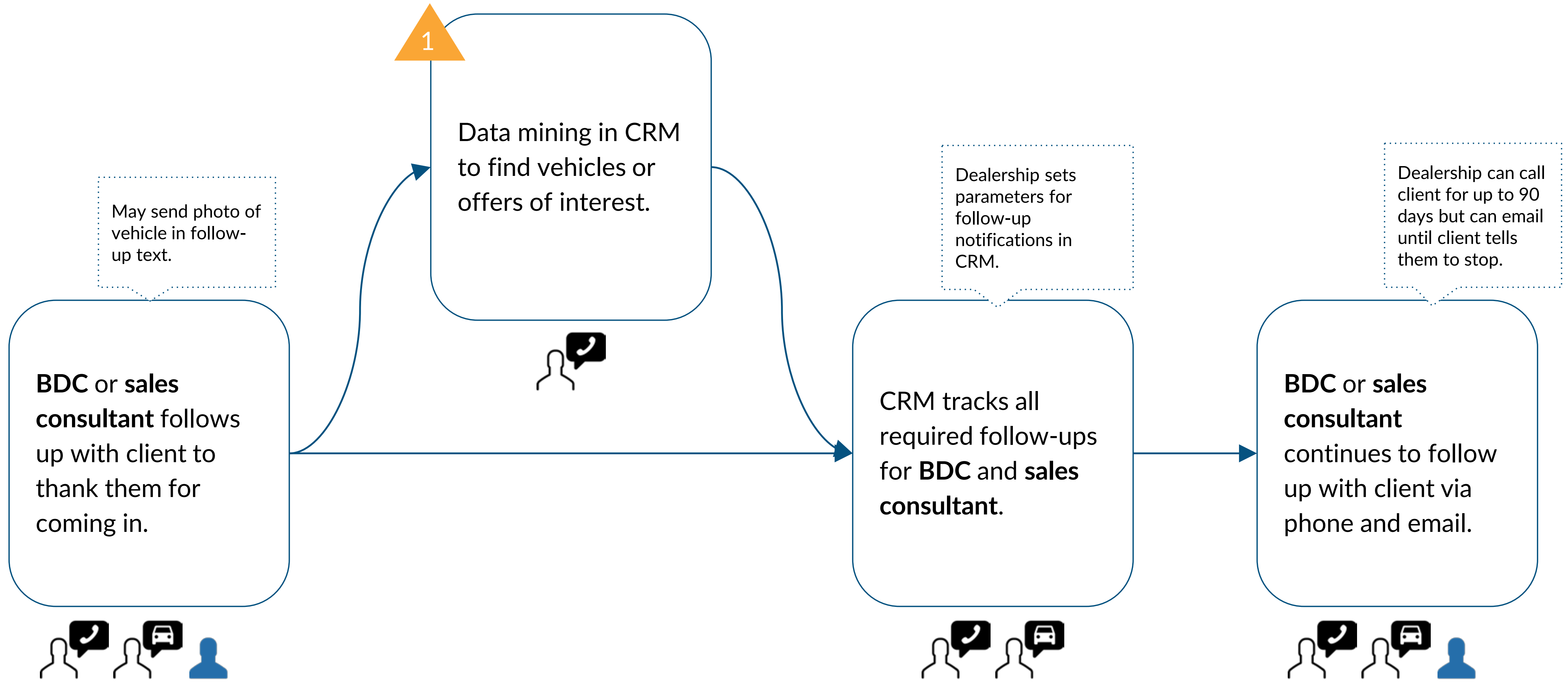


1. Offer CRM app to support sales consultants who want to access and enter information while on the sales floor or away from desk.
2. Allow Showcase app to show inventory data in real time.
3. Investigate the effectiveness of OEM online sales training.

   Offer more hands-on product and sales training for sales consultants rather than online trainings or videos.

