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**AGENCY SALES MODEL / P8**

Are agencies the future of motor retailing? Opinion is divided

**10 MINUTES WITH... / P21**

Lee Manning, co-founder of Armchair Marketing

**AM LIVE PREVIEW / P24**

Get 2021 off to a great start with our virtual show

A man with a shaved head and a light beard, wearing a dark navy blue suit jacket over a light-colored button-down shirt, stands on a balcony. He is leaning against a metal railing with his right arm. The background shows a blurred city skyline with tall buildings under a clear sky.

# ALL FOR ONE, ONE FOR ALL

CITROËN'S 'MUSKETEER' APPROACH TO HELPING ITS RETAILERS IMPROVE / P18



# Are you losing one in four customers?



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# EDITOR'S LETTER

suspect many of us will be glad to see the back of 2020. Who could've imagined this time last year that we would be starting a new decade with such disruption to our home and working lives?

We're all painfully aware of the negatives of this year. So I want to pick a few positives out of the experience:

- Dealerships quickly prepared for the 'new normal' of socially distanced workplaces, on-site PPE and appointment-only sales, helped by the rapid creation of a COVID-19 car sales best practice guide by the NFDA and SMMT.

- OEMs came to the table quickly to support their networks, and once out of lockdown many dealerships experienced a strong 'bounce-back' of trade.

- Used car margins strengthened for many as a sustained slowdown in the remarketing sector left demand exceeding supply and kept vehicle values strong.

- The Financial Conduct Authority delayed implementation of its new motor finance and SM&CR rules in recognition of the pressure dealers were already under due to the pandemic.

- Some analysts suggest motor retail has evolved seven years in seven months, gaining more experience of digital or omnichannel trading than ever.

On a personal note, I'm thankful to the *AM* team for adapting rapidly. We all left the office in March and haven't been back since. Thanks to technology we've seamlessly brought *AM* readers more breaking news, magazine interviews, live webinars and presentations than ever before.

I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May all the best bits of our pre-pandemic lifestyles return in 2021.



## MEET THE TEAM



**Tim Rose**  
Editor



**Tom Sharpe**  
News and  
features editor



**Stephen Briers**  
Editor-in-chief



**Jeremy Bennett**  
Head of digital/  
associate editor

# **“Are you disappointed and frustrated with the finish you are getting on your diamond cut alloy wheels?”**

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What's in store at  
the first Virtual  
AM Live

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You have had your say about  
the companies you believe  
offer the best service – and  
here are the results

# CHALLENGES OF COMPLYING WITH THE 2030 DEADLINE

Government decision to bring forward ban on sale of new ICE vehicles not without complications

**C**ar dealers have been urged to “lobby hard” to ensure that Government gives motorists and the motor retail sector the tools required to truly ‘go electric’ by 2030.

While Cambria Automobiles chief executive, Mark Lavery, is keen to highlight the folly of Government plans to ban the sale of non-electrified new petrol and diesel cars by 2030, others have said “careful planning” and long-term commitments are what’s needed to smooth the road to widespread electric vehicle (EV) adoption.

Either way, former Hyundai Motor UK president and chief executive, Tony Whitehorn, predicts the fast-forwarding of the shift to EVs will bring about “fundamental change” for franchised car retailing.

Perrys Motor Sales managing director, Darren Ardron, said he felt carmakers and retailers were ahead of the curve and issued a rallying cry to MPs to back their efforts.

“We have spent around £500,000 making our network EV-ready over the past 12 months,” said Ardron.

“That’s a significant investment at a time when new car sales volumes are faltering and, while EV demand is growing, it’s yet to form a large part of our sales.

“There’s a sense now that retailers have made huge investments in facilities, tooling and training, but we need to see much more of a focus on affordability, infrastructure and customer education from Government to meet the 2030 and 2035 targets. There needs to be long-term planning on tax benefits and incentives that will allow us all to plot the way forward.”

Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced the plan to end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030, and hybrids by 2035, in November, in line with Committee on Climate Change (CCC) recommendations.

Among plans outlined in the Government’s National Infrastructure Strategy (NIS) to help deliver the shift was £1.3 billion of public spending on charging infrastructure, which would include a high-powered charging hub at every motorway service area, installed by the private sector, by 2023.

