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# FORDPROS

TRUCK BUYERS: THEIR TRUCKS IN THE FIELD

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## TRUCK BUYER EXAMPLES BRING IDEAS



How Truck Buyers Think:  
Work Truck Solution Survey

# FORD PRO-FILE:

*Jim Cantrell*

Gray-Daniels Ford is one of the premier dealerships in the Brandon, Mississippi area. Founded in 1991 the dealership was bought in 2000 by Asbury Automotive Group, Inc., one of the largest automotive retailers in the U.S. They now operate a platform of five dealerships representing seven franchises in the Brandon area.

Jim Cantrell is the Fleet Sales Director for Gray-Daniels Ford. Jim grew up around the car business. His father became a manager at a local Pontiac dealer in 1965, and he stayed with that dealership for 31 years. When his father retired Jim took over his manager position.

Jim learned a lot about sales from his father. On Sundays the family would get in the car and drive around different neighborhoods. Jim's father would look in the drive-ways and see who had a Pontiac that was a few years old. He would write down the tag number and send them a postcard. He was always prospecting. Following his father's example, Jim writes down company names from work trucks he sees on the road every day. The next day they will hear from Jim.

Gray-Daniels Ford is in the early stages of deploying Work Truck Solution (WTS) into its website. WTS is a new service that works transparently within your dealership's existing website. Work Truck Solution provides quick and easy access to highly consolidated and expertly organized information and pictures for currently available work trucks, not only from your inventory but from other dealer inventories that subscribe to WTS.

Several other dealerships within the Asbury Automotive Group are reporting success using WTS. "I like the concept. It is of real value to us," Jim said. "It presents us to the customer as being able to offer any kind of vehicle. We try to keep a diverse selection in our inventory, but we can't have everything. You may not have exactly what a customer is looking for, but another dealer in the WTS network does have it. It doesn't matter to the customer what lot the truck is on. All we have to do is work out the transfer; we do that all the time."

Jim takes full advantage of Work Truck Solution's ability to analyze the traffic to their web site. "It was an



eye-opener to me to see how many people have come to our website looking for dump trucks. We never had a dump truck sitting on our lot in stock. Now that I know what people are looking for, it's going to affect the inventory that I decide to keep on the lot. We are starting to learn more about our work truck customer base."

"We are beginning to integrate WTS into our prospecting," Jim says. "All a salesperson needs is an email address and he can shoot a short note to the prospective customer with a link to one of the service bodies on our website. It creates an opportunity to drive the customer to the website, get a response and then an opportunity to follow-up. It's a quick way to throw a little more bait in the water."

Most FordPros did not have the opportunity to learn about sales from Sunday family drives so long ago, but Jim's father's sales techniques are still relevant today. And when Jim applies his father's sales lessons through new tools available to today's modern FordPro, he continues his father's legacy into the future.



Jim and his wife, Denise, cruising the British Virgin Islands.

Article by Ken Keller

