

Commercial Excellence Academy

by  Asbiverse Group

Optimizing Route to Shopper® Capability for Winning in Retail

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# Route to Shopper®

A Strategic Framework for  
Integrated Shopper-based Value  
Creation in the Automotive  
Industry

# Route to Shopper® for Automotive

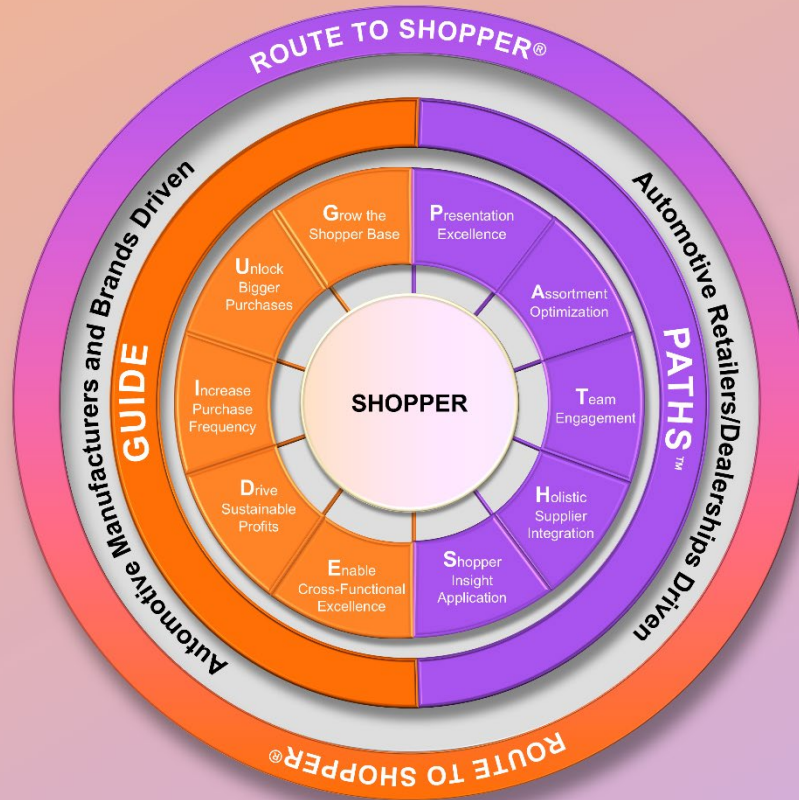
## Transforming Commercial Excellence in Automotive Landscape

*A Strategic Positioning Document from the Commercial Excellence Academy*

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# The Route to Shopper® Framework incorporating GUIDE – PATHS™ for Automotive Industry



## Strategic Context

### What does it really take to win a shopper's consideration in a world of endless options?

In the automotive marketplace, the journey from consideration to purchase has transformed dramatically. Traditional sales approaches are being challenged by evolving consumer behaviours, digital acceleration, and market disruption. The **Route to Shopper®** Framework, now customized for the automotive industry, offers a proven capability system that addresses these fundamental shifts.

