

CASE STUDY /// FORD

Rural Ford Dealer Cracked the Top 4% Nationally.

A full-funnel media strategy reached high-intent buyers beyond the trade area and turned phone leads into a monthly pipeline.

C-4 Analytics®

ADVANCED AUTOMOTIVE MARKETING
FOR A DIGITAL-FIRST WORLD

+16%

YEAR-OVER-YEAR
SALES GROWTH

100+

MONTHLY AD-DRIVEN
PHONE CALLS

Top 4%

OF FORD DEALERS
NATIONALLY

THE CHALLENGE

A rural Midwest Ford dealer was operating in a market with a small population and factory APR programs working against it. To hit aggressive sales targets, the store could not rely on converting whatever local demand existed. It had to expand its addressable audience, pull in high-intent shoppers from well beyond the immediate trade area, and deliver a clear reason to make the drive. The Why Buy message was strong and the vehicle discounts were aggressive. **The media mechanics needed to catch up, and ad-driven phone calls were stuck in the single digits each month.**

THE STRATEGY

C-4 Analytics built a full-funnel media strategy anchored in Google's AI-powered search and inventory solutions. Top-of-funnel campaigns extended visibility well past the immediate trade area, building an audience of shoppers who would never have found the store on their own. Mid and lower funnel campaigns leaned into a competitive opening: almost no other local Ford dealers were investing in vehicle-level inventory advertising, so C-4 Analytics moved fast and captured VIN-level visibility at a fraction of the cost seen in saturated markets. First-party audience signals fed Google's AI the data it needed to identify the highest-value buyers, and bidding shifted to the outcomes that actually mattered: phone calls from shoppers willing to make the drive.

THE RESULTS

445 → 516

UNITS SOLD
YEAR OVER YEAR

+12.1%

CONVERSION
RATE LIFT

-16.8%

COST PER
CONVERSION

17 of 466

NATIONAL
DEALER RANK

Phone calls from advertising went from single digits to more than 100 per month. Cost per conversion dropped 16.8%. Total spend fell 14.4% while conversions still grew. Geography never got the chance to be a ceiling. The media found buyers wherever they were, and met them with the right message at the moment of intent.