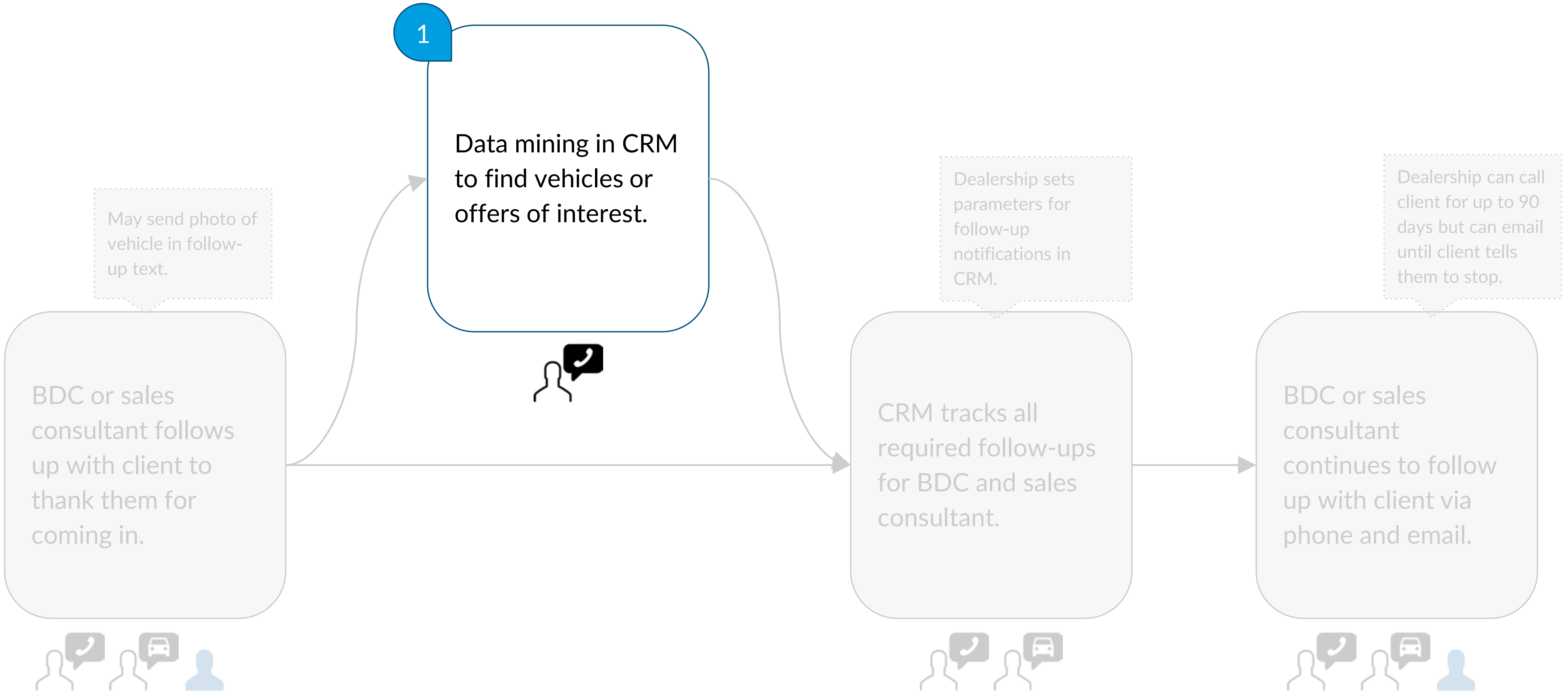
   Include best practices such as updating CRM in a timely manner, using active listening skills, and giving client their full attention.

4. Active Follow-up: Findings



1 Some CRMs do not allow for specific client targeting or data mining (e.g., sending Continental offers to all clients who recently viewed a Continental).