To ensure the private sector can continue to expand the charging network, Government has also confirmed it will invest £950 million in future-proofing grid capacity along motorways and key A roads.

It also plans to extend support for charge point installation at homes, workplaces and on-street locations, while committing £90m to fund local EV charging infrastructure to support the roll-out of larger, on-street-charging schemes and rapid hubs in England.

## FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE

Action needs to be decisive and swift, even with the near-decade-long timeframe now in place, however.

A report by Cazana valuations director Rupert Pontin and its global automotive lead Tom Lawrie-Fussey said: “Reaching pure EV production in UK by 2035 means roughly 10 million EVs on the road, assuming a conservative growth in EVs over the next 15 years.

“The Government commitment places huge pressure not only on OEM new-technology production ramp-up rates (to a level never

before seen) and also asks some huge questions of the Government’s own commitment to deploying a viable charging infrastructure.

“There also remains a huge hole in fuel duty that must be recaptured somehow from EV drivers.

“One thing’s for sure, the vehicle retail marketplace will become increasingly volatile, as the value and long-term attractiveness of EVs plays out.”

In a blog published by Endava, former Hyundai Motor UK president and chief executive Tony Whitehorn said EVs remain 30% more expensive to produce than internal combustion engine (ICE) cars and would not reach price parity until 2050.

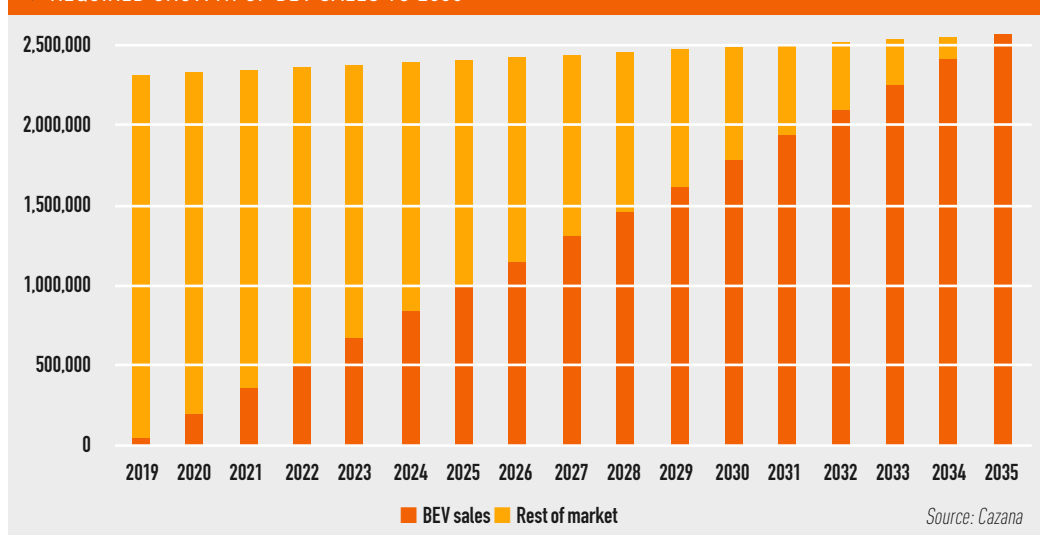
He warned the resulting balance between profit margins and fines resulting from stringent EU emission regulations, which demand an average 95g/km of CO<sub>2</sub> for 90% of the vehicles in 2020, increasing to 100% in 2021, will fundamentally change franchised car retail.

“To make these cars more accessible to the public, manufacturers have had to reduce their margins substantially,” said Whitehorn. “Some manufacturers are even taking a net loss on such cars in an effort to increase demand for battery electric vehicles (BEVs).”

He added: “Margins made in 2020 will be further threatened in 2021. As a result, cost-cutting will escalate even further, factories will have to review their future, manufacturers will look to increase their joint venture developments in electrical technologies and further manufacturer amalgamation will occur.

