What Your Lot Says in Public: California's CARS Act Arrives Thursday, and A.D.A.M. Goes and Looks Every Night

TelicX explains the new total-price rules, what its AI advisor A.D.A.M. can flag for Cali dealers each morning, and exactly what he will refuse to tell them.



PHOENIX, AZ, UNITED STATES, September 28, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- On October 1, California puts a price on the difference between what a dealership says out loud and what it actually means. This Thursday, the California Combating Auto Retail Scams Act becomes operative. It is short, it is specific, and it lands squarely on the part of a store the public can see.

> A.D.A.M. along with our Performance Agents will be relentless in the pursuit of helping dealers to recognize online pricing gaps. We will never stop helping our partners."
>
> *Brian Schwelling, CEO TelicX*

Three pieces matter most. The total price has to appear, clearly and conspicuously, in any advertisement that references a specific vehicle for sale, and in any ad that quotes a monetary amount or financing term for one. It also has to appear at least once in the first written response a store sends a customer about that vehicle. There is no grace period attached to that. Not five days. Not one. The duty arrives with the advertisement. A used vehicle sold or leased at retail for fifty thousand dollars or less now carries a three-day right to cancel, replacing the old two-day cancellation option a buyer used to purchase. And dealers have to keep the records that show they did all of it, for two years.

That is the spine of it, though not the whole law. What makes it interesting is not the rule. It is that most of the exposure sits in places nobody on the floor looks at twice: a unit sitting on the store's own website with no price on it, a number on a listing site that stopped matching the store's number three weeks ago.



[TelicX](https://telicx.com) built its AI advisor, A.D.A.M. (Adaptive Dealer Advisory Mind), to read a dealership's own numbers and coach every seat the way a seasoned operator would. As of this week, he also goes and looks at the lot's public face, every night, for California rooftops.

He knows what a store believes each car is worth, because he reads the store's own numbers. Then he looks at what the public can actually see about those same cars, on the store's own website and on the major listing sites, and he puts the two side by side. Where a retail unit is carrying no price, he says so the next morning. In California he applies no grace period to that, because the statute does not. Where an advertised price no longer matches the store's own number, he names the car, names where he saw the stale figure, and names the gap. Where a unit that is ready to sell is invisible, with no photos or no listing the store's own reporting can see, he calls it what it is: money sitting still.

The findings go to somebody who can act. Not a notification nobody owns, but the manager who owns that lane, climbing the chain when a seat is empty, with dealer leadership copied. And every TelicX rooftop also has a Performance Agent, an experienced retail automotive professional who sees the same finding, knows which store leaves fresh units unpriced over a long weekend, and asks about it again next week. A coach that never sleeps and an operator who never lets it go.

Then there is the part TelicX cares about more, which is what A.D.A.M. will not do.

He will never tell a dealer they are compliant. Not once, not in passing, not if they ask him directly. He also will never tell them they are in violation. Those are conclusions for a store's attorney and its compliance vendor, and he is neither.

There is also a great deal he simply cannot see. He cannot see a store's first written response to a customer, which is where a good part of this law actually lives. He cannot see the finance office, or what was said about an add-on being optional. He cannot see whether the cancellation disclosure was delivered or whether the required notice is on page one. And a car that has already sold leaves his view, so a sold car still advertised is exactly the kind of exposure he will miss.

TelicX builds that boundary into the product on purpose. When A.D.A.M. is asked about a regulation, he answers from the government's own published text, cites the source every single time, and tells the user to go read it themselves and confirm it with counsel. The daily note to

the store carries the same statement, every time. Where the law is strict, so is he. Where it is silent, he goes back to being a merchandising coach.

A vendor who tells a dealer their software makes them compliant is selling something. An early warning that says exactly what it can and cannot see is worth more, because a dealer can actually trust what it does say.

The statements about the Act above reflect the chaptered text of Senate Bill 766, Chapter 354, Statutes of 2025, operative October 1, 2026, and the California Department of Motor Vehicles publication on the Act. Dealers should read those sources themselves and confirm any regulatory question with their own counsel or compliance vendor.

The nightly watch is live for TelicX client rooftops in California and is included at no additional cost. The company's full plain-language explanation of the Act, including everything A.D.A.M. will and will not tell a store, is published at [telicx.com/insights](https://telicx.com/insights/what-your-lot-says-in-public/).

TelicX is the company behind A.D.A.M. (Adaptive Dealer Advisory Mind), an AI advisory platform for franchised automotive dealerships. A.D.A.M. reads each rooftop's own performance and coaches the store in plain language on where to focus and what it is worth, working alongside the dealer's existing tools and people. Every rooftop's data is fully isolated.

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