



## **Autobytel's Dealership First Services Help Car Sellers Keep Pace with Record Number of Online Customers**

### **Autobytel Network Most Visited Internet Automotive Destination in November, With 9.36 Million Unique Visitors**

**IRVINE, CA - January 4, 2005** - Autobytel Inc. (Nasdaq:ABTLE) has reported that 9.36 million unique monthly visitors used its websites in November<sup>1</sup>, again making the Autobytel Network the most visited Internet automotive destination and one of the most visited sites overall. Continuing its mission to help auto dealers effectively sell more cars to these millions of car buyers, the company is providing a wide range of value added services to its dealer network through its *Dealership First* program.

Autobytel *Dealership First* is an aggressive, comprehensive program designed to help member dealers optimize closing rates and cost-per-sale for the car buyers who submit Purchase Requests on Autobytel web sites - an estimated 67% of whom are expected to purchase a vehicle in the near-term. The program is backed by dedicated, certified account managers who provide hands-on dealership support. It also includes monthly management reports, custom phone surveys, training and evaluations and Autobytel Interactive Marketing (AIM), which displays dealership website ads, customized dealer messages, customer testimonials and more to visitors to Autobytel's websites that are located in that dealer's geographic area. In addition, *Dealership First* services now includes Automated Dealer Appointments which encourage consumers to make an online test drive appointment as soon as they have submitted a Purchase Request, with the information passed directly into the dealer's Web Control system.

Through *Dealership First*, Autobytel also provides a rigorous 7-step customer quality program (Quality Verification System), which screens and validates all customers' names and telephone numbers before the Purchase Request is sent to a dealer. All Autobytel online affiliates are also monitored for the quality of their customers.

Autobytel's customized research service, meanwhile, gives dealers the same data and research tools used by many of the leading manufacturers and web portals. To promote the dealership to in-market car buyers the moment a Purchase Request is submitted, the dealership's website link is embedded in the confirmation email sent to customers who submitted a Purchase Request through Autobytel.

After launching the first Internet customer management program in 1996, Autobytel pioneered online automotive CRM technologies and today, CRM tools represent the fastest-growing segment of the company's business. Its Retention Performance Marketing program (RPM<sup>sm</sup>), designed to help dealerships increase their service department revenue, is delivering an average of 22:1 return on investment for dealers nationwide. And Autobytel's best-in-class customer and sales management product, Web Control, is now used by more of the nation's top-100 e-Dealers than any other product.

Autobytel also offers dealerships Finance Leads, a finance customer acquisition program, available through Car.com. It was recently reported that the number of finance leads delivered to dealers tripled in Q3 year over year.

"The measure of our success is the number of customers we generate for dealerships and how well our dealers are able to service those customers," said Autobytel Inc. CEO Jeffrey Schwartz. "Through Autobytel, they tap into the Internet's largest audience of car shoppers, and receive the full support of our *Dealership First* value-adds, marketing, quality control and training, as well as CRM and service reminder programs - all designed to help them sell more cars for less."

Founded in January of 1995 with six employees, Autobytel processed 45,000 Purchase Requests for new vehicles in its first year of business. In 2004, the company anticipates delivering approximately 4.5 million Purchase Requests to its nationwide dealer network and today is responsible for over \$1 billion in car sales a month for dealers using its services.

<sup>1</sup> comScore Media Metrix, November 2004

<sup>2</sup> Study by R. L. Polk & Company 2004

<sup>3</sup> 2004 Ward's Dealer Business e-Dealer 100

#### **About Autobytel Inc.**

Autobytel Inc. (Nasdaq: ABTLE), a leading Internet automotive marketing services company, helps retailers sell cars and manufacturers build brands through marketing, advertising, data and CRM (customer relationship management) products and programs. The Company owns and operates the automotive websites Autobytel.com, Autoweb.com, Car.com, Carsmart.com and AutoSite.com, as well as AIC (Automotive Information Center), a trusted industry source of automotive marketing data and

technology for over 20 years. Autobytel is also a leader in dealership lead management and CRM solutions and owns and operates AVV, Inc., a top provider of dealership CRM and sales management products, and Retention Performance Marketing, Inc. (RPMâ), which powers dealerships with cutting-edge customer loyalty and retention marketing programs. As the Internet's largest new car buying service, Autobytel generates over a billion dollars a month in car sales for dealers through its services and was the most visited new car buying and research destination in 2003, reaching millions of car shoppers as they made their vehicle buying decisions. Autobytel's car-selling sites and lead management products are used by more of the nation's top-100 e-dealers than any other program.

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