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DISRUPTORS DISRUPTED / P4

Shares of the online-only
used car retailers slump

DIGITALISATION OF FINANCE / P17

Is the market moving away from
showroom finance completely?

TOYOTA AYGO X / P34

New crossover city car to
boost Toyota's fortunes

AM AWARDS HAT-TRICK

ARNOLD CLARK DOES THE TRIPLE • FULL AWARDS COVERAGE STARTS ON P37



EDITOR'S LETTER

It was fantastic to see so many motor retail industry figures in one place at the AM Awards dinner this month.

Let me personally congratulate all the winners of the AM Awards and also praise all those whose entries were shortlisted by the panel of experienced judges. It's a considerable achievement to get on the finalists list. All are great businesses and individuals.

Two of the awards are particular delights for me, personally. After the uncertainty that Lookers endured under the eye of the FCA until the authority concluded its investigation in 2021, I'm delighted to recognise its new chief executive Mark Raban as Business Leader of the Year for the cultural and process changes he and his team have driven.

And similarly, I'm proud we recognised Andrew Iveson as DP/GM of the Year for his work leading an MBO and securing a future for a dealership whose entire existence was threatened by the exit of Mitsubishi, its partner of 30 years.

I do love our awards evening's ability to celebrate successes and create a positive mood at a time when tough conditions prevail. Plus it raised more than £5,000 for our industry charity Ben, which will be put to great use supporting automotive industry workers and their families during tough times.



OUR WRITING TEAM



Tim Rose
Editor



Tom Sharpe
News and
features editor

CONTENTS

37

Awards



UP FRONT

- 04 News insight
- 06 News digest
- 08 Market intelligence
- 14 Opinions

TALENT

- 85 People on the move
- 86 Eight questions to... Jonathan Rogan, head of business at Bowker BMW

SPOTLIGHT: DIGITALISATION OF FINANCE

- 18 Move away from showroom finance
COVID-prompted rapid ramping up by dealerships of their online capabilities is having an impact on the sale of vehicle finance
- 23 Impact of interest rate increases
The Bank of England's counter-inflationary measures could mean problems ahead for some dealerships
- 29 The 'digital' business manager
Savvy prospective customers are increasing going online. We explore how this will affect the role of the business manager



SHOWROOM

- 34 Toyota Aygo X
- 36 Long-term report

ONLINE DISRUPTORS NOW THE DISRUPTED

At launch, the biggest digital-only used car retailers were the subject of huge valuations, but in recent months their share prices have slumped

Has the online used car retail bubble burst or have the UK's established car retailers' disrupted the disruptors with their ability to evolve and adapt to cater for the digital car buyer?

Zeus Capital market analyst Mike Allen suggests the share price slump at the biggest global players in a sector containing brands such as Carmax (down 27.7% YTD), Carvana (-82.8% YTD), Cazoo (-80.2% YTD) and Auto1 (-61.1% YTD), may be attributed to impatient investors.

Some could be getting anxious to see a return as a cost-of-living crisis feeds fears of faltering consumer confidence and possible recession.

UK incumbent Cazoo has now lost 86.9% of its initial \$7 billion (£5.6bn) market value since its August 2021 New York Stock Exchange listing, with share prices down from \$9.38 (£7.69) to \$1.23 (£1) at the time of writing.

Elsewhere, Dennis Publishing's Autovia division announced that Buyacar would cease operating as an online car retail platform – instead focussing on lead generation – while speculation grew that Carzam may be headed for a market exit.

Commenting on the sector's listed online retail operations, Allen said: "The likes of Carvana and Cazoo have had huge valuations and attracted huge sums of investment and that applies huge pressure to deliver results, but the sector doesn't stand still and wait five years for you to come good."

"Investors get impatient. The economic outlook is changing, and the mood of investors has gone from a 'risk on' situation to 'risk off' in recent months, leading to a change of attitude when it comes to online car retail."

Allen added: "Will they ultimately fail? Perhaps, but with the amount of money backing these businesses it is unlikely to be this year or next."



**“TRADITIONAL
RETAILERS
HAVE MORE
TOUCHPOINTS AND
MORE INFRASTRUCTURE
BUILT INTO
THEIR MODEL
MIKE ALLEN, ZEUS CAPITAL**

GROWTH AT WHAT COST?

Cazoo founder and chief executive Alex Chesterman told *The Times* newspaper that "nothing Cazoo-specific" had knocked share prices, citing "irrational fear" in the stock market for their fall in value.

But, as it succeeds in growing its market share, Cazoo continues to struggle to improve its profitability in a market where most retailers have been reaping the rewards of record used car margins.

A recent Q1 trading update revealed revenues up 159% year-on-year to a record £295m after sales volumes rose 102% (to 19,713). Yet gross profit per unit (GPU) declined 19% to £124 and Cazoo's overall gross profit declined 2% to £2m.

The result came less than a month after Cazoo reported seeing a "clear path for significant retail GPU improvement" from its online used car sales after reporting a £550m loss for 2021,

targeting GPU to £900 this year, with a longer-term goal of reaching £3,000pu.

It was also followed by a report detailing the potential risks and pitfalls of its online car retail and vehicle subscription model – submitted to the US's Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) – in which Cazoo conceded that it cannot guarantee it will "achieve profit at all".

In its Q1 trading update, Chesterman said he was "extremely pleased" with the business's record Q1 revenues and unit sales and highlighted plans to ramp up reconditioning capacity to deliver further growth and "allow us to continue our progress towards our long-term market share ambitions".

Cazoo – already active in the UK, France and Germany and set to expand into Italy and Spain this year – saw its used car sales rise 233% to 49,853 in 2021. It has reiterated a target of achieving revenues of £2bn on the back of 100,000 used car sales in 2022 on the way to a long-term target of £15bn in revenues.

Chief financial officer Stephen Morana said its Q1 GPU was impacted by investments made in the second half of last year. He added: "We expect a significant improvement in our UK retail GPU in Q2 and throughout the rest of the year as we start to see the benefits of these investments."



FAILING TAILWINDS

Many of the sector's biggest players expect the unprecedented tailwinds of appreciating used car values, that have produced record used car margins and profit for the sector's established players, to combine with the cost-of-living crisis to make the market far tougher as 2021 progresses.

Motorpoint chief executive Mark Carpenter said: "For the first time since COVID, we're seeing normal





Alex Chesterman said 'irrational fear' was behind Cazoo's stock market decline

levels of depreciation returning, with stock typically losing between 1.5% and 2% of its value per month."

Another franchised car retail group boss told AM: "The economic fundamentals have to come into play at some point in time".

Allen suggested that traditional retailers – and possibly cinch, with its backing from owner Constellation Automotive – could be better placed to deliver sustainable growth in a more challenging market.

Allen said: "Traditional retailers have more touchpoints and more infrastructure built into their model. That gives them the chance to easily save time, make efficiencies and make the whole process slicker.

"They've also got the premises where customers can get comfortable with the idea of buying that big ticket item."

He added: "What were Cazoo doing differently when they launched? Really, they were delivering cars to customers in a branded van.

"Nothing stands still in motor retail,



“THE PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE THAT WANT TO BUY A CAR WHOLLY ONLINE IS TINY. THAT IS THE ULTIMATE FLAW IN AN ONLINE-ONLY MODEL

ROBERT FORRESTER, VERTU

and I think Cazoo succeeded in winding a lot of people up so when COVID hit many said 'right, we're investing in digital retail and taking them on'."

Vertu Motors claims to be the first car retailer to have launched the UK's first end-to-end car retail process.

Its recently published 2021/22 financial results revealed that it had leveraged "sector tailwinds" to deliver a 41.9% rise in turnover (to £3.62bn) and 228% rise in adjusted pre-tax profits to (£80.7m) as its used car gross profit per unit reached £1,763.

WHAT CUSTOMERS WANT

Vertu chief executive Robert Forrester remains far from convinced that consumer demand for online retail is sufficient to guarantee any online-only retailer a big enough share of the market.

Just 900 of the 89,000 used cars Vertu sold in 2021 were done so completely online. "They are the people that bought end-to-end online with no intervention from us, and that

number has doubled year-on-year to get to that point," Forrester said.

Vertu Motors sold 4,300 cars where a £99 deposit was left to secure the vehicle online, but Forrester said that "most came in for a test drive before they took the car from us".

According to research by EY, 61% of car buyers want a test drive at a convenient location, while 50% want to experience the vehicle "hands on" at a dealership or experience centre.

Forrester said: "The percentage of people that want to buy a car wholly online is tiny. That is the ultimate flaw in an online-only retail model.

"Online retail has an extremely low online conversion ratio and the only way you're going to turn online enquiries into online sales is to either spend an awful lot of money on marketing or be very cheap."

Cazoo's accelerating scale and growing profile could yet see it deliver success across Europe.

The future of its UK rival Carzam will also be watched closely.

Last November, the online retailer, launched with a big fanfare by Big Motoring World founder Peter Waddell, seemed was set to propel itself into its "next chapter" after raising £112m in its first external fundraising round. It claimed its first-year revenues (2021) were on track to total around £150m on the back of 13,500 used car sales.

Yet, after barely a year in the role, its chief executive, Kirk O'Callaghan, became the fourth director to leave the business this year when his departure from the business was recorded on the Companies House website in April.

That was just days before Waddell also ceased being a director, although Companies House shows he remains a large shareholder.

And *The Times* newspaper reported that the Peterborough-based retailer 'might be running out of road' after its sources suggested attempts to find a buyer were not bearing fruit.

Furthermore, while online-only UK car retailers Cazoo and cinch prize their 4.8 and 4.7 ratings on Trustpilot – from 20,498 and 13,366 review, respectively – Carzam has seen its reputation dented by a string of damning online reviews.

Carzam's rating is 4.2 and on a rapid decline, with 51 of the first 60 reviews posted in May attracting a one-star score.

AM approached Carzam for a comment on the business' future, and its service issues, but received no response. **TOM SHARPE**

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* Latest July 2019-June 2020 ABC audited circulation: 11,031

THIS MONTH'S NEWS HIGH

APR

13

EXPANSION PLANS FOR BIG MOTORING WORLD

Big Motoring World aims to expand after growth investor Freshstream acquired an undisclosed stake in the business. The move comes six months after the business acquired Peterborough-based SW Car Supermarket. Freshstream's introduction as a key stakeholder heralds the exit of part-owner and former Cox Automotive president of international operations, John Bailey.

14

SANDICLIFFE HELPS STAFF FIGHT RISING COSTS

Family-owned Sandiccliffe told staff they will receive a special payment of £500 to help them cope with the rising cost of living. Managing director Paul Woodhouse told AM: "This bonus is only able to be paid because of the financial stability which their hard work generates."



20

MOTORPOINT HAS 'FURTHER FIREPOWER' AFTER SITE SALE

Motorpoint chief executive Mark Carpenter said the £5m sale of the used car supermarket group's Stockton site will provide the business with "further firepower" for growth. The PLC entered into a 25-year lease at an initial rent of £350,000 per annum after completing the sale-and-leaseback agreement.

25

USED CAR BUBBLE 'COULD BE DEFLATING'

Wholesale and retail used car values data providers indicated "signs of a market correction". Cox Automotive's latest AutoFocus publication indicated that the used car bubble "could be deflating" as marketing specialist Indicata sales director Jon Mitchell stated many retailers were seeing "a different side to the used market" in 2022.



26

VOLVO TAKES MINORITY STAKE IN CARWOW

Carwow attracted an investment from Volvo Cars, which has taken a minority stake of the online car sales marketplace through its venture capital arm, Volvo Cars Tech Fund. Lex Kerssemakers, chief commercial officer at Volvo Cars, said: "Our collaboration with carwow will help us and our retail partners grow volumes and reach our target of selling around half of our volume online by 2025."

VOLVO | CARWOW





INEOS UNVEILS TWO DOZEN FRANCHISED RETAILERS

Ineos Automotive revealed its 24 UK franchised retailers ahead of the Grenadier SUV's May launch, including AM100 dealer groups Cambria, Harwoods and Jardine. The manufacturer said its dealer on-boarding process would include an "intensive Ineos training programme for the sales agents and workshop technicians".

BRAYLEYS REPRESENTS HONDA AROUND THE CAPITAL



Brayleys completed the acquisition of Orpington Honda from Lookers, which has now exited Honda representation with the exception of its Belfast Honda motorcycles franchise. Brayleys now covers Honda's

retail operations around the M25 and is the Japanese brand's largest private franchisee with eight showrooms and 10 aftersales locations. Pictured is managing director Paul Brayley.

STELLANTIS AGREES SHARE NOW DEAL

Stellantis agreed a deal to acquire the Share Now car sharing mobility provider formed through a BMW and Mercedes-Benz joint venture. The manufacturer said the move would boost its bid to become a "car-sharing leader" with the addition of 14 major European cities and 10,000 vehicles to an existing car sharing fleet of 2,500 vehicles offered via its Free2move mobility solution.

ARNOLD CLARK'S 'EXCELLENT' 2021

Arnold Clark reported an "excellent" 2021 financial performance with revenues up 25% to £4.7bn as pre-tax profits rose 68% to £263m. Chief executive Eddie Hawthorne (right) told AM the group was now poised to expand its used car operations in England through the expansion of its newly-acquired Central Car Auctions business, new vehicle preparation sites and Click & Collect facilities. It will also open an EV Innovation Centre in Stafford.



CONSTELLATION GETS GO-AHEAD TO BUY MARSHALLS

BCA and cinch owner Constellation Automotive Group received the regulatory approvals required from the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to complete its acquisition of Marshall Motor Holdings. The takeover should be completed within 14 days with Constellation's Timothy Lampert and Matthew Kelly on the AM100 PLC's board as Alan Ferguson, Francesca Escery, Nicky Dulieu and Christopher Walkinshaw all exit.



26

28

MAY

3

9

11

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Claims inflation: how to mitigate costs to your business

Karen Reed, Motor Trade Director,
PIB Insurance Brokers



The rising cost of claims is due to a number of factors. These include Brexit, fuel shortages, the increased cost of energy, the continued impact of workforce absences due to COVID-19, vehicle technology, and environmental and legislative issues. More recently, Russia's invasion of Ukraine is impacting the global financial market.

Specifically, claims within automotive are being affected by delays in parts supply and increased costs. Parts for cars and commercial vehicles have been impacted by supply chain issues, in particular due to the shortage of semiconductor computer chips, and vehicles are often off the roads for months at a time if they are involved in an accident.

In addition, labour costs have risen. According to Allianz data*, in just the past year labour costs have risen 6.5%, repairs 6.6% and parts 9.1%.

These problems are affecting most vehicle manufacturers and, subsequently, retailers. It is vital that businesses mitigate costs in the event of a claim by doing the following:

- Notify your claims handler as soon as possible. This is paramount, and can mean the insurer can offer its services to a third party and reduce hire charges which are based on the current climate (for example, difficulties obtaining parts are driving up this element).

- Provide as much information as possible to allow your handler to act quickly. In the event of an accident, take pictures of the other party's registration and damage caused, make a note of the number of occupants.

- Gather video evidence such as CCTV which can help speed up settlement of your claim.

Delays in reporting an incident can mean lost opportunities to help, and a lengthier time to investigate an incident, which can drive up the cost of a claim even further.

To discuss your insurance cover and any concerns about the rising costs, please contact Karen e: Karen.Reed@pib-insurance.com; t: 07518 839613

*Source: Allianz motor claims inflation update

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NEW CAR MARKET

BUYERS LEAPFROG PHEVs AS BEVs MAKE BEST SENSE

Hybrids are being overtaken by battery electric vehicles more quickly as range anxiety dips

The fall of 15.8% for the month of April (and 5.4% year-to-date – YTD) is bad enough. But, for comparison, when one remembers that we were in lockdown for part of April 2021, the scale of the decline becomes clear.

The dreadful April figure has led the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) to reduce its full year registrations forecast from 1.89 million to 1.72 million units.

Of course, the three main factors behind the reduction in the forecast are well-known: the semiconductor shortage, the war in Ukraine and the decline in consumer confidence. Indeed, things are so bad we only need one more factor and the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse might start to think about saddling up.

Within the market, there have also been some dramatic shifts. Fleet sales are down by 25% YTD, as manufacturers, naturally, prioritised full-price retail sales. That will have two effects on consumers. The negative one is that anyone renting a car for a summer holiday will struggle to find a bargain, as

rental companies are paying far more for their cars (if they can get them at all). The positive one is the residual values should remain well above pre-pandemic levels, as an undersupply of new cars means strong demand for used ones.

The other big shift has been the continued rise of battery electric models (BEVs), whose biggest promoter is the price of fuel advertised outside every petrol station. BEVs have exactly doubled their market share to 14.4% so far this year.

Interestingly, sales of plug-in hybrids (PHEVs) have been static, and are now outsold 2:1 by BEVs. Long-term, it was always expected that BEVs would pull ahead of PHEVs, but the trend is accelerating more quickly than many forecasted. As the price premium for BEVs has fallen and ranges have increased, more people are deciding that going straight to BEV makes more sense (see chart below).

If you include mild hybrid in the figures, 51% of registrations YTD have been electrified in some form, which is a significant milestone. By the end of this year, BEVs alone will account for more than one-in-six registrations. How much they will accelerate

in 2023 and 2024 will depend on two factors. First, how quickly an effective charging network can be rolled out (recharge anxiety is now more important to potential buyers than range anxiety). Second, the steady decline in battery prices has stalled, which is not going the help uptake of electric vehicles.

Increasing demand for lithium is driving up prices, and sanctions on Russia are impacting the price of nickel, a major component of NMC (nickel manganese, cobalt) lithium-ion batteries. NMC batteries are still the most popular type for BEVs.

At a segment level, there is one traditional vehicle type that is largely succeeding where King Canute failed. Compact executive models, such as the BMW 3 Series, are still taking exactly the same market share as they did in the mid-1990s, when "Sport Utility" was a term familiar only to Americans.

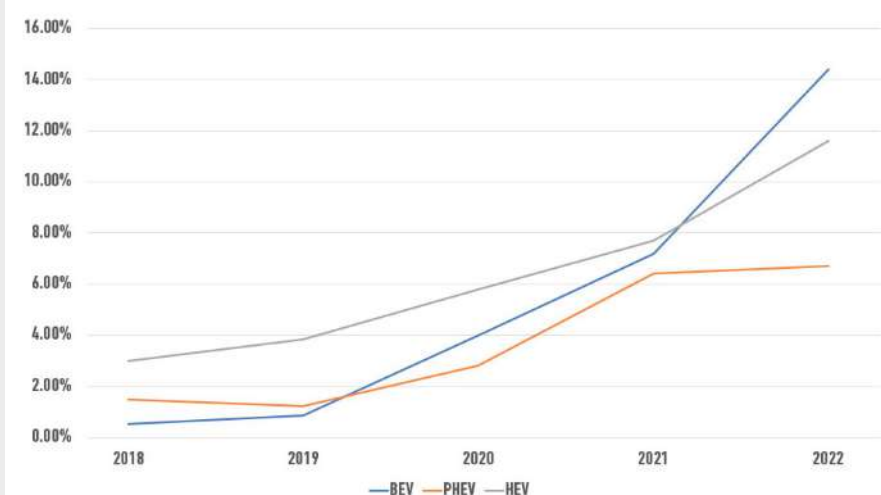
While the "Big Three" segments (supermini, small family and large/premium SUVs) continue to dominate the UK market, compact executive is easily the next biggest segment (and bigger than large family, executive and luxury segments combined). The attraction seems to be that they are compact: whereas buyers of large executive models like the E-Class may think they might as well go for an executive SUV and get even more space, compact executive buyers seem to value the relative agility of their saloons.

