

# Benefit from real-time data integration with Auto Trader Connect

**A**utoTrader chief executive Nathan Coe has likened the launch of the marketing platform's new stock management solution to "exposing the heart of Auto Trader so that any retailer can use that data to power their business".

Auto Trader Connect (ATC) taps into the full breadth of online Auto Trader's data capabilities, enabling retailers to sync multiple back-end and consumer-facing systems and update them automatically in real-time.

From OEM-connected vehicle data to Auto Trader's live pricing feed and retailers' own valuation algorithms, ATC connects the entire stock management and marketing ecosystem to enhance efficiency, eliminate inconsistency and improve margin at the same time as customer experience.

"Cars are moving quickly; prices are moving quickly. What you need is real-time stock management and the ability to change prices quickly", says Coe.

"What we are doing is almost like



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**PAUL RICHARDS, CROMPTON WAY MOTORS**

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"If you think about everything that retailers need to do to take full advantage of technology and automation in their business, the very basis of that is good stock management, which demands an ability to keep data updated on-the-fly and ensuring, more than anything, that each car is exactly as described.

"This system gives access to the same data that we use, which is increasingly connected to the OEMs themselves."

ATC has already been live with 325 car

retailers for 12 months while more than 1,200 have since requested access.

Retail Essentials, the first element of the Auto Trader Connect solution, will be included in all standard advertising packages from next year, with early access already available (from December 1).

To take full advantage of the new platform, all retailers have to do is ensure their third-party software providers can integrate their existing systems.

More than 60 have either already agreed to facilitate the process, or are committed to doing so early next year, including: Click Dealer; GForces; Dragon2000; eDynamix

Global; Nexus Point; The Whole Caboodle; Chief Mechanic; SalesMaster; Bluesky Interactive; and Dealer Kit.

Coe says Retail Essentials has already proven successful in eliminating re-keying, possible missed sales opportunities and pricing that is behind the fast-moving market.

Auto Trader found that almost half (45%) of retailers are adding the incorrect vehicle specifications into their DMS due to inaccurate data, an issue which risks misleading the consumer or impacting a vehicle's valuation.

Coe says: "If those descriptions aren't correct the customer is likely to go elsewhere or, equally, the retailer may be unaware of the true spec of the car and could be under-selling it. It's all lost revenue.

"Taking advantage of everything Auto Trader has to offer, to ensure these things don't happen, is just about integrating with Auto Trader Connect. Do that and the benefits will follow."

Paul Richards, the owner of Crompton Way Motors, which has been using Auto Trader Connect for the past six months, says the system allowed Crompton Way's high turnover forecourt to "reprice faster to drive higher margins" while saving staff two to three hours a day – the equivalent to a full day each week.

Richards adds: "We also no longer have the frustrating wait for a feed to run; if I want to change a price, correct a mistake or add a new photo, it's done in an instant, both on Auto Trader and my website."

Parkway Motor Group has also been using Auto Trader Connect. Managing director, Sean Booth, says: "Being connected in real-time to Auto Trader allows us to have all of the data at our fingertips to manage our inventory as accurately as possible.

"This enables us to advertise vehicles with rich vehicle data, price more accurately to optimise margin and manage them across our Parkway Group website and Auto Trader all from one system in real-time."

Coe says Auto Trader's strategy is to support its car retail customers to evolve and thrive in an increasingly digital retail environment populated by large-scale disruptors.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in Spring last year it moved quickly to offer free advertising, an offer it extended in December 2020 and February 2021.

But Coe says the "real support" offered to retailers was the advice, webinars, insight



and the market visibility delivered by its data. This will help its customers continue to compete with new market disruptors with "big marketing budgets and big tech budgets", he says.

"A lot of our customers don't have the resources to invest in that to the same degree so we want to enable our customers to start that digital sales journey – which they might be able to complete online or on the forecourt – and help them to offer their customers that same choice," he says.

"We can already gather a guaranteed part-ex price that we can underwrite, but we also want to be able to offer the finance and also allow a customer to reserve the car.

"End-to-end sales are on the horizon. That's the road we're on. We are looking to offer our customers a complete package."

Auto Trader employs around 1,000 people, around a third of which are dedicated to supporting customers, a third to developing its technology and the remainder to marketing, finance and building the brand.

Coe adds: "We want retailers to feel the full benefit of all those people. Auto Trader Connect allows us to do that."