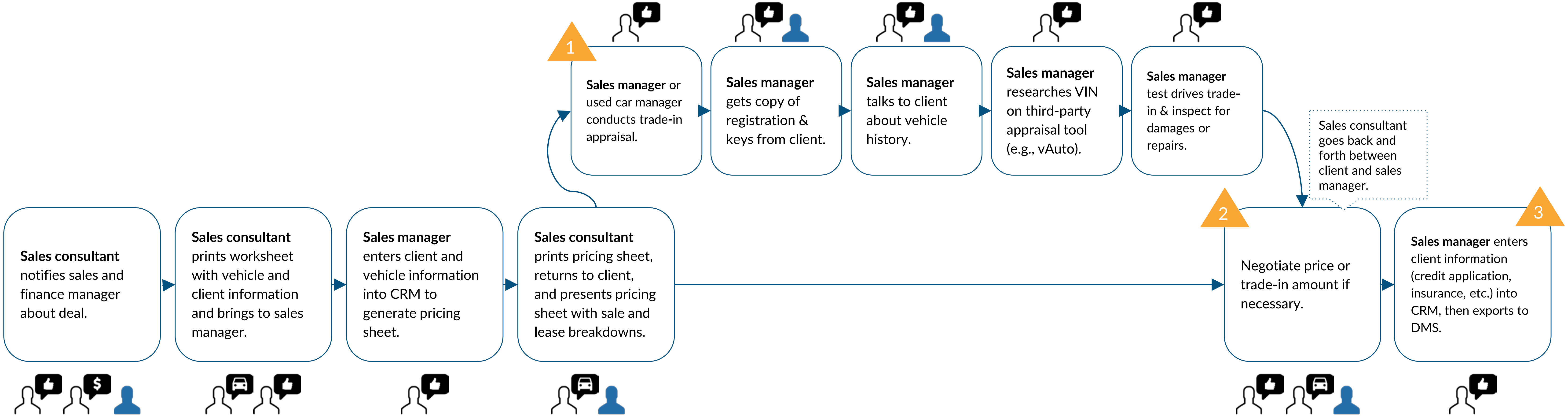
4. Active Follow-up: Recommendations



1

Enhance CRM functionality to enable automated email blasts to a targeted group of clients based on product interests.

5. Vehicle Purchase/Lease: Findings



1 Bottleneck if only a limited number of people are trained to conduct trade-in appraisals.

Client may need to wait while trade-in appraisal is being conducted.

2 Price negotiations frustrate clients, who are worried about being ripped off or pressured by sales consultants.

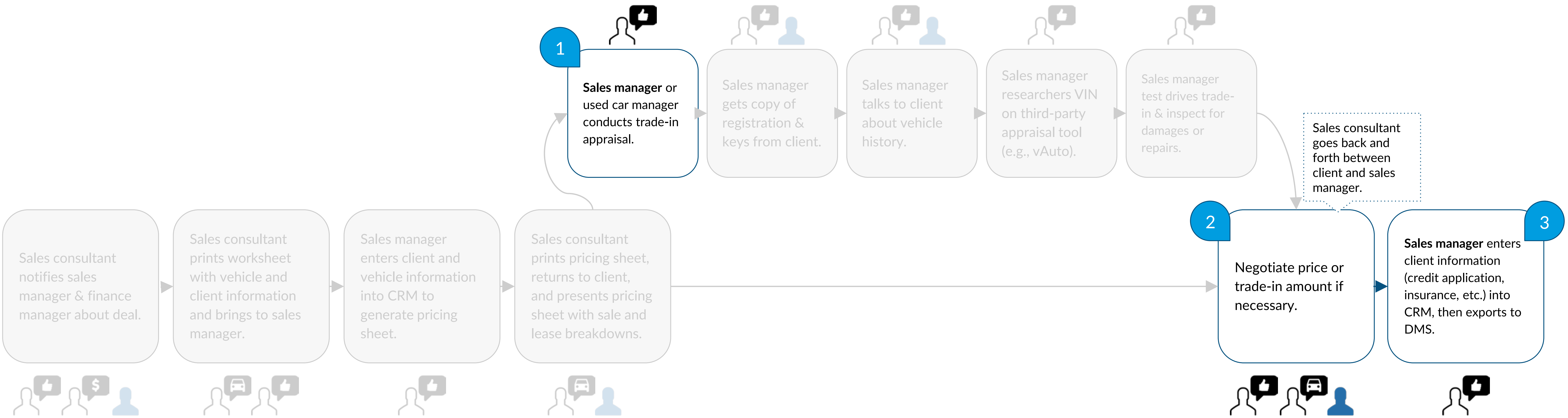
Clients frustrated that dealership can't easily find pricing they saw in OEM's Estimate Your Payment tool.