At a manufacturer level, Ford has retaken the top spot – it shows how much the market has shifted in the past couple of years that such a comment is even possible. Ford is also now predominantly a cross-over brand – the Puma and Kuga accounted for 50.3% of its sales YTD. Registrations of Ford hatchbacks have tanked: remarkably, the Focus is now being outsold by the Toyota Corolla.

In second place, Kia has slipped behind Ford by just 791 units YTD, but the company is currently well on course to beat its long-term goal of selling 100,000 cars per year. It is also worth noting that Kia's parent, Hyundai, is also doing much better. Hyundai is up by 51% YTD, and has overtaken Nissan to take 9th place. After a difficult period in 2019/2020, Hyundai is firmly on the road to recovery.

The biggest decline among the top 10 brands has been Volkswagen, which is down by 32%. VW has hardly fallen out of favour, rather it is a combination of scarce chips going to more profitable Audis and

MARKET SHARE OF ELECTRIFIED VEHICLES



SPONSOR'S COMMENT



By Richard Jones,
managing director,
Black Horse

The motor industry is full of facts and statistics that purport to tell you everything about the market, but I

suspect that most of you are like me and want to support numeric analysis with getting out and about (as we now thankfully can) and seeing the world as it is.

With March registration figures now in the rear-view mirror I'm finding myself increasingly benchmarking the cars and vans I see on the road against the updates I receive, to complete the picture.

New plate (22 plate) cars are something we all tend to look out for and the number of these now gliding by silently in electric and hybrid format, is much more noticeable as every peak registration period passes.

The statistics firmly back this up with registrations of battery electric vehicles (BEVs) this March reaching nearly 40,000 and exceeding the entire annual level of three years ago.

This said, the level of used cars continues to hugely dominate our streets and motorways, with older cars more evident as supply constraints and cost to consumers keep them firmly in play. With the average used age now exceeding eight years, there are still nearly 10 million vehicles out there dating back to 2008 and earlier.

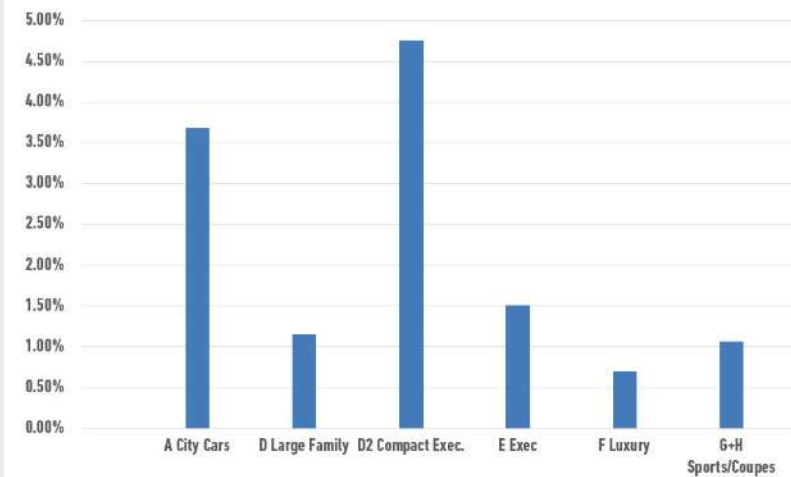
Against this diverse backdrop I find myself considering the drivers and owners of these vehicles.

There is clearly a gulf between the cost of the latest electric cruiser and an older, more modest family runabout. But, at a basic level, most customers simply want to travel safely, reliably and comfortably from A to B.

At Black Horse we are committed to providing them with the funding and products they need to meet their aspirations and improve their range of choice.

"THERE ARE STILL NEARLY 10 MILLION VEHICLES OUT THERE DATING BACK TO 2008 AND EARLIER"

AFVS MARKET SHARE BY SEGMENT



* Excludes the three major segments of supermini, small family, and premium/large SUVs

Porsches, and VW prioritising margins over volume (VW used to be as happy as anyone to engage in discounting for volume).

Just outside the top 10, MG continues its stellar performance. Market share has doubled YTD to 3.0% and, just as encouragingly, its best-selling model is its range-topping (at least for now) HS C-segment crossover. The HS is currently outselling established models like the VW Tiguan and Peugeot 3008.

Former MG sibling, JLR is not faring so well. It is no surprise that Jaguar has fallen by 38%, but it was not in the script that Land Rover should have fallen by an even bigger 44%. It is now becoming clearer that the Discovery 5 is joining

the Jaguar XE as JLR models that should never have been signed off – the investment was basically money down the drain. The Discovery has sold just 581 units YTD, or 3.8% of total Land Rover sales. To develop one failed model is unfortunate, to develop two looks like carelessness.

At a model level, the most striking statistic is that seven of the top 10 best sellers are crossovers. Only the Corsa (at 1), Mini (5) and A-Class (10) are carrying the banner for hatchbacks. Meanwhile, the UK's best-seller for the whole of the 2010s, the Fiesta, is down in a lowly 21st place YTD. The Fiesta was also outsold by the Tesla Model 3, the UK's best-selling saloon – strange times, indeed. **DAVID FRANCIS**



NEW CAR REGISTRATIONS

April decline prompts 2022 forecast rethink

New car sales were down 15.8% in April 2022 versus April 2021, with the month ending at a total of 119,167 registrations.

Society for Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) data shows the decline was driven primarily by a 25,736 unit plummet (33% down) in large fleet registrations as many car brands, unable to supply enough cars to match demand, continue to prioritise the more profitable private consumer segment, which helped this market segment achieve a 2,949 unit increase (5% up).

Blaming the ongoing impact of supply chain constraints and broader macro-economic factors such as rising inflation and global political uncertainties, the SMMT's usual April reforecast downgraded its market outlook for 2022. That followed the worst March plate-change market since 1998.

It now expects 1.72 million new cars to be registered during 2022, down from the 1.89m prediction it made in January. That would still represent a 4.5% rise on 2021's total.

1 FORD

The historic market-leader is back at the top of the table because it was the only brand to reach five-figure registrations in April, thanks to its Puma and Kuga models. YTD Ford has just knocked Kia down to second spot by only 91 units.



2 HYUNDAI

This brand is on a charge, helped by electric models such as Ioniq 5 and popular ICE cars such as Tucson. April volume growth of 65% helped put Hyundai 51% ahead YTD versus 2021.



	April					Year-to-date					
	Marque	2022	% market share	2021	% market share	% change	2022	% market share	2021	% market share	% change
1	Ford	10,060	8.44	12,959	9.15	-22.37	39,798	7.41	49,031	8.65	-18.83
	Audi	9,860	8.27	11,154	7.88	-11.60	37,059	6.90	40,557	7.15	-8.62
	Kia	7,588	6.37	7,529	5.32	0.78	39,707	7.40	27,894	4.92	42.35
	BMW	7,491	6.29	8,757	6.19	-14.46	35,404	6.60	40,701	7.18	-13.01
	Volkswagen	7,315	6.14	13,323	9.41	-45.09	33,732	6.28	49,542	8.74	-31.91
	Mercedes-Benz	6,543	5.49	8,668	6.12	-24.52	31,436	5.86	40,368	7.12	-22.13
2	Hyundai	6,518	5.47	3,958	2.80	64.68	26,257	4.89	17,380	3.06	51.08
	Toyota	6,098	5.12	7,892	5.57	-22.73	33,915	6.32	31,675	5.59	7.07
	Vauxhall	6,042	5.07	8,972	6.34	-32.66	29,940	5.58	33,798	5.96	-11.41
	Nissan	5,770	4.84	5,036	3.56	14.58	21,811	4.06	26,122	4.61	-16.50
	Peugeot	4,989	4.19	6,756	4.77	-26.15	21,524	4.01	22,461	3.96	-4.17
	Land Rover	4,523	3.80	6,374	4.50	-29.04	15,124	2.82	26,925	4.75	-43.83
	Mini	3,997	3.35	3,116	2.20	28.27	15,096	2.81	13,910	2.45	8.53
	Škoda	3,828	3.21	5,834	4.12	-34.38	14,380	2.68	20,076	3.54	-28.37
	Volvo	3,006	2.52	4,321	3.05	-30.43	14,165	2.64	18,285	3.22	-22.53
	Honda	2,860	2.40	2,231	1.58	28.19	9,825	1.83	6,751	1.19	45.53
	MG	2,714	2.28	2,146	1.52	26.47	16,552	3.08	8,307	1.46	99.25
	Citroën	2,451	2.06	2,641	1.87	-7.19	9,978	1.86	11,246	1.98	-11.28
	Renault	2,345	1.97	2,361	1.67	-0.68	10,947	2.04	10,427	1.84	4.99
	Mazda	2,254	1.89	2,243	1.58	0.49	8,968	1.67	7,545	1.33	18.86
	Dacia	2,155	1.81	1,136	0.80	89.70	7,502	1.40	4,412	0.78	70.04
	Seat	1,916	1.61	4,144	2.93	-53.76	8,743	1.63	15,604	2.75	-43.97
	Fiat	1,782	1.50	1,271	0.90	40.20	7,826	1.46	4,484	0.79	74.53
	Suzuki	1,383	1.16	1,315	0.93	5.17	6,761	1.26	5,218	0.92	29.57
	Jaguar	1,119	0.94	1,993	1.41	-43.85	4,430	0.83	7,121	1.26	-37.79
	Porsche	1,074	0.90	1,212	0.86	-11.39	5,354	1.00	4,143	0.73	29.23
	Cupra	960	0.81	528	0.37	81.82	2,855	0.53	1,452	0.26	96.63
	Lexus	514	0.43	975	0.69	-47.28	3,655	0.68	4,368	0.77	-16.32
	Polestar	409	0.34	318	0.22	28.62	1,847	0.34	1,240	0.22	48.95
	Jeep	180	0.15	264	0.19	-31.82	773	0.14	1,116	0.20	-30.73
	SsangYong	173	0.15	105	0.07	64.76	568	0.11	344	0.06	65.12
	Abarth	127	0.11	159	0.11	-20.13	408	0.08	700	0.12	-41.71
	Bentley	127	0.11	118	0.08	7.63	565	0.11	424	0.07	33.25
	DS	124	0.10	47	0.03	163.83	828	0.15	462	0.08	79.22
	smart	116	0.10	127	0.09	-8.66	561	0.10	534	0.09	5.06
	Alfa Romeo	101	0.08	99	0.07	2.02	496	0.09	415	0.07	19.52
	Subaru	72	0.06	128	0.09	-43.75	385	0.07	438	0.08	-12.10
	Maserati	62	0.05	53	0.04	16.98	256	0.05	210	0.04	21.90
Genesis	59	0.05	0	0.00	0.00	149	0.03	0	0.00	0.00	
Alpine	23	0.02	16	0.01	43.75	101	0.02	58	0.01	74.14	
Mitsubishi	0	0.00	716	0.51	0.00	0	0.00	2,544	0.45	0.00	
Other British	178	0.15	214	0.15	-16.82	817	0.15	822	0.14	-0.61	
Other Imports	261	0.22	374	0.26	-30.21	16,229	3.02	7,998	1.41	102.91	
Total	119,167		141,583		-15.83	536,727		567,108		-5.36	



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FINANCE OFFERS

No let-up in roll-back on Q2 offers

The continued issues around new car supply continue to apply downward pressure on retail finance offers in the UK, according to the latest AM data.

Data from 250 car manufacturer representative examples shows that, while average monthly payments have remained relatively flat at nearly £400 a month quarter-on-quarter (QOQ), the number of 0% offers have dropped by more than 30% in Q2.

The average level of deposit contributions to help incentivise sales has also rolled back by 20% to just less than £1,000.

Retailers have been taking forward orders for anything that can't be delivered from stock, but AM understands that even placing forward orders is becoming more problematic as factory allocation has become increasingly difficult to predict.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) has downgraded the new car registrations forecast for 2022 and expects supply to be affected for the remainder of the year. So, it makes sense that financial support on retail offers is dialled back.

That said, there are still positives for those looking to buy before the end of June. Average deposit levels have continued to fall QOQ by 30%. This was after an 11% drop in Q1, so manufacturers are clearly conscious of the cost of living crisis and making new car offers more accessible.

HYUNDAI AND RENAULT STAND APART

Data shows models from Hyundai and Renault having the best value for those seeking an offer in Q2.

Hyundai's Bayon small SUV looks particularly tempting with one of the lowest priced monthly payments at £141 on 0% finance over two years.

Hyundai is predicting that the global semiconductor shortage will ease from Q2, allowing vehicle production to rebound in the first half of this year.

That confidence in supply may suggest why the Korean brand is so prominently represented when looking at the models, including SUVs and hybrid options, with the lowest monthly payments and lowest rate APR offers. Hyundai makes up half of the top 10 models with the lowest monthly payments.

Renault is dominating the low rate finance game in Q2 by making up nearly the entire table of best deals at 0% finance. That's across its range.

Electric vehicles continue to be a bright spot in bucking sales trends in 2022. Citroën's e-Berlingo, e-C4, and e-SpaceTourer are all available with some of the lowest customer deposit levels at £2,000. The Mini Electric is also available in Q2 for the same deposit. Peugeot's e-Traveller MPV has the most generous deposit contribution with a £6,750 discount.



SEARCH FOR FINANCE OFFERS

For a searchable list of manufacturers' finance offers, go to am-online.com/offers

TOP FINANCE DEALS FOR RETAIL BUYERS

Model	Finance type	Deposit	Term	Monthly payment	Final payment	APR	Offer ends
Top 10 models by lowest monthly payments							
Hyundai i20 SE Connect 1.0 T-GDi 100PS 48 Volt Hybrid Petrol	PCP	£5,800	36	£133.51	£8,421.48	4.90%	30/06/22
Hyundai Bayon SE Connect 1.0 Petrol T-GDi 48 Volt Mild Hybrid 100PS	PCP	£6,200	24	£141.22	£10,942.56	0.00%	30/06/22
Hyundai i10 SE Connect 1.0 MPI 67PS Petrol	PCP	£4,400	24	£144.87	£7,098.36	6.20%	30/06/22
Hyundai Kona Hybrid SE Connect Hybrid 1.6 GDi 141PS	PCP	£7,300	36	£147.03	£12,560.70	6.20%	30/06/22
Toyota Aygo X 5 Door Hatchback Edge 1.0 Petrol (72hp) Juniper Blue Bi-tone (Metallic Paint)	PCP	£3,338.75	42	£159.00	£8,077.50	3.90%	30/06/22
MG3 Excite 1.5 VTI-tech 5-speed Manual	PCP	£2,007.79	48	£159.00	£4,584.90	3.90%	30/06/22
Fiat Panda 1.0 Mild Hybrid City Life	PCP	£3,490	48	£163.00	£4,545.00	6.90%	30/06/22
Citroën C3 Sense PureTech 83 S&S Manual	PCP	£3,984.99	48	£169.00	£6,888.00	6.90%	30/06/22
Hyundai Kona Premium 1.0 T-GDi 48V Mild Hybrid	PCP	£7,300	36	£177.51	£11,246.52	6%	30/06/22
Volkswagen up! 1.0 3-dr 65PS S/S manual	PCP	£2,320.87	48	£179.00	£4,343.40	6%	30/06/22
Top 10 0% offers at lowest monthly payment							
Hyundai Bayon SE Connect 1.0 Petrol T-GDi 48 Volt Mild Hybrid 100PS	PCP	£6,200	24	£141.22	£10,942.56	0.00%	30/06/22
Renault Captur E-Tech Hybrid Evolution 145 Auto	PCP	£5,088	24	£184.00	£15,292.00	0%	30/06/22
Renault Captur Evolution TCe 140	PCP	£5,752	24	£199.00	£13,168.00	0%	30/06/22
Renault Zoe GT Line+ R135 EV 50 Rapid Charge	PCP	£9,360	24	£199.00	£16,360.00	0.00%	30/06/22
Renault Clio E-Tech Hybrid 145 Auto	PCP	£4,523	24	£214.00	£12,836.00	0.00%	30/06/22
Renault Clio Techno TCe 90	PCP	£4,544	24	£219.00	£10,095.00	0.00%	30/06/22
Suzuki Vitara 1.4 Boosterjet Mild Hybrid SZT	PCP	£4,369	48	£229.00	£8,388.00	0.00%	30/06/22
Renault Arkana E-Tech Hybrid S Edition 145 Auto	PCP	£7,177	24	£264.00	£16,482.00	0.00%	30/06/22
Renault Arkana S Edition TCe 140 Auto EDC	PCP	£7,072	24	£274.00	£15,047.00	0.00%	30/06/22
Renault Kadij Techno TCe 140	PCP	£6,845	24	£274.00	£14,474.00	0.00%	30/06/22
Top 10 models by lowest deposit							
Dacia Sandero Sandero Stepway Essential TCe 100 Bi-fuel	PCP	£184.00	48	£184.00	£6,284.00	5.90%	30/06/22
Dacia Sandero Comfort TCe 90	PCP	£191.00	48	£191.00	£6,033.00	5.90%	30/06/22
Dacia Duster Essential TCe 100 Bi-Fuel 4x2	PCP	£195.00	48	£195.00	£7,994.00	5.90%	30/06/22
Dacia Jogger Essential TCe 110	PCP	£204.00	48	£204.00	£8,124.00	5.90%	30/06/22
Nissan Micra IG-T 92 Manual KIIRO	PCP	£296.30	36	£296.26	£7,966.62	5.49%	30/06/22
Nissan Juke DIG-T 114 Manual N-Connecta	PCP	£1,500.00	36	£345.24	£11,393.00	5%	30/06/22
Citroën e-Berlingo Feel 100Kw Electric	PCP	£2,000.00	48	£456.96	£10,640.00	6.90%	30/06/22
Citroën e-C4 Sense 100kW Electric	PCP	£2,000.00	48	£379.13	£14,179.00	6.90%	30/06/22
Mini Electric Level 1	PCP	£2,000.00	48	£380.61	£12,146.64	6.90%	30/06/22
Citroën e-SpaceTourer Business Edition 50kWh Automatic	PCP	£2,000.00	48	£393.23	£15,770.00	6.90%	30/06/22
Top 10 models with highest deposit contribution							
BMW 840i M Sport Gran Coupe	PCP	£8,659.00	48	£717.25	£26,055.40	4.90%	30/22/22
Peugeot e-Traveller Active Standard Electric 50 KWH 136	PCP	£5,507.58	48	£549.00	£18,542.00	6.90%	04/07/22
Jaguar F-TYPE Coupe P450 R-Dynamic RWD	PCP	£10,698.00	48	£799.00	£27,281.00	5.90%	30/06/22
Jaguar F-TYPE Convertible P450 R-Dynamic RWD	PCP	£18,427.00	48	£749.00	£27,281.00	6%	30/06/22
Renault Captur E-Tech Hybrid Evolution 145 Auto	PCP	£5,088.00	24	£184.00	£15,292.00	0%	30/06/22
VW Arteon Shooting Brake R-Line 2.0 TSI 190PS 7-speed DSG	PCP	£3,490.32	48	£515.00	£14,227.20	5.60%	30/06/22
VW Arteon R-Line 2.0 TSI 190PS 7-speed DSG	PCP	£3,515.48	48	£505.00	£13,634.10	5.60%	30/06/22
Volvo XC90 B5 Core All Wheel Drive Automatic	PCP	£8,495.53	48	£599.00	£23,366.25	6.50%	30/06/22
VW Passat Estate SEL 2.0 TDI 150PS 5 door	PCP	£3,436.10	48	£449.00	£11,034.00	5.60%	30/06/22
Audi A5 Sportback Sport 35 TFSI 150 PS S tronic	PCP	£3,791.23	48	£539.00	£13,922.25	6.90%	30/06/22

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CREATING OODLES OF CAR BUYING CONFIDENCE

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VIEWPOINT



HOW TO ENSURE AR CUSTOMERS COME TO NO 'HARM'

TARA WILLIAMS is chief risk and compliance officer, AutoProtect Group



DON'T OVERLOOK HUMAN FACTOR IN THESE TIMES OF MAJOR CHANGE

ANWEN ROBINSON is general manager and senior vice-president for the UK & Ireland, Infor

➔ On December 3, 2021, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) issued a press release: "FCA proposes stronger requirements on oversight of appointed representatives (ARs)."

