

MARKETING STRATEGIES OF THE AUTOMOBILE DEALERS IN THE CITY OF BALIWAG, BULACAN: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

*Ericka P. De Guzman, John Miguel C. Fajota,
Jose Enrique M. Garcia, Jim Charlie C. Manuel,
John Paulo V. Pile*

Abstract

This study showed the comparison of marketing strategies by two automobile dealers in Baliwag City, Bulacan, in the automotive industry, emphasizing client understanding and product specifications, respectively. Both dealerships prioritize effective communication, social media leverage, and comprehensive sales training to enhance customer service and brand awareness. Along the competitive landscape of DRT Highway, they compete by offering advanced technology with many safety features in products and attractive displays while stressing the importance of long-term relationship building. These include offering effective communication, investing in training programs for the sales agents' development, leveraging social media to boost brand awareness, and encouraging the sales agents to follow up with the clients effectively to improve the after-sales service. These strategies aim to build trust and positive client experiences. The researchers recommended that other automobile dealers and future researchers take time to read the content of this study, which highlights the impacts of marketing strategies on their business operations, and may use this guide in conducting different study.

Keywords: After-Sales Service, Automobile Dealers, Customer Service, Effective Communication, Marketing Strategies, and Leveraging Social Media

Introduction

Germany and France pioneered automobile development in the late 1800s, but American mass production, led by Henry Ford, propelled the U.S. to dominance in the early 20th century. The "Big Three" emerged by the 1920s. By 1980, Japan surpassed Europe as the leading automaker, transforming the industry into a global enterprise. The invention of the automobile revo-

lutionized travel, replacing long journeys on foot with faster, simpler, and more reliable transportation.

Figuring out how to draw in customers in the automotive industry, identifying the most sought-after cars, staying on top of current market trends, predicting future customer preferences, and selecting the best cars for display or design in the dealership are all important aspects that may require attention and consideration.

Marketing strategies are essential to the success of automobile dealers. Dealerships must use successful techniques to draw in and keep customers in light of the industry's intense competition and constantly changing consumer preferences. According to Neil, M., Kimberly W., Hui, F., & Simon, C., (2019). Marketing strategy is crucial in strategic marketing, addressing key challenges. This discussion delves into car dealerships' diverse techniques for enhancing brand visibility, engaging potential customers, and driving sales. From traditional advertising to modern digital methods like social media and online platforms, the automotive sector employs a range of strategies in today's dynamic market.

The research gap in this study stems from businesses predominantly relying on the original four Ps marketing concept of product, price, place, and promotion introduced by American Marketing professor Edmund Jerome McCarthy in 1960 and first published his book *Basic Marketing: A Managerial Approach*. Many companies are unaware of the updated seven marketing strategies. The researchers also found that the review-related literature provided in this study did not mention the seven marketing strategies used by businesses in their operations. Also, there has been a lack of extensive research on comparing the marketing strategies of automobile dealerships in the Philippines.

In continuation to the research gap of the study during the late '70s, marketers realized that the marketing strategies needed to be updated. Nowadays, businesses should apply the trend of extended marketing strategies that have become 7 Ps: product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence. It is important for businesses to understand customer preferences, market trends, and adaptation to changing consumer behaviors.

Review of Related Literature

Impact of marketing Mix in the Automobile sector with special reference to Passenger Car Segment: A Comparative Study among Foreign Brands and Domestic Brands

As reported by Sridevi, M., & Manjunath, H. (2022). One of the biggest markets in the world is the automobile sector. Automobiles are considered to be a need for everyone. India has a sizable market for autos, but there is also a strong competition in the market. The main goal of this paper is to compare Indian and foreign automakers in terms of a variety of factors, including advertising costs and strategies, brand positioning, market share, price, marketing tactics, and brand value. Maruti Suzuki, TATA Motors, KIA, and MG were chosen as the four firms based on their earnings after tax and market share. As contrary to KIA & MG, which were made elsewhere, Maruti Suzuki and TATA Motors were based in India and produced cars.

Strategies for Used Car Dealership Owners to Sustain Business in a Competitive Environment

As stated by Jude Thaddeus, S. (2018). This multi-case study aimed to investigate the methods used by car dealership owners and managers to stay profitable and maintain operations for over five years. The study involved ten individuals from small used vehicle dealerships, including five owners and five managers. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in Colorado, and the findings revealed three themes: customer care, aggressive marketing, and business knowledge. Thematic analysis revealed that used vehicle dealership managers and owners needed to utilize these methods to compete in the market and maintain growth. The study could lead to more small businesses succeeding, creating employment opportunities and job creation, and positively impacting the economic empowerment of other businesses and communities.

Predicting Automotive Sales using Pre-Purchase Online Search Data

According to Philipp, W., Tobias, W., & Achim K. (2019). The study analyzed customer service strategy and marketing performance of automobile firms in South-South, Nigeria,

focusing on 132 customers with a 15-year buying relationship. The results showed that customer service significantly influenced the performance metrics of automobile dealers. Proper implementation and improvement of marketing strategies enhance customer satisfaction, loyalty, retention, patronage, and long-term financial performance. The study concluded that marketing strategies play a crucial role in the performance of automobile dealers and should be employed as a broad commercial logic to meet customer needs and gain sustainable competitive advantage in the target market. It recommends that automobile dealers leverage customer service strategy knowledge to shape offerings, reap customer lifetime value, and achieve competitive advantage for the organization.

Customer Service Strategies and Marketing Performance of Automobile Firms in South/South Nigeria

As conducted by Owonte H., & Joseph U. (2022). The study analyzed customer service strategy and marketing performance of automobile firms in South-South, Nigeria, focusing on 132 customers with a 15-year buying relationship. The results showed that customer service significantly influenced the performance metrics of automobile dealers. Proper implementation and improvement of marketing strategies enhance customer satisfaction, loyalty, retention, patronage, and long-term financial performance. The study concluded that marketing strategies play a crucial role in the performance of automobile dealers and should be employed as a broad commercial logic to meet customer needs and gain sustainable competitive advantage in the target market. It recommends that automobile dealers leverage customer service strategy knowledge to shape offerings, reap customer lifetime value, and achieve competitive advantage for the organization.