### Market Evolution Demanding a New Approach:

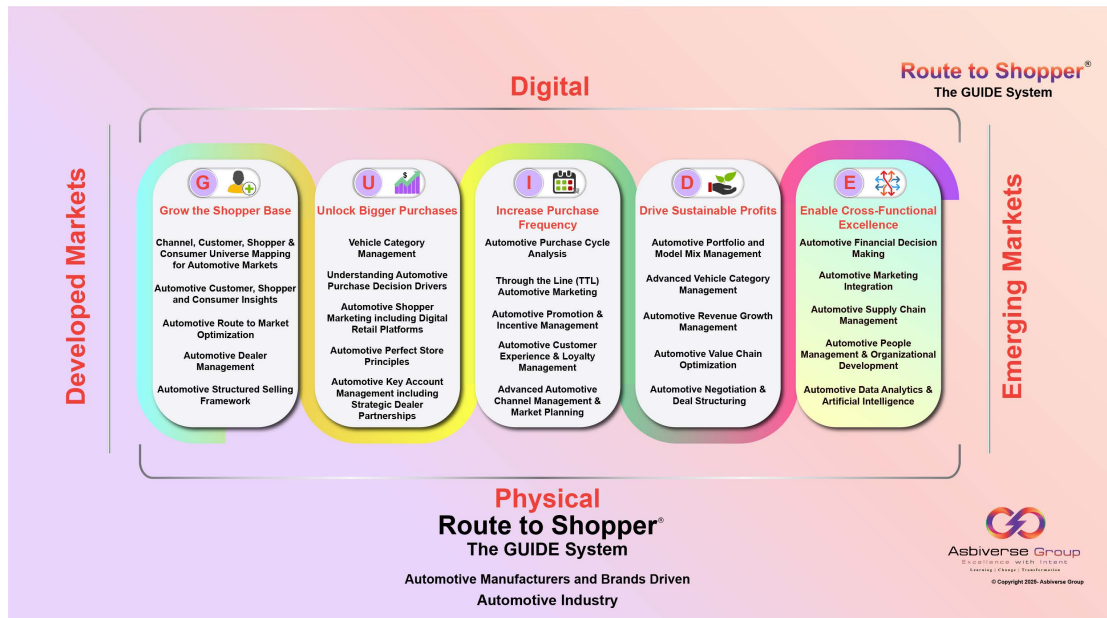
- **Purchase Journey Transformation:** Today's automotive buyers spend up to 61% of their purchase journey in digital channels before ever visiting a dealership
- **Value Chain Disruption:** Electric vehicles, direct-to-consumer models, and subscription offerings are reshaping the core business model
- **Experience Expectations:** Shoppers now demand the same seamless, personalized experiences in automotive that they receive in other categories
- **Margin Pressure:** Traditional profit pools are evolving, requiring a more sophisticated approach to value capture
- **Shopper vs. Consumer Distinction:** The automotive industry faces a unique challenge where the vehicle shopper (decision-maker) and the vehicle consumer (user) are often different, requiring alignment of both perspectives

This landscape demands a structured approach to capability development that aligns automotive manufacturers and retailers around a common framework focused on the shopper journey. The **Route to Shopper®** Framework provides this alignment through complementary frameworks for brands (**GUIDE**) and dealerships (**PATHS**).

Our framework enables automotive organizations to navigate this disruption by building systematic capabilities that drive commercial excellence across the entire ecosystem. By aligning around the shopper journey, brands and retailers can create seamless experiences that convert interest into purchase, purchase into loyalty, and loyalty into advocacy.

# GUIDE – PATHS™ Frameworks for the Automotive Industry

## GUIDE Framework (For Automotive Manufacturers and Brands)



### G: Grow the Shopper Base

*Expanding the funnel of qualified prospects and converting them to customers*

#### Key Capabilities:

- Developing insight-driven shopper segmentation that distinguishes between vehicle users and purchase decision-makers
- Creating targeted digital journeys that capture and nurture early-stage automotive consideration
- Establishing lifestyle-based marketing that connects vehicle capabilities to customer aspirations
- Building automated lead qualification systems that identify high-potential shoppers
- Developing conquest strategies for competitive owners based on ownership lifecycle triggers

### U: Unlock Bigger Purchases

*Increasing transaction value through upsell and cross-sell*

## **Key Capabilities:**

- Creating feature and option packaging that aligns with shopper value perception
- Developing showroom and digital experiences that demonstrate premium feature value
- Building financing solutions that enable higher transaction values while maintaining payment affordability
- Establishing accessories and personalization programs that increase vehicle margin
- Creating service packages and protection plans that enhance overall customer value

## **I: Increase Purchase Frequency**

*Accelerating the automotive replacement cycle*

### **Key Capabilities:**

- Developing structured lease-end management programs that facilitate vehicle replacement
- Creating trade-in optimization tools that identify ideal replacement timing
- Building subscription and flexible ownership programs that enable more frequent vehicle changes
- Establishing lifecycle marketing programs that maintain engagement throughout ownership
- Developing multi-vehicle household strategies that place multiple brand vehicles in a single family

## **D: Drive Sustainable Profits**

*Creating balanced profitability across the value chain*

### **Key Capabilities:**

- Establishing optimal channel mix strategies across traditional and emerging sales channels
- Creating incentive and promotion strategies that drive volume while protecting margins
- Developing finance and insurance product portfolios that enhance transaction profitability
- Building connected service offerings that create recurring revenue streams