When the client inputs their ZIP code, they think the state fees are calculated in the price; however, the ZIP code is only used to find the nearest dealer, so the pricing the client sees at the dealership is different.

3 If changes happen after a deal is loaded into DMS, the user needs to manually update both DMS and CRM.

Some data may not correctly transfer correctly between systems, so the user need to manually check and update data.

5. Vehicle Purchase/Lease: Recommendations



1

Offer appraisal training for managers who want additional appraisal skills.

Involve client during appraisal process, or educate client on vehicle being purchased and/or legacy of OEM or have them begin credit application.

2

Add a fees/tax calculator tool to Estimate Your Payment.

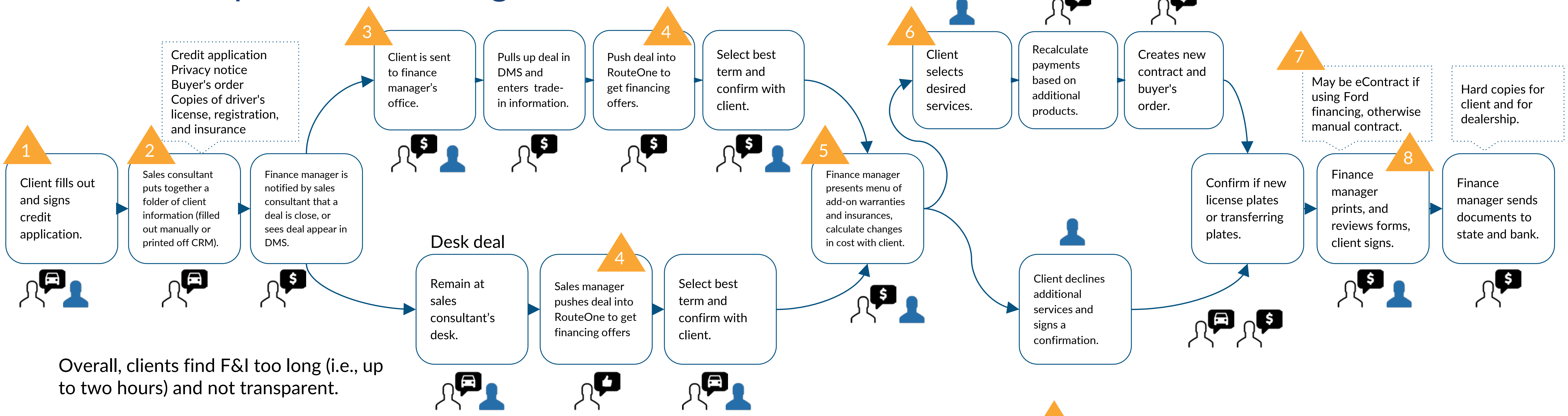
Allow clients to save estimated payments in OEM app.

Using the proposed single client view (e.g., Showcase), sales consultants can review pricing with client or use this information to better market products to them.

3

Allow any updates to a deal to apply across all systems in the single client view.

6a. F&I Paperwork: Findings



Overall, clients find F&I too long (i.e., up to two hours) and not transparent.

1 Dealers can't access online credit applications, clients often have to apply again at the dealer. Repetition frustrates some customers.

The dealership could call e-branch of Ford Credit for access, but that office is only open from 9-5.

No connection between credit application and RouteOne; finance managers must cut and paste information from one to the other

2 Dealerships may fill out a buyer's order manually, increasing the risk of error.

3 Clients don't like being "sent down the hall" to F&I office.

Client must wait for finance manager to become available.

