



In 1905, Charles Howard opened a Buick dealership in San Francisco. At the time, far more people in the hilly town depended on horses than on cars.

The next year—when the 1906 earthquake devastated San Francisco—Howard used his showroom cars as rescue vehicles when horses were injured or refused to go down the city's burning streets.

Before the big quake, the city's horse-loving public was largely disinterested in Howard's Buicks. After the quake, people understood the value of cars.

Still ... it would take some doing on Howard's part before he could convince people to actually buy such "newfangled" contraptions. When he decided to take horses in trade, Howard's car-selling business improved. That also helped him to improve his horse-valuing skills.

Then ... Howard realized something else. Before his business could *really* take-off, he'd have to teach people how to drive.

This 1906 image depicts Charles Howard, in San Francisco, with his Buick racer. Do you see the other vehicle on the street? It's a horse-drawn carriage.

Credits:

Image online, courtesy Michael C. Howard (Charles Howard's son) and the Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation.

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