- Establishing balanced inventory management that optimizes working capital efficiency

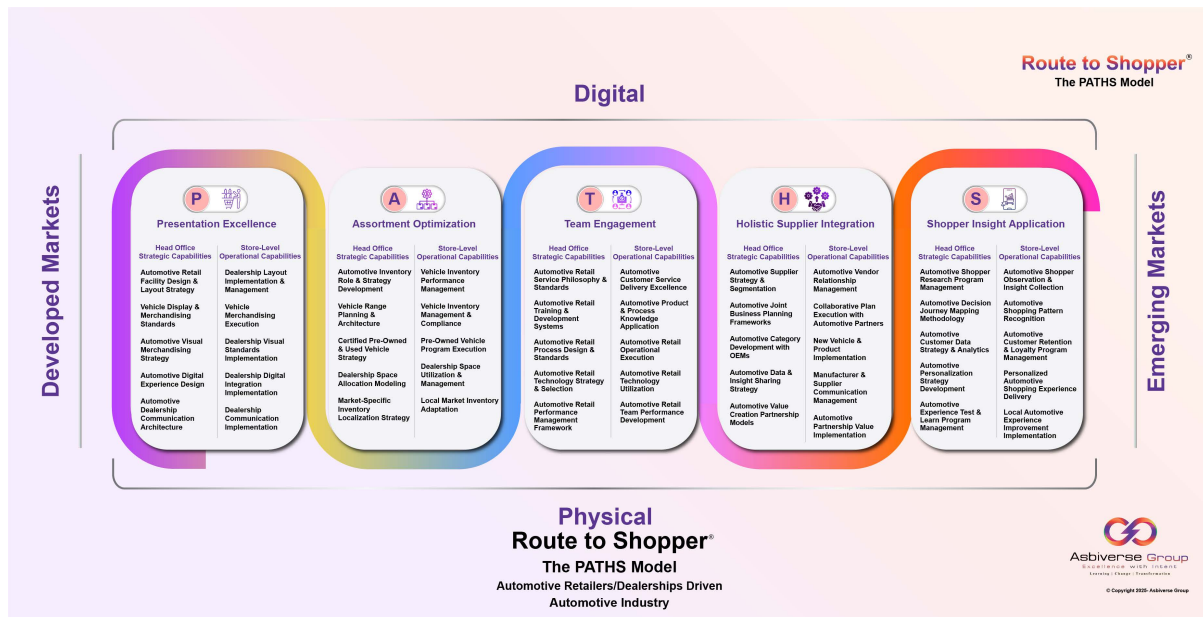
## E: Enable Cross-functional Excellence

*Aligning internal teams for seamless execution*

### Key Capabilities:

- Creating integrated planning processes across product, marketing, sales, and aftersales
- Developing shared KPIs and incentives that drive collaborative behaviours
- Building digital platforms that connect customer data across the organization
- Establishing agile innovation processes for rapidly evolving market conditions
- Creating capability development roadmaps for commercial teams

## PATHS Framework (For Dealerships and Retail Partners)



## P: Presentation Excellence

*Creating compelling shopping environments across physical and digital*

### Key Capabilities:

- Designing immersive showroom experiences that bring vehicle benefits to life

- Creating digital retail platforms that provide seamless research and transaction capabilities
- Developing personalized virtual selling processes for remote shoppers
- Building experiential brand zones that communicate brand values
- Establishing consistent merchandising standards across physical and digital channels

## **A: Assortment Optimization**

*Ensuring available inventory matches market demand*

### **Key Capabilities:**

- Developing data-driven inventory planning based on local market preferences
- Creating flexible vehicle allocation systems that respond to changing demand
- Building used vehicle acquisition strategies that complement new vehicle offerings
- Establishing specialty and limited-edition vehicle programs that drive showroom traffic
- Developing demo fleet management that balances experience delivery and capital efficiency

## **T: Team Engagement**

*Equipping retail teams with capabilities for success*

### **Key Capabilities:**

- Creating product knowledge systems that build expertise across the entire vehicle lineup
- Developing consultative selling skills that match vehicles to customer needs
- Building digital tool proficiency for enhanced customer experiences
- Establishing performance management frameworks that drive desired behaviours
- Creating incentive systems that align with brand and business objectives