An Analytical Study of Marketing strategy of Mahindra Automobiles

As stated by Saraswat, S., Singh, S., & Choudhary, S. (2023). The research paper delves into an analytical analysis of Mahindra automobiles' marketing strategy within the Indian car segment. Marketing plays a pivotal role in continually enhancing products to elevate customer satisfaction. Given intensifying competition and evolving customer preferences, marketing products, services, and information has become increasingly challeng-

ing. This environment compels companies to innovatively approach various aspects including promotion, pricing, sales, advertising, distribution, and brand building. The research focuses on understanding Mahindra's primary marketing strategies, reflecting the company's response to changing customer and market demands while aiming for creativity and effectiveness across their operations.

Marketing Strategies for Automotive Dealership in Grenada

As mentioned by Hall K, (2022). This study explores the challenges faced by certain executive-level automotive dealership managers in Grenada regarding their marketing strategies for selling new U.S. and Japanese vehicles. These managers are worried about the potential negative impact of marketing strategies on their dealership's profitability. The research, conducted using a qualitative multiple-case study approach, focuses on four managers in the southern region of Grenada. Drawing from the segmentation, targeting, and positioning model, the study identifies successful marketing strategies, including customer retention, product branding, media promotional strategies, and after-sales service. The findings emphasize the importance of two-way communication with customers for maintaining strong relationships. The study's positive implications involve the potential for sustainable marketing strategies to positively impact employees, families, and communities by enhancing satisfaction and overall well-being.

Recent Trends in Automotive Industry

As indicated by Gupta M., et al., (2019). Technological progress has significantly transformed contemporary life. Innovations like automatic braking systems, adaptive and cooperative cruise control, self-driving cars, and AI-powered vehicles have greatly enhanced road safety and adherence to traffic regulations, consequently boosting life expectancy. Additionally, electric and solar rechargeable batteries contribute to the preservation of fossil fuels. These emerging technologies notably assist drivers by ensuring appropriate vehicle spacing to prevent collisions.

Factors Influencing Watching and Purchase Intentions on Live Streaming Platforms: From a 7Ps Marketing Mix Perspective

Based on Ho, C., Liu, Y., & Chen, M. (2022). Previous studies looked into how live broadcasting affects consumers' intent to buy. However, no study has looked into how the service marketing mix (7Ps) affects customer purchase behavior from the seller's perspective. By watching broadcasters' programs, the current study aims to shed insight into the connections between the 7Ps and consumers' purchasing intentions. Data gathered from 330 customers (including 237 shoppers for garments and 93 customers for seafood) through Facebook live shopping platforms is used to design and evaluate an integrative marketing-oriented approach. According to the study's findings, physical evidence, positioning, and promotion all have a favorable impact on consumers' desire to make a purchase.

Impact of New 5 Year Automobile Policy (2016-21) on the Profitability of Major Players in the Automobile Industry of Pakistan

As stated by Mustafa, S., Begum, R., Nisar, S. K., & Osama, A. (2018). This study compares the old vehicle policy announced by the Government of Pakistan with the new five-year policy announced by the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) in March 2016 for years 2016 to 2021. The main goal of this essay is to identify the essential elements of the new auto policy and their effects on the financial performance of the major companies in Pakistan's automobile sector. The main goals of this policy are to increase volume with better quality, attract investors, foster intense competition, reduce costs, advance technology, and satisfy all stakeholders through a balance between tariffs and growth, customer satisfaction, and removing existing car manufacturers' monopolies.

Selected Problems of the Automotive Industry—Material and Economic Risk

As reported by Richert, M., & Dudek, M. (2023). This study provides an in-depth, summary of publications, studies, and sources on the automotive industry's transition to electric and other zero-emission vehicles. It explores the technological and economic impacts of the automobile sector's transition to zero-emission vehicles. Despite great de-emission parameters, the pro-

duction of electric cars does not have a zero-carbon footprint. Material supply chains for the manufacturing of batteries for electric vehicles face substantial risks due to factors such as a lack of diversity and limited flexibility. The dominant supplier of rare elements for batteries is China. The article analyzes the impact of prices on the demand for electric cars and compares them to internal combustion cars.

A Systematic Literature Review on Customer Retention in the Automobile or Automotive Industry

As mentioned in A Systematic Literature Review on Customer Retention in The Automobile or Automotive Industry (2023). The automotive industry competes fiercely in increasing sales volume between vehicle brands, environmentally friendly vehicles, and social media marketing. Vehicle distributors are giving extra attention to the after-sales business, which proved during the COVID-19 epidemic to be a crisis-proof industry as a result of the declining trend in profit margins from new car sales. The automobile industry needs after-sales support since keeping customers with the same car dealers helps the business succeed and encourages them to buy more vehicles. This literature review indicates which nations are most active in conducting research studies, as well as which institutions and companies are most productive and generous with their sponsorship funds.

Measuring the Quality of Car Dealership Services from the Point of View of Customers by Applying to the Automotive Sector in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

As stated by Abdelgawad, M., Ghosh, A., & Shamsy, M. (2022). The study's objective was to assess customer satisfaction with car dealership services from the perspective of customers. It did this by applying to the Saudi Arabian automotive industry to raise the standard for both car companies' and agencies' services and to increase the likelihood that results in improving customer service. Low service quality is a selling problem, not a brand problem. As new car buyers' expectations for service quality rise, so does the pressure on automakers and dealerships to deliver high-quality goods and services. After-sales services and repairs at car dealerships have received much criticism from customers compared to their other purchasing experiences.

The COVID-19 Impact on Supply Chains, Focusing on the Automotive Segment during the Second and Third Wave of the Pandemic

According to Pató, B. S. G., Herczeg, M., & Csiszárík-Kocsir, Á. (2022). The automobile industry has seen some significant changes recently, and the COVID-19 pandemic has created several difficulties for global automotive supply networks. The virus had several major impacts on the global economy, forcing the adoption of new risk management strategies by businesses and international supply chains. Major automobile suppliers transferred their production facilities to the Philippines region, and the lockdowns severely hurt the leading semiconductor segments. Due to the rapid advancement of technology, electrification of the automotive sector and the proliferation of electric vehicles are becoming increasingly crucial. Companies in this industry forced to diversify their supply chain operations as result of the economic shock brought on by COVID-19 to remain competitive, reduce supply chain-related risks, and begin recovery efforts.