It heralded the start of a consultation that the regulator noted focused on "improving the appointed representative regime and tackling harm from this model."

The consultation closed in early March. There is clearly momentum for change in the AR and very broadly introducer appointed representative (IAR) models alike.

In 1986, the AR model was created to allow self-employed representatives to engage in regulated activities without having to be authorised. Over time, the model has broadened, something we see in motor retailing, where FCA-authorised principal firms provided AR status to offer finance and/or insurance products/services to a broad range of retailers for whom they have oversight responsibility.

The FCA's assessment of "harm" was summarised by clear evidence that principals had more complaints per £1 million of revenue than non-principals. The position was particularly apparent where principals were of a smaller scale.

Looking further, principals were often unclear about their regulatory

responsibilities for their ARs and provided insufficient oversight.

The situation was exacerbated by inadequate controls for regulated activities for which they have accepted responsibility. In short, things were too "light-touch".

THE DIRECTION OF TRAVEL

For principals, such as AutoProtect Group, the FCA has re-emphasised our full responsibility (including any liabilities that might arise) to ensure that our ARs are fit and proper and comply with all FCA rules.

To fulfil these responsibilities, principals will be required to be far more hands-on in their oversight duties, evidenced by the supply of far more reported information on a broad list of criteria.

At a high level, this includes; the AR's business background, revenues, complaints record, details on regulated and non-regulated activities, financial arrangements between principal and AR, annual reviews of AR senior management's fitness and propriety and aspects of ARs' business and activities.

There can be no doubt that the proposals will require significantly more time, effort and cost for retailers. It will also mean that principals, as the regulator recognises, will require sufficient resources to maintain the "adequate" controls required.

Indeed the FCA references the need for principals to have the necessary people, processes, technology, facilities and information and, by implication, financial backing to oversee the AR's activities and potential liabilities.

At AutoProtect, we have the resources and backing to fulfil the FCA's remit and, as always, we will ensure our retail clients are kept abreast of the changes required.

➔ Change has certainly been a never-ending stream through the automotive industry. As Ferdinand Porsche once said: "Change is easy. Improvement is far more difficult."

The transformation triggered by governments, consumer behaviours, geopolitical factors and technological advances is touching every aspect of the way cars are designed, built, sold and consumed.

This seismic change can be instituted only by a qualified and motivated workforce. HR professionals face a task developing a strategy that strengthens their employers' brands while also embracing ceaseless change.

Ability to adapt quickly is a key capability at all levels. Linear hierarchies, old role models, classic role responsibilities were designed for traditional businesses. With digitalisation and CASE (connectivity, autonomous, sharing/subscription and electrification) transformation everything changes.

■ As cars become more like software products with continuous improvements, OEMs must compete with software firms and may struggle to recruit enough specialists to drive the transition.

■ The growth of e-mobility destroys some jobs and creates some different ones. E-mobility vehicles will need fewer parts. More than 50% of the classic supply chain for propulsion and transmission will be phased out over time.

■ At the same time, e-mobility presents an opportunity for business-driven project managers with expertise, as new battery production plants and engineering solutions using alternative power sources are developed. While automotive companies may need

"ABILITY TO ADAPT QUICKLY IS A KEY CAPABILITY AT ALL LEVELS"

to downsize, they face a rising skills gap in strategic areas at the same time.

Job attraction is no longer determined by salary alone. Automotive companies must find the right mix of incentives, a rich experience, digital technologies and flexibility to foster loyalty.

Look to sectors such as the IT and software-based service industries. The employee experience starts with pay that is increasingly tied to team performance, rather than individuals. It also includes balanced working hours, freedom and the ability to make important decisions.

Automotive companies also have to use their marketing and product strategy skills to become sought-after employer brands able to fend off the attraction of other sectors. Fundamental building blocks are decent pay and a rich digital experience. But these alone are not enough. A commitment to the products and employees, a clear strategy, and nourishment of employees' sense of belonging are vital ingredients. Once a sound employee development strategy is in place, small details can make all the difference.

Automotive is entering a brave new world, an age of artificial intelligence and robotics in earnest. But human factors, which have sometimes been overlooked in the past, can make the difference.

"PRINCIPALS WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE FAR MORE HANDS-ON IN THEIR OVERSIGHT DUTIES"



DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LEEDS AND MILTON KEYNES IS £186.68

PROFESSOR JIM SAKER is director of the Centre for Automotive Management at Loughborough University's Business School and an AM Awards judge. He is also president of the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI)



For years I have listened to organisations in our sector talking about being 'customer-centric' or using phrases like 'we put the customer at the heart of what we do'.

Although these are commendable sentiments it is sometimes difficult to see how this works.

Unlike many involved in the industry, I am on the receiving end of the supposed 'customer-centric' activity that is intended to improve customer engagement.

I have recounted in the past the trials and tribulations I have faced having bought a new SUV on behalf of my son.

The local dealer lost the franchise and there was no notification from the manufacturer that it had happened or when the new franchisee was opening.

We then had the car serviced after the first year and received a teddy bear from the manufacturer thanking me for having the work done within its network. It was a nice gesture, but surely my customer profile would suggest I was not the target audience for cuddly toys.

Anyway, it was with some trepidation that I suggested to my son that the car needed its second annual service. His partner rang a local franchised dealer in the Beds/Bucks area and was quoted £545.99. This triggered a certain amount of angst and text messaging stating this was a little more expensive than expected. I

suggested they rang other franchised dealerships to find some basis of comparison.

In Leicester, the price was £383.96, while in Leeds it was £359.31 and a dealer 25 miles away from the first quote came in at £438.35 before offering a low mileage service rate of £294.95.

When they rang back the original dealer who had quoted £500-plus to question the discrepancy, they were immediately offered a discount that brought the figure down to £436.50 and were told that the low mileage service offered by the neighbouring dealership would invalidate the manufacturer warranty. I rang the manufacturer and was told the low mileage service did not invalidate its warranty.

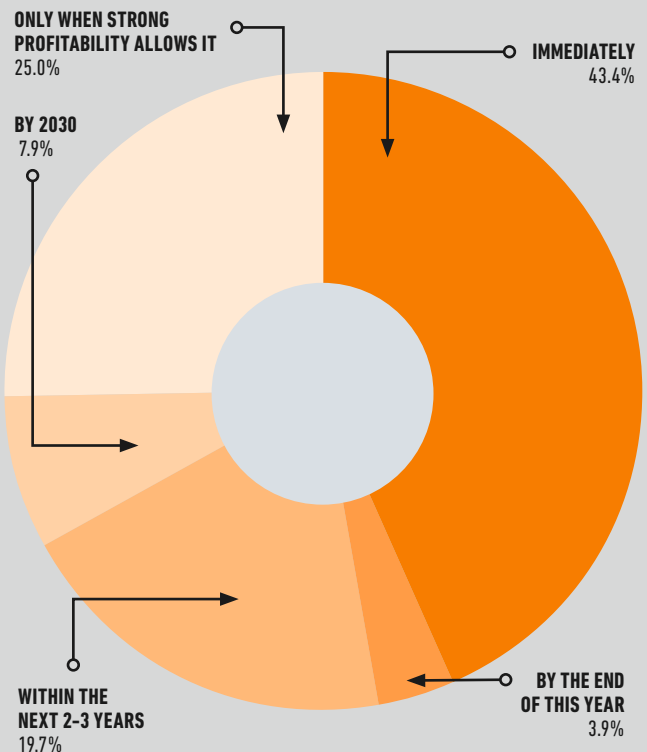
I understand that different dealerships have different costs, wage rates etc. and that, with the advent of BEVs, aftersales margins are going to be less profitable. I appreciate that the costs in Leicester and Leeds are likely to be less than in the Beds/Bucks area, but there must be some harmonisation of service pricing associated with a particular franchise otherwise the public will lose any faith it has in us as a sector.

This is not customer centricity; the customer is left confused and misled. My final comment is that if more than £500 was going to be spent on a service I would have been expecting more than a cuddly teddy bear from the manufacturer!

**"SURELY MY CUSTOMER PROFILE
WOULD SUGGEST I WAS NOT THE
TARGET AUDIENCE FOR CUDDLY TOYS"**

AM POLL

HOW QUICKLY SHOULD DEALERSHIPS ADOPT MORE ECO/SUSTAINABILITY MEASURES?



Sustainability should be firmly on the boardroom agenda of UK motor retail groups in 2022, according to nearly half of the respondents in our latest AM-online poll.

One voter's response of "time is running out on climate change – profits should not be a priority over the climate" seems to reflect the view of almost one-in-two automotive industry personnel who participated in our poll who want automotive managers to be driving sustainable changes immediately.

A tiny minority felt motor retailers could wait until nearer the 2030 target for the UK to reach sustainable development goals agreed with other United Nations members, including measures to create a lower carbon society.

"In the past 10-20 years we've already seen some groups implementing many energy saving measures at dealerships, encouraging the reduction of waste and many are going paperless," said one voter. "I just think the next changes will happen faster and faster. Customers will start to expect it."

**NEXT MONTH: ARE VIDEO APPOINTMENTS A BETTER
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SPOTLIGHT:

DIGITALISATION OF FINANCE

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Motor finance: a hands-on or digitalised future?

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IS SHOWROOM FINANCE DOOMED?
THE COVID-PROMPTED RAPID RAMPING
UP OF ONLINE CAPABILITIES IS HAVING
ITS IMPACT ON VEHICLE FINANCING

PAGES 18-19

COMPETING AS INTEREST RATES RISE
BANK OF ENGLAND COUNTER-INFLATIONARY
MEASURES COULD MEAN PROBLEMS AHEAD
FOR SOME DEALERSHIPS

PAGES 23-24

THE 'DIGITAL' BUSINESS MANAGER
AS MORE AND MORE SAVVY CONSUMERS
SEEK HELP ONLINE, HOW WILL THE ROLE
OF BUSINESS MANAGERS EVOLVE?

PAGES 29-30

Is the market moving away from showroom finance completely?

COVID-prompted rapid ramping up of online capabilities is having an impact on vehicle financing

The past two years has seen rapid innovation in motor finance as the market has adapted to working more remotely in response to COVID-19.

Omnichannel retail supplier iVendi is already predicting that close to half of all used car finance applications will be made online this year.

The company says that, across its vehicle retailer user base, it expects to see 45% of applications made by customers digitally and remotely, rather than in the showroom, as part of the sales process.

All interviewees for this feature agree that the direction of travel for finance is digital, but that doesn't mean finance won't be a topic of face-to-face discussion in showrooms for years to come.

Adrian Dally, Finance and Leasing Association (FLA) director of motor finance and strategy, believes there has been 10 years of progress to improve the digital journey for finance customers



ISTOCK.COM/NIKOLAY LAPSHIN

during the two years of COVID-19 lockdowns.

He says: "The lockdowns have prompted innovation and investment at a huge scale."

One FLA member told Dally that as much as 80% of the motor finance journey is now digital and this is much higher than it would have been before the pandemic.

Dally also thinks this move towards digitalisation is not something that will go into reverse; it's here to stay.

He says one of the drivers towards digitalisation of finance include the commercial reality that if businesses don't move in this direction, they will be unlikely to be able to compete in the future.

However, he says: "I don't think any business would want to impose one way of arranging finance. You want to offer a multi-channel approach."

"Dealers and lenders know they have to offer an approach that gives the customer the choice about how to conduct their own finance journey."

"You will always have to cater for those customers that need more support and guidance in the showroom, face-to-face. I think that will be the case for many years into the future."

SHOWROOM SUPPORT

Dally says increasing digitalisation in the industry has not reduced the appetite for the FLA's Specialist Automotive Finance (SAF) training.

SAF training has now been completed by more than 37,000 dealership staff and Dally says it is a way of increasing professionalism in the industry and ensuring retailers can confidently continue to help customers with finance in showrooms or to support them digitally.

James Tew, iVendi's chief executive, says many automotive retailers have upgraded their online presence substantially over the past two years and the motor finance journey they are offering digitally is simply better and easier to use, hence more consumers are opting to adopt it.

He says: "The technology on offer has



"YOU WILL ALWAYS HAVE TO CATER FOR THOSE CUSTOMERS THAT NEED MORE SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE IN THE SHOWROOM"

ADRIAN DALLY, FLA

continued to improve at a rate that is much better than incremental. The online journeys are more effective and easier to adopt for dealers and to use for car buyers, plus are better integrated into the whole purchasing process."

Tew says that many online motor finance journeys now offer a degree of flexibility that mean customers could "play" with the main variables behind each deal – handing them control.

He says: "In many ways, online motor finance is more customer-friendly, allowing the customer to run different variations of the numbers in a way that is difficult when sitting in front of a salesperson in a showroom."

Tew says that while "there will always be a place for showroom-based applications", he believes increasing numbers of car buyers will choose the digital option.

Sophus3 head of automotive insight Patrick Fuller says OEMs are realising new car finance, in particular, is an area where they can have closer relationships with customers.

Fuller says: "Finance has been perceived as an end of process transactional step, but it should be more integrated and flexible throughout the customer journey."

"There are signs that online finance is growing and becoming more integrated. That's certainly a focus for us with OEM clients at the moment."

Fuller adds: "One of the negatives for finance in the showroom right now is there is a lot to get into the conversation."

"You have to get the customer over the line and there are so many moving parts to balance and you only have so much time."

Whereas online, Fuller says "there's always time for another click".

DIGITAL IS THE ONLY WAY

Carwow chief executive and founder James Hind firmly believes motor finance is only moving one way – and that's digital.

He says that, while some customers still want to visit dealerships for a test drive, the majority of research and customer journeys are happening online.

Hind says that, while there has been a lot of innovation over the past two years, particularly with used car finance options,

there is still friction for the new car personal contract purchase (PCP) journey.

He says: "If you're a customer looking for a new car PCP it's a lot more difficult right now to compare prices across specific makes and models on a monthly price basis."

"It's something I would like to see more innovation on. It is difficult because the rules for advertising PCPs require representative examples which make it harder to collate offers, compare and spit out a customised offer searched by monthly price."

However, Carwow has been working with OEMs to integrate their captive finance PCP calculators directly into the online marketplace.

Hind says: "Questions about PCP finance are among the most popular queries we get from consumers. So, being able to integrate it into Carwow has been great."

"More than anything it's been popular with retailers because it saves so much time. It also benefits consumers because they can deepen their research on their finance options during the car-buying process."

Fuller says future innovation for finance should integrate new car finance more closely into an earlier stage of research for the buying journey.

He says car brands are, historically, very product-led, with the customer journey more than likely assuming a product choice has been made before applying finance.

However, Fuller would like to see finance applications happen first and then have it customised to the product to open up more options for customers.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

This could mean customers might consider other trims, accessories, option packs or different models entirely based on their monthly payment compared with what they may have considered for their budget previously.

Retailers or OEMs could also be contacting finance customers about other areas where finance may be useful, for things like charging installations or accessories. This could all be bundled into their monthly finance payment.

Fuller believes the work manufacturers are doing now to upgrade the new car finance journey puts them in a better position for understanding relationships for mobility services they might offer in future.

This might include shared ownership of vehicles, autonomous vehicle services or further flexible mobility subscriptions.

Fuller says: "It's interesting that a lot of the OEM captive finance houses are acquiring or establishing mobility as a service (MaaS) operations. Getting a better understanding of a customisable finance journey helps prepare brands for the future of MaaS, even if that might be 10 years from now."

TOM SEYMOUR



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Three ways Black Horse is digitalising finance

The COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdowns that accompanied it normalised online buying in a way never seen before. Even the most 'digitally resistant' customers were turning to remote services, according to research by McKinsey*.

In our industry, dealers were no longer able to welcome customers onto their forecourts, so services overwhelmingly moved online to keep business going.

But, in 2021, when dealerships were able to reopen after the lockdowns, customers didn't stay entirely remote. Many of our dealers saw a large-scale return to pre-pandemic habits.

"There was a huge increase in footfall post-pandemic due to the pent-up demand after lockdowns ended in 2021. This lasted for several months until it began to plateau towards the end of that year," said Laura Sandle, Director, Sandles Car Supermarket.

It seemed that customers didn't want to go fully remote forever, but neither did they want to give up their newfound online options. A new landscape had emerged – one where the digital and physical journey were intertwined, and the convenience of remote financing had become as important a part of the overall experience as visiting a showroom.

There was already a trend in this direction, but the shift accelerated rapidly during COVID-19. And it isn't always easy to keep up when everything changes so fast. That's why, at Black Horse, we offer three key services to help dealers continue giving customers the best service possible – however they choose to buy their vehicle.

SignIt Anywhere

Our contactless finance tool simplifies the journey for both dealers and customers. It allows customers to access and sign their credit agreement anytime and anywhere via our online customer portal, giving them the flexibility they need.



LetsULearn

Our specialist training programme, LetsULearn, helps dealers increase their overall understanding of our products and services, and gives them all the information they need to explain everything to their customers. We've seen great success with the platform. In fact, users currently rate our 'Road to Recovery' pathway 4.7 out of 5.

API integration

We have a suite of APIs and we can accommodate those that dealers are already using. This lets dealers connect online and offline systems to allow better data handling and a smoother customer journey.

Though our tools are different, they all have one main goal in mind: to help dealers empower customers to make the

best decision for their situation. In our new, post-COVID world, that means offering them the flexibility they have come to expect.

"Customers want to decide how they view and buy a car. So, it's important that dealers provide them with the right mix of online and offline services to make that choice, and give clear information to help them select the right funding product," said Tim Smith, Head of Motor Finance, Black Horse.

To learn more about how we're digitalising finance for dealers and customers – and to find out how you could benefit from our services – visit our website (below).

* Source: <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/adapting-customer-experience-in-the-time-of-coronavirus>. Short url: tinyurl.com/yc5ys6uc

Visit our website at www.blackhorse.co.uk/dealer/home

blackhorse 

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For further information contact:
dealersupport@northridgeuk.com

Staying competitive as interest rates increase

BoE's counter-inflationary measures could mean problems ahead for some dealerships

Car dealerships are facing a double whammy of rising overheads and diminishing consumer finances after the Bank of England (BoE) further increased interest rates this month to 1%.

Fears have been raised that the bank's 2022 interventions will put even greater pressure on struggling households as inflation, which climbed 7% in the year to March, and energy bills continue to skyrocket.

These pressures on the pocket will likely result in a sharp decline in consumer spending as tax increases and inflation start to eat into wages.

At the same time, dealers are having to contend with their own rising energy bills and global supply chain disruption, exacerbated by the conflict in Ukraine.

Finance houses have also been increasing their interest rates, with new deals attracting higher annual percentage rates (APRs) due to the expectations of the market. Worse still,

where new cars have been ordered, but the finance hasn't been locked in, the buyer is potentially exposed to further APR rises, driven by the possibility of yet further interventions from the BoE.

So what can dealers do to ensure they remain competitive, particularly when consumers can shop around so easily online for their vehicles and finance?

Partner and automotive manufacturing specialist at RSM UK Richard Bartlett-Rawlings says the interest rate rises will impact some dealers more than others.

