

2024

AUTOHOOK®

# CASE STUDY

Accelerating Electric  
Vehicle Sales with  
AutoHook® Test Drive  
Incentives



# Problem



## Limited Desire of Electric Vehicles at Dealerships

National OEMs face a common challenge: despite stocking the latest electric vehicles (EVs), potential buyers aren't engaging with the models as anticipated. This issue goes beyond just missed revenue opportunities at the OEM level. A recent Harris Poll & Urban Science® Study revealed that 25% of dealers cited excess EV inventory as a top concern\*. Many potential buyers are still hesitant to transition from traditional gasoline-powered cars, with unfamiliarity surrounding EV benefits playing a key role in their reluctance. Consequently, dealerships are experiencing lower foot traffic for EVs, leading to stagnating sales and older inventory accumulating on the lot, adding financial strain for dealers. Bridging this gap requires targeted strategies that drive both awareness and action.

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EV market share is up 21% in 2024. So there is untapped potential that remains to be unlocked. Fortunately, AutoHook is exactly the kind of tool that is needed here, as it offers an attractive, cost-efficient way to get active shoppers behind the wheel for their first EV experience.

*Tom Kondrat, Advanced Analytics Global Lead, Urban Science*

# Opportunity



Targeted test drive incentives play a powerful roll in driving engagement

## Increase Sales and Move Old Inventory

A national OEM saw this challenge as an opportunity to engage and educate consumers on the benefits of electric vehicles (EVs) while improving the visibility of their EV lineup. Research shows that 42% of consumers seek individualized guidance from dealers during their transition to EVs. This insight highlighted the need for a more hands-on approach. By shifting focus to test drives, they believed they could get more customers behind the wheel and allow them to experience firsthand the performance, cost savings, and environmental benefits of EV.

The Harris Poll & Urban Science study further revealed that offering just a \$50 incentive would motivate 72% of consumers to test drive an EV, underscoring the powerful role incentives play in driving engagement. Not only could this increase new EV sales, but it would also help move older models that were becoming dated, clearing space for newer inventory.



42% of consumers seek individualized guidance from dealers during their transition to EVs\*



\$50 incentive would motivate 72% of consumers to test drive an EV\*

# Solution



\$50

AutoHook Test drive incentive on VDP and SRPs in Zero Emission Vehicle States

## Targeted AutoHook Test Drive Incentives

To capitalize on this opportunity, the national OEM tapped into a proven method: Offering test drive incentives to customers to try an EV. They partnered with Urban Science to implement an AutoHook campaign in Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) states, utilizing their test drive incentive program.

The AutoHook solution allowed them to zero in on specific customers by placing a \$50 test drive gift card offer on the dealerships' EV Vehicle Detail Page (VDP) and Search Result Page (SRP). This ensured the offer was highly visible to those already interested in EVs, turning passive online visitors into active in-store test drivers. Once in the dealership, the focus was on showcasing the unique features of the EVs, with a team of salespeople trained specifically to address common questions and concerns regarding electric vehicle ownership.

Test drive incentives were the critical catalyst in converting online research into action, by successfully motivating hesitant buyers to take a test drive.

# Result

## Surge in EV Sales and New-to-Brand Customers

The campaign resulted in a significant increase in lead volume, and 80% of leads who took an EV test drive converted to a sale; this cleared out older inventory, allowing for new models to take center stage. By aligning with consumer interests through targeted test drive incentives, the OEM positioned itself as a leader in the EV market. With 63% of dealers expressing optimism about the revenue potential of EVs\*, test drive incentives have proven to be a powerful tool for capturing consumer attention and accelerating sales. As the shift toward electric vehicles continues, these strategies will be critical for dealers looking to stay ahead of the curve and maximize future revenue opportunities.

The results of the campaign exceeded expectations. Over the course of five months:

**25%**

increase in Tier III lead volume

Dealers in ZEV states saw a significant increase in EV leads which is something they previously struggled to capture.

**18%**

website-to-show rate

AutoHook incentives were able to shift online consumer research to in-person test drives, ultimately leading to an increase in closed sales. The personalized experience was instrumental during the EV sales process.

**17%**

of AutoHook EV leads converted to a sale

The combination of targeted incentives and a personalized test drive experience resulted in a 17% lead conversion rate in ZEV States EV sales over a 5-month period.

**61%**

of leads generated were new-to-brand customers

The AutoHook incentive campaign attracted a significant number of first-time visitors to the OEMs dealerships, many of whom were not only new to electric vehicles, but the brand itself.



## Urban Science as a Solution

### **Put the power of science on your side.**

Since our founding over four decades ago, Urban Science has continued to empower dealers with daily, actionable insights that fuel lead conversions so they can outsell their competition.

### **Info / Contact:**

[Urbanscience.com/dealer](https://urbanscience.com/dealer)

### **Source:**

\*Urban Science Online Consumer and Dealer Studies, February 2024. These surveys were conducted by The Harris Poll on behalf of Urban Science among 3,005 U.S. adults aged 18+ and 250 U.S. automotive dealers