Influence of social media on vehicle purchasing decisions: An empirical study on automobile industry

Based on M, Darshan, (2018). The business also heavily utilizes the internet and online resources. The rise of social media has changed the way people interact and communicate. The persistent growth of online and electronic commerce is highly attributed to the growing influence of the internet and social media. Along with the growth of online marketing strategies, there is an escalation of dependency on people which determines their tastes and purchasing decisions. The current study intended to evaluate the impact of the Internet and social media platforms on automobile purchasing behavior in this environment. The study suggests that optimizing online and internet marketing methods in the car business is critical.

Theoretical Framework

According to **Bernard H. Booms and Mary J. Bitner (1981)**, who improved the original four marketing strategies adding three elements and become extended marketing strategies turned into 7Ps. It can help companies create a more comprehensive and customer-focused approach to meet their business goals, leading to more effective marketing campaigns and improved customer satisfaction.



Figure 1. Marketing Mix 7P's

Figure 1 represents the seven marketing strategies that some in the Automobile Industry might use. It also expounds on the idea and technological innovation brought about by the "Internet" as a supplement in automobile marketing management, which is a big help to traditional physical selling nowadays.

PRODUCT

This involves decisions related to the design, features, quality, and branding of the product or service offered to the market.

PRICE

The pricing of the services or products ought to deliver a value-for-money experience to users. Thus, this is an essential tactic that should represent the value to customers and allow the company to compete in a competitive and dynamic market.

PLACE

The accessibility of the products or amenities offered by the company ought to be readily available to the customer. The distribution ought to be prompt, like digital shopping. For instance, the company should increase the number of assembling plants for its products around the world to fulfill the increasing demand for automobile products.

PROMOTION

The marketing campaigns comprise sales promotion, public relations, advertising, and social media marketing. Automobile Dealers organization that concentrates on the marketing of its products on a global platform by using modernized technologies.

PEOPLE

It refers to the people in the organization who connect with the customers - both directly and indirectly - as an important marketing decision whether physical or online marketing. Great products and businesses require employees to participate in both digital and physical marketing, as well as personnel in direct contact with customers.

PROCESS

The process describes the necessary procedures and its optimization of delivering physical or online products and core experiences. Tracking processes and overall system performance enables firms to detect key errors before they occur or, at the very least, detect them very early before any significant failures occur.

PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

It pertains to several aspects of the service experience, including facilities, interior design, livery, and post-purchase artifacts (souvenirs). Online brand awareness across multiple channels is an excellent example of online evidence. The number of followers, likes, and other social engagement indicators, for example, can show how well these platforms enhance customer experiences.

Conceptual Framework

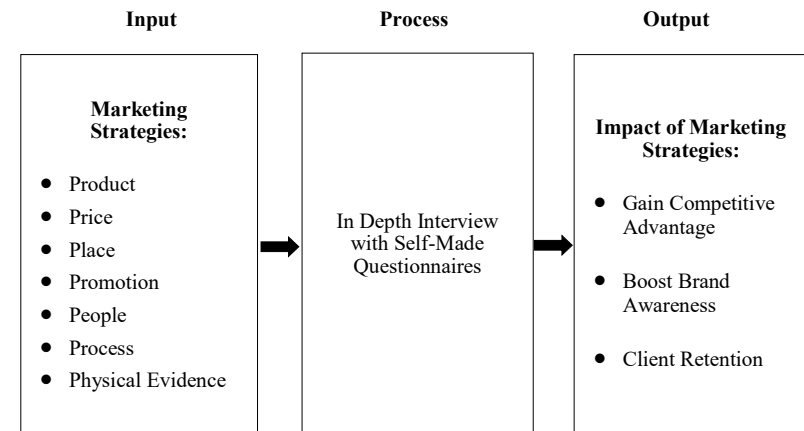


Figure 2. Research Paradigm

Figure 2 shows the first frame containing the input of the Marketing Strategies as to product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence. Lastly, is the output, which impacts automobile dealers to gain a competitive advantage, boost brand awareness, and client retention.

Statement of the Problem

Since the automotive industry has seen significant advancements in technology in the past few decades, and this trend is expected to continue. This study aims to determine the marketing strategies used by two automobile dealers in Baliwag City, Bulacan along DRT Highway. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. How may the respondents describe their marketing strategies in terms of:
 - 1.1 Product,
 - 1.2 Price,
 - 1.3 Place,
 - 1.4 Promotion,
 - 1.5 People,
 - 1.6 Process, and
 - 1.7 Physical Evidence?
2. How may the respondents describe the impact of their marketing strategies in terms of:
 - 2.1 Gain Competitive Advantage,
 - 2.2 Boost Brand Awareness, and
 - 2.3 Client Retention?

Scope and Limitation

This study focused on analyzing the marketing strategies used by two automobile dealers in Baliwag City, Bulacan along DRT Highway. This study is not focused on marketing-related sales as there is no data to compare. Meaning, this study is not focused on the data related to sales as this data is not available to analyze.

The aim of this study follows how effectively automobile dealers used marketing strategies to survive in the market. This study also focused on the needs and concerns of the customers. This study does not rely on how many cars the automobile dealers sell. However, this study focused on how businesses can give people satisfaction with the product and after-sales service.

Another consideration that is limited to the scope of the study, more detailed elements that influence engine performance and condition, such as the components of the engine and unique features added by automakers, was not covered by this study.

Method

Research Design

This study used qualitative study with the use of in-depth interviews method with key personnel from various automobile dealership to gain insight into their marketing strategies. An in-depth interview is a qualitative research technique that is used to conduct detailed interviews with a small number of participants. In contrast to other types of qualitative research, researchers who use an in-depth interviewing approach spend a significant amount of time with each participant in a conversational format. (Rutledge, P., & Hogg, J. L. 2020)

Research Participants and Sampling Procedure

The population of the study focused on two sales managers from automobile dealers in Baliwag City, Bulacan, including Honda and Ford. The researchers believed that the research participants with extensive experience in sales, marketing, and trading are the best fit for the researchers to study the comparison of marketing strategies used by automobile dealers, as they are the most suitable respondents to provide the necessary data for the research question.

The researchers used purposive sampling for qualitative research, focusing on a specific subset of a sample. This strategy is suitable for small or limited data sources due to the study's design and objectives. Each sales manager from two automobile dealers were participated as respondents, ensuring their participation aligns with the study's objectives.

