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Urban Science, Celebrating 25th Anniversary, Advises on Sea Changes in Auto Dealer Networks

DETROIT, MARCH 26, 2002 – When automakers cast their nets for customers, how do they know where the fish are biting, what size net to use and which bait will lure the biggest catch? For a quarter century, they've relied on the advice of Urban Science, a strategic consulting firm that has not only ridden the waves of change in the automotive industry but measured their height, breadth and impact.

Celebrating its 25th anniversary this month, Urban Science is a global organization that has helped virtually every major automaker in the world establish, analyze and/or improve its dealer networks.

Jim Anderson, president and founder of Urban Science, created the first computer-based dot maps to show the locations of car buyers. He and his staff subsequently were the first to devise a way to make color printouts of information displayed on a computer screen. And eventually, automakers began asking Urban Science to analyze their maps and demographic data to help them determine where to place their dealerships.

“Today, companies in the areas of retailing, catalogue sales, and banking are turning to us as well for advice regarding their outlets and branches,” said Anderson. “And it’s because of our proven track record. We have a deep foundation both in understanding the industries we serve and in the research-and-analysis tools we can employ,” he added.

Urban Science draws on very specialized and sophisticated computer programs it has developed over the years as the tools for its diagnoses.

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One of these analytical tools carries out network analysis, which provides a clear picture of how a manufacturer's integrated retail networks are performing. Urban Science employs scenario-planning to determine the optimal number, location and type of operations and services needed to achieve the highest potential return from each market area. Once in place, this approach allows the manufacturer to adjust to market changes so that the networks continue to improve.

A second tool is site analysis. With this capability, Urban Science professionals can measure the performance of individual sites within the network and determine the causes of any difficulties at particular locations. Urban Science can quantify and qualify the potential for improved sales, customer retention and profits at each retail site. It can diagnose why some sites outperform others and offer ways to improve under performing sites.

A third potent analytical tool is customer analysis. Through this methodology, Urban Science uncovers likes and dislikes of customers, allowing the seller to target customers and prospects more effectively with marketing and customer-relationship-management efforts. Then Urban Science shows how to use this knowledge to maximize program impact and profits, accurately assess potential customers and markets, and establish realistic standards for measuring results. The payoff is a better return on investment forecasting and more effective use of variable marketing funds.

These remarkable tools have generated a reputation for Urban Science as a firm that has the ability to see and do things that others can't. Its customized intelligent solutions provide companies with the opportunity to increase the market share and profitability of their retail networks. Headquartered in Detroit, Michigan, Urban Science operates from offices in the United States, Spain, England, Germany, Italy, Australia, The Netherlands, Mexico and Japan.

For information: www.urbanscience.com.

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