

Come into the Light

2014 Awareness Campaign for Moonlight Automotive, Inc.

Geneva Denney



Executive Summary

Come into the Light is an awareness campaign for Moonlight Automotive, Inc., an auto maintenance and repair shop out of Westminster, Maryland. They were opened in 2009 by certified technician, Chad Elder. The business is run by him and his wife, Jamie Elder. Chad is dedicated to providing his customers with quality service at the highest standards of integrity.

Moonlight Automotive, Inc. has a rare business in which they offer client-friendly and affordable car repair services. However, the business is very under marketed within the community. The awareness strategies within the company are not being utilized well and have not caused an increase in customers.

Come into the Light has a campaign goal to inform the residents of Carroll County of the services provided by Moonlight Automotive, Inc., to increase customer base by 5-percent in 2015. In order to make the goal a possibility 5-percent of 335 is 16.75. Therefore, Moonlight will have to gain 17 new customers in the 2014-2015 timespan to make this campaign a success.

Furthermore, *Come into the Light* will implement strategies such as engaging customers through personal messages, promotions, social media, and word-of-mouth. Each strategy is fine-tuned to be geared specifically to each public profile. *Come into the Light* was built on a small budget and many tactics used come at no cost to the company, but time.

Additionally, *Come into the Light* will use tactics like creating a blog, updating social media, T-shirt giveaways, personal messages, and recommendation incentives. A budget, calendar, and communications table have all been set to make the campaign flow smoothly and properly.

An evaluation tool has also been set to make sure proper records for each tactic will be kept.

Come into the light—2014 Campaign for Moonlight Automotive, Inc.

By: Geneva Denney

Background:

Moonlight Automotive, Inc. is an affordable auto maintenance and repair shop. They were opened in 2009 by Chad Elder. Chad is ASE certified and advanced level Master Certified. He is dedicated to providing his customers with quality service and the highest standards of integrity. He is constantly participating in continuing education courses to stay current and up-to-date on the latest automotive technology equipment.

Chad is the main repair man within the company, but he has recently hired two new workers to help with the expansion of their company. Moonlight Automotive is located, and expanding within the local Carroll County area. Moonlight is a small, non-dealership company and lots of their business is generated by word-of-mouth.

However, when doing a simple google search of auto repair shops in Westminster, Maryland seven listings came back—Moonlight was not one of them. This shows that the awareness strategies of the company are not working well because they don't have any type of reviews or customer advice popping up in search engines. The word-of-mouth strategies need to be expanded upon.

In 2010 the automotive market contributed to 4-percent of U.S. GDP and employed millions. Additionally, car sales have risen 11-percent since 2012. Moonlight automotive is expanding to a new location, and has also started to sell cars—therefore they are following the trends of the industry. The hope of *Come into the Light* is to pull more customers into the repair shop and utilize the word-of-mouth strategies on the next level.

In the past year, eliminating repeats, Moonlight had a total of 335 customers. This number needs to continue to rise or the company will not be successful. In order to make them successful Moonlight needs to make their brand a more common name around the Carroll County area.

The goal of this campaign is to inform the residents of Carroll County of the services provided by Moonlight Automotive, Inc. to increase customer base by 5-percent in 2015. As stated before, in 2013 Moonlight had 335 individual customers. In order to make the goal a possibility 5-percent of 335 is 16.75. Therefore, Moonlight will have to gain 17 new customers in the 2014-2015 timespan to make this campaign a success.

SWOT Analysis:

Strengths	Weaknesses
Affordable Friendly Family-oriented Efficient Quality service	Not marketed No social media presence Relying on word-of-mouth
Opportunities	Threats
Start of car sales Expansion Social media outreach Young/fresh/adaptable	Competition Cranberry Auto Firestone Caples Car Care Altman Automotive

Situation Analysis:

Based on my research, Moonlight Automotive is an auto care company in Westminster, Maryland. They have enough of a customer base to continue to function in the fashion that they have been, but they are not marketed well within the community. So, if they want to grow their business, changes need to be made.

A lot of their business comes from word-of-mouth and should be utilized in a different way. The company has a successful webpage, but this is a minimalistic way to market a business. Their social media presence is minimal and underused. Many do not know they do repairs, they're expanding, or that they sell used cars.

Moonlight is owned and operated by one person and he does not have time to do everything. However, Chad's wife Jamie has offered her services to him for a few hours each day. In this time Jamie could utilize *Come into the Light* during her time in the office, and the success will come.