Participant	Position
A - Honda	Sales Manager
B - Ford	Sales Manager

Research Instrument

The researchers utilized a self-made questionnaire to collect data for this study. The researchers decided to use in-depth interview questions, as a process in gathering and collecting data.

The questions prepared and developed by the researchers have one section: it is about the study comparing marketing strategies of automobile dealerships, which involves semi-structured questions that allow participants to express their insights and experiences. The researchers used a recorder on a mobile phone and take notes on pieces of paper, to complete the data needed for this study.

Self-Made Interview Questions for (2) Sales Managers of Automobile Dealers

1. What are your marketing strategies in terms of product? Which is one of the extended seven marketing Ps, how can you make sure that your products satisfy the needs and wants of your potential client?
2. Can you share your marketing strategies regarding the price of your products to measure how effectively can help to accomplish goals or quotas for the company?
3. How do you ensure efficient and timely distribution of your products accessible to your clients?
4. Can you share with us your successful campaigns in which the promotion was critical to raising awareness in your target market and helping to improve company sales?
5. How do you implement your marketing strategies in terms of people who communicates and delivers the products and services to potential clients?
6. In terms of Process, how do you operate and guarantee the services with efficiency and effectiveness to clients?
7. What are your marketing strategies that make your dealership differ from competitors in terms of physical evidence and to improve overall client experience?
8. What are the impacts of your marketing strategies it can be more than one P's to gain a competitive advantage in the market?
9. What is the impact of your marketing strategies to boost your brand awareness to potential clients?

10. How effective are your marketing strategies to retain clients by having after-sales services?

Data Analysis

The researchers utilized thematic analysis to examine the data gathered. It is a qualitative data analysis method that involves reading through a data set (such as transcripts from in-depth interviews or focus groups) and identifying patterns in meaning across the data (Braun& Clarke,2006).

The researchers first transcribe and translate the data that were acquired through interviews. The data that were gathered through an interview provided related information about the marketing strategies that automobile dealers used and how they impacted their business operations. The researchers then study and review the transcriptions to have a better understanding of the data. Open-ended questions are questions that do not provide participants with a predetermined set of answer choices, instead of allowing the participants to respond to their own words (Allen,2017).

To reflect on the data that were gathered, from the interview, the researchers utilized the Thematic Analysis of Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, who were both psychologists. This so-called thematic analysis can be done in a variety of ways, but the six-step procedure is the most popular method. This method includes familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up. It is the best idea to research where you're trying to find out something about people's vision, perspective, understanding, or advantage from a set of qualitative data – for example, transcriptions of an interview, profiles in social media, or responses from a survey (Caulfield, 2019).

Familiarization - The first step is to familiarize the data. Before the researchers begin evaluating individual items, it is necessary to have a full synopsis of all the data gathered.

Coding - Next is to code the data. In qualitative research, coding is “how you define what the data you are analyzing are about” (Gibbs, 2007). Researchers will utilize descriptive coding.

It is a first cycle method of coding that involves reading through qualitative data, and coding passages according to topic (Saldaña, 2009).

Generating themes - At this stage, the researchers decided to discard some of the codes that were too indefinite or irrelevant.

Reviewing themes - The researchers have to make sure that representations of data are beneficial and reliable to the topic.

Defining and naming themes - It entails defining exactly what the researchers mean by each topic and determining how it improves understanding of the data.

Writing up - Lastly, is to write up the researcher's analysis of the data. It requires an introduction to establish the research question, aims, and approach (Caulfield, 2019). The researchers will use open-ended questions.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers provided a letter with a consent form for the respondents before they participated in the study. It is important to provide consent for the respondents to better understand what they will be participating in and also for the researchers to gain the research participants' trust. The researchers assured that the data privacy of the respondents is protected while collecting, analyzing, and reporting the data gathered with this consent form.

This letter and consent form consisted of research objectives and asked for the permission of the respondents to participate in the study. Moreover, informed consent also attests that the research participants are voluntarily willing to participate in the study and are not forced to participate.

The research participants received the consent personally, and the researchers explained and answered all their concerns. They had the freedom to choose their own time to participate in the study within their company, which was conducted through face-to-face interviews.

The researchers conducted an in-depth interview containing several questions. To easily analyze the data gathered and to get brief and necessary data from the participants. Also, it involves a semi-structured interview for the research participants to fully furnish their answers. This interview also gave the researchers clear, organized, and in-depth data that are needed for this study. The interview was recorded; however, the names were disclosed for their privacy and confidentiality. The researchers made sure that the research participants were treated with honesty, kindness, and respect which ensured that this study would be ethical.

Validation and Reliability Testing

The comparative study underwent validation through content validity assessments, expert feedbacks from college faculty, and data analysis to confirm the adequacy of the researchers' research methodology. Therefore, was done through an in-depth interview with the respondents using note-taking of their answers and a recorder for accurate transcription of marketing strategies of two automobile dealers. Three experts in the related field contributed to the validity and reliability of the test: (2) the college professors and (1) the college dean.

Results and Discussions

This chapter includes results and a discussion of the responses gathered from two automobile dealers. It has been accomplished by conducting an in-depth interview with the participants. Moreover, the researchers utilized Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis as a guide to process and analyze the marketing strategies of automobile dealers.

To proceed, the researchers transcribed the recorded interview. The researchers familiarized themselves with the data collected and analyzed them to formulate codes. The codes were created through the responses of the participants. After coding, the researchers were able to group them accordingly. Then, the grouped codes were able to generate themes, and the codes were used as sub-themes.

Table 1. Marketing Strategies in terms of Product

HONDA Alias Tony	<p>We first identify the client's needs to understand what they truly want. From there, we provide an offer based on their identified needs. If we do not identify their needs first, it becomes challenging. Because during the conversation, what we offer might not be what they truly want. Right from the start, we prioritize asking about their needs. After that, we inquire about the type of transaction, whether cash, in-house financing or if they prefer to negotiate directly with the bank. These are the initial steps, and once we have gathered the necessary information, we start with the transaction.</p>
FORD Alias AGENTX44	<p>For marketing strategies, the first thing we have to do is ensure that we know all the specifications of our products. So that we can explain properly to the client that's the first thing. The second aspect is that we need to provide all the details to the client. Just in case, we also need to offer a detailed comparison between our dealership and other brands.</p>

According to Tony, they make sure that they understand what are the client's needs first before suggesting something for them to know what to offer. However, AgentX44 said they must know all their product specifications to ensure they give detailed information and offer the client detailed comparisons between their dealership and other brands.