4 Data may not copy correctly; users must go back and forth between DMS and RouteOne to verify information is correct.

5 Most finance managers still use paper menus and manually calculate loan payments.

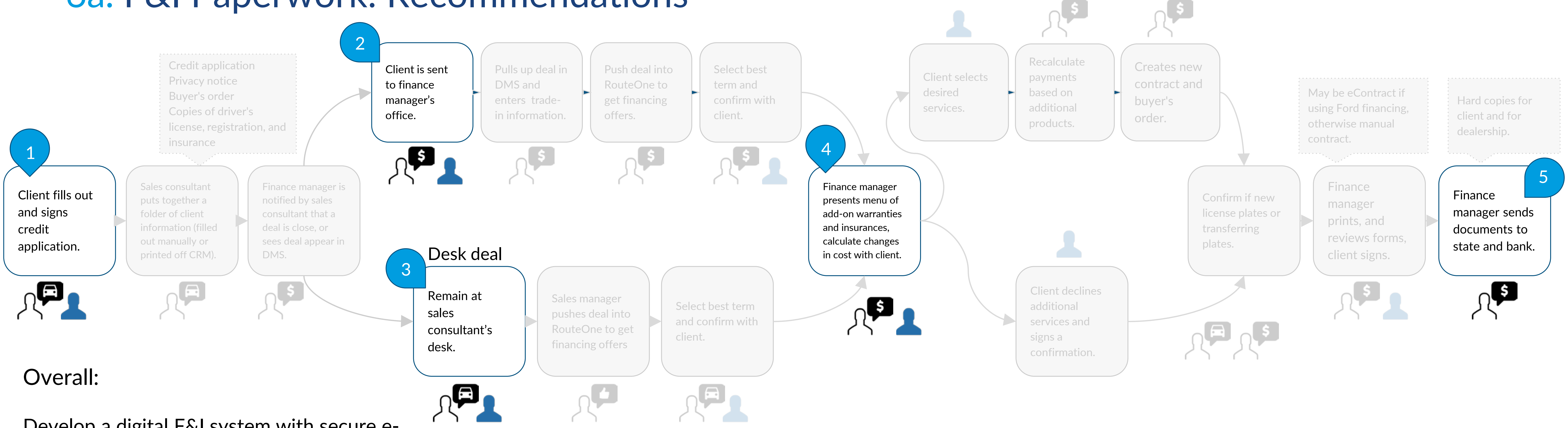
6 Finance managers don't use CRM as their job is already too time-consuming.

Sales consultant will try to brief managers on client, but may not have time. Finance managers can't sell F&I products as effectively if they don't know client's needs.

7 eContracting only works with Ford financing and Capital One bank.

8 Sales consultants and finance managers use hard copy checklists to verify paperwork.

6a. F&I Paperwork: Recommendations



Overall:

Develop a digital F&I system with secure e-signature and direct integration with the proposed single client view.

Use a single, transparent F&I workflow to set client expectations and to act as a checklist for everyone involved.

Allow dealerships to customize which parts of F&I will still be completed on paper based on state requirements and/or client comfort.

1 Integrate Ford Credit, CRM, DMS and other tools into a single client view so everyone has access to the same data and clients do not need to repeat information.

2 Recommend that finance manager introduces self at sales desk and walks client to their office.

3 Offer training and support for dealerships that want their sales consultants to desk their own deals.

Allowing sales consultants to desk deals prevents a bottleneck at F&I because they don't need to wait for the finance manager.

4 Make online menu more flexible to allow individual selection (rather than packages), with clearly visible pricing and electronic disclosures/signatures.

This may also help to build trust and defer potentially negative perceptions of the finance manager pressuring them.

5 Assess state and federal regulations on paper vs. digital documents and signatures for F&I documents.

6b. Vehicle Preparation: Findings

1

When client is in F&I, **sales consultant** arranges for vehicle to be cleaned and fueled.

→

Sales consultant gets keys and owner's manual.

→

Sales manager inspects vehicle.

1

If there is no fuel tank on site, service technicians or sales consultants must drive to nearest gas station to fill up which may increase preparation time.

Some dealerships use a paper vehicle delivery checklist.

6b. Vehicle Preparation: Recommendations

1

When client is in F&I, **sales consultant** arranges for vehicle to be cleaned and fueled.

