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A game-changing idea

Cox Automotive is comprised of more than 25 brands that provide a comprehensive set of products and solutions across the entire automotive ecosystem.

But while their products and solutions are fully integrated, the same couldn't always be said for their exhibit marketing.

Czarnowski + Cox Automotive

The foundation of our partnership with Cox Automotive was established nearly a decade ago through our work with Manheim and vAuto—both Cox Enterprises brands.

In 2014, Cox Enterprises formed Cox Automotive—bringing Manheim, vAuto and numerous other brands together under one automotive solutions banner to bridge the gap at every stage of the automotive experience.

And while Cox Automotive was transforming the way the world buys, sells and owns cars, they needed a partner who could deliver an equally transformative experience for their exhibit marketing.

Enter Czarnowski.

“Czarnowski delivered an amazing experience for our clients and team members at NADA 2018. We crushed our goals, and everyone was truly in awe of our show floor village experience.”

– Kristen Givens, Director of Marketing, Cox Automotive





Connecting brands and experiences

After the formation of Cox Automotive in 2014, its brands remained separate with only limited and secondary reference to the overall Cox Automotive brand.

And because the brands functioned separately, they were promoted separately with independent stands located throughout the show floor. Since customers and prospects only engaged with individual brands, the depth of Cox Automotive's solution portfolio wasn't accurately conveyed.

So we began promoting the need to integrate Cox Automotive's brands at every show—from their smallest events to their largest—and provided examples of how we helped other clients successfully navigate similar organizational changes.

We then worked closely with their top marketing leadership to develop and refine a strategy that steadily pushed Cox Automotive toward a more complete, cohesive demonstration of how its connected brands work together to improve automotive dealerships from top to bottom.

The evolution begins

The National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) show is the auto industry's premier marketplace of products, services and technologies—making it the biggest event of the year for Cox Automotive.

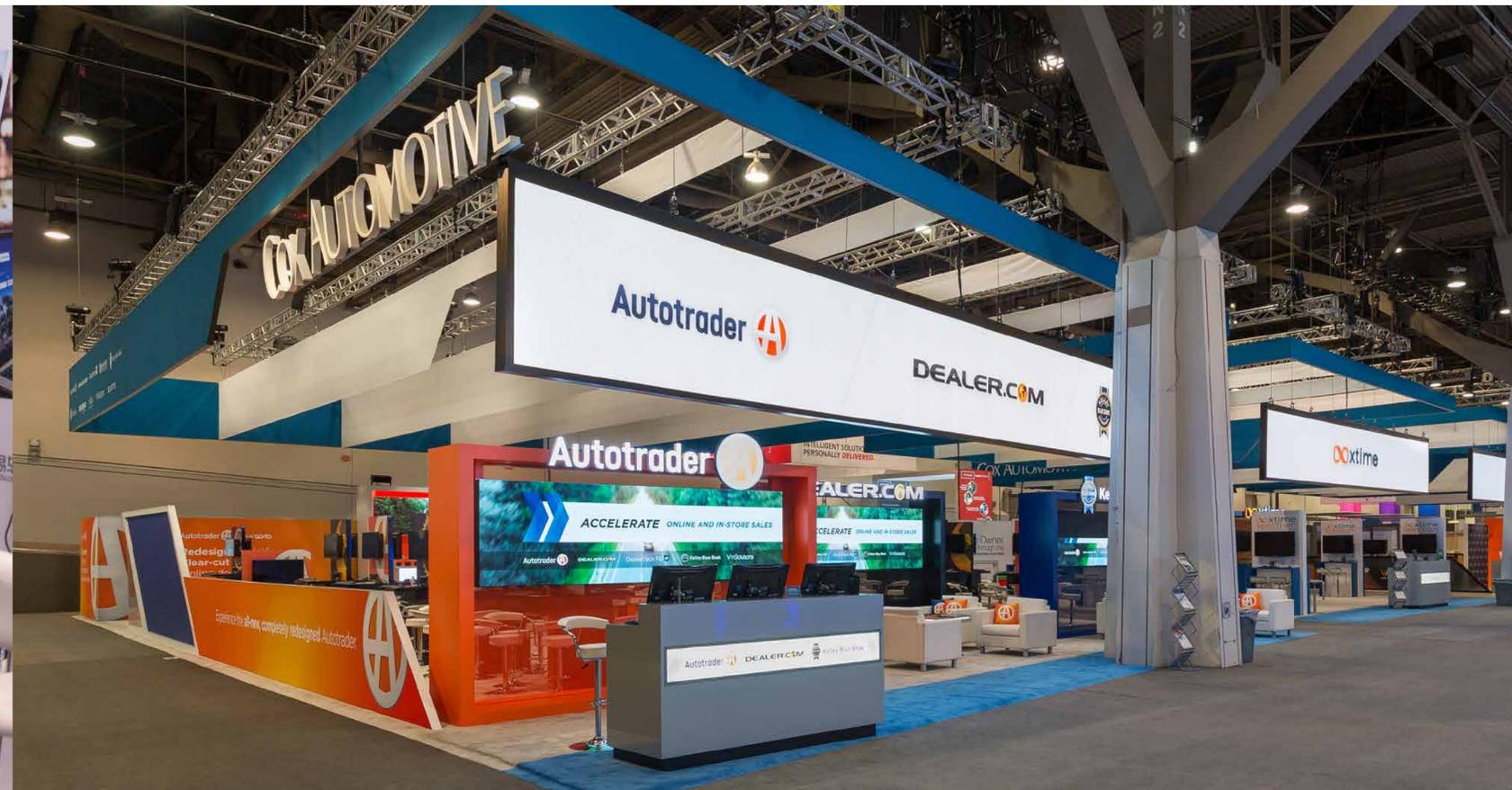
The decision was made in 2016 to consolidate 12 of Cox Automotive's brands into a cohesive NADA experience while maintaining each brand's unique identity.