He believes that, while franchised dealers may receive support from manufacturers to ensure their sales continue to consume supply or maintain used stock turnover, non-franchised dealers may have to look around more widely to ensure their finance house partner remains competitive compared with more traditional lenders.


"One means of ensuring competitiveness is through working with finance providers that are specialists in the

automotive industry and able to effectively model residual value," says Bartlett-Rawlings. "This has a significant impact on the costs to the end-consumer and, therefore, ability to sell stock."

Evolution Funding sales director Keith Bell takes a different view. He believes the interest rate rise won't change dealer's underlying competitiveness because, eventually, all lenders will have to adjust their rates to fall in line with the costs of funds' increases. Rather, Bell says, dealers lose their competitiveness by using the wrong pricing format.

"The best way for a dealer to be confident in their competitiveness without reducing income potential is through a genuine credit score-based pricing product," he says.

"It's the only way to ensure a dealer's customers get the APR they deserve and expect, and they shouldn't kid themselves because their higher scoring customers already know what they can get elsewhere before they've even had the opportunity to quote them.

"I always say to dealers if their used car acceptance rate is 50%, then the 



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50% they're missing are not the mid-to-low-scoring customers – the ones not taking finance are high-scoring customers who all knew they could get a better APR elsewhere."

Online finance can also affect the traditional conversations over a vehicle's price, with discounts for the consumer harder to secure as dealers aim for maximum margin.

"The current market for cars – new or used – will see little, if any, haggling on price," says Bartlett-Rawlings. "Demand remains strong and, therefore, there is little customer power in the market currently.

"New car finance attracts significant manufacturer contributions, which can reduce the overall cost of funding the vehicle and make it attractive to change to a new car.

"Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) changes to the commission models for automotive finance products have seen a move towards flat rate finance which, ordinarily, will be more expensive than variable risk-based finance, where the rate is based on the individual customer's credit risk.

"This could present a problem to those who offer fixed-rate interest, as it may see them becoming more attractive to those with a lower credit score who cannot obtain better rates through a variable credit risk model."

As new car lead times continue to increase to many months from order to build and then delivery, so finance houses are having to hedge against further interest rate rises which may impact the deal. But, this also requires having to carefully co-ordinate any pricing changes with their brokers.

Bell says that, as a broker, his company has to follow the policies of individual lenders. But, he adds, that due to the size of its relationships with the main lenders, he tends to get sufficient notice of any future pricing changes.

"This is because they understand we have



to co-ordinate pricing across multiple lenders, and that can't be done in the space of a couple of weeks," says Bell. "That helps us to manage the pipeline carefully and we also have the option to move the deal to an alternative lender to retain the original customer APR if we really need to."

Bartlett-Rawlings adds that, with lead times remaining long, added to the current global supply chain disruption, manufacturers have been pulling build slots, making them unable to commit to new vehicle delivery times.

The current economic climate, he says, will also impact traditional lenders' and alternative providers' competitiveness against captive finance houses, who can offer more attractive interest rates and supplier contributions to offset wider market interest rate rises.

"Should rates rise significantly, to offset inflationary economic pressures, this will most likely push more volumes to the captive finance houses," says Bartlett-Rawlings.

"This will be further exacerbated by the cost of living crisis, which will result in variable rate products offering higher rates to consumers due to the knock-on effect on affordability and individuals' credit ratings.

"It is likely we will start seeing finance houses holding back from fixing in rates at date of order and offering rates only on completion, resulting in consumers either taking the rate offered on delivery or pulling out of the sale completely as it is no longer affordable. This, too, will be impacted by the cost of living crisis as monthly payments that would have been comfortable at the point of order may no longer be affordable at the point of sale."

ALEX WRIGHT

“DEMAND REMAINS STRONG AND, THEREFORE, THERE IS LITTLE CUSTOMER (HAGGLING) POWER IN THE MARKET CURRENTLY
RICHARD BARTLETT-RAWLINGS, RSM UK

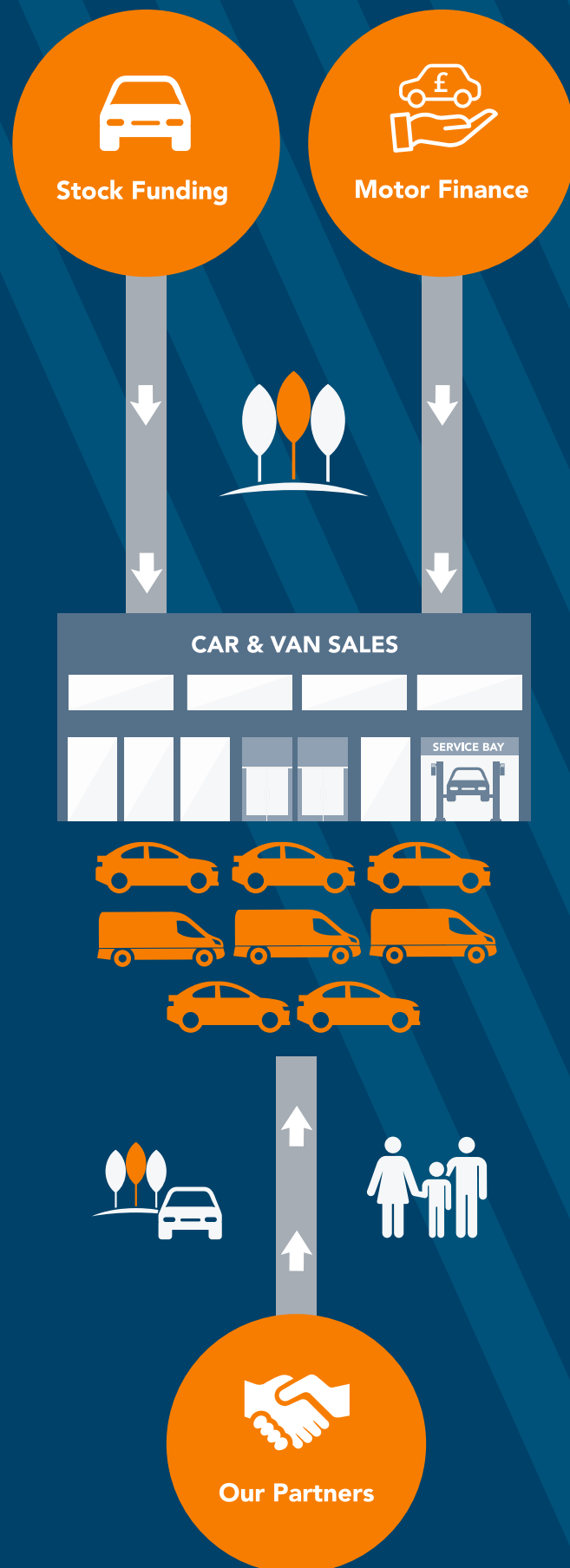
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New Startline Used Car Tracker gives market sentiment snapshot

Paul Burgess hopes the Tracker will provide useful insight for the used car sector



KEY FINDINGS FROM THE FIRST TRACKER

- Dealers are positive on balance about the used car market – 33% are more optimistic than last month compared with 25% who are more pessimistic
- Stock supply is the number one challenge, say 70% of dealers
- 22% say that consumers are more likely to buy a used car than new compared with last month – against 18% who say less likely



New monthly research looking at consumer and dealer sentiment in the used car market – the Startline Used Car Tracker – has been launched by Startline Motor Finance.

Paul Burgess, CEO, explained its purpose: “There is a lot of what you might call ‘hard’ information published about the used car sector. However, there is much less attitudinal research, looking at how consumers and retailers *feel* about subjects affecting car buying and selling over time – and this is where the Tracker will play a new and useful role, we believe.”

Consumers are questioned about their propensity to buy, fuel choices and the factors that will affect used car purchases, as well as looking at dealer sentiments regarding the prospects of the market, the challenges facing them and their online offering.

Research for the Tracker is being carried out for Startline by APD Global Research and the first edition, just released, shows that dealers remain positive about the prospects of the used car market despite gathering economic pressures.

In total, 33% who responded said they were more optimistic than last month,

compared with 25% who were more pessimistic, while the outlook was unchanged for 43%.

Interestingly, the reasons chosen by both dealers who are pessimistic and those who are optimistic are broadly similar. Among positive dealers, factors that are perceived as strengthening include stock supply (61%), market and prices (21%) and consumer confidence (17%). Conversely, those who are pessimistic see stock supply (53%), consumer confidence (52%), and market and prices (13%) all weakening.

Different sentiments are also revealed over whether dealers believe consumers are more likely to choose a used car over new this month – with 22% agreeing, 18% disagreeing and 60% unchanged.

Factors mentioned by dealers who answered ‘more likely’ include new cars

consumers want not being available (92%) and new car prices having risen (39%). Those ‘less likely’ chose used car prices having risen (70%), and the cars that consumers want not being available used (30%).

Paul Burgess said: “We could hardly have asked for more interesting results from our first edition of the Tracker. After a long period of buoyancy, it indicates there is divergence in how some dealers view the future prospects of the market alongside a core who foresee a more stable picture.

“Part of Startline’s mission is to provide useful insight to the motor retailers with which we work and we’re looking forward to seeing how the results develop over time.

“We hope our findings are of interest to the used car sector as a whole.”

ABOUT STARTLINE MOTOR FINANCE

Founded in 2014, Startline is one of the UK’s leading motor finance companies, providing flexible solutions to around half of the top 50 franchised dealers and 70% of the top 50 independent car retailers measured by turnover, as well as accounting for more than 2% of the motor finance market by volume. Headquartered in Glasgow, it aims to deliver market-defining levels of customer service, compliance, innovation and insight.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Email: enquiries@startlinemotorfinance.com Web: www.startlinemotorfinance.com

Meet The Supplier

MOTOR AUCTION GROUP (MAG)



DIRECTOR MATTHEW GILL
LOCATIONS:
ROTHERHAM, CORBY
BRANDS:
MOTOR AUCTION GROUP,
FLIPIT
EMPLOYEES: 50

MOTOR AUCTION GROUP HAS RECENTLY MADE AN ACQUISITION. TELL US MORE ABOUT THAT.

We've added a location in Corby, alongside our existing auction site in Rotherham. It had been operated by CD Auction Group, that was acquired by SMH Fleet Solutions which, itself, was subsequently acquired by Cazoo. Corby is going to be exclusively running timed auctions, so we're currently doing a soft launch where bidders can buy cars and give us feedback. Our priority is to make the online platform as easy to use and the process as smooth and transparent as it possibly can be.

DOES THIS CLEARLY MARK A KEY MOMENT IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE BUSINESS'S ONLINE AUCTIONS, THEN?

Yes. We were able to leverage our relatively small scale to react to the COVID-19 pandemic quickly in 2020. James (MAG managing director James Tomlinson) and I were able to meet and get online sales up and running within days, when restrictions allowed, and we were able to reopen the halls similarly quickly. Online sales have become a large part of our business and in September we launched a new web platform. It allows buyers to log into a 'My Showroom' area featuring vehicle inspection details, imagery and everything they need to know about the cars they're following. But, while we're now pursuing that omnichannel approach, we know there's still a place for physical sales and Rotherham will continue to cater for that.

WILL THE GROWTH IN TIMED ONLINE SALES AT CORBY BRING EFFICIENCY SAVINGS?

Potentially. MAG has (23) logistics and storage

facilities across the UK and there is the potential to market cars remotely, without moving them to the physical auction site. Right now, we do have vehicles at Corby and we're keen to fully leverage its vehicle preparation, body shop and imagery facilities.

HOW WILL MAG'S GROWTH, IN WHAT IS ITS 75TH YEAR, IMPACT THE WAY IT DEALS WITH CUSTOMERS?

We'll maintain that agility and speed of response and personal response to customers' requests that our larger competitors can't match. We're family run – that gives us autonomy and agility. If we need to drop everything and act fast to help a customer out, then we will.

WHO ARE MAG'S KEY CUSTOMERS?

Among our customers are Arnold Clark, HPL, Close Brothers Motor Finance, Blue Motor Finance, Vinci Leasing and Toomey Leasing to name a few. Resetting our strategy to become more omnichannel in 2020 positioned us to add new clients though, with Sytner's CarShop among them. The Corby acquisition has also seen us add several new customers.

WE UNDERSTAND MAG HAS ALSO INNOVATED WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF A CAR BUYING PLATFORM?

Flipit is one example of how we've looked to grow in line with market trends. Again, we're in the process of quite a soft launch after being overwhelmed by the sheer volume of enquiries generated when we introduced the platform in January. It's another factor that could play a key part in our growth. MAG sold just short of 20,000 cars in 2021. This year we're hoping we can double that, but the focus remains on the quality and ease of service.



For more information contact Zoe Sutton, Sales Director
T: 01709 919400 | M: 07900 492788
W: www.mag.co.uk E: zs@mag.co.uk

MAG
MOTOR | AUCTION | GROUP

The 'digital' business manager

Savvy customers are increasingly going online. How will this affect business managers?

The role of the business manager is evolving – and digitalisation is playing its part in that change. However, even with the onset of digital and online finance agreements together with the arrival of the agency model in the franchised sector, the often clunky, clumsy and complex nature of arranging funding means human intervention remains inevitable.

Straightforward end-to-end online car purchase deals where the customer has little or no interaction with the dealer until collection or delivery are rare.

Online finance applications often accelerate the process and provide customers and dealers with an indication of price and acceptance, but it doesn't take long for complications to create stumbling blocks which usually result in the deals being taken offline.

Indeed, online quoting and eligibility checking has already taken a level of work away from the dealer. However, complications can arise with declined and conditionally-approved applications as well as anything which could alter the finance offer.

From cherished plates to negative equity and seemingly simple issues such as a change in the part-exchange price or obtaining the settlement figure for a customer's current vehicle, are all highly likely to move the application from online to offline.


Plus there's the add-on products to be sold. Meanwhile, the agency model raises a host of questions over new car funding, including who is responsible for selling the finance and when and how add-on products are offered.

Currently 35% of transactions managed by the iVendi system are self-served and that figure is expected to grow to 45% this year (see p26). However, there's still a requirement for human interaction when the finance

agreement needs to be revised, requiring the customer to be kept informed and engaged.

CEO James Tew says: "Technology makes the process quicker, slicker, easier and more transparent. But there's plenty of things that can get messy in car finance."

Consequently, iVendi has introduced its 'concierge' approach whereby a professional liaises with the customer, makes the necessary amendments to the deal including giving explanations, before returning it to the digital space where the customer can complete the application in their own time.

Tew adds: "If it's a case of 'we need another £1,000 deposit' or 'it's 48 months, not 60', I think there should be human intervention. I actually believe it would be cheaper and more cost-effective to use people 

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than technology because it's about human interaction."

As well as offering a choice of lenders in the online space, Tew advises when a decline occurs a person should step in and target the lender most likely to approve rather than undertake several credit searches on the person.

Tew adds: "The amount of revenue that can be generated by people involvement is significant. Technology will do a good level of it, but it can't do it all.

"What human beings are really good at is smoothing the cracks and I think that's very much what we do in easing these pain points in the digital journey."

Dealers utilising the 'concierge' approach are also boosting online sales of add-ons.

The company is working with some dealers which offer 70% of its customers add-on products - those who have been spoken to and expressed an interest, and are seeing a 30% penetration compared with those dealers targeting all its vehicle buyers and upselling 24% of its deals.

Tew believes centralising add-on sales is attractive for larger dealers as it delivers cost savings and makes managing a team much more straightforward.

Realtime Communications (RTC) helps motor retailers to optimise customer lifetime value including evolving the business manager role from the traditional maximising F&I income to enhancing the customer's lifetime experience and ownership journey.

Commercial director Alistair Jeff says: "Placing customer needs at the heart of a dealer's culture, as expected by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), is an opportunity to redefine the BM function. We believe that pivoting the traditional title can be a step in the right direction."



WHAT HUMAN BEINGS ARE REALLY GOOD AT IS SMOOTHING THE CRACKS AND I THINK THAT'S VERY MUCH WHAT WE DO

JAMES TEW, IVENDI

Technology is already central to the agreement selection and process, providing a fast, transparent and compliant experience. However, Jeff identifies an opportunity to broaden the 'new BM role' to support people needing extra assistance with finance and embrace the broader dealer proposition such as service plans, extended warranties, smart insurance, and other added-value features which can be joined by new services such as recharging EVs or valet services.

He says: "The role as we see it developing will be about servicing peoples' car needs, saving them time and effort. Finance will be a core part of this dealership experience.

"Even in a digital age, personal service has a value and we should never forget that, for most people, 'transportation costs' are second only to housing. The new role of a BM can be about making ownership more manageable and more enjoyable."

Likewise, online vehicle marketplace carwow's commercial director Sepi Arani believes the business manager role will have to adapt rather than disappear altogether.

Arani says: "Ultimately, a broader know-

ledge base will be required to cover the existing forms of finance offering in the market, but also the ability to compare and contrast new additions such as subscription will be necessary.

"With customers eagerly researching the best route to drive their chosen vehicle online and the growing forms offered by manufacturers - for a business manager to provide guidance and recommendations their knowledge will have to go above and beyond that of the savvy consumer."

Technology will continue to develop including artificial intelligence (AI) such as chatbots that can easily answer generic questions and interactive FAQs (some of which brands already utilise well on their online journeys). However, questions regarding F&I can often be granular and very specific to each consumer's personal circumstance.

Arani says: "As such, a balance of both AI and human interaction will ultimately win for both consumers and brands alike. Ensuring that basic questions are answered instantly without the need to draw on expensive human resources while offering a second line of real human interaction to keep consumers flowing through any online journey is critical to success.

"The brands that will succeed and delight the largest pool of customers are ones that offer consumers the choice and put them in the driving seat of how and when they want to progress in their purchase.

"Offering the ability to seamlessly connect online and offline journeys and to easily reference their 'basket' finance offering and ask questions to a human when required to are all key for retailers to offer their customers the perfect vehicle sales journey."

DEBBIE KIRLEW



Meet The Supplier

MOTONOVO FINANCE



DEBBIE MCKAY
COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR
MOTONOVO FINANCE

MotoNovo Finance is one of the UK's most prominent motor finance businesses with an impressive history going back 40-plus years. The business works with franchised and independent retailers covering cars, motorcycles and light commercial vehicles, providing finance for consumers and businesses.

A multi-award-winning business that employs more than 700 people, MotoNovo is recognised and trusted as a market leader in scale, reputation and thought leadership.

Underpinning the company's success are its people and its devotion to dealer and customer excellence.

WHAT SETS YOU APART FROM OTHER INDUSTRY SUPPLIERS?

An obsession with good outcomes for dealers/brokers/customers/team members. MotoNovo has sustained a reputation for innovation, dealer-centricity, digitisation and best practices to deliver upon this ambition. We are here for the long haul looking after dealers and their customers.

- Dealer NPS averages 77.7% (09/21-02/22)
- Customer experience 86.4% approval – Institute of Customer Service UK Customer Satisfaction Index (FS sector average 78.8%)
- Trustpilot ranking – 4.6 'excellent' from 24,900 reviews.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE SIGNIFICANT ISSUES FACING DEALER FINANCE IN THE YEAR AHEAD?

Regulatory developments and the broader socio-economic backdrop will, I'm sure, be the main issues.

There is much happening in regulatory terms. The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) is due to report on its supervisory work assessing compliance with its ban on discretionary commission introduced in January 2021 and on mystery

shopping undertaken to assess lenders' control over dealer networks. In what could be a similar timeline, the FCA is expected to announce any final rules for its proposed Consumer Duty and its new Consumer Principle 12 – a firm must act to deliver good outcomes for retail customers, by the end of July 2022. After that, firms have until April 30, 2023, to implement those rules.