## **H: Holistic Supplier Integration**

*Creating seamless partnerships across the ecosystem*

### **Key Capabilities:**

- Developing integrated finance and insurance provider relationships
- Creating seamless charging infrastructure partnerships for electric vehicles
- Building connected service provider networks that enhance the ownership experience
- Establishing parts and accessory supplier relationships that support personalization
- Developing digital marketing partnerships that extend market reach

## **S: Shopper Insight Application**

*Using data to enhance shopping experiences*

### **Key Capabilities:**

- Creating unified customer data platforms that connect online and offline behaviours
- Developing predictive analytics that identify high-potential prospects
- Building test drive optimization based on customer preferences and behaviours
- Establishing customer feedback systems that drive continuous improvement
- Creating personalization engines that deliver customized shopping experiences

## **Illustrative Examples (Hypothetical)**

### **Example 1: Electrified Model Launch Strategy**

**Business Challenge:** Accelerating adoption of electric vehicles while maximizing transaction value and ensuring long-term customer satisfaction.

#### **GUIDE Application:**

- **G:** Targeted digital campaigns to EV-curious segments based on lifestyle and driving patterns
- **U:** Bundled home charging solutions and premium technology packages for enhanced margins

- **I:** Structured battery health check program with upgrade incentives at 3-year ownership mark
- **D:** Balanced pricing strategy across vehicle, charging ecosystem, and connected services
- **E:** Integrated planning between product development, marketing, and dealer development teams

### **PATHS Application:**

- **P:** Immersive EV experience zones in dealerships with interactive technology demonstrations
- **A:** Optimized mix of demonstration vehicles and available inventory based on market adoption rate
- **T:** Comprehensive EV specialist training program with certification for sales consultants
- **H:** Seamless integration with charging providers, electricians, and home installation services
- **S:** Digital tracking of EV consideration behaviours to identify and nurture high-potential prospects

**Potential Outcome:** Higher conversion of EV-curious shoppers, 22% increase in accessories and services per vehicle, and reduced range anxiety through comprehensive support ecosystem.

### **Example 2: Used Car Retail Transformation**

**Business Challenge:** Creating a premium certified pre-owned experience that strengthens brand loyalty and creates a pathway to new vehicle purchase.

### **GUIDE Application:**

- **G:** Data-driven outreach to 3–5-year owners with personalized trade-in valuations
- **U:** Value-added certified pre-owned packages with extended warranties and service inclusions
- **I:** Lifecycle marketing program with scheduled check-ins and upgrade consultations
- **D:** Optimized reconditioning standards balancing cost and customer perception
- **E:** Integrated planning between new vehicle, used vehicle, and service operations teams

## **PATHS Application:**

- **P:** Digital-first merchandising with comprehensive vehicle history and condition documentation
- **A:** Data-driven inventory acquisition based on local market demand and turn rate
- **T:** Consultative selling approach emphasizing value, quality, and ownership confidence
- **H:** Seamless integration with warranty providers, finance partners, and inspection services
- **S:** Unified prospect tracking connecting used vehicle interest to future new vehicle potential

**Potential Outcome:** 25% faster inventory turns, 18% higher certified pre-owned penetration, and double the conversion rate from used to new vehicles within 36 months.

## **Potential Outcomes from Route to Shopper® Deployments**

When properly implemented, the **Route to Shopper®** Framework has the potential to transform automotive commercial performance across key metrics:

### **Sales Effectiveness:**

- 30% increase in test-drive-to-sale conversion rates
- 20% improvement in lead-to-appointment conversion
- 15% reduction in sales cycle duration
- 25% increase in digital-to-showroom transition effectiveness

### **Customer Experience:**

- 40-point improvement in dealership Net Promoter Score
- 35% increase in service retention through improved sales-to-service handoff
- 30% higher customer engagement with digital ownership tools
- 25% improvement in problem resolution effectiveness

### **Business Performance:**

- 15% increase in per-vehicle profitability through feature and option attachment
- 20% higher finance and insurance penetration
- 30% improvement in first-year service plan adoption
- 25% increase in accessories revenue per unit

## **Operational Efficiency:**

- 40% reduction in lead follow-up time through automation
- 35% improvement in inventory turn through optimized assortment management
- 25% higher sales team productivity through streamlined processes
- 30% reduction in digital marketing cost per qualified lead

## **Long-term Value Creation:**

- 25% increase in customer lifetime value
- 30% improvement in brand loyalty and repurchase rates
- 20% higher referral rates from satisfied customers
- 35% stronger alignment between manufacturer and dealer business objectives

These outcomes represent hypothetical possibilities and serve as targets for organizations implementing the framework. Actual results will vary based on implementation quality, market conditions, and organizational readiness.