Based on Swift, J. K., Callahan, J. L., & Vollmer, B. M. (2010). While client preferences are integral to evidence-based practice, their impact on treatment outcomes remains uncertain, prompting a meta-analysis of 35 studies on adult clients to investigate this. The authors also explored the correlation between consumer product involvement and knowledge, treating product and knowledge types as moderating variables to provide deeper insights (Moon, J. B., 2003).

Table 2. Marketing Strategies in terms of Price

HONDA Alias Tony	<p>The quota per SC means per sales consultant, so the quota here is a minimum of 2 units. Each SC needs to meet this desired quota every month. The sales consultant should aim to achieve two units monthly to ensure they don't fall short by targeting just one unit at a time.</p>
FORD Alias AGENTX44	<p>Okay, strategies for the price lists? First, we need to give the best discounts to the client. Because we have many competitors, we need to match or surpass them. So, we can have a good client, as we face tough competition from companies like Mitsubishi, Toyota, and Ford. Offering them a generous discount might be a good approach.</p>

As per Tony, their company prioritizes giving quotas to sales consultants to achieve two units sold every month. Nevertheless, AgentX44 stated that they must offer the best discounts to the clients to secure the transaction as they compete with their competitors such as Mitsubishi and Toyota.

According to Chung, D. J., et al (2020) this study explores the multifaceted impacts of quota frequency on sales force performance, developing a theory regarding salespeople's behavior in response to the duration of sales quota cycles. Additionally, we address pricing dynamics in markets with a dominant price-leading brand, proposing an optimal price rule estimation method based on sales targets and demand forecasts (Roy, A., et al. 1994).

Table 3. Marketing Strategies in terms of Place

HONDA Alias Tony	The bank will have some questions for him/her for CI. There's also a bank that will go directly to the house to check if the address is accurate. The bank will then evaluate it, and once it's approved, the credit advice will be released, and that's when the process begins. The client will provide the reservation for the requirements. After that, within a few days, the unit will be released. Sometimes, our challenge is that clients are just inquiring. Other times, during the transaction, we have clients who seem to be shopping around. Sometimes, it doesn't push through because there are various factors, especially when there's a lack of budget. So, when they realize that they are short of budget, they will not push the transaction.
FORD Alias AGENTX44	We need to put up displays first because most of them need to see the unit first, right? What you see is what you get. For example, we have displays here, and at the back, we have displays. This way, they can distinguish which brand the buyer prefers by seeing them one by one.

Table 3 shows that Tony mentioned that for them to be efficient, they involve the banks to verify clients' backgrounds, and once approved by the banks, they will process the unit within a few days. Whereas AgentX44 focuses on displaying products to allow their prospects to choose what car they prefer. Their strategies are to aim to make products accessible to clients, facilitating the decision-making process and potentially expediting transactions.

As per Arasa, R. (2015). Know your customer compliance necessitates the compilation of auditable proof of due diligence operations, in addition to client identification. There is necessity for financial institutions to validate that their customers are not or have not been involved in illegal activities such as fraud, money laundering or organized crime in order to meet KYC conformity requirements. Also, according to Azenkot, S., Hanley, M., & Baker, C. M. (2021). Some technology companies have made significant strides towards the accessibility of their products. Most consumer-facing technology products still pose access barriers to people with disabilities. Prior research has established that accessibility expertise is limited to a small number of practitioners in companies, but we do not know how these practitioners can affect change across a large organization.

Table 4. Marketing Strategies in terms of Promotion

HONDA Alias Tony	Perhaps the successful campaign is also based on the promotions provided by the manufacturer. Because once the manufacturer gives the promotion to the car dealers. What the car dealers do is discuss it with their agents, and then the agents start the campaign for the month's promotions. Additionally, on the Facebook page, through boosting, because currently, clients tend to go through the marketplace or the Facebook page, so it's like they're canvassing there. It helps save time instead of going to each dealer or brand; they are already on social media platforms.
FORD Alias AGENTX44	What needs to be achieved every month is the quota because the company has a monthly quota. We need to reach 50-plus units per month. As I said a while ago, posting is very important for us to acquire clients. For example, in the month of January, we have separate divisions like regular, probationary, and accredited. Just like mine in a regular division, we need to sell 3 units and up to meet the target quota for regular agents. Social media advertising is crucial; we need to advertise on all social media platforms. Since people use different social media, I need to find where the target audience is.

Table 4 shows that Tony highlights successful campaigns of monthly promotions coming from the manufacturer, and they will discuss it with their agents. They utilized social media platforms such as Facebook, which made their strategy efficient, and they recognized the trend of canvassing cars through online platforms. Furthermore, AgentX44 emphasizes the importance of posting on all social media platforms to reach their target audiences effectively. He additionally stated that to promote their products effectively, they should set monthly quotas with specific target units for each division.

As mentioned by Alalwan et al. (2017) highlighted various marketing strategies available for firms to utilize across social media platforms, including advertising, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), customer relationship management, and branding. Nonetheless, the predominant focus within social media marketing has primarily revolved around advertising, as evidenced by the keen attention from researchers and practitioners alike.

Table 5. Marketing Strategies in terms of People

HONDA Alias Tony	<p>We have meetings here every week, where we assess potential prospects to convert from inquiry to sales. We review the list, and once we identify clients with possible prospects, we encourage them to complete the transaction. For those who haven't, we encourage them to continue engaging with the client, follow up, and convince them until the client decides and is willing to make a purchase. We also have training programs for new individuals, teaching them how to negotiate and close deals.</p>
FORD Alias AGENTX44	<p>The first thing we need is, of course, to know what we're selling and all the specifications of the unit. We also have proper training; as a senior, I conduct the training, and we call it "walk around 6.0". So, we need to describe and provide the client with everything that this particular unit has. The second thing is, that we need to teach them positive ways, how to communicate properly, and strategies on how to sell to clients. At least when clients see that "Hey, this person is good, knowledgeable, and skilled". There's a high possibility they'll choose us. Because that's what we take care of not only what we sell, but also the good service we provide.</p>

Table 5 shows that Tony's marketing strategy in terms of people is to manage weekly meetings to assess potential prospects and convert inquiries into sales. They emphasize improving engagement with clients, follow-ups, and training programs for sales agents to improve negotiation and deal-closing skills. Similarly, AgentX44 stated that they also prioritize training sessions or "walk around 6.0" to increase knowledge and ensure sales agents can effectively offer the product specifications of the units to clients. They focus on building trust with clients and provide excellent service alongside product offerings.