As always at MotoNovo, we are committed to helping our dealers to understand the changes once announced so that, together, we can be ready for the April 2023 deadline.

The other big issue is socio-economic. For most millennials and Gen Z customers rising inflation and interest rates will be a whole new and unwelcome experience. It will, I'm sure, bring challenges, but experience suggests that such times often favour dealer finance over unsecured personal lending.

MOTONOVO HAS A REPUTATION FOR INNOVATION – WHAT'S NEXT?

Having grown my career with MotoNovo for more than 15 years, I know first-hand that our difference is led by our dealer-centric 'can-do' inclusive culture and commitment to embracing innovation change.

A long-time leader in helping to digitise finance, we were the first company to bring e-signatures to the market and a host of other tools that have shaped the dealer finance market we see today.

As well as technology, we also pride ourselves in championing fresh thinking. Last year, we brought our unique risk-based pricing model, MotoRate, to the market successfully; this year, we have launched GROW (Generating Real Opportunities for Women).

GROW is an all-new network created to support dealer and broker partners to increase female representation at all levels across motor retailing, reflecting the world in which we operate. It is just one of our diversity and inclusion initiatives.

The consistent theme in our innovation has always been the same, helping dealers to move their thinking and business models to be in tune with what is an increasingly dynamic trading environment.

Visit: dealer.motonovofinance.com
Tel: 0330 128 1730



In association with



Double-digit efficiency gains thanks to Loop BI

A democratisation of Volkswagen Group's car retail, influenced by the implementation of business intelligence software from Loop BI, has propelled the group to efficiency gains of 10%.

It took just six months for 800 retailers of the German OEM's brands to leverage data from all group functions – including Volkswagen Financial Services, cars, commercial vehicles, aftersales and finance operations – to deliver the improvement after the adoption of its KPI (key performance indicator) dashboard.

And Loop BI managing director, Simon Porri, believes there is more to come as it prepares to add to a client list that already includes Aston Martin, Lotus Cars, Volvo and the VW Group.

"So far we've grown largely thanks to word of mouth and the amazing feedback we've had, which has been fantastic," said Porri.

"We've grown about 180% in the past 12 months and roughly the same for the 12 months before that.

"Now it's time to get our name out there a bit more and realise our potential as a business at a time where digital transformation is at the heart of every development in the sector and accelerating hard."

VW Group's relationship with Loop BI sees data and KPIs from every level of its hierarchy, from HQ to dealer management, brought together on Loop BI's intuitive

business intelligence dashboard – giving all users a single view of performance.

It also provides a combination of tools for HQ, field teams and dealers to improve performance across the business, such as balanced scorecards and action centre functions to drive behaviours directly linked to KPIs.

The result has been rapid improvements in business performance in areas including aftersales and used sales, while the semiconductor shortage continues to impact new car availability.

System simplicity

Matt Bishop, network insight manager at Volkswagen Group UK, said: "Across our network users comment on the simplicity of the Loop BI system and how easy and clear it is to find what they are looking for.

"Loop BI has given us a 10% improvement in efficiency and performance across Volkswagen Group UK, time savings, and a more standardised way of working and reporting."

Lotus, meanwhile, has seen a 13% improvement in standards across its franchised dealer network since rolling out Loop BI's standards assessment tool.

Loop BI is a product of Gloucester-based River Software, who also operate incentive and recognition programmes in the automotive sector.

As it shifted to paperless operations and increased web-based functions, it realised that the vast amount of data it was gathering could be put to better use... and Loop BI was born.

"We launched Loop BI with a far broader array of functionality for customers, but a focus on simplicity and transparency," said Porri. "The platform ensures that everyone on that OEM/retailer relationship has access to the same source of truth. One view of the data.

"Previously, there were several different systems that had to be accessed, so people loved the idea of this single view."



ACROSS OUR NETWORK USERS COMMENT ON THE SIMPLICITY OF THE LOOP SYSTEM

**MATT BISHOP,
VOLKSWAGEN GROUP UK**

With the recent additions of Aston Martin, Lotus and VW Group to its client list, Loop BI's experienced team now provides the software that underpins KPI management at around 15,000 car dealership locations.

Staff members are split into development teams operating alongside data integration and speed, product and customer success teams.

Getting the name 'out there'

Last July the business recruited former Autovista head of growth marketing Ben Miller as its head of marketing. It is all part of a concerted drive to get the Loop BI name "out there", according to Porri, and show the car retail sector the improvements the system can make to dealers' performance.

But Porri added: "The feedback on the product speaks for itself. Loop BI achieves a massive amount of efficiency."

Loop BI claims that evidence from across its client base shows that improvement actions logged on its system typically drive a positive shift in KPIs three-times faster than traditional performance management techniques.



For more information please visit: www.loop-bi.com or email: hello@loop-bi.com

Loop in Numbers

Users

72,500

4,532

KPIs created

Franchise Locations

18,800

1,500

data imports

Countries

155

215,000

actions assigned

Languages

15

17,500

meetings scheduled

VOLKSWAGEN
GROUP



**improvement in efficiency
and performance**



**uplift in retailer
standards compliance**

Areas of focus

While the system can tap into a vast array of sales, aftersales and customer satisfaction data, Porri said OEMs and retailers usually choose 15 to 20 areas of focus to scrutinise and improve.

The real success comes from Loop BI's ease of use and transparent dashboards, however.

According to Loop BI, just 30 minutes of training is enough to get car retail managers familiar with its KPI data dashboard and actions functionality.

An hour's training will lay the foundations for access to full network audit functionality.

"In the business intelligence sector people will turn to Tableau or Power BI, but I just don't think they work in change implementation across a car retail network," Porri said.

"These are systems that are used by a limited number of people – usually with data analysis expertise – who are based in a head office.

"The reality is that, if you don't get the data in front of the people that need it, then you won't get the improvements.

**A GREAT
EXPERIENCE
WORKING
WITH
EVERYONE AT LOOP.
I HAVE FULL
CONFIDENCE THAT
ANYTHING WE NEED
WILL BE DONE RIGHT**

**MICHAEL DAWKES,
ASTON MARTIN**

"Our aim is to keep the dashboards as simple and as user-friendly as we can to ensure the data gets out there and can be acted upon by the people that need it."

Loop BI is keen to grow its business through partnerships with car retailers.

Right now, though, many of its OEM partners see it as a key component of their shift to an agency car retail model.

VW is making the move in electric vehicles (EVs), while Lotus Cars recently rolled out its agency model in the UK.

Porri said: "In a sense, agency is flipping the sector on its head, handing much of the customer data to the OEM, but the sharing of that data between OEM and dealer is central to its success.

"Lotus Cars has seen Loop BI as a vital point of data sharing with its network."

Porri cited findings from the recent *Next Destination: Software – how automotive OEMs can harness the potential of software-driven transformation* report from the Capgemini Research Institute to highlight the growing importance of software-driven transformation.

It said the shift is expected to improve OEMs' productivity by up to 40%, reduce costs by 37%, and improving customer satisfaction by 23% in the next five years.

"It's great to be in a position where we can take a central role in both OEMs and retailers realising those gains," Porri said.

TOYOTA AYGO X



Chilli Red is one of the new 'spicy' colours for the Aygo X

Toyota is aiming to draw on car buyers' appetite for crossovers and SUVs with the Aygo X (say "cross") rebranding of its city car.

Coming hot on the heels of the excellent Yaris Cross (yes, they spell out 'Cross' in that case), it continues to be part of what remains of an A-segment shorn of the Citroën C1, Peugeot 108 and Ford Ka in recent years, however.

While its nose adopts the Yaris Cross's styling, its 11mm height increase is barely noticeable.

Wheel arch-filling 17- or 18-inch alloys, arch extensions and side skirts are though, along with bi-tone paintwork made more distinctive by vibrant Chilli Red, Cardamom Green, Ginger Beige and Juniper Blue options.

Based on the Yaris platform, the Aygo X is 250mm longer than its predecessor and 125mm wider, though remains compact and has a 4.7 metre turning circle.

Rear leg and headroom remain best suited

to small children, but boot space has grown 60 litres to 231 litres.

Prices start at £14,805 for the entry-level Pure trim car, with Edge £15,505, Exclusive £17,725 and Limited Edition £19,650. An optional CVT gearbox adds £1,100 to each.

It's more expensive than its key rivals, then, but it's also larger and better equipped as standard.

Pure features 17-inch alloys, automatic headlights, air conditioning, a seven-inch touchscreen infotainment system and a leather steering wheel.

Toyota Safety Sense further brings automated braking with pedestrian and side-approaching vehicle detection, adaptive cruise control, road sign assistance, lane-trace assist and an automatic high beam.

Edge adds 18-inch alloys, automatic wipers, rear privacy glass, fog lights and an eight-inch touchscreen. Customers can also spec a power-operated canvas roof (£895).

Exclusive's part faux leather upholstery, wireless phone charger, LED headlights,



**AROUND ONE-
IN-FOUR AYGOS
SOLD ARE
TO FLEET
CUSTOMERS
AND WE WOULD
EXPECT THIS TO
CONTINUE FOR
2023**

**CHARLIE HOLCOMBE,
TOYOTA**

keyless entry and start and nine-inch Smart Connect infotainment system – including live nav, connected services and over-the-air software updates – deliver a range-topping feel.

This trim also introduces the option of a five-speaker JBL sound system (£495) which not only fills the little cabin with rich sound but 42 litres of boot space with its 300W amplifier.

Available for six months, Toyota's Aygo X Limited Edition is only available in Cardamom Green, with 18-inch matt black alloys, Mandarin orange trim highlights, part-leather heated front seats and that canvas roof.

The Aygo X's cabin architecture is quirky, but functional, a lozenge-shaped gloss black centrepiece neatly accommodating the infotainment.

The physical buttons on its stylish multi-function steering wheel give easy access to functions on the move.

And, despite the limited height gain of the Aygo X, Toyota has raised the seating position by 55mm to provide good visibility.

All Aygo Xs feature the same three-cylinder,



£14,805 TO
£19,650



72PS 1-LITRE,
THREE-CYLINDER
PETROL



0-62MPH 15SEC,
TOP SPEED
98MPH



5SP MAN, CVT



56.5-
58.9MPG



109-114G/KM

one-litre petrol engine, with 72PS and 93Nm of torque.

In a city setting the optional CVT gearbox made progress effortless. At motorway speeds and in hillier landscapes it made for a less comfortable bedfellow, however, due to the three-cylinder engine's reliance on revs.

There is little to pick between the two gearboxes in terms of economy. The manual claims combined fuel economy of up to 58.9mpg with 109 to 110g/km CO₂ emissions, the CVT 56.5mpg and CO₂ emissions of 109 to 114g/km.

Both accelerate to 62mph in a whisker under 15 seconds with the manual topping out at 98mph, the CVT 94mph.

The Aygo remains a hatchback at heart – X or no.

Toyota has retained its youthful style and added an appreciable layer usability and safety kit, though.

That should be enough to secure it a far greater share of that smaller A-segment.

TOM SHARPE

Q&A



**CHARLIE
HOLCOMBE,**
SENIOR
MANAGER
BRAND (TOYOTA)

Why was it important to give the Aygo the 'cross treatment' in its latest generation?

Customer feedback and market trends identified that there was desire for a stylish, affordable, compact and manoeuvrable vehicle. Feedback also suggested that the higher riding position of an SUV would appeal to provide better visibility within urban situations. Toyota's European stylists have evolved Aygo from a hatchback to a crossover body type to make it the best proposition in its class, whether in the city or on open roads, with a confident driving position and visibility.

Aygo was the UK's A-segment market leader in 2021 (17,385 units). What are the Aygo X's projected UK registration volumes for 2022?

With the current supply situation we are more cautious about future growth statements. However, for the past couple of years Aygo has been leading the A-segment and we are confident customers will continue to have Aygo X at the top of their consideration lists.

What is the expected retail/fleet split for the Aygo X?

Historically, around one-in-four Aygos sold are to fleet customers and we would expect this to continue for 2023. For the remainder of 2022 we expect Aygo X to fulfil mainly retail sales.

There are a few trim options for Aygo X. Which grade do you expect to be the big seller?

We expect the Edge grade to be the biggest seller, making up around 55% of the mix, followed by the Pure at 35%.

How is Toyota planning to roll-out its marketing to help launch the Aygo X?

Our objective is to drive awareness and a positive image of Aygo X with our core target audience. They are a youthful audience who have a fashionable and vibrant view on life and want a car that expresses their personality. The launch campaign is supported with a large media investment, and channel selection has been weighted to ensure cut through including broadcaster video on demand, YouTube and social channels.

How will the Toyota SUV/crossover line-up evolve from here?

We will add another model to our SUV line-up when we launch Corolla Cross at the back end of this year, supporting the growing trend for SUV-style vehicles.

KEY RIVALS



Kia Picanto



VALUE,
WARRANTY



OPTIONAL
SAFETY PACK



Volkswagen Up



PREMIUM BADGE,
SPACE, EV OPTION



BASIC
STANDARD TRIMS



Suzuki Ignis



ALL-WHEEL DRIVE
OPTION, MILD HYBRID



COMPACT INTERIOR

REVIEW RATINGS

AUTO EXPRESS



TOP GEAR



WHAT CAR?



VW ARTEON SHOOTING BRAKE R-LINE 2.0-LITRE TSI 190PS

REPORT
PROGRESS



£38,790
(AS TESTED, WITH
OPTIONS: £47,350)



2.0-LITRE TURBO-
CHARGED, 190PS
TRANSMISSION
7-SP DSG AUTO S



0-62MPH 7.8
SECS, TOP
SPEED 145MPH



38MPG



168G/KM (WLTP)

THE MILES DISAPPEAR EFFORTLESSLY, BUT AT A COST

The time has come for the Arteon to leave AM's hands and find its future home with another family or company. Hopefully, it will find one with a desire to be comforted and cosseted while frequently traversing the waistline of England; one that puts this cruiser to good use.

As you could expect, with 190PS on tap from its turbocharged petrol engine and a capability to sprint to 62mph in less than eight seconds, it

was not the most frugal car to use on the daily school run or occasional trips into the city.

Occasional longer trips to interview dealers or visit family allowed this car to show what it is best at: effortlessly making the miles disappear. I rather wish I'd done more. But then, I'd also wish for more than 36mpg at current fuel prices – that fuel economy reminds me of the days of my tuned-up, supercharged Volkswagen Corrado G60.

Our Arteon's premium styling certainly attracted a few admiring glances from other parents on the school runs though.

In an era of chunky crossover SUVs this sleek, range-topping grand tourer certainly stands out in its Kings Red metallic paintwork with chrome accents and 19-inch Montevideo Black alloys.

The £1,235 optional Harman Kardon upgraded sound system lets you be heard beautifully too, should you wish to crank up the volume. In short, it'll be a great used car for somebody. **TIM ROSE**



THAT FUEL ECONOMY REMINDS ME OF THE
DAYS OF MY TUNED-UP, SUPERCHARGED
VOLKSWAGEN CORRADO G60

CURRENT
MILEAGE

1 3 5 5 7

START
MILEAGE

1 0 9 9 3



PLENTIFUL POWER AND POISE



PAINFUL PETROL PRICES

» GUESS THE CAR COMPETITION

PREVIOUS WINNER



Colin Campbell,
managing director
of JC Campbell
Honda at Rostrevor,
correctly named
the Škoda
Roomster in our
March issue.

No one correctly identified the car in our April issue, so we'll give you another chance to win a £20 John Lewis voucher. Email am@bauermedia.co.uk with 'Guess the car' in the subject line and include your job title and company in your entry. The closing date is Friday, June 3.





CONGRATULATIONS TO THE
2022 AM AWARD WINNERS



This year's AM Awards gala dinner was held in London for the first time in at least two decades. Staged at the Park Plaza Hotel Westminster Bridge in the shadow of the Houses of Parliament, it was an incredibly exciting opportunity to recognise and reward the strengths of numerous businesses and individuals in the UK's motor retail industry.

The event was the final stage of a process in which a record number of franchised dealers, independent motor traders, vehicle repairers and sector suppliers submitted entries for a variety of categories spanning customer service, sales, online experience, aftersales and leasing.

Entries to the major dealer group categories required verification by our new audit partner, the accountancy firm UHY Hacker Young.

The 2022 AM Awards judges were Sally Fyffe, head of wholesale at Micheldever Group; Professor Jim Saker, the director of Loughborough University's Centre for Automotive Management; Steve Nash, the chief executive of the Institute of the Motor Industry; Steve Young, managing director of the ICDP; Sue Robinson, NFDA chief executive; Julia Muir, founder of the Automotive 30% Club; AM editor Tim Rose; AM news and features editor Tom Sharpe; and AM editor-in-chief Stephen Briers.

Independent chairman Christopher Macgowan OBE, a former chief executive of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders and of the Retail Motor Industry Federation, oversaw the judging process.

Supporting the judges were AM Awards auditors from UHY Hacker Young Manchester's motor retail team, which is led by David Kendrick.

On the night, we were joined by ITV News presenter Nina Hossain and award-winning comedian Milton Jones.

Over the next 45 pages you can learn all about what made our winners stand out from their rival entrants.

AM AWARDS JUDGING PANEL



Sally Fyffe,
head of
wholesale,
Micheldever
Group



Steve Young,
managing director,
International Car
Distribution
Programme



Sue Robinson,
chief executive,
National
Franchised
Dealers
Association



Professor Jim Saker, director
of Loughborough
University's Centre
for Automotive
Management



Julia Muir, founder,
Automotive 30%
Club and chief
executive, Gaia
Innovation



Tim Rose,
editor, *AM*



Stephen Briers,
group editor, *AM*,
Fleet News and
Smart Transport



Tom Sharpe,
news and
features editor,
AM



Steve Nash,
chief executive,
Institute of the
Motor Industry



Christopher Macgowan OBE,
independent
chairman

AUDITOR



In 2022 we've been delighted to partner with the Manchester-based automotive team of UHY Hacker Young, who have audited the entries to our flagship dealer group awards.

UHY national head of automotive David

Kendrick said: "Having worked in the automotive industry for nearly 20 years, we have always valued the AM Awards and evening of celebrations. To now be appointed as the awards auditor is a great honour."





Chairman of the judges Christopher Macgowan OBE presented the award to Lucy Tunnicliffe, commercial journalist, Original ADS (centre). Looking on is event host ITV News presenter Nina Hossain

BEST NEW PRODUCT OR SERVICE

Winner: Original ADS and RAC with Charge Pod

As the mass adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) increasingly becomes a reality in the UK, the risk of motorists becoming stranded due to an empty battery becomes ever more in focus.

The RAC and Original ADS have developed a solution for getting discharged EVs back on the road, with minimal disruption, called Charge Pod.

The lightweight device is installed in RAC patrol vehicles and enables a stranded EV to be charged at the roadside. It's powered by the recovery vehicle's

engine and, with an output of 7.5kW, it provides enough power in a short time for the EV to be driven to the nearest charge point or the driver's home.

Around 827,000 motorists require assistance from breakdown services each year due to running out of petrol or diesel. An EV with an empty battery is more challenging as the vehicle must be towed to a charge point, often requiring a flat-bed vehicle.

Charge Pod enables the RAC to provide the same "out of fuel" service as it would to traditional internal combustion engine vehicles, getting discharged EVs

back on the road more quickly and more efficiently than other solutions.

Since implementing the Charge Pod system on a trial basis in 2019, the RAC has won contracts with companies such as Renault UK and Motability Operations because of its ability to support stranded EV drivers.

