POWERFUL SOLUTIONS

For maximum F&I profitability

Owner's Manuals

I once had a Guest who contacted me with some strange feedback, the day after he had taken delivery. This particular gentleman, it would seem, was experiencing a sort of manic episode. He couldn't get over the fact that, in his words, his new SUV practically drove itself!

"I don't have to use the brakes entering corners…the car does it for me", he proclaimed. "Heck, I don't even have to take my foot off the gas!"

I didn't understand what he was trying to say, at first. "What do you mean, you don't have to use the brakes entering corners?" I asked, hoping he would slow down long enough for me to figure out what he was talking about.

Then I figured it out. He was referring to the intervention of the Electronic Stability Program. He had by happenstance, I'm sure, experienced one of the features of his on-board safety system. After one day, with his new vehicle, he had decided to relinquish what years of prudent driving had taught him. The vehicle, he thought, would protect him from himself.

"That's your Electronic Stability Program taking steps to try and prevent you from crashing. It's there for emergencies, though. You still have to do the driving or you'll end up in a wreck", I explained. "Did you read your Owner's Manual?"

Not unlike my Guest then, we should ask ourselves, when is the last time *we* read an Owner's Manual?

Today's vehicles are amazing examples of engineering brilliance. The ESP system utilizes telemetry gathered from various sensors within the vehicle. For example, on a particular system, data from the steering wheel positioning sensor, throttle positioning sensor, ABS wheel speed sensors, all combined with input from the on-board gyroscope(s) may be considered within a few milliseconds to determine what, if any, corrective action the automobile may employ. To counter under-steer…the system may initiate a burst of brake pressure to the inner rear wheel. The outer front wheel may be called upon, in similar fashion, to counter over-steer. All of this expensive technology is in place to hopefully help keep us from testing the durability of that guardrail or oak tree sitting just off the edge of the corner.

The bottom-line here is clearly that today's new vehicles are vastly complex collections of systems with a whole lot going on in a very short period of time. You can look through the Owner's Manual and you'll notice that at the bottom of nearly every section, it reads, "refer to electronics section."

I was recently working with a Business Manager who shared a related experience. He had a Guest who was an Engineer. This gentleman turned down the opportunity to take advantage of the VSC the day he took delivery. However, after having read his Owner's Manual he was convinced he needed it and came back, the next day, to purchase the protection.

We're just scratching the surface here. What sort of things can we learn, like the Engineer, about the complexity of these systems from a simple read-through of an Owner's Manual?

Think about it.

Good luck and good selling!