According to Abdolvand, M. A., & Farzaneh, S. (2013) the findings indicate that sales experience forms the foundation for all sales presentation skills, while training is linked to all skills except active listening. Sales managers are encouraged to prioritize the development of adaptive communication and closing skills among their business-to-business sales team to enhance sales performance.

Table 6. Marketing Strategies in terms of Process

HONDA Alias Tony	<p>Efficiency requires constant communication, for example, when a client has inquiries, immediate feedback or responses should be addressed. There are standard processes I mentioned earlier, so the manager conducts meetings with his/her team, and then they will assess the potential purchases. The manager guides that and at the same time, those prospective clients who are not yet ready to make a purchase. We evaluate what might be needed, ensuring there are no gaps in convincing the client if necessary, and the manager intervenes to assist the sales agent.</p>
FORD Alias AGENTX44	<p>Process? What do you mean by process? from the start? It was the best, as I said, we need to capture the client's attention first. For example, explain everything, grab their attention, and afterward explain it detail by detail. For instance, if they've already made a reservation, you'll talk to them about that. On our releasing day, you have to make sure that you have explained everything, including the warranties, discounts, and everything you need to explain it all to them.</p>

As stated by Tony, they highlight the continuous communication and immediate feedback to address client inquiries efficiently. Their managers conduct team meetings to assess potential purchases, guide their teams, and intervene to assist sales agents in convincing prospective clients. In the same way, AgentX44 stated that they should capture the client's attention first. After that, they will discuss it detail by detail, and if they made a reservation, they will discuss it again, such as warranties, discounts, and everything the client should know.

According by Kalogiannidis, S. (2020). that effective communication is a crucial component of organizational development. For most businesses, increasing sales and fostering business expansion depends on having good communication with both clients and staff. Therefore, it is beneficial to have a methodical procedure for getting client feedback, not only as a foundation for making necessary corrections to existing products but also as an essential component of the process of developing new product (Fundin, A., & Bergman, B., 2003).

Table 7. Marketing Strategies in terms of Physical Evidence

HONDA Alias Tony	<p>One way to speed up transactions we offer is through a test drive, providing clients with a hands-on experience. It allows them to feel the performance of a vehicle, showcasing its efficiency and fast cars. Additionally, we discuss the car safety features to ensure the client is well-informed. Despite that, we have promotions they will also be encouraged “This unit is nice because they have safety features. Also, emphasizing its fuel efficiency is a key factor, as clients tend to overlook units with higher fuel consumption they do not consider. Hence, offering a test drive becomes an effective approach to promoting our units.</p>
FORD Alias AGENTX44	<p>It's always social media, and you need to be hardworking in visiting the banks. The number one is social media and the second is bank visits. Ford is Ford, number 1 when it comes to units; Ford has the most advanced technology, all the specs are here, safety features, and then the specs. Also, the driving comfort, together with the service, combines into that, that's why we getting more clients.</p>

Table 7 shows Tony mentioned that they offer test drives as a physical evidence strategy to accelerate transactions, allowing clients to experience the vehicle’s performance with better fuel efficiency and safety features to increase the chance of purchasing the unit. In contrast, Ford relies heavily on social media presence and bank visits, emphasizing its advanced technology, safety features, driving comfort, and service quality to attract clients, maintaining the leading competitor in the automotive market.

As mentioned by Kumar, (2020), Test drive marketing in the automotive industry is often dynamic, demanding, and rewarding because it is determined that the test drive section is the one that draws in the greatest number of customers. The revenue of developed and growing nations and business is based on their capacity for continuous innovation to yield a reasonable profit. Modern technology is important (Rajiv, K., 2018).

Table 8. Impact of Marketing Strategies to Gain Competitive Advantage

HONDA Alias Tony	<p>Aside from a test drive, we also encourage them to visit the dealer. Because right now, if you see, there are some bogus accounts on social media. Pretending to offer services as legit sales agents, we advise clients to personally come to the dealership to ensure legitimacy.</p>
FORD Alias AGENTX44	<p>Okay, so in terms of impact, as I mentioned, the impact of social media is big. So, if you want to look on Facebook, you can check the advertisements there, and you'll probably see Ford. Ford's marketing strategy is really commendable because they need to compete with rivals like Toyota and Mitsubishi. That's why I admire our company, you can also see billboards everywhere, even when you go to NLEX, it's all well-covered.</p>

As per Tony in Table 8, their company gains a competitive advantage by focusing attention on personal engagement and authenticity. Also, encourage potential prospects to visit the dealership to verify legitimacy, especially in light of fake social media accounts posing as sales agents. On the other hand, Ford leverages the importance of social media platforms such as Facebook to gain a competitive advantage in the automotive industry. For them, these marketing strategies are effective in competing with their rivals like Toyota and Mitsubishi, as evidenced by their widespread presence in advertisements, including billboards on major highways like NLEX.

In the car industry, leveraging social media is essential for understanding customer expectations, boosting sales, and improving brand image (Zhong, 2023). Sustainable marketing initiatives in the automobile industry will help enhance brand image, which in turn will have a beneficial impact on customer engagement and sustainable car purchases (Gong et al., 2023).

Table 9. Impact of Marketing Strategies to Boost Brand Awareness

HONDA Alias Tony	One way to boost that is by enhancing their offers on Facebook pages because some have better offers. For example, some have no cash-out, while others offer huge discounts those are the strategies.
FORD Alias AGENTX44	Of course, we need to ensure that our service is great, especially to stand out from other dealerships. Because that's where you will see if your dealership is doing things right. So, they won't forget you from the beginning. That's why the saying "first impressions last" is true, that is where Ford is known.