The RAC signed an exclusivity deal with Original ADS, in May 2021, which will see more than 300 RAC patrol vehicles equipped with the Charge Pod system in the coming years.

FINALISTS

Automotive Compliance
CitNOW
eDynamix

Journey Energy Solutions
Loop BI
Original ADS and RAC with
Charge Pod

Phyron
Real World Analytics



Tom Sharpe, news and features editor, *AM* (right), handed the award to Alistair Horsburgh, chief revenue officer, CitNOW Group

SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR (READER VOTED)

Winner: CitNOW

CitNOW's suite of digital communication and personalised video services have become a vital sales tool to 90% of the UK's AM100 top dealer groups.

This reader-voted category has been dominated by CitNOW for the past three years and it has now surpassed 60m videos created using its technology, with a little more than 12.1m in 2021 alone.

Video is now a core competency for all automotive salespeople and technicians and this has been particularly vital when operating remotely during the pandemic.

AM readers continue to be impressed by how CitNOW puts them at the heart of their business to deliver an outstanding partnership experience.

App upgrades and new integrations have helped

to keep the business ahead of the curve.

The company was rated with a net promoter score (NPS) of 76 in 2021, putting CitNOW in the 'excellent' category and in the 100th percentile in the software sector.

Automotive retailers working CitNOW receive an extensive onboarding programme with a dedicated team and can access continued support with free online training to help customers feel confident when using the platform.

The CitNOW Academy helps customers improve their skill levels and fully utilise the solutions available from the group. This is provided through free online webinars, on-site training and a raft of tips on how to produce high quality content in the 'How2CitNOW' video series on YouTube.

CitNOW received high praise from *AM*'s reader voters, with one saying: "We have been working with CitNOW for so long that it feels more like a partnership than a supplier relationship."

"In fact, our customers now expect to receive a personalised video from our sales and service consultants to keep the conversation open throughout the entire purchase and ownership journey."

Another reader said that CitNOW has been leading the push for video and image technology in the automotive industry for some time and this shows in the leadership and level of service it offers to its customers.

They added: "It's a fantastic company to work with and the products are invaluable in helping to support our requirements as a dealer group."

FINALISTS

LD Carmarket
Alpha Financial Services
carwow

CitNOW
Cox Automotive
Dealerweb
EMaC

Keyloop BI
Motorway
Warranty Administration
Services

C
/OT
JRA
SMETIC REPAIR INSURANCE
RANCE COSMETIC P
INSURANCE
ICE TYRE & A
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INSURANCE TYRE & ALL
S GAP INSURANCE
SERVICE PL
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Ben Russell, CEO of award sponsor Car Care Plan (right) handed the trophy to Ashley Andrew, managing director UK, Hyundai Motor UK

USED CAR OF THE YEAR (READER VOTED)

Winner: Hyundai Tucson

The Tucson was re-launched in 2015 as a sharp looking, family-friendly SUV, which gave Hyundai a much-needed competitor in the growing compact crossover segment.

It quickly became the manufacturer's most popular model and has continued to be its best-selling car.

The Tucson resonates well with used car buyers as it has proved reliable and robust. Equipment levels are generous, with all trim levels featuring digital radio and air conditioning and many are equipped with premium-car features like keyless entry and heated seats.

A five-star safety rating from Euro NCAP cements the car's appeal among family buyers, too.

An updated Tucson was introduced in 2019,



heralding the adoption of fuel-saving technology in a mild hybrid variant. The 186PS four-wheel drive 2.0 CRDi diesel provided a 7% improvement in fuel economy and reduced CO₂ emissions.

Also new for the 2019 model year was a 1.6-litre

diesel, with 115PS or 136PS, replacing the existing 1.7 CRDi. Petrol engines were offered as a normally aspirated 132PS 1.6 GDI and a turbocharged 177PS 1.6 T-GDI.

The Tucson was already available with safety and convenience features, including autonomous emergency braking, blindspot alert, rear cross traffic alert and lane-keeping assistance.

The updated version came with a traffic jam assistant for automatic versions called 'smart cruise control with stop and go', which keeps pace with traffic and is capable of coming to a complete stop and automatically moving off again when the vehicle in front pulls away.

In 2021 the model was replaced with an all-new fourth-generation one, offered with a wide array of hybrid powertrains and enhanced driveability.

FINALISTS

Ford Fiesta
Hyundai Tucson
Kia Sportage

Porsche 911
Vauxhall Corsa
Volkswagen Golf

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David Paterson, managing director of award sponsor Supagard (right) presented the trophy to Paul Philpott, president and CEO, Kia UK

NEW CAR OF THE YEAR (READER VOTED)

Winner: Kia Sportage

Now in its fifth generation, the Sportage has been instrumental in driving growth for Kia. It accounts for half the brand's annual sales and features in the market's most competitive sector.

The new Sportage is a significant evolution of its AM Award-winning predecessor, welcoming enhancements in styling, driveability and powertrains.

Taking inspiration from the recently-launched fully-electric EV6, the new Sportage has a distinctive look and an upmarket interior.

The chassis was developed specifically for European roads and delivers a more engaging drive, while ride comfort and refinement are raised to premium-brand levels.

New powertrains introduce hybrid and plug-in hybrid (PHEV) technology for the first time, improving performance and efficiency, with the latter bringing



greater appeal for fleet customers in particular.

The Sportage PHEV can travel more than 40 miles with zero emissions when fully charged and delivers an impressive 265PS, making it the most powerful Sportage to date.

Standard features include Android Auto and Apple

CarPlay smartphone compatibility; front and rear parking sensors and a reversing camera; lane-follow assist; and lane-keep assist.

The safety focus continues with forward collision avoidance assist, which includes sensors for monitoring pedestrians, cyclists and junctions.

As a family-focused model, the Sportage has a luggage capacity that is among the best in its class – offering almost 600 litres of space.

Kia says the interior of the all-new Sportage creates “a driver-orientated space that is truly state-of-the-art”.

The 12.3-inch infotainment touchscreen and digital instrument display are connected in one wrap-around panel, while a raised centre console houses a rotary gear selector and switches for key functions.

Pricing starts at £26,745 – an increase of more than £2,000 compared with the outgoing car.

FINALISTS

Audi Q4
BMW 2 Series Coupé
Kia Sportage

Nissan Qashqai
Suzuki S-Cross
Toyota Yaris Cross

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Peter Toop, sales and marketing director at Audi franchisee Vindis Group (centre), collected the award on behalf of Audi from Lance Boseley, marketing director of award sponsor Diamondbrite

EV OF THE YEAR (READER VOTED)

Winner: Audi e-tron GT

Blurring the lines between a sensible electric saloon and high-performance supercar, the e-tron GT is Audi's flagship electric model that's designed to give us a flavour of what's to come from the German carmaker over the next few years.

It started life as a concept car, making it into production just three years after its unveiling at the Los Angeles Auto Show. The car's development was completed alongside that of the Porsche Taycan, with the cars sharing a platform and core hardware.

Key to the e-tron GT's performance and efficiency is its aerodynamic body, which incorporates active elements such as the rear spoiler and front cooling ducts. The low roof and wide track give a unique, eye-catching look.



Two versions of the e-tron GT are offered: the 530PS Quattro and the 646PS RS. Both utilise an 800-volt electrical infrastructure, enabling a rapid charging time of 23 minutes (5%-to-80%) and the ability to add 62 miles of range in just five minutes.

Performance is equally rapid, with the 0-62mph sprint taking four seconds in the Quattro and a little more than three in the RS.

The Quattro has a maximum range of almost 300 miles, while the RS can cover 283 miles, officially. Both models can achieve more than 200 miles per charge, in real-world driving.

Audi's familiar switchgear can be found on the inside, where the cabin provides seating for five.

Build quality and equipment levels are high, as expected from a car costing upwards of £82,000.

FINALISTS

Audi e-tron GT
BMW iX
Hyundai Ioniq 5

Kia EV6
Vauxhall Mokka-e
Volkswagen ID.4

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Let's drive... dealer innovation

We're pleased to have the opportunity to sponsor the Independent Dealer of the Year category at the 2022 AM Awards.

Startline provides motor finance to around 70% of the UK's top 50 independent car retailers by turnover – alongside around half of the top 50 franchise dealers – and we are continually impressed by their levels of innovation, agility and commitment.

Playing a part in recognising these achievements is a privilege for our business and we'd like to extend our best wishes and sincere respect to all of those shortlisted for the awards.



enquiries@startlinemotorfinance.com
startlinemotorfinance.com

startline >



Kelly Ventham, head of client relationship at award sponsor Startline Motor Finance, presented the trophy to Stuart MacKinnon, managing director, Angus MacKinnon

INDEPENDENT DEALER OF THE YEAR

Winner: Angus MacKinnon

A clear roadmap for future success helped Angus MacKinnon to its win in this year's Independent Dealer of the Year category.

The Utttoxeter-based used car retailer focussed on its local market and the acquisition of stock tailored to its customer demographic as it emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic with a 2021 turnover that exceeded that of two years previous.

And now a strategy of pursuing a 25% electric vehicle (EV) stock mix is set to prime the business for further growth this year.

According to its entry, the business is also targeting the adoption of a new car retail franchise to support its sales growth.

A local focus sees Angus MacKinnon only acquire

cars with a potential 'days to turn' of 40 days or less, using the retail back pricing method to ensure the delivery of margin.

It targets stock acquisition from private sellers and alternative car buying providers in a bid to minimise the fees which it would incur at auctions.

And a range of the sector's most prominent data sources are drawn upon to back-up the business's stocking strategy.

Strong focus on finance and insurance sales have helped the business boost pre-tax profits by 15.5% in 2021, alongside an average margin on each used vehicle sale to rival some of the industry giants.

But, crucially, a focus on customer care and consistent service keeps car buyers coming back time and time again.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Hilton Garage

FINALISTS

Angus MacKinnon
Big Motoring World
Hilton Garage

MB Motors
Redgate Lodge

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startline

A thick white wavy line starts from the top right, curves down and left, then loops back up and right, ending near the bottom left. It frames the central text.

CREATING OODLES OF CAR BUYING CONFIDENCE

oodlecarfinance.com

oodle

Phillip Williams, managing director of award sponsor Oodle Car Finance (second from right) presents the award to digital marketing specialist Ben Mills and Edward Ford (right), director, FOW Car Supermarket



ONLINE CONSUMER EXPERIENCE OF THE YEAR (INDEPENDENT)

Winner: FOW

FOW, formerly known as Fords of Winsford, launched a new website in Q4 2021, powered by new partner GForces, through the NetDirector platform. It's a partnership which allowed the used car supermarket to integrate a full online journey for the customer to buy a car.

The website has integrated calls to action (CTAs) for customers to request a personalised video of their intended purchase, organise finance with the option of a free 'value my vehicle' credit check performed in three steps and the option to reserve a vehicle for up to 48 hours.

Through its partnership with Keyloop and GForces,

FOW provides a 'click and collect' service, with the option to deliver the car to the customer's door via 'We Deliver Cars', with a pricing model that can be integrated within the online order.

The car supermarket has seen an uplift in online transactions since the introduction of videos on its website and social platforms.

Videos are also embedded within its classified adverts, exclusively to specific models.

During lockdowns, FOW's social media channels contributed to 3,267 total sales over a three-month period when its showrooms were closed.

FOW is in the process of expanding its online content to help customers through their buying

journey, with dedicated landing pages featuring search engine optimisation (SEO)-centric descriptive content and high-quality videos, scripted, edited and performed by members of the internal team.

Pooling its internal expertise has allowed FOW to become more efficient while actively reacting to industry changes. FOW designs, creates and prints all on-location content with video production created and edited internally.

FOW's marketing team works closely with its sales teams to better understand customer needs and create content relevant to them.

The website is under continuous development with changes optimised to enhance the customer journey.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Frosts Cars

FINALISTS

Angus MacKinnon
Ask Motors
FOW

Frosts Cars
MCS Performance
Van Sales UK

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INDEPENDENT WORKSHOP OF THE YEAR

Winner: S&R Miller

Wigan-based S&R Miller has built its reputation as a Volkswagen Group specialist since the business was established by husband and wife duo Stuart and Rachel in September 2015.

The workshop specialises in tyres, repairs, performance tuning and diagnostics and such is the expertise available that it has become a five-star hit in online reviews and has seen customers travelling to the Bradley Lane site from as far afield as Devon. Its positive reputation has also spread to other garages and dealers in the area.

S&R Miller carries out work for Arnold Clark, Evans Halshaw, the Chorley Group and Stoneacre. Each of them regularly uses the garage's expertise

for diagnostics, manufacturer programming, coding and calibrations, its entry said.

S&R Miller has built a genuine rapport with its loyal customers who love the quality of service they are consistently provided with. This is reflected in its customer retention rate of 66%.

The Millers run the workshop control together and have expanded the scope of the business over the years to a team of five.

Turnover has grown by 171% since 2019 and the workshop is forecasting further growth of 40% year-on-year in 2022.

Most importantly, the business has continued to be profitable in the past three years and is due to increase its operating profits by 86% in 2022,

representing a big leap in success for the business after putting in the work to slowly build a stable foundation for growth.

S&R Miller has a team of technicians from varying backgrounds where they have been able to create a comprehensive sounding board to solve any Volkswagen Group servicing issue.

The company has continued to invest in equipment to service the latest vehicles and training its technicians towards electric vehicle and hybrid qualifications to cater for future products.

The next anticipated stage of growth for S&R Miller is for Stuart to step away from the tools and focus on growing and marketing the business to an even wider audience.

FINALISTS

CCM
 Meadowfield Auto Centre
 Redgate Lodge Service Centre
 S&R Miller



Mike Edwards, chief sales & marketing officer of award sponsor AutoProtect Group (right), presents the award to Melvin Rogers, director of human resources, Sytner Group

THE COMMUNITY HERO AWARD

Winner: Sytner Group

Within a year, Sytner Group increased its annual donation to long-term automotive charity partner, Ben, from £40,000 in 2021 to £100,000 in 2022, alongside running fundraising events, throughout the year.

It has also committed to take part in community events going forward, including Leicester Pride, which colleagues first took part in last year, where it had a stand at the event to talk to individuals about its diversity and inclusion strategy.

The business has also recently implemented changes in diversity and inclusion to benefit colleagues, community and the wider workforce to help make opportunities readily available for all.

Sytner has set up working groups to include all colleagues and provide them with a platform where their voices can be heard. Included in this is the LGBTQ+ working group that will be organising and fundraising around Leicester Pride 2022.

The group also 'gives back' to the community via the 'Yes Project', in partnership with Leicester Cares, which has been going for more than 20 years – where colleagues visit schools and partake in mock interviews with year 10 and 11 students, to help develop their interview skills.

As part of the programme Bentley Leicester, Audi Leicester and Porsche Leicester take part in dealership tours with young offenders and school leavers.

The group gives individual dealerships the autonomy to choose charities and fundraising events to support, to encourage more active participation by colleagues, and each colleague receives one day off a year, fully paid, to support a charity.

All the group's fundraising and knowledge-sharing activity is communicated internally through a monthly newsletter, which was launched at the start of pandemic to help keep staff informed.

The group also circulates regular emails to encourage colleagues to participate in future charitable activities.

The charity work ties into the group recruitment strategy to retain and gain the most diverse talent.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Arnold Clark Automobiles
TrustFord

FINALISTS

Angus MacKinnon
Arnold Clark Automobiles
CarShop

Hendy Group
Sytner Group
TrustFord

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Rebecca Clark, sales director of award sponsor Auto Trader, presents the trophy to Aaron Surry, general manager, Lexus Cambridge



FRANCHISED DEALERSHIP OF THE YEAR

Winner: Lexus Cambridge

A

focus on staff motivation and people was at the heart of the AM Award-winning entry from this year's Franchised Dealership of the Year.

In 2021, Steven Eagell Group set out with the aim of ensuring that Lexus Cambridge's 2020 profit – its first during its near four-year ownership – was not a "flash in the pan" or the result of COVID-triggered market forces.

But, it was the adoption of a strategy which focussed on easing the pressure on staff, in a bid to create a working environment primed to succeed, that gained praise from the AM Awards judges.

A "customer second, people first" approach

pioneered by Lexus Cambridge resulted in an investment in resource.

A new general manager was joined by an additional new sales controller, allowing the sales teams to be split in to two separately led entities in a move which meant each team member could enjoy every other weekend off.

An additional service advisor and parts manager were also recruited as, centrally, Steven Eagell Group took its renewals team from two to seven to ease the prospecting burden on sales staff.

Customers also benefited as Lexus Cambridge aimed to build on 2020's overall dealership customer satisfaction Index (CSI) score of 91.1%.

Its staff were able to commit more time and thought to customer satisfaction as a partnership with a nearby David Lloyd gym was developed to facilitate collection and drop-off from the facility for members as non-members gained complimentary day passes.

As a result, the Lexus Engagement Survey revealed Lexus Cambridge's Net Promoter Score had risen from 53% in 2020 to 77% in 2021 while its CSI rose to 92.5%.

A 47% increase in sales leads, meanwhile, helped the business achieve a near-20% increase in profit before tax in 2021 and the Centre of the Year accolade at the Lexus Centre of Excellence awards.

FINALISTS

Blackshaws
Hatfields Jaguar Shrewsbury
Hatfields Land Rover Pickering

Marshall BMW Mini Motorrad Grimsby
Peter Vardy Porsche Centre Aberdeen
Lexus Cambridge (Steven Eagell Group)

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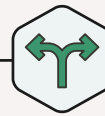
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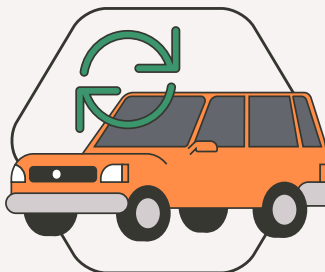


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Jack Allman, chief commercial officer of award sponsor Bumper (right), presented the trophy to Richard Gough, head of aftersales, Marshall Motor Group



FRANCHISED WORKSHOP OF THE YEAR

Winner: Marshall Mercedes-Benz South Lakes

A laser focus on data, communication and training has helped position Mercedes-Benz South Lakes as a perfect performer within the German brand's aftersales network.

The business was operating at a loss in 2019, but has since turned this around to a profit in 2021 on the back of a digitalised service booking facility and workshop utilisation of 109.1%.

The dealership's aftersales department is a critical contributor to profitability with 3% return on sales.

This has been underpinned by a 100% score in Mercedes' 2021 CSI rankings, placing it first among 130 other businesses across the UK.

The workshop was already operating at a 95% CSI score in 2019 and that last 5% can be tricky to close down, but the business' focus on making servicing

and MOTs "as painless as possible" for customers has delivered that final push.

Mercedes-Benz South Lakes empowers customers by giving them options to book and interact with the servicing department online without needing to pick up the phone.

Customers can access an online portal through an initial SMS message to book a service, request a loan car, describe specific issues and access bespoke offers with discount codes.

Embracing digitalisation has seen an 85% increase in bookings done in this way between 2019 and 2021.

The richness of Mercedes-Benz South Lakes' customer data proved invaluable when COVID restrictions came into place and MOT and service intervals were increased. The workshop was able to successfully contact all customers to inform them

of when they needed to come in and this boosted business throughout 2021.

Customer retention has increased by 5.7% to 55.6%, a particularly impressive feat as a franchised workshop's bread and butter is zero-three-year-old vehicles, which have seen declining sales across the industry due to supply issues.

The workshop doubled its efforts on improving its retention of three-to-six-year and six years and over vehicles with a 16% and 21% increase respectively.

The team at South Lakes remained engaged and motivated throughout the lockdowns with online training, which has resulted in all five technicians now qualified to carry out high voltage work on electric vehicles (EV).