Sales consultant gets keys and owner's manual.

Vehicle inspected by sales manager.

1

Incentivize dealerships who want to add an onsite fuel tank to save on vehicle preparation time.

Incorporate delivery preparation into proposed digital workflow for single client view.

7. Vehicle Delivery: Findings

1. **Sales consultant** gives client a tour of dealership, including service area.
2. **Sales consultant** demonstrates vehicle features based on client's interest and time.
3. **Sales consultant** sets up OEM app and Sync My Ride app and website accounts with client.

Sales consultant pairs client's phone to vehicle.

Sales consultant gives keys, owner's manual, and copies of paperwork to client.

Client drives home in their new vehicle.

1 By this time, the client just wants to get their vehicle and leave.

Vehicle delivery can occur before or after F&I depending on finance manager's availability. Some clients may be annoyed at having to wait or go back to paperwork after the vehicle is already delivered; the client is excited about their new vehicle and wants to leave.

2 OEM account and app are tedious to set up. Sales consultant needs to input the same client information again.

The app lacks services that would be of value to clients, such as remote commands.

Sales consultants are graded on app activation rates, so they must set up the account, which frustrates both them and clients. Clients perceive that the set-up is to benefit the salesperson only.

3 Salespeople don't use the New Vehicle Orientation (NVO) app because it cannot be tailored to a client's specific car and irrelevant sections can't be skipped. NVO includes information that the client already knows.

Some dealerships use separate delivery specialists, which can be disruptive to the client (who needs to repeat their needs/interests again) and can prevent salespeople from keeping up their product expertise.

7. Vehicle Delivery: Recommendations

1. Sales consultant gives client a tour of dealership, including service area.
2. [1] **Sales consultant** demonstrates vehicle features based on client's interest and time.
3. [2] **Sales consultant** sets up OEM app and Sync My Ride app and website accounts with client.
4. Sales consultant pairs client's phone to vehicle.
5. Sales consultant gives keys, owner's manual, and copies of paperwork to client.
6. Client drives home in their new vehicle.

Prevent bottleneck at F&I (see page 45) so client goes right from purchase to delivery.

1

Require that sales consultants handle vehicle delivery to keep their product knowledge fresh.

Offer hands-on product training for sales consultants.

Create VIN-specific digital delivery checklist so sales consultant only shows features that are in the client's actual vehicle.

Allow sales consultants to send this checklist with tutorials to a client's OEM account to reference as needed.

2

Build out services of OEM account and app to be more relevant to clients (e.g., adding remote commands).

Remove OEM account activation as a performance metric for sales consultants.

8. Client Follow-up: Findings

1

Sales consultant calls, emails or texts the client within a day to thank client and offer assistance.

→

BDC or **sales consultant** sends thank you letter sent to client.

→

2

BDC or service department emails six month reminder for first service appointment.

1 Sales consultants and managers did not use videos during the sales process, but thought they could be helpful to email to clients if they had questions about features.

2 Based on secondary research and other Ford research conducted by LiquidHub, clients are open to learning about new accessories or services, especially to “refresh” a car that is a few years old.

8. Client Follow-up: Recommendations

1

Sales consultant calls, emails or texts the client within a day to thank client and offer assistance.

BDC or sales consultant sends thank you letter to client.

2

BDC or service department emails six month reminder for first service appointment.

1

Provide library of tutorials that sales consultants can email to client as needed.

Include tutorials in OEM account and recommend relevant tutorials based on client’s vehicle.

2

Improve tagging capabilities in CRM to target accessories and services marketing based on client's’ vehicle and lifestyle.

06

Conclusion & Next Steps

Conclusion

- Clients and dealerships want the new vehicle sales process to be faster and more efficient.
- More robust technology for CRM and financial tools will help achieve this goal.
- The relationship between the client and sales consultant is more important than technology: product knowledge, personalized advice, and trust are vital to success.

Next Steps

- Continue field research at auto dealerships
- Develop additional functionality for CRM and DMS tools
- Integrate systems into single client view
- Conduct usability testing with single client view to validate design and functionality

Thank You

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