Tony stated in Table 9 that they aim to leverage the use of social media such as Facebook pages to enhance their brand awareness and showcase attractive offers like significant discounts to capture the attention of potential prospects and be competitive in the market. Conversely, AgentX44 mentioned that it focuses on delivering exceptional service to ensure memorable first impressions, emphasizing the importance of quality customer interactions to stand out from other dealerships and solidify its reputation as a reliable automotive brand.

As stated by Abdul, G., K., Ghishwa, A., Muhammad, U., G., Sinoka, A. (2019). Brand awareness refers to consumers consciousness about the brand and products offered by it. It is the most significant thing for any company to provide the best possible information about their brand and its offerings to the people in order to attract their potential consumers. Brand awareness through social media plays a major role in increasing market shares for the brands as it is an influential tool for consumer repetitive buying behavior.

Table 10. Impact of Marketing Strategies to Client Retention

HONDA Alias Tony	Most of the time, when a vehicle is already acquired, some sales agents think that the transaction or the relationship with the client is already finished. However, that's where what we call after-sales begins. The most common thing we offer in after-sales service is encouraging them to bring their vehicle in every 10,000 km for preventive maintenance involving changing the oil and filter. What's good about Honda is that within one year, they only need to come in about twice a year for an oil change.
FORD Alias AGENTX44	To build a relationship with your client, it's not just about communicating during the sales process. After-sales service is also crucial because that's where you build the relationship. Moreover, that's where you can get more referred clients, also your network will grow. Based on my experience, even after a sale, for example, if I've made a transaction right away, once the vehicle has left, I would call the client. I would ask how our unit is doing, and what they need. Don't forget to call or chat, whatever you prefer, if you have any concerns. Afterward, so what they say about building a relationship with the client can materialize. Even if they don't need anything, you need to follow up. You need to ask them, "How's your unit? How's the driving comfort of your unit? If you need anything from us, don't hesitate to call." Sometimes, this approach brings them back for a second or third unit.

Table 10 shows Tony mentioned that they prioritize after-sales services by encouraging clients to bring their vehicles for preventive maintenance every 10,000km, to check the unit they bought, and to ensure good quality and well maintained. Pursuant to AgentX44 emphasizes that for them, it should be continuous communication to preserve the relationship with clients. They do follow-ups via text and call to check their vehicle's performance and ask if they have concerns to establish a rapport that often results in repeat purchases and referrals, solidifying long-term relationship with clients.

Effective use of after-sales services boosts a business's bottom line. In the automotive sector, after-sales services raise customer satisfaction levels by providing high-quality, efficient service (Adusei & Tweneboah-Koduah, 2019). For customers to spread positive word of mouth about a brand or product in the current environment, after-sale service assumes a crucial role in strengthening the bond between the association and its clients. Customers start to develop faith in the brand and establish a long-term relationship with the association when their needs and demands are met (Nordin et al., 2016).

Thematic Analysis

Table 11. Thematic Analysis of Main and Sub-Themes

Summary of Themes and Sub-Themes	
Main Themes	Sub-Themes
Theme 1: Seven Marketing Strategies	Sub-Theme 1: Understanding Client's Preference and Product Knowledge
	Sub-Theme 2: Big Discounts
	Sub-Theme 3: Bank Verification and Product Availability
	Sub-Theme 4: Social Media Advertising
	Sub-Theme 5: Training Programs for Skills Development of Sales Agents
	Sub-Theme 6: Better Communication Skills to have Client Engagement
	Sub-Theme 7: Advance Technology and Safety Features
Theme 2: Impacts of Marketing Strategies	Sub-Theme 1: Preventing Prospects to be Scammed
	Sub-Theme 2: Standout Dealership with Diverse Choices
	Sub-Theme 3: Surpass their Competitors
	Sub-Theme 4: Build Client Relationships and Satisfactions

The researchers made a thematic analysis of the marketing strategies used by automobile dealers and how it impacted their strategies to gain competitive advantage, boost brand awareness, and client retention. Table 11 shows the defined themes based on the answers of the research participants. The researchers generated two main themes and a total of 11 sub-themes. These themes answered the research gaps and statement of the problem of the comparative study.

Conclusions

The results of this study have shown that Honda Cars Baliuag and Ford Baliwag have different marketing strategies for serving their prospects or clients in the automotive industry. Honda focuses on understanding client needs, while Ford provides detailed comparisons of their dealership and others to help clients make informed choices. Also, they provide extensive training programs for their sales representatives for better communication skills.

In addition, along the populated DRT Highway, both dealerships compete by offering products with advanced technology and safety features, and attractive displays to catch clients' attention. Automobile dealers leverage social media platforms to gain a competitive advantage over other competitors and continuously boost their brand awareness in the region. The dealers also stress the importance of good communication skills to their clients to ensure excellent service at all times.

Furthermore, they share a commitment to build long term relationships with clients and adapting to changes in the industry. These findings highlighted how important client-focused tactics, unique marketing strategies, commendable customer service, and staying connected in the ever-changing automotive market.

Recommendations

1. The researchers recommend to other automobile dealers in Baliwag City, Bulacan that they can further strengthen their market presence by valuing and leveraging social media platforms through consistent postings and unique advertise-

ments as part of their marketing strategies, to gain a competitive advantage and boost brand awareness effectively. It can increase community engagement and brand image as per the respondents of this study.

2. The researchers recommend to other automobile dealers that they may further enhance their marketing strategies by encouraging their sales agents to do follow-ups with their clients consistently to improve their after-sales service effectively and efficiently, which can build client relationships and satisfaction and to retain them and get referrals as a bonus.
3. The researchers recommend to future researchers that they may use this study as a guide to conduct a different study to compare the marketing strategies of motorcycle dealerships in Baliwag City, Bulacan. While identifying and further exploring the various marketing strategies motorcycle dealerships use to obtain clients of each dealership in the city.
4. The researchers recommend to future researchers that they may use this study as a guide to conduct a study about the challenges of automobile dealerships in obtaining a client, knowing that there are many automobile and motorcycle dealerships and how they deal with it effectively.