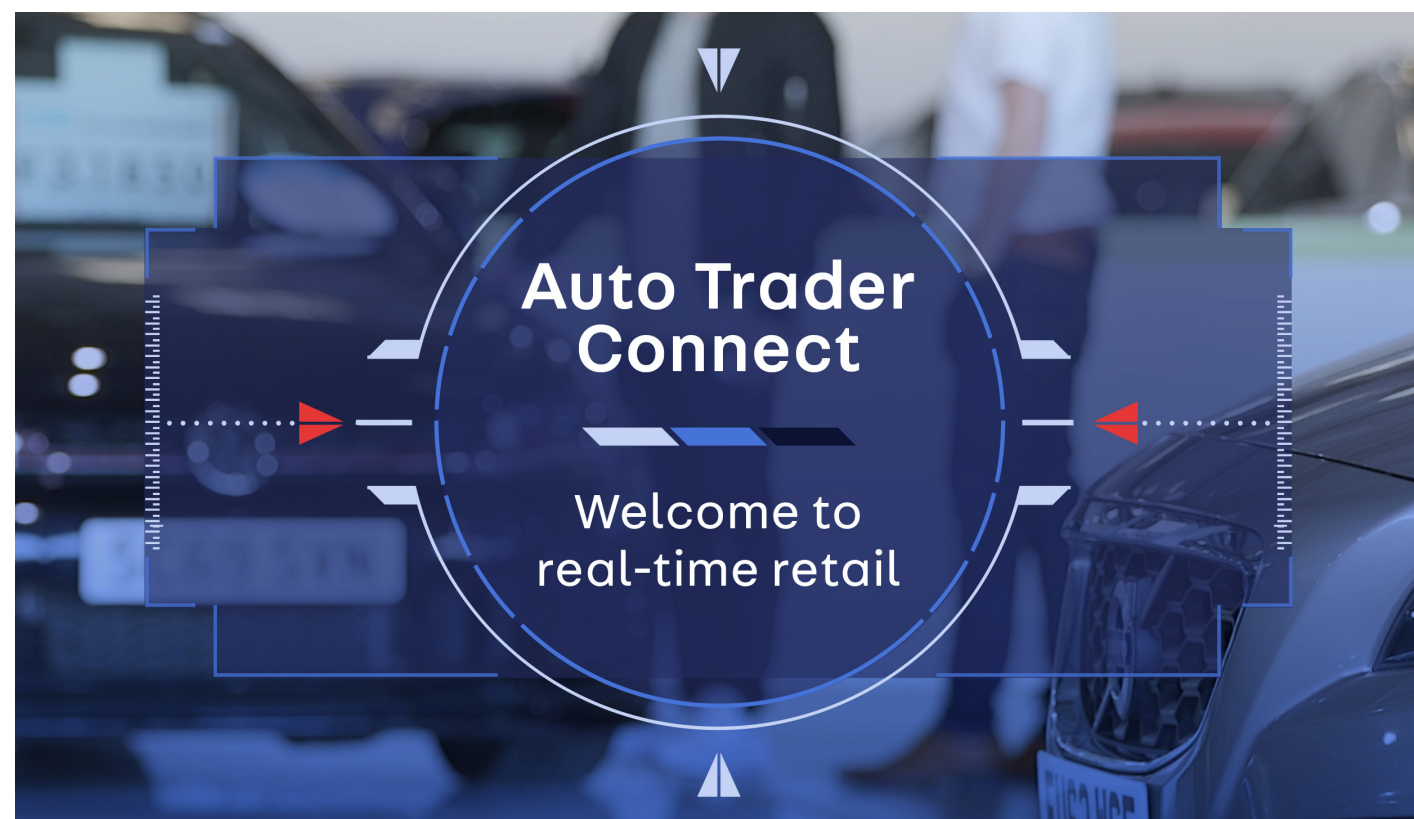
Coe suggests that the biggest threat to many car retail operations in the current trading climate could be complacency.

He says that the imbalance of supply and demand driving used car values up by around 30% year-on-year and weekly Auto Trader platform visits up 27% on 2019 – to more than 14 million – is unlikely to end any time soon.

But he adds: "The risk is that people aren't actively thinking how they can make change to their businesses and evolve because things are so good.

"Making change shouldn't necessarily be about the threat, it's about the prospect of the opportunity.

"The benefits that can be gained out of introducing technology into your business, reducing some of the mental tasks, reducing inefficiencies and discrepancies, they are things that can be felt over time right throughout the business."



**For more information or to request access to Auto Trader Connect, retailers can visit [trade.autotrader.co.uk/auto-trader-connect](https://trade.autotrader.co.uk/auto-trader-connect)**

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