

Automotive News

AutoNation opens online buying service for women

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AutoNation Inc., the nation's largest dealership group, plans to roll out an online buying service this week aimed at women.

The service, Car Buying Her Way, features no-haggle pricing and personal shoppers to help with purchases. AutoNation is testing the service in California, Florida and Colorado and expects to expand it nationwide this year.

AutoNation says it used research about female auto buyers — such as the aversion they express to negotiating with salespeople — to develop the service. It is available at **womencertified.autonationdirect.com/buyonline**.

AutoNation's partner in the venture is WomenCertified, which trains businesses to market to women. Delia Passi, the founder of WomenCertified, says the need for such training is acute for auto retailers.

"Buying a car ranks at the top of their list of purchases women most despise," Passi told *Automotive News*.

The personal shoppers provide online and telephone advice to users of the new service, Passi says. The shoppers get monthly e-mails from WomenCertified on female-friendly sales practices, she adds.

Car Buying Her Way is part of AutoNation's online sales channel, AutoNationDirect. Ron Frey, president of AutoNationDirect, says that as part of the affiliation with WomenCertified, the new service will be promoted by women's groups.

Frey says AutoNation aims to create "a safe environment that empowers a woman to home in on the right product."



WomenCertified's Delia Passi: Dealers need help marketing to women.

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