References

- Abdelgawad, M., Ghosh, A., & Shamsy, M. (2022). Measuring the Quality of Car Dealership Services from the Point of View of Customers by Applying to the Automotive Sector in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.52133/ijrsp.v4.37.2>
- Abdolvand, M. A., & Farzaneh, S. (2013). Impact of Sales Experience and Training on Sales Presentation Skills between Industrial Salespersons. *Research Journal of Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology*, 5(8), 2661–2670. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.19026/rjaset.5.4712>
- Abdul, G., K., Ghishwa, A., Muhammad, U., G., Sinoka, A. (2019). The Impact of Brand Awareness and Social Media Content Marketing on Consumer Purchase Decision Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334775705_The_Impact_of_Brand_Awareness_and_Social_Media_Content_Marketing_on_Consumer_Purchase_Ddecision/link/5d4103354585153e59301643/download?_tp=eyJjb250ZXh0Ijp7ImZpcnN0UGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIiwicGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIn19
- Adusei, C., & Tweneboah-Koduah, I. (2019b). After-Sales service and customer satisfaction in the automobile industry in an emerging economy. *OALib*, 06(01), 1–21. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1105167>
- Alalwan, A. A. (2018). Investigating the impact of social media advertising features on customer purchase intention. *International Journal of Information Management*, 42, 65–77. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2018.06.001>
- Altay, B. C., Okumuş, A., & Mercangöz, B. A. (2021). An intelligent approach for analyzing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on marketing mix elements (7Ps) of the on-demand grocery delivery service. Retrieved from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40747-021-00358-1?fbclid=IwAR3LHiwF1Kid9MMbzHnpYNmCG4JeB8SjpF1DUIwnCSWK6Rc1fj173BXr3qw>

- Arasa, R. (2015). Determinants of Know Your Customer (KYC) Compliance among Commercial Banks in Kenya. *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies*, 7(2(J)), 162–175. Retrieved from [https://doi.org/10.22610/jebs.v7i2\(j\).574](https://doi.org/10.22610/jebs.v7i2(j).574)
- Azenkot, S., Hanley, M., & Baker, C. M. (2021). How accessibility practitioners promote the creation of accessible products in large companies. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-computer Interaction*, 5(CSCW1), 1–27. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1145/3449222>
- Caulfield, J. (2019). How to do thematic analysis | Step-by-Step Guide & Examples. Scribbr. Retrieved from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/thematic-analysis/>
- Fundin, A., & Bergman, B. (2003). Exploring the customer feedback process. *Measuring Business Excellence*, 7(2), 55–65. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1108/13683040310477995>
- Gong, Y., Xiao, J., Tang, X., & Li, J. (2023). How sustainable marketing influences the customer engagement and sustainable purchase intention? The moderating role of corporate social responsibility. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1128686>
- Gupta, M., et al., (2019). Recent Trends in Automotive Industry. *International Journal for Research in Applied Science & Engineering Technology*. Retrieved from <https://www.ijraset.com/files/serve.php?FID=21450>
- Hall, K. (2022). Marketing Strategies for Automotive Dealerships in Grenada - ProQuest. Retrieved from <https://www.proquest.com/openview/6edf8f3b0465645aba2bdee06ad1a450/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>
- Ho, C., Liu, Y., & Chen, M. (2022). Factors influencing watching and purchase intentions on live streaming platforms: From a 7Ps Marketing mix perspective. Retrieved from <https://www.mdpi.com/2078-2489/13/5/239>

- M, Darshan, (2018). Influence of social media on vehicle purchasing decisions: An empirical study on automobile industry. ResearchGate. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327679663_Influence_of_social_media_on_vehicle_purchasing_decisions_An_empirical_study_on_automobile_industry
- Neil, M., Kimberly W., Hui, F., & Simon, C. (2019). Research in Marketing strategy. Retrieved from https://ideas.repec.org/a/spr/joamsc/v47y2019i1d10.1007_s11747-018-0598-1.html
- Nordin, N., Yaacob, A. A., Razak, R. C., Radzi, W. N. W., & Saraih, U. N. (2016). *Service Evaluation on Automotive After-Sale service*. Retrieved from <https://www.akademiabaru.com/submit/index.php/arbms/article/view/1202>
- Park, C., & Moon, B. (2003). The relationship between product involvement and product knowledge: Moderating roles of product type and product knowledge type. *Psychology & Marketing*, 20(11), 977–997. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.10105>
- Pató, B. S. G., Herczeg, M., & Csizsárik-Kocsir, Á. (2022). The COVID-19 Impact on Supply Chains, Focusing on the Automotive Segment during the Second and Third Wave of the Pandemic. *Risks*, 10(10), 189. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3390/risks10100189>
- Philipp, F., Tobias, W., & Achim, K. (2019). Predicting Automotive Sales using Pre-Purchase Online Search Data. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336071588_Predicting_Automotive_Sales_using_Pre-Purchase_Online_Search_Data
- Roy, A., Hanssens, D. M., & Raju, J. S. (1994). Competitive pricing by a price leader. *Management Science*, 40(7), 809–823. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.40.7.809>
- Rutledge, P., & Hogg, J. L. (2020). In-Depth interviews. *The International Encyclopedia of Media Psychology*, 1–7. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119011071.iemp0019>

- Saraswat, S., Singh, S., & Choudhary, S. (2023). An Analytical Study of Marketing Strategy of Mahindra Automobiles. *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*. Retrieved from <https://ijrpr.com/uploads/V4ISSUE5/IJRPR13030.pdf>
- Sharma, S., & Aggarwal, A. (2019). Aspects of marketing strategy impacting the commercial vehicle industry– A critical review of literature. Retrieved from <https://www.ijarnd.com/manuscripts/v4i1/V4I1-1169.pdf>
- Swift, J. K., Callahan, J. L., & Vollmer, B. M. (2010). Preferences. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 67(2), 155–165. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.20759>
- The Problem and Its Background. Retrieved from <https://www.history.com/topics/inventions/automobiles>
- View of A Systematic Literature Review on Customer Retention in The Automobile or Automotive Industry (2023). Retrieved from <https://journal.imwi.ac.id/index.php/cakrawala/article/view/436/408>
- Zhao, S., & Zhu, Q. (2018). A risk-averse marketing strategy and its effect on coordination activities in a remanufacturing supply chain under market fluctuation. Retrieved from https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0959652617324009?fbclid=IwAR3-m_EyJq7Fw1eHfwyk0fdKX5jhVmbFEVp0N24LiubXhcgRXoh5NCy7kiM
- Zhong, Y. (2023). Adoption of social media marketing strategies in automotive industry. *Journal of Education Humanities and Social Sciences*, 16, 123–128. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.54097/ehss.v16i.9577>