## **AI Enablement for Automotive Brands**

The **Route to Shopper®** Framework creates the foundation for AI-enabled commercial excellence by establishing the processes, data architecture, and organizational alignment required for effective AI application. Our approach prepares automotive organizations for the AI revolution in several key areas:

### **Intelligent Customer Acquisition:**

- AI-driven lookalike modelling to identify high-potential prospects
- Predictive lead scoring based on behavioural patterns and purchase signals
- Automated content personalization based on lifestyle preferences and usage patterns
- Real-time media optimization based on conversion effectiveness

### **Enhanced Purchase Experience:**

- Digital twin showrooms with AI-powered vehicle configuration based on customer preferences
- Virtual product specialists providing 24/7 detailed vehicle information
- Augmented reality test drives with personalized route recommendations
- Natural language processing to identify customer preferences from conversation

## Optimized Ownership Management:

- Predictive maintenance alerts based on vehicle usage patterns
- AI-driven service recommendations based on seasonal factors and driving habits
- Personalized vehicle update recommendations based on feature utilization
- Proactive satisfaction monitoring with intervention triggers

## Commercial Performance Optimization:

- Real-time inventory recommendations based on market demand signals
- Dynamic pricing optimization based on competitive positioning and inventory age
- Automated performance coaching for sales consultants based on customer interactions
- Personalized incentive recommendations based on individual motivation patterns

These AI capabilities are not standalone solutions but require the foundational elements of the **Route to Shopper®** Framework to deliver their full potential. By establishing the right capabilities first, automotive organizations can leverage AI to enhance rather than replace human judgment.

## Role of Commercial Excellence Academy

The Commercial Excellence Academy serves as your trusted partner in transforming commercial capabilities across your automotive organization. Our role extends beyond traditional consulting to include:

### Framework Customization:

- Tailoring the **Route to Shopper®** Framework to your specific market context
- Aligning capability development with your brand strategy and business objectives
- Creating custom implementation roadmaps based on your organizational readiness

### Capability Building:

- Designing and delivering learning experiences that build critical skills
- Creating tools and resources that enable consistent application
- Establishing measurement systems that track capability development

## Cross-functional Alignment:

- Facilitating integration between manufacturer and dealer capabilities
- Creating shared vision and language across commercial functions
- Developing collaborative approaches to shopper-centric transformation

## Sustainable Implementation:

- Building internal champions through certification programs
- Creating governance structures that maintain capability focus
- Developing measurement systems that track business impact

Our Academy brings expertise from across industries to help automotive organizations navigate disruption through structured capability development. We serve as both strategic advisors and practical implementation partners throughout your transformation journey.

## Call to Action

The automotive industry stands at a pivotal moment. Electrification, digital disruption, and changing consumer expectations are transforming the competitive landscape. Success requires a structured approach to commercial excellence that aligns manufacturers and retailers around the shopper journey.

The **Route to Shopper®** Framework offers automotive leaders a proven approach to navigate this disruption. By building systematic capabilities that span the entire commercial ecosystem, organizations can create sustainable competitive advantage in a rapidly changing market.

We invite automotive commercial leaders to:

1. **Reassess** how your organization delivers shopper-centric experiences across physical and digital touchpoints
2. **Align** your brand and retail operations around a unified capability roadmap focused on shopper needs
3. **Explore** how the **Route to Shopper®** Framework can transform your commercial performance and future-proof your business model

The future of automotive retail belongs to organizations that build systematic, shopper-centric capabilities. The **Route to Shopper®** Framework provides the roadmap to this future, connecting brand promise to retail reality through structured capability development.

*Commercial Excellence Academy - Building tomorrow's automotive capabilities today*

## **Contact**

To begin a strategic dialogue on implementing the **Route to Shopper®** Framework in your organization, please contact:

Strategic Partnerships Team

Commercial Excellence Academy

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