The result was a more consistent attendee experience that still allowed each brand to achieve its own objectives and goals. 97% of visitors said they interacted with at least two Cox Automotive brands at NADA 2016.

While 2016's design strategy increased efficiency, it still encouraged engagement with brands as individual entities. So 2017's design strategy focused on engaging NADA attendees with Cox Automotive's entire portfolio of best-in-class brands and solutions.

The separate yet connected design strategy not only created a more unified Cox Automotive experience for customers and prospects, it increased show revenue 56% YOY while decreasing budget spend 19%.

But we didn't stop there.



“I don’t think we’ve ever received so many compliments on our exhibit presence from leadership and clients. Czarnowski’s innovation, hard work and amazing partnership helped us get there, and we can’t thank them enough.”

– Kristen Givens, Director of Marketing, Cox Automotive

Bringing down the walls

In 2016 and 2017, all marketing and design under the Cox Automotive sign were driven by the individual brands. In 2018, the walls were brought down, and the Cox Automotive corporate identity was center stage.

The open design concept represented how Cox Automotive wanted to do business differently. Instead of separate yet connected brands, NADA 2018’s design demonstrated how each brand worked together to offer a complete set of solutions.

Individual brand identity was still expressed in each exhibit space, but each space was part of an overall Cox Automotive village. The goal was not to diminish but to enhance the brands through unified Cox Automotive messaging.

Consistency was key. Each brand space had a low pavilion wall with a backlit logo that was located in the same place in every exhibit. Our design team further unified the space by using a curved front edge for all of the booths, creating a stadium look and feel.

Curved LEDs above each brand space acted as a dynamic messaging vehicle. They displayed individual brand content while also coming together intermittently to display Cox Automotive messaging, creating a shared design language that reinforced the unified concept and linked the brands together in attendees’ minds.

To further increase efficiency and reduce spend, we leveraged existing properties from previous years when possible—including more than 250 demo stations.

The results were stunning: 16% above the pre-set demo goal; 36% increase YOY for contracts signed; and 50% increase YOY for total annualized revenue. To top it off, 4 of 5 post-show survey respondents indicated they were somewhat, very or extremely like to purchase a Cox Automotive product or service as a result of what they learned at the show.

Familiar faces, extraordinary service

When a company's executives stand on the show floor saying, "This is exactly the vision we had," we know we've done our job. And that's what we delivered for Cox Automotive.

Our years of experience combined with our understanding of Cox Automotive's specific needs allowed us to create not only the program they needed during a significant transition but also push them toward creating the program that would serve them in the future.

Our ability to successfully execute the Cox Automotive program lies in our ability to connect their top-level executives with the right people—and the same people—year after year.

A consistent team knows where a client has been and where they are going—increasing efficiency, improving communication, reducing overall service costs and delivering a superior program.





Looking to the future

We help Cox Automotive exhibit at more than 150 shows annually—from 26,000 square feet at big shows like NADA to 30'x70' structures and 10'x10' stands at smaller events.

The goal for their 2019 program is to continue to reuse as many components as we can but create new graphics and digital content to keep the experience fresh. This strategy keeps budgets down while adding value to the program and our partnership with Cox Automotive.

At Czarowski, we only move in one direction: forward. And we'll continue to help Cox Automotive evolve their program by identifying more ways to improve efficiency, save money and propel their unified brand into the future.