The company has set little to no marketing budget and they have done so because they utilize word-of-mouth so much. Since the budget is minimal, their strategies and tactics need to come at little cost to the company. This means word-of-mouth strategies need to change, social media needs to be updated, and customer-company interaction needs to be increased.

Core Problem:

The community, which houses Moonlight Automotive, Inc., is unaware of their work as a repair shop, their new location, and their used car sales, without this their business cannot grow.

Their resources are underutilized and their marketing strategy needs to be updated. Once this happens they should thrive in the business world and the customer numbers should continue to increase.

Publics Profiles:

Current Customers:

Our current relationship with the customers of Moonlight is strong. These are the loyal people who are already putting their trust into Chad and the business. Current customers have already successfully helped spread the word about the company and proudly say where they go for maintenance.

These customers have been around from the beginning of the business, and they have steadily climbed since then. Moonlight needs to remind them of their business and what they do. They have already talked about Moonlight in the past, and will probably continue to do so if work is up to par. These are the customers that need to be utilized in helping spread the word about Moonlight Automotive, Inc.

The message to this public is simple, Moonlight Automotive, Inc. is located in Westminster, but we have expanded to a new location nearest the Westminster fire department. There we will continue to repair cars, and sell used cars.

The objective for this public is to increase awareness of Moonlight's repair shop, new location, and car sales. The secondary objective is to increase the word of mouth marketing.

As the news customers look to social media for reviews and references we must keep in mind the people writing the reviews. These people are the current customers we hold a relationship with. If Moonlight can keep that relationship strong and continuing they should have no problem utilizing this public to inform the other.

New Customers:

Our current relationship with the people who don't use Moonlight Automotive is slim, to none. Most are unaware of Moonlight at all, and some have heard of it but have failed to implement the company's services. However, everyone is in need of a good repair shop.

These are the people who still use dealerships to fix their car, and are over paying. These potential new customers can't find a trusted repair shop because they have yet to use Moonlight Automotive.

The message to our new customers is simple, Moonlight Automotive, Inc. is located in downtown Westminster and we have affordable car care and maintenance.

Our overall objective for this public is to increase the number of new customers. As stated before, one of the main marketing strategies Moonlight uses is word-of-mouth, so in order to succeed with our objective we need to look at ways to update current strategies and implement new ones.

One thing we need to know is how this public communicates. Besides word-of-mouth how else could we reach this public? Many new customers look to apps, reviews, social media, and the internet when trying to decide if they should use a new company or not. In summary, the way to reach this public will be through utilizing networking strategies and social media to get Moonlight's message out. This needs to be a prevalent part of the tactics for this public.

Summary:

Basically, there are two distinguished publics—the current customer base, and the new customers Moonlight wants coming in. In order to reach new customers Moonlight has to maintain a steady relationship with its old customers, so that they inform the new ones.

Both publics have the same basic means of communication. This involves word-of-mouth, networking, social media, phone applications, and basic contact with the company (maybe finding a business card, or seeing the logo).

Our tactics and strategies need to reflect that which was mentioned before. The only way to increase awareness and keep a low budget is by using both publics to their fullest means.

Strategies and Tactics:

Current Customers:

The strategy picked for current customers is to engage them through personal messages and promotions. In doing so, it's hoped that engaging them will help them further our messages along to friends; bringing in more recommendations over all.

The first tactic is to give out t-shirts to loyal customers. A few years ago Moonlight Automotive, Inc. had T-shirts and sweatshirts printed. The front is inscribed with a simple Moonlight Automotive, Inc. graphic. And the back has the full Moonlight logo with contact information and a web address. This design is simple but works because it's black shirt with a bright blue logo, and stands off the background very well.

While some customers have purchased a T-shirt from Moonlight already, not many have, and they are mainly circulated and worn by close friends of Chad. Once a month, there should be a drawing to give away a T-shirt to one loyal customer. No one customer can win twice.

This giveaway is designed to increase the visual learning of those in the community. When people see the logo and name around it will stick out in their mind more, therefore they would think of Moonlight when they need car repairs. This is also designed

to bring customers in. Often times people put off car repair as long as they can, but what if you called them and said they had won a T-shirt? This would give them an excuse to come in and would hopefully cause them to get something repaired while there.

With the T-shirts being more dominant in the community people will see, notice, and talk about what's on the T-shirts more.

