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The traditional car buying experience is often seen as an overwhelming task. But thanks to the Web, customers can save time and enter a dealership precisely knowing what they want to buy.

How many times have you started the process by visiting different car dealerships? Purchasing a new or used car is a significant investment and you will hopefully be keeping your vehicle for awhile. You likely have certain features and options in mind, which will help narrow the scope of which models you will consider. But because you want to find the best car to meet your needs, the process can be intense and arduous.

Many car companies and dealerships are posting their inventory online so you can search for a car to best suit your needs. If you begin with the website as your first step, when you walk into the dealership, you have a narrowed list of vehicles that have the features you want, in your price range and you donâ€™t have to waste a lot of time driving around from one dealership to another.

There are three different types of auto retail sites available for car buyers and each has its own unique advantages.

The Coast-to-Coast Dealerâ€™s Website

When browsing online for your car, one of your primary concerns may be selection. CarMax is an online car dealership with a large inventory, located in several states across the country.

When you visit the site, you enter the make, model, price range and other details for the type of car you want. You are asked to enter your zip code, and then given a list of available vehicles at locations near your zip code. You can compare models, pricing, features, mileage, and other details.

If you arenâ€™t sure what type of car you want, this is a good option to check out as many cars as possible in your price range.

The Local Dealershipâ€™s Website

The local dealership is probably the best option if customer service, in addition to selection, is important to you. The difference is similar to shopping at a large retailer versus the small specialty shop owned by a local family known for their contributions in the community. But whereas that small specialty shop may not have an inventory comparable to the big guys, the local dealership may not only offer a comparable selection of cars, but services that you wonâ€™t find at the larger auto retailers.

Conklin Cars is a new and used car dealer with several locations in Kansas. When working with a dealership that has several locations, you have the advantage of a large inventory, and working with specialists at each location. Customers who have visited the Salina car dealer site, for example, can also visit the companyâ€™s Newton car dealership and Hutchinson auto dealer sites online or in person to compare models, features and pricing.

But in addition to searching for cars based on brand, make, model, new, used, and even â€œbuildingâ€• the car you want, customers can also send questions to the dealershipsâ€™ parts and service technicians. Rather than running all over town to try and find the right part your car needs, or taking the car to a mechanic that may not be familiar with your car, youâ€™ve got both covered at one location. This works well because it gives you a one-stop-shop option for not only purchasing your car, but

care and maintenance after purchase.

Other notable advantages of using a local dealership include better, low-pressure sales and customer service, in addition to unique services. At Conklin Cars, sales reps are trained to create relationships with customers for any of their car buying or car service needs. For example, customers can rent a vehicle from Conklin Cars, a unique feature of this local dealership not found at many auto retailers.

Brand Name Shopping

If you have a particular brand in mind, visiting the companyâ€™s main site is probably your best option. A manufacturerâ€™s website will offer a comprehensive look at all of the companyâ€™s offerings. Saturn, example, is known for its low-pressure, no-haggle pricing. Like most automotive brands, the site is quite comprehensive with a photo gallery of different models, pricing, features and other valuable information to help you make an educated decision on which one of their vehicles will best suit your lifestyle.

Modern technology has created an opportunity for the car buyer to save much time, effort and stress when shopping. Depending on whether you want a vast inventory, a local resource capable of providing all of your car service needs, or youâ€™re focused on one particular brand, beginning the car buying process online is a smart move. If you know your budget and enter the dealership with a clear decision on which cars you want to see, youâ€™ve got the hardest part of the car-buying process covered, and all that will be left to do is make a decision and go through the paperwork.

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