This has set the workshop up for the future of increased sales of EVs and hybrids.

FINALISTS

Marshall Peugeot Cambridge
Mercedes-Benz South Lakes

Milcars Mazda
Ryders of Warrington
Steven Eagell Toyota Birmingham

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Serena Carter, key account manager, Shell Lubricants, presents the award to Andy Garrett, chief information officer, Lookers



ONLINE CONSUMER EXPERIENCE OF THE YEAR (FRANCHISED)

Winner: Lookers

Digital now plays a part in every sale. Lookers makes thanks to its online digital strategy and digital transformation programme. The multi-franchised dealer group has established online transaction capabilities, 'Click and Drive' and 'Click and Sell'.

Click and Drive is a fully digital, contactless buying experience that allows customers to create finance quotes, reserve vehicles, value vehicles and organise part-exchange, complete finance applications and purchase a vehicle.

Customers are given the choice of a digital and/or dealership experience and, overall, the programme has delivered significant new and used car sales revenue, Lookers said.

The Click and Sell option allows customers to sell their used car, providing an instant evaluation when a vehicle registration number is inputted.

Lookers has also rolled out new aftersales offerings, providing customers with an online self-check-in solution which has new finance integration and payment options and vehicle status tracking.

It has also invested in a nationwide fleet of specialist delivery vans as part of an enhanced home delivery service for its online shoppers and has delivered website user experience improvements to its vehicle details page, results page, navigation and search and home page.

Lookers now also provides a contactless sales

process that allows contact-free handover to customers via a partnership with Adobe Sign, where 'digital dealership' files can be hosted on Microsoft SharePoint and shared with the customer for an e-signature – removing the need for printing.

The process has reduced 16 wet signatures to just three e-signatures and can be audited remotely by quality assurance teams.

The solution has removed the need for third party contractors to transport, store and audit the dealerships sales files, delivering savings.

Lookers re-structured the digital deal files process to more than 150 dealerships using e-signature documentation, online training guides and step-by-step videos for sales agents.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

TrustFord

FINALISTS

Lookers
Pentagon Motor Group
RRG Group

T G Holdcroft
TrustFord
Waylands Automotive

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Kevin Brockbank core sales director of award sponsor Santander Consumer Finance (right) handed the trophy to Russell Borrie, chief operating officer and group sales director, Arnold Clark Automobiles



USED CAR DEALER OF THE YEAR (FRANCHISED AND INDEPENDENT)

Winner: Arnold Clark Automobiles

Maintaining a 'great' reputation when you are selling the UK's highest volume of used cars is an impressive feat.

Doing so while innovating to improve digital retail solutions and seeking to educate motorists on the future direction of the sector is award-winning.

Arnold Clark offers an average 37,000 used vehicles for sale via its online portal and more than 100,000 Trustpilot reviews rank it as 'great' or above.

The AM100 group's scale allows it to leverage a team of 100 digital developers, along with dedicated

communications and in-house marketing teams and its own film studio to maintain the exposure needed to sustain its impressive market share.

In 2021 the group launched its first Innovation Centre – in partnership with Transport Scotland, OLEV, Scottish Power, Energy Saving Trust, Go Ultra Low, Strathclyde University and The NVT Group – to help foster confidence among motorists curious about making the switch to a zero-emissions vehicle.

The business's franchised retail sites, car and van rental and Motability cars are all among Arnold Clark's list of stocking sources.

Its Sell Your Car buying platform has delivered a 120% rise in volumes this year, despite sector-wide stock shortages.

And as well as a website that generated 50 million web sessions in 2021, with 230,000 customers going on to buy a car digitally, an Arnold Clark app has been downloaded 410,000 times and has 165,000 active users.

Members of the AM Awards judging panel ultimately concluded that Arnold Clark matches its scale to slick process and well-conceived innovation to award-winning effect.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Peter Vardy

FINALISTS

Arbury Motor Group
Arnold Clark Automobiles
Baytree Cars

Marshall Volvo Grantham
MCS Performance
Peter Vardy
TrustFord

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John Veichmanis
COO, carwow

*Source: SMMT data Q1 2022

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carwow



John Veichmanis, chief operating officer of award sponsor carwow (right) presented the trophy to Tony Murphy, head of business, Marshall Volkswagen St Albans



EV DEALERSHIP OF THE YEAR

Winner: Marshall Volkswagen St Albans

A steadfast focus on instilling confidence and knowledge in customers exploring the switch to zero-emissions transport was central to the success of the AM Awards 2022's EV Dealership of the Year.

The team at Marshall Motor Group's St Albans Volkswagen franchise impressed judges with an ability to identify the EV buying journey's pain points and eliminate them to create a business well-positioned to serve its local community.

When head of business Tony Murphy joined the dealership in October 2019 he encouraged his sales team to mystery shop other EV retailers to discover what was required to achieve market-leading performance.

In the period that followed, the business established a unique ID. Hub environment – not mandated by the brand – to offer customers an immersive EV experience.

Meanwhile staff, who helped to identify a lack of knowledge as customers' biggest frustration when seeking advice from dealership staff, were trained up to "product expert" levels to deliver a confidence inspiring, informative and consultative customer experience.

A partnership with the local Tesco superstore saw its 24 free-to-use charge points – installed through a partnership with VW – included on every EV test drive.

Technicians and product experts also harnessed

the power of CitNOW videos to interact with customers and overcome common vehicle issues.

VW St Albans' EV focus has helped the business accelerate zero-emissions-capable vehicle sales from 39 in 2019 to 143 in 2021 – 88 of which were pure electric.

From a loss-making position at the time of its 2019 acquisition from Jardine Motors Group, it also returned significant profits.

It is now the top performing EV retailer in Marshall's 20-strong VW portfolio.

"EVs have played an important role in our turnaround and will do so even more in 2022 and beyond as we get closer to the new rule prohibiting ICE sales from 2030," said Murphy.

FINALISTS

Downeys Cars NI
Marshall Volkswagen St Albans

Marshall Volkswagen Kidlington
Vindis Volkswagen Cambridge

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David Kendrick, automotive partner at award sponsors UHY Hacker Young (right) presented to award to Steven Latham of the NFDA who collected the award on behalf of the Obee brothers

THE STRATEGIC SUCCESS AWARD

Winners: Glen and Thomas Obee, former owners of Motorline

New for 2022, this award enables AM and its audit partner UHY Hacker Young to give special recognition for the long-term strategic leadership of a motor retail business.

The winners enjoyed a remarkable finale in 2021 when they sold Motorline to Marshall Motor Holdings, after spending the past 15 years transforming the business, more than quadrupling its annual revenues to almost £700 million.

This was done by extending its franchise portfolio, which included Nissan, Toyota, Lexus, Hyundai, Peugeot, Volkswagen, Audi and Škoda, and its geographic footprint across Kent, West Sussex, Surrey, Berkshire, Bristol, South Wales and the West Midlands.

The Obee brothers focused on their workforce: engaging and developing staff, building high performing teams. The two willingly invested in their properties and proved they could get a decent return from mainstream brands.

In an AM interview during 2015 they said: "The best compliment you can have is when manufacturers say they'd prefer you to do it, and we've been lucky to be in that position with our partners."

Only entering the AM100 after the 2008 recession, the duo drove the family business, which had been founded by their father in 1972, up the rankings to be among the 25 biggest UK motor retailers by 2021. Their negotiation of the £64.5m sale of the group to Marshall and retirement from the industry was the mark of long-term strategic success.

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UHY Hacker Young
Chartered Accountants

Cameron Wade, VP global omnichannel retailing of award sponsor Keyloop (right), presents the trophy to Paul Philpott, president and CEO, Kia UK



MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

Winner: Kia UK

Kia UK is on the road to break the 100,000 registrations mark in 2022 after defying COVID-19 disruption to supply chains. It delivered growth of 29% year-on-year with 90,817 new car registrations in 2021 and a record market share of 5.5%.

It's a remarkable achievement for a brand that has now celebrated three decades-plus operating in the UK and more than 1.2 million cars sold since 1991.

The brand has ranked consistently as a top performer in the National Franchised Dealer Association (NFDA) Dealer Attitude Surveys, getting near perfect scores for the most recent results across areas like support, profitability, training and the day-to-day working relationship. Top performing

dealers were making in excess of 3% return on sales last year.

Kia's popularity with its dealer partners speaks to its ability to walk the fine line between delivering volumes, profits and brand desirability.

The 191 dealers representing Kia not only gain access to a slick operating team, but also a product line-up that has remained consistently relevant for many years.

The Kia e-Niro is the second most popular EV on the market in the UK behind Tesla's Model 3, with 12,271 units sold in 2021.

The Sportage also continues to be a key weapon in bolstering volumes and market share for the Korean brand, representing 50% of all its sales.

Nearly 30,000 new Sportages hit UK roads last year.

Kia is now embarking on an ambitious strategy to launch a range of dedicated new EVs over the next five years to fully transform its line-up for electrification and provide its dealer network with the next generation of innovative products.

Such is the desire for Kia's new products that the first of these is the striking EV6, which is already sold out for 2022.

An Electric Experience tour is already underway across Kia's 191 showrooms until the summer to showcase the power trio of the e-Niro, Sportage plug-in hybrid and EV6. Dealers are well positioned to become local experts on EVs at a critical time when many consumers are considering the switch.

FINALISTS

Kia UK
Lexus GB
MG Motor UK

Toyota GB
Vauxhall

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Nathan Tomlinson, dealer principal, Devonshire Motors (centre) collects the trophy on behalf of Andrew Iveson (inset) from Liam Finney, director of commercial partnerships at award sponsor EMaC



DEALER PRINCIPAL/GENERAL MANAGER OF THE YEAR

Winner: Andrew Iveson, Livingstone Motor Group

Ensuring staff have a leader they can trust, who communicates well, who demonstrates focus and complete belief, and who guides them through uncertainty is critical for this winner.

Andrew Iveson has worked up through the ranks at Hull Mitsubishi, now known as Livingstone Motor Group, from trainee sales executive in 1997 to general manager, and lately he has been required to lead his team through considerable uncertainty and change. With Mitsubishi set to exit the UK in 2021 the Hull-based dealership's board had to consider the company's future carefully after 30 years

representing the Japanese manufacturer and even longer in the same family ownership.

"I had 20 faces looking at me to solve this problem," said Iveson in his awards entry.

Iveson planned and proposed a management buyout to the board. He set out to court other franchises. Both were ultimately successful. Iveson rebranded the business to Livingstone Motor Group and added Subaru, Isuzu and SsangYong franchises. It ranked fourth for Subaru in Q4 2021 and first for SsangYong in January, while its Isuzu stock is forward sold until November.

Its 2021 profitability exceeded 2019's despite the

costs of rebranding, refurbishment and training.

Iveson reviewed wage structures to make staff less reliant on bonuses and, to motivate the sales team in this period of long lead times, he pays commission on the sale and commission again at handover if the delivery is longer than three months. "Yes I pay twice, but it instantly motivated the staff to get selling," he said.

"I have brought positivity, enjoyment, stability and shown direction; how change should be and can be embraced not scared of," said Iveson. He's flown the flag for the dealership, built a plan and stuck to it, and shown to staff that he will lead them to success.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Graham Etherington, Marshall BMW Mini
Motorrad Grimsby & BMW Scunthorpe

FINALISTS

Steve Bridge, eStar Truck & Van
Graham Etherington, Marshall BMW Mini
Motorrad Grimsby & BMW Scunthorpe
Alex Gayton, Perrys Peugeot and Citroën

in Bletchley
Andrew Iveson, Livingstone Motor Group
Omar Khan, Marshall Mercedes-Benz of Bolton
Hayden Williams, Livery Dole

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Assurant is passionate about fostering a diverse, equitable and inclusive culture to drive sustainable innovation for the benefit of all we support. We are therefore proud to sponsor the very first AM Awards Leader in Diversity & Inclusion category.



Heidi Liddiment, account director Automotive UK at award sponsor Assurant (right) presented the trophy to Sharon Ashcroft, human resource director, TrustFord

LEADER IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Winner: TrustFord

TrustFord's goals are to reflect the diverse customers it serves, be an employer of choice and attract and retain diverse talent who can thrive and progress in an inclusive culture.

Steps the dealer group is taking towards achieving these goals include redacting sensitive information from applications to eliminate 'unconscious bias' at the stage of screening applications and advertising flexible work with every vacancy.

TrustFord is also an Automotive 30% Club member, which includes participation in its 'Speakers for Schools' programme and securing recognition of staff through its 'Inspiring Automotive Women' initiative.

In 2021, a cascade process began to engage senior management through a series of calls from board members to help demonstrate their commitment to its diversity and inclusion (D&I) agenda.

TrustFord has been working with Fiona Daniel (FD2I) to develop the strategy further – holding sessions with the board to share insight and data supporting how a diverse leadership drives more successful businesses.

Feedback from the sessions has been distilled into the strategy and the framework is being developed and cascaded through the business.

The car retail group has a five-year plan to deliver by communicating D&I plans internally, encouraging an 'inclusive culture' via listening sessions and

surveys and tracking and measuring progress by setting D&I aspirations.

A chat group has also been set-up for female colleagues on the colleague app where information can be accessed any time. Senior women in the group also mentor female members of staff who may need help in developing their skills and confidence.

TrustFord also promotes support provided by automotive charity, Ben, including Silvercloud – Ben's digital platform to help colleagues manage their mental health and wellbeing.

The AM100 group also gives mental health training and shares stories of how colleagues are encouraging each other through wellbeing activities and 'wellbeing days'.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

LSH Auto

FINALISTS

LSH Auto
Sytner Group
TrustFord

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Stephen Briers, group editor, *AM* (right), presented the award to Damian Campbell, head of corporate sales, Lookers Vehicle Solutions – Fleet Financial

LEASING OPERATION OF THE YEAR

Winner: Lookers Vehicle Solutions – Fleet Financial

A 'perfect mix' of personal service, long-serving staff, technological advances, innovative products, together with being part of one of the biggest dealer groups in the UK, means Lookers Vehicle Solutions – Fleet Financial stands apart from its competitors.

With a staff of around 25 people – with nearly half having more than 10 years' service with the company – their market knowledge and attention to customer care enables the company to champion its motto, 'extra care comes as standard'.

Cornerstones of this include: Fleet Financial Emotive, a specialised brand promoting and supporting customers transitioning to electric vehicles (EVs) and

PHEVs (contributing to nearly 65% of its current order book being one of these); continual staff training and development; complimentary access to 'fleet navigator', a bespoke fleet management package designed to help customers manage their vehicles in one secure location; and complimentary driver workshops based on the toolbox talks concept in the construction industry.

In 45-minute sessions maintenance and operations staff engage with company car drivers, helping them to understand how to run and manage their company vehicle.

Recent developments include Emotive's launch in 2020 and, with the support of Lookers Vehicle

Solutions, the launch of a new Fleet Financial website. This offers customers increased support, including a customisable quotation platform, vehicle reviews, secure customer area to complete financial proposals and an omnichannel approach combining digital and human support.

The website was launched in September 2021 and now Fleet Financial is transacting 26% of business from customers who've visited it.

Factors such as the above have contributed to improvements in key financials measures year-on-year to 2021: a 16% increase in turnover; 74% increase in profit before tax; and 17% increase in units sold.

FINALISTS

CarLease UK
 Lookers Vehicle Solutions – Fleet Financial

Simon Whicher, sales director, Cooper Solutions part of award sponsor PIB motor trade practice group (right), handed the trophy to John O'Hanlon, CEO, Waylands Automotive



DEALER GROUP OF THE YEAR (UP TO 10 SITES)

Winner: Waylands Automotive

A well contested category this year, but our winner takes the trophy for its strong growth, positive and supportive culture and investment in digital capabilities.

This is the third time running Waylands Automotive, headed by chief executive John O'Hanlon, has won this award.

Continued investment in its digital capabilities are a key objective as it ensures this complements its showrooms, and it is increasing its digital sales team to be able to extend the hours the business can help online customers without sacrificing quality of service.

Focus on digital sales response was a key driver in 2021 for Waylands. Enhancements to its website

and virtual sales appointments process helped improve customer satisfaction and sales conversion, and more improvements stem from the launch of a call scoring programme, which reviews inbound calls to the dealerships for manner, rapport and enquiry capture. A group sales induction and training in remote selling techniques ensures new starters hit the ground running.

Staff know that "customers who visit a Waylands business should truly feel the difference" whether they're on site or online.

Now representing Volvo, Kia and MG – all of which have battery electric vehicles in their ranges – Waylands has achieved EVA (electric vehicle

approved) accreditation across every business.

The group is run like a larger organisation in terms of the controls and processes and therefore provides strong financials. However, its scale allows an entrepreneurial approach from each business, which is actively encouraged. This allows a dynamic blend between balance sheet and business operation, said its entry.

The young business has continued to invest in talent, strengthening its management structure in the year to appoint head of sales, digital sales, marketing and HR, and thereby re-enforcing the approach of running controls tightly alongside an entrepreneurial business.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Hatfields

FINALISTS

Hatfields
L&L Automotive
Porsche Retail Group

Stephen James Automotive
Waylands Automotive

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Chris Evans, head of sales operations at award sponsor heycar (right), handed the trophy to Russell Borrie, chief operating officer and group sales director, Arnold Clark Automobiles



DEALER GROUP OF THE YEAR (MORE THAN 10 SITES)

Winner: : Arnold Clark Automobiles

Our winner has thought out of the box to help consumers make buying decisions while continuing to adapt to industry-wide changes.

In an average year Arnold Clark delivers remarkable results. Yet in the exceptional 2021 trading year for the industry our judges felt that this dealer group's performance was astounding, with a return on sales of 5.6% from revenues that exceeded those of 2019. And reinforcing the financial data is the way that the group is investing in both its own future and the future of its customers, with showroom and digital resources, activities to support local communities, and the launch of an

Innovation Centre which allows motorists to experience electric vehicles (EVs) from different brands in one location without being sold to.

That Innovation Centre doesn't sell, but can help customers gain enough EV confidence to make up their minds. It has proven so successful that more are planned to open in 2022. In addition, the company is rolling out its own EV approval programme so all employees are trained on alternative-fuelled vehicles and can give consumers confidence that they're receiving correct, well-researched information.

More innovations are happening behind the scenes at Arnold Clark, such as digitalising a showroom processes to minimise customer signatures,

development of a bespoke enquiry management system for omnichannel usage, a branch team reward which sets clear goals for an entire branch to earn bonuses together, and the 'Think Customer' initiative which enables anyone to put forward ideas that could improve the customer experience.

Its number of 'click and collect' sites is increasing, and, as a group, Arnold Clark is rolling out a sustainability strategy to cut carbon output.

This win means Arnold Clark has collected this trophy in seven of the past 10 years.

It's a business that some industry veterans describe as an unstoppable motor retailing machine. That shows little sign of changing.

FINALISTS

Arnold Clark Automobiles
Marshall Motor Holdings
Perrys Motor Sales

Peter Vardy
Steven Eagell Group
TrustFord

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BUSINESS LEADER OF THE YEAR

The logo for Premia Solutions, featuring a stylized white square icon with a smaller white square inside, positioned above the company name.

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Opportunities for growth | Development support

Karen Prince, director of customer engagement, Lookers (second from right), collects the trophy on behalf of Mark Raban (inset) from Ian Simpson, director of award sponsors Premia Solutions (right). Looking on is AM editor Tim Rose



BUSINESS LEADER OF THE YEAR

Winner: Mark Raban, Lookers

In awarding this year's Business Leader of the Year accolade the AM Awards judges wanted to recognise a man who has guided an AM100 PLC through its toughest period of trading to deliver impressive profitability.