The second tactic is to give free oil changes for every 5 people they recommend to the shop. Gaining recommendations is a major part of *Come into the Light*. Recommending someone is a great way to spread word-of-mouth information and it also brings new people in the door. This part of the campaign is where the two publics connect. The more the current customers share, like, and comment on social media the more potential new customers will recognize Moonlight as a place they can trust.

Every time someone new comes into the store they will be asked if they were recommended by someone. If so, there needs to be a tally record taken. Once one person has recommended 5 new people to the store they will be given a voucher for a free oil change as thanks for spreading the word about Moonlight Automotive, Inc.

And the final tactic for this public is to host a summer event. In the past Moonlight has had a cookout for customers, and in the fall they host a Halloween event. However, in the past few years Moonlight has been unable to host a summer event due to budgeting problems, and unawareness of said event.

This tactic is optional but will increase relationships with customers. Personal contact with customers has proven to increase trust in the relationship. When customers are confronted with a situation that puts the relationship out of its normal context, they are forced to see the person and business in a different light. This is further show that Chad can be trusted, not only as a mechanic, but it puts a human perspective on him and his work. The trust gained from something like this is exponential and only help the company grow.

In the summer, Moonlight should host a cookout at the shop and invite all customers to come. It will be held for a few hours, on a weekend, and will have fun, low-budget activities for people of all ages. In the budget, there is a set dollar amount for the party, but have also included a subtotal in case the event is not utilized.

New Customers:

The strategy picked for new customers is to engage them through social media and word-of-mouth from customer reviews and recommendations.

The first tactic for this public is to create a blog. The blog will be broken down into three sections—Chad's corner, Car Sales, Homepage of updated information. The blog will be done through a wordpress domain and will be free. If the blog proves successful Moonlight can choose to upgrade to a paid version of wordpress which will give them more options and updates.

The first section of the blog is the homepage. As stated before, the homepage of the blog will be used to update information for the business. This can include things like the new location, the name of the monthly T-shirt winner, anything new happening in the shop, and any family business Chad or Jamie feel needs to be shared with customers.

The second section of the blog is the car sales page. Here is a chance for Chad to advertise the used cars they have for sale. Chad does work on all the cars he brings in, they are fixed to a T, and most of the times improved for looks as well. Chad goes out and buys cars, brings them to his shop, fixes them, and then puts them up for resale. But, if no one knows he has cars, or which he has, then they can't be bought.

If Chad were to put the listings, as well as the details of the car, onto the page it reaches a wider audience and can increase the chances of the cars selling. Another great piece of information to put onto the page is the fact that he can do tag and title if you buy the car from him. This means he's a one-stop-shop for car buying and you don't have to worry about haggling salesmen.

This page can describe the ease of buying a car from Moonlight Automotive, Inc. and show the details of their stock.

The final piece of the blog is called "Chad's Corner," and is the part that should be updated the most. This part will be a weekly blog post to give advice or answer questions of customers, or any auto-minded person who comes across the blog.

This part of the blog is what is meant to be shared, liked, and commented on. For each post there could be three topics of discussion, as mentioned before. One can be a question and answer based blog post where Chad addresses questions to a mechanic. This could be any topic from repair, to sale advice, or general information. Another topic could be personal messages from the mechanic, possibly tips and tricks learned along his journey. And the final will be advice for helping your car live a healthier longer-lasting life. Each blog post should be shared on the business social media page and a link to the blog should be added to the website.

Once the sharing happens through the business sites we would rely on close friends and loyal customers to share the posts on their own web pages so the word spreads further. This tactic also goes back to the recommendations mentioned earlier in *Come into the Light*. If someone sees a post shared from a friend it can cause them to recognize the company and go in for repair. The simple sharing of a post can be considered a recommendation to the business, as long as the new customer knows who shared the information.

The second tactic is to keep the social media pages updated. This is done to ensure that Moonlight is making a presence on social media, and is contacting all customers in a direct and effective way. Again, all blog posts should be shared on the social media pages which allow others to share them as well, generating more awareness. Anything that keeps customers updated should be shared on social media.

And the final tactic for this public is to make sure the webpage is easily navigated and updated. Moonlight Automotive, Inc. has paid someone to build them a website that shows where they are located, what they do, and who they are. This site should continue to be updated and branded by the company. If Chad or Jamie find anything significant to update on the blog or social media site, they should also make sure it's up to date on the webpage.

