Sizzlin' software
for your dealership

Integration of multiple functions is a common theme

By Mary Hughes

I t used to be said that, "there's nothing more outdated than last year's software." While that may not be as true now as it was in the earlier days of the rush to computerize everything, there are some brilliant new applications now available for your dealership.

For example, just when you thought CRM software couldn't get any better, here are a few new offerings that deserve your attention.

DealerSocket

DealerSocket, already established in the U.S., is coming to the Canadian market. To quote from **www.dealer-socket.com**, "it's a comprehensive tool that leverages all your customer history, current customer and prospect interactions, dealership processes and the best attributes of your people, to automate and drive the ideal buying experience for your customer." DealerSocket is web-based so there's no software or hardware to buy.

Marketing director Shellie Pierce explains: "Our software is designed so the dealer can get one view of all departments – sales, service, CSI, and marketing. It generates reports from a screen called 'manager's dashboard' and it can drill down into any area, like a sales person's performance or CSI scores or leads."

Sam Rizek, is their executive sales manager for Canada. "Dealers have so many bolt-on systems these days," he says, "they often have several products that don't talk to each other. Our software can replace all that with an integrated approach."

Salesboom

On the east coast, the folks at Salesboom market their CRM program, *Automotive Edition*, as a service not a product. The program is a tight integration of marketing and sales tools which work with a dealer's website, e-mail program and phone system. Called 'Software as a Service' (SaaS), it's based on cloud computing which CEO and co-founder Troy Muise says is taking over the software world. "Cloud computing is the next generation of software tools. You build your own applications on my cloud on my network."

Traditional web-based software resides on a single server. Cloud computing is like grid computing and relies on sharing computing resources. The goal is to apply traditional super-computing power (normally used by military and research facilities) to perform tens of trillions of computations per second.

Although it's extremely powerful, *Automotive Edition* is very user-friendly. "Everyone knows how to fill out forms online," says Muise. "Configuring this software for your dealership is as simple as that. It all works with prompts and easy-to-edit webform-type pages with links and text boxes." Muise insists the product works well even when there's no IT manager. There's a pre-packaged version or you can tweak it yourself.

In effect, Salesboom.com rents you the software and provides a fully staffed training department to help. Upgrades are free and provided instantly to subscribers. For more information, visit **www.salesboom.com**.