Lookers chief executive Mark Raban claimed in an interview with *AM* earlier this year that he liked to "stick with my knitting" by nature, having spent much of his career in finance roles, including postings at ASOS and Marshall Motor Group.

After switching to the chief executive hot seat at Lookers in early 2020 Raban took on a business staring down the barrel of a "perfect storm" of

legacy issues. Within months, an ongoing fraud investigation would identify a £19m black hole in the group's accounts as a Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) investigation scrutinised its compliance procedures and Lookers' stock exchange listing was suspended temporarily due to the late submission of its 2019 accounts.

Raban led through this period – and the turmoil of COVID-19 pandemic, just weeks after he took on his new position – to return Lookers to rude health.

Last month (April) the group's preliminary 2021 annual financial results revealed a record pre-tax profit of £90.1m – up 558% year-on-year – and revenues up 9% at £4.05bn.

Lookers' comeback has clearly instilled confidence in Raban, who told *AM* that he is now aiming to "try something different".

A hub-and-spoke used car retail operation and a focus on a caring culture that will nurture its workforce are both now high on the PLC's agenda, underpinned by the creation of a redeveloped headquarters in Altrincham.

In his interview with *AM*, Raban said: "I'm extremely proud of what we have achieved over the past two years.

"Those on the front line have been phenomenal and the work done by our leadership team has been fantastic."

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Keyloop is delighted

to support the AM Awards and sponsor the **Retailer of the Year** and **Manufacturer of the Year** categories.

Congratulations to both
Arnold Clark Automobiles as winner of the Retailer of the Year award, and **Kia UK** as Manufacturer of the Year.

www.keyloop.com



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Elena Rodriguez, chief product officer of award sponsor Keyloop, presents the trophy to Eddie Hawthorne, chief executive and group managing director, Arnold Clark Automobiles

RETAILER OF THE YEAR

Winner: : Arnold Clark Automobiles

S elected from the winners of the Used Car Retailer of the Year and the two Dealer Group of the Year categories, our winner is a family-owned brand and an unstoppable force.

Arnold Clark prides itself on being the largest independent, family-run business in Europe, and this is reflected in its desire to put the customer in total control and allow its employees the freedom to do what they do best.

Reinvesting its substantial annual profits, it has created an environment that nurtures individualism and promotes healthy working, and for the customer

it wants to be sure that it is 'easy to do business with'.

Development of its digital customer journey, with new buying concepts like click and collect and home delivery, has happened in tandem with new physical concepts such as its Innovation Centre in Glasgow.

This site, which opened in 2021 with the support of Olev (Office for Low-Emission Vehicles), the Energy Saving Trust and Transport Scotland, among others, is not a car sales location; it was designed with the future of transport in mind, and its role is to educate the public about alternative fuel vehicles and let them experience the hybrids and electric vehicles of many brands in one place.

More Innovation Centres are set to open; the next will be in England this year.

A Think Customer initiative encourages staff to put the consumer first and consider ways to help them get what they want.

A Think Employee initiative ensures the company examines ways to give back to the staff who help make it so successful, such as rewards for entire teams working together to achieve brand goals.

Joint research programmes with the University of Strathclyde are looking at how the changing car industry and market will affect the consumer with an aim to help shape transport strategy in the future.

FINALISTS

Arnold Clark Automobiles (winner of Dealer Group of the Year – more than 10 sites, and Used Car Dealer of the Year)

Waylands Automotive (winner of Dealer Group of the Year – up to 10 sites)

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Andrew Landell, managing director of award sponsor LTK Consultants (right) handed the trophy to Tom Avery, general manager, Marshall Hyundai Gloucester

BEST IN CUSTOMER SERVICE

Winner: Marshall Hyundai Gloucester

For two years running, in extraordinary circumstances, Marshall Hyundai Gloucester topped the Korean brand's national league for customer focus.

Under the guidance of general manager Tom Avery, who has been with the business since it was founded in 2012 as part of Westland Group, the business also delivered a 2.9% return on sales in 2021 and smashed its budget.

Sales numbers were 5% above Hyundai's national average, service 4%.

This is against a background of lockdowns and vehicle supply disruptions caused by the pandemic.

Longevity is an important element of providing excellent customer care, with Avery and his senior

sales executive being able to track customers back more than 20 years when he worked for another business. The two sales executives have been with the business five years and the master technician 11 years, parts manager and aftersales manager seven and sales manager more than three.

A key challenge, says Avery, is identifying customers who have "slipped under the net", because the business didn't respond quickly enough when they were not totally satisfied.

"My office is a glass box in the showroom," he said in his entry. The door is always open and if Avery hears a disgruntled customer he'll talk to them immediately and resolve the problem.

To prevent this, all sales and service customers

are asked to complete satisfaction surveys, they're asked to complete Google reviews (the dealership has more than 500 with an average score of 4.6 out of five) and all customer phone conversations are recorded. Each of the management team listens to 20 calls per week for coaching and development purposes.

Considerable attention is given to checking customer email addresses and telephone numbers at all touchpoints. The focus means it has the cleanest data in the Hyundai network: 96% for email, 95% for mobile numbers.

It has paid off. As one customer leaving a five-star review put it: "I went to search for a new car. I did not expect to get such an amazing experience."

FINALISTS

Holdcroft Motor Group
Jim Reid Vehicle Sales & Service
Lexus Cardiff
Livery Dole

Lookers Northallerton Volkswagen
Marshall Hyundai Gloucester
Marshall Toyota Newport
Motonet.com
Roadside (Garages)

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“ People are doing much more of the car buying journey online now. One of the key benefits of working with CarGurus is the ability to reach further afield to search for new customers. ”

Jonathan Royle, Head of Marketing and Digital Delivery at RRG Group

ABOUT CARGURUS

CarGurus.co.uk is the fastest growing online automotive marketplace in the UK among its nearest competitors based on the year over year percentage change in average unique monthly visitors.

We help dealers quickly and easily market their vehicles and connect with more engaged buyers. To learn more about the challenges CarGurus solves for consumers and dealers, call **0800 808 5557** or visit cargurus.co.uk/signup/AmAwards

Source: Comscore MMX Multi-Platform®, Total Unique Monthly Visitors. Custom-defined list includes: CarGurus.co.uk, Motors.co.uk, AutoTrader.co.uk, Gumtree.com-motors, Q4 2020 - Q1 2021 vs Q4 2021 - Q1 2022, UK



Richard Pyke, director of account management, Support & Operations, of award sponsor CarGurus and PistonHeads, presents the award to Caroline Burnell, head of marketing & communications, eStar Truck & Van

MARKETING STRATEGY OF THE YEAR

Winner: eStar Truck and Van

Key to eStar Truck and Vans' marketing strategy has been 'measuring, failing, learning and evolving'.

The small three-member marketing team, headed by Caroline Burnell, has taken the time to 'get under the skin' of the business needs, as well as the needs of its customers and employees, to generate deliverable measured results, since it was established in April 2021.

The team has taken a digital-first approach to include social media, email and SMS marketing, online advertising, and website redevelopment – with PR, events and print advertising secondary.

Its mission? To make things as "simple" as possible for customers and prospects, for example, by only contacting customers when there was insight to benefit their business, such as informing its Manchester database about the proposed clean air zone (CAZ) – as a 'softer' sales activity.

On social media, eStar held a live Q&A session on Instagram to help demystify elements of the (since delayed) Manchester CAZ to position the dealer as experts in the field to customers and prospects.

eStar also had success with its social media influencer strategy, which saw it form partnerships to reach new audiences – a local travel and family

blogger to highlight the eVito Tourer and a chef who appeared on the BBC's *Great British Menu* to highlight the eVito panel van. As a direct result of the campaign, eStar sold two eVito vans.

The eStar marketing team has operated on a people-first basis, setting the tone of content of how it speaks to customers, which the rest of the business has followed.

eStar said the new culture of openness, transparency, suitability, and desire to help was developed by the marketing and team and continues to evolve as a result of what is learned from its projects and campaigns.

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Tom Sharpe, news and features editor, *AM* (centre), collected the trophy on behalf of Stuart Foulds (below) from Tom Marley, group CEO of award sponsor Aston Barclay. Looking on is group editor Stephen Briers



HALL OF FAME

Winner: Stuart Foulds

A transformative period for TrustFord which saw an acceleration of fleet volumes, a restructured portfolio and a focus on employee culture will be the legacy of this year's Hall of Fame inductee – Stuart Foulds.

Foulds joins esteemed company in the AM Hall of Fame after bringing an end to his automotive retail career with almost five years at the Ford of Britain-owned franchised car retail group.

Previously the managing director of the Evans Halshaw Ford Group and the longest-standing member of the Ford Dealer Council, Foulds took the helm of TrustFord in July 2017. What followed was a renovative period for the AM100 group.

The expansion of its Long Marston logistic centre,

near Stratford-on-Avon, and the acquisition and growth of a vast pre-delivery inspection centre in Sherburn have accelerated its ability to deliver volume.

Foulds' tenure also saw the delivery of the TrustFordNOW initiative to improve the immediacy of sales, allowing car buyers to drive a vehicle away in as little as an hour.

The brand was later extended to ServiceNOW, guaranteeing a service in 60 minutes.

PartsPlus trade parts centres and QuickLane fast-fit operations have been rolled-out across the UK and, in 2020, TrustFord made changes as part of a move to consolidate the brand's London dealerships.

The £30m sale of its 4.44-acre Alpertown dealership saw its sales operations moved to Edgware Road before the January 2020 opening of a new 20,000 sq ft aftersales centre in Alpertown.

Alongside a series of strategic changes made under Foulds' leadership, TrustFord also focussed on its people, leading the way on issues such as diversity and inclusion.

And Foulds became recognised as a key supporter



of the Ben automotive charity, particularly through its annual Break Out for Ben charity challenge (<http://ben.org.uk/BreakoutForBen>).

One AM Awards judge said: "It's great that we can recognise what Stuart Foulds has done in his career. There's a real legacy there."

PREVIOUS INDUCTEES

2021 Professor Richard Parry-Jones CBE,
Marshall Motor Holdings
2020 Graham Day, CEM Day

2019 Tony Whitehorn, Hyundai
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TALENT ON THE MOVE



PAUL WILLCOX
GROUP MANAGING
DIRECTOR
STELLANTIS UK



ALISON JONES
SENIOR VICE-
PRESIDENT
STELLANTIS

Vauxhall managing director Paul Willcox will assume overall responsibility for Stellantis UK's car and commercial vehicle brands following the promotion of Alison Jones.

In a series of changes effective from June 1, Jones has been promoted into the role of senior vice-president of Circular Economy with the car manufacturing giant.

Stellantis said its Circular Economy business was one of the core pillars of its "Dare Forward 2030" plans. It aims to multiply revenues from recycling and extending the life of EV

batteries by factors of 10 and four as part of its objective to reach €2bn (£1.7bn) revenues in 2030.

Willcox will take the helm of Vauxhall, Peugeot, Citroën, DS Automobiles, Fiat, Fiat Professional, Abarth, Jeep and Alfa Romeo in the UK.

Stellantis chief executive Carlos Tavares said: "The daily challenges and ongoing deep transformation of the automotive industry requires organisational agility and talent at the right place at the right timing across our company."

"These appointments reflect the bold ambitions of our strategic plan 'Dare Forward 2030' and will strongly contribute to the transformation path we started since Stellantis was formed in January 2021."

Elsewhere in the Stellantis leadership changes, Maxime Picat is appointed chief purchasing and supply chain officer, replacing Michelle Wen who will pursue personal projects.

Uwe Hochgeschurtz is appointed enlarged Europe chief operating officer, replacing Picat, with Florian Huettl replacing Hochgeschurtz and joining the Stellantis' top executive team as Opel and Vauxhall chief executive.



**IAIN BROWN, FIAT
AND ABARTH UK
SALES DIRECTOR**

Stellantis has promoted Iain Brown, from head of customer experience and quality for Abarth, Fiat, Alfa Romeo, Fiat Professional and Jeep, to the role of Fiat and Abarth UK sales director.

The manufacturer says Brown will assume responsibility for developing and implementing the Italian brands' sales strategy with the aim of growing market share sustainably while improving the customer experience.

Brown joined Fiat as zone sales manager in 2008 and has held various roles including that of regional sales manager and national sales operation manager. He had been in his most recent role since 2019.

In his new role, Brown will report to Fiat and Abarth country manager Greg Taylor.



**AMEDEO FELISA,
ASTON MARTIN
CEO**

Aston Martin has appointed former Ferrari chief executive Amedeo Felisa as its new CEO as Tobias Moers stands down after less than two years at the helm. Flisa – already a non-executive director – will be joined by former Ferrari colleague Roberto Fedeli, as chief technical officer, in June.

Former Mercedes-Benz AMG division chief executive Moers, who officially succeeded Andy Palmer at Aston Martin in August 2020, will stay until July to help ensure a smooth transition.

Aston Martin say the changes will "drive further and faster innovation and instil greater cohesion and effectiveness across the company."

Aston Martin's Q1 trading update also revealed it had appointed Doug Lafferty as its new chief financial officer with, replacing Kenneth Gregor.



SCOTT HAMILTON-COOPER,
MANAGING DIRECTOR OF
AX AUTOMOTIVE

AX Automotive has promoted sales and operations director Scott Hamilton-Cooper to managing director.

In his new role, Hamilton-Cooper will focus on digital transformation to further enhance the customer experience for AX's automotive retail, insurer, broker, and fleet partners and their drivers.

He will also oversee the launch of a new customer app, which will give motorists instant access to all aspects of their case to help answer queries more effectively.



**BEN GORNALL, FINANCE
DIRECTOR AT BOWKER
MOTOR GROUP**

Bowker Motor Group has appointed Ben Gornall as its new finance director.

He joined the family-owned dealer group four years ago, as a financial controller.

His new role sees him take on more responsibility for day-to-day financial decisions at the business.

Gornall will continue to report to Andy Gee, chief financial officer at Bowker Group, which incorporates Bowker Motor Group and Bowker Transport. Gee joined the group in 2018.



**DANIEL TEMPLE, HEAD
OF SALES DEVELOPMENT
AT ALPHERA**

Daniel Temple has joined Alphera Financial Services as its new head of sales development.

Temple will move to the new posting from his most recent position as sales channel development manager within BMW Group UK.

During his time with BMW Group UK he has helped launch the 'Full Circle Retail Programme', an upstream remarketing initiative designed to retain BMW Group vehicles within the franchise retailer network.



**BEN FISH, NETWORK
OPERATIONS MANAGER
AT RENAULT UK**

Former head of sales for Seat and Cupra UK Ben Fish has joined Renault UK as its new network operations director.

He takes over from Tim Marriott, who was given the position last year as part of a management reshuffle.

Fish will be responsible for sales operations, fleet and network development.

He is credited with playing an "instrumental part" in leading and developing the launch strategy for the Cupra brand.



**BRUCE CLARK, CHIEF
TECHNOLOGY OFFICER
AT VERTU MOTORS**

Vertu Motors has promoted IT director Bruce Clark to the newly-created role of chief technology officer.

He will lead a 50-strong in-house software and robotics development team, working on the progressive development of the AM100 PLC's Click2Drive online car retail platform as well as fine-tuning customer and vehicle data analytics and addressing cyber security threats.

His remit will also include oversight of the company's IT operations.

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION TO THE AM TEAM:

Which do you prefer – on the beach or by the pool?

EDITORIAL

Editor Tim Rose 01733 46826
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@AM_editorTimR

► On the beach

News and features editor Tom Sharpe 01733 468343 tom.sharpe@bauermedia.co.uk
@Sharpe_Tom

► On the beach for people watching and because my awful swimming technique is less apparent in the sea

PRODUCTION

Head of publishing Luke Neal

► By the pool, can't stand suncream and sand

Production editor David Buckley

► I like to be able to see a beach, not go on it. Hate sand between my toes, so it's a pool for me every time

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EIGHT QUESTIONS TO A...

HEAD OF BUSINESS

Jonathan Rogan,
Bowker BMW in Preston



What are the main responsibilities of your role?

My role is to give the business direction so we can continue to grow and be profitable. That's a wide-ranging job and means whatever is required to make the dealership run smoothly and delight our customers. No two days are the same. I love the variety.

With Bowker being such a well-known and enduring family business in the north-west there's an extra dimension to the management team's responsibilities. We have to remain true to the family name and the legacy it represents. I believe family businesses offer customers a different experience than some of the larger dealer groups. We work hard to protect those unique high standards.

What are the most significant challenges ahead?

We're working hard on staff recruitment and retention. As a family business we have the edge in terms of loyalty. But we know we can still work harder to create the kind of careers and fulfilling working environment that attracts and retains people with the right skills. Some of my colleagues have been with Bowker for more than 30 years. That kind of continuity is a challenge worth meeting.

The industry as a whole is dealing with supply chain issues and then there's the huge changes that come with ongoing customer experience advances like online retailing and video. Then there's the move to electric vehicles (EVs). After more than 30 years in the trade, I can't remember a time when our ability to adapt has been in such sharp focus.

How might these challenges be overcome?

Every member of staff will want something unique from their careers. Our job as an employer is to acknowledge everyone's unique set of skills and give them the support and encouragement to make the most of them. We invest in training and education. We have scholarship and apprentice programmes with Preston and Blackburn colleges for young people starting out in the automotive industry. It all makes a difference.

We must be patient on supply chain issues. We can't always affect the volume of cars we receive, but we can communicate clearly and often with our customers. By listening to and understanding them we can even discover available used models that meet their needs sooner than they may have had to wait for a new car.

Bowker is investing in electric charging infrastructure at our dealerships to meet demand from EV owners. We are also investing in training to help technicians transition from combustion to high voltage engineers. Like I say, it's about how we all adapt.

What attracted you to this area of expertise and how did you get to your current role?

I was Bowker aftersales director when, earlier this year, the head of business role at Preston presented an exciting new challenge. I've always loved cars, I think I have a good way with people and people skills and, after 18 years in the trade, I have discovered a love for the analytical side of the business and the thrill of exceeding targets. It's a blend I hope suits the role well. Everyone in UK automotive retail knows Bowker. The company is renowned for developing great people, backed up with some of the world's biggest and best automotive brands. I'm looking forward to this next chapter of the story.

What's the most important thing you've learned in your career, and how have you made use of it?

Expertise and skills are important. But I think people, and specifically people skills, are the most important element of any business. I can't pretend to know everything about the dealership in the same detail as a specialist colleague, but I can surround myself with the best people – then encourage and trust them to work together as a team.

I find that, in my career, success follows relationships. A big part of that, in any modern business, is building on those relationships to help everyone grow. And growth comes from the kind of success where we take satisfaction from everyone's individual achievements.

QUICK-FIRE QUESTIONS

What drives you?

I get bored easily. I often need a fresh challenge. That's why the nature of the job as head of business suits me so well. The variety always keeps me thinking and on my toes.

What's your favourite app?

I love buying and renovating classic cars. So I spend much too long on classic car marketplace apps. It's a weakness, but I have the happy knack of selling them for more than I spend on them.

How do you relax?

I like bingeing on box sets. Recently, I've been watching *Billions* and *Queen of the South* on Netflix. I also love walking with my family and our Bernese mountain dogs, ending up in a country pub.

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The initial one has already been viewed by more than 3,000 people in its first week since Armchair Marketing published it. It features discussions with Julia Greenhough, marketing director of TrustFord, which recently won the AM Award for Best Marketing Strategy, and Callum Wood, head of sales at CitNOW which was selected by AM readers to win the Supplier of the Year award for the second consecutive year.

The **AM**

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