Summary:

The publics for *Come into the Light* are distinct, but in order for the campaign to be successful the publics need to work together, whether they know it or not. The social media outreaches are designed to create awareness for new customers. However, because it is done on such a broad scale it will reach the current customers as well.

Since the current customers are already friends with Moonlight on Facebook it will allow them to share all the information from the blog with people who have yet to see it. Also, the personal touches create a different customer-business relationship that can be talked about on the website and within the blog.

The awareness generated by both outreaches will help create a better business strategy and relationships that will grow the customer base to reach our goal of a 5-percent increase in 2015.

Calendar:

Calendar: Campaign to Increase Customers at Moonlight Automovite, Inc.																
Start date: June 2014	June				July				August				September			
Weeks	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
<i>Public: New Customers</i>																
Strategy: Engage them through social media, and word of mouth																
Tactic 1: Create a blog																
<i>Chad's Corner</i>	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.
<i>Car Sales</i>	Check at the beginning of each month															
<i>Updated Info</i>	Update whenever something with the company changes															
Tactic 2: Update social media page	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.	1 hr.
Tactic 3: Make sure webpage is updated, and easily navigated																
<i>Public: Current customer base</i>																
Strategy: To engage them through socail media, and personal messages																
Tactic 1: Give out T-shirts to loyal customers																
	Pick one loyal customer a month to win a free T-shirt															
Tactic 2: Free oil changes for every 5 people you rocommend																
Tactic 3: Hosting a summer event																
					Jamie's work								Chad's work			

Budget: Subtotal does not include the event party

		Detail	Per Item Cost	Time	Evaluation Time	Actual Projected
Public						
<i>New Customers</i>						
Tactics:	Creating a blog	Prepared by staff, Wordpress	\$0.00	1 hr per week	20 min a week	\$0.00
	Updating social media	Prepared by staff	\$0.00	1 hr per week	20 min a week	\$0.00
	Updating webpage	Prepared by staff	\$0.00	1 hr per month	20 min a week	\$0.00
<i>Current Customers</i>						
Tactics:	T-Shirts	Printed already	\$7.50 X 4	1 hr per week	20 min a week	\$30.00
		Free oil change for recommendations	\$36.00	Dependant	20 min a week	\$36.00
	Personal Messages	Postcards from Vistaprint	\$132.00 for 1000	Dependant	20 min a week	\$132.00
		Stamps	\$0.42 X 1000	Dependent	20 min a week	\$42.00
	Event	Food & Drink	\$3.00 (per person) X 100 people	1 week planning	24-hour period	\$300
		Decorations	\$20		1 hr	\$20
		Supplies	\$65		1 hr	\$65.00
				Sub total		\$240.00
				Total		\$625.00

Communications Table: Matrix

Key Public	Self-interest	Primary Message	Influential	Objectives	Strategies	Tactics
<i>New Customers</i>	To find the best, most affordable, car service	Moonlight Automotive, Inc. is located in downtown Westminster and we have affordable car care and maintenance.	Previous customers; trusted friends; social media sites	To increase the number of new customers	To engage them through social media and word of mouth	1. Create a blog 2. Update social media page 3. Update webpage
<i>Current Customers</i>	To continue to get reasonable prices on car services	We are located in Westminster, but have expanded to a new location nearest the Westminster fire department. There we will continue to repair cars, and sell new ones.	customers; friends; social media	To increase awareness of Moonlight's repair shop, new location, and car sales	To engage them through personal messages	1. Give out T-shirts to loyal customers 2. Personal messages- birthday cards 3. Hosting a summer event

Evaluation:

Current Customers:

For the current customer base, evaluation will be a free tool as long as all records are kept during the time of the implemented campaign. The objective that coincided with this public was to increase awareness of Moonlight's repair shop, news location, and car sales.

Criteria for this evaluation is increasing share, like, comments, using social media and spread word-of-mouth about Moonlight Automotive, Inc., to generate recommendations to the shop. The tools used for this will be tracking sharing, liking, and commenting through social media, and also tracking recommendations.

Records should be kept using an excel document for easy access to data.

New Customers:

For the new customers, evaluation will also be free. The objective for this public was to increase the number of new customers.

Criteria for this evaluation says, data collected in March 2013 stated Moonlight Automotive, Inc. had 335 customers in 2013 needs to be increased by 5-percent to 352 customers by 2015. The tools used for this will be a record of the number of customers during 2014 to see how it increases over the time the campaign is being implemented.

Records should be kept using an excel document for easy access to data.