“Certain manufacturers will look at specific markets that have penal BEV targets in 2021 and will opt to vacate their presence, realising there is no long-term business proposition (e.g. Mitsubishi in Europe). Also, OEMs will aim to reduce dealer margins, resulting in price maintenance for the customer but in significant margin reduction for the dealer.

## REQUIRED GROWTH OF BEV SALES TO 2035







**“ WE NEED TO SEE MUCH MORE OF A FOCUS ON AFFORDABILITY, INFRASTRUCTURE AND CUSTOMER EDUCATION**

**DARREN ARDRON, PERRYS**



**“ THIS WILL MEAN A MOVE AWAY FROM THE FRANCHISE BUSINESS MODEL AND TOWARDS AN AGENCY STRUCTURE**

**TONY WHITEHORN, EX-HYUNDAI**



**“ WITH EV WE GET TO START OVER AGAIN AND CREATE THE RIGHT SOLUTION FROM DAY ONE**

**NATHAN TOMLINSON, DEVONSHIRE MOTORS**



**“ THIS IS A GOVERNMENT THAT TALKS ABOUT LISTENING TO THE SCIENCE. WELL I SUGGEST THEY DO**

**MARK LAVERY, CAMBRIA AUTOMOBILES**

“Across various regions, this will mean a move away from the franchise business model and towards an agency structure.

“Commencing in 2021, this will fundamentally change the relationship with the dealer network.”

#### **MPs' 'LACK OF UNDERSTANDING'**

Right now, Ardron is concerned about the affordability of EVs for some Perrys customers.

The UK has failed to follow the lead of other European countries which have boosted EV grants as part of their efforts to reboot their economies in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Germany, the government doubled its share of the existing purchase incentive for EVs and hybrids in June, paying a grant of €6,000 (£5,370) for a pure EV in addition to an OEM-backed subsidy of €3,000 (£2,685).

France, meanwhile, increased its the state-provided grant towards an EV purchase to €7,000 (£6,243) from €6,000 (£5,342).

Ardron said: “It is one thing to communicate the fuel savings as part of the overall running cost of a car to someone who buys their car on finance and might be paying an extra £100 to £120-a-month over the equivalent ICE car, but it's not the same for those paying cash.

“For people like my parents the

prospect of spending £35,000 to replace their hatchback would blow their minds.”

He added: “More needs to be done to address the various issues around affordability and the daily running of EVs and more needs to be done to address the concerns of the car retail sector.

“Has anyone in Government actually done a study to see what the shift to EVs will do to our workshops, for example? This is where I agree wholeheartedly with Mark (Lavery). We need to be lobbying MPs hard as a sector to ensure that the impact is properly understood.”

Lavery met with Transport Secretary Grant Shapps and MP Brandon Lewis in October in what he described as “a proper tear up” over Government EV policy.

He said the politicians “had no understanding” of the high whole-life cost of producing an EV or the environmental damage and child exploitation in some countries mining raw materials such as cobalt.

“What you have is a metropolitan elite who've come up with a political soundbite to make us look 'green,'” he said.

“It's soundbites rather than utilising the data. This is a Government that talks about listening to the science. Well I suggest they do.”

Lavery believes many OEMs have accepted a purely EV future as their

fate, so motor retailers and consumers must make their voices heard and create enough push-back to ensure proposals are reconsidered.

Earlier this year he warned that an all-out push to EVs risks catching UK automotive “sleeping at the wheel”, bringing an end to OEMs’ research and development in hybrid, hydrogen and synthetic fuels which could all play a vital part in the UK’s aim of ‘net zero’ in a better manner.

“We have all got to not just accept defeat here and get stuck into our MPs. We're incredibly robust, and we do normally find a way to get things done,” Lavery said.

#### **EV OPPORTUNITY**

Devonshire Motors managing director Nathan Tomlinson also believes the car retailer sector's case needs to be clearly heard by UK policymakers, warning that “without careful planning I think there will be some reckless consequences”.

But he also acknowledged that franchised retailers must be ready to embrace a “golden opportunity” being presented by EVs.

IMI data suggests that just 5% of UK automotive technicians are “adequately” trained to work on EVs and franchised retailers should become the go-to service provider of choice.

“Almost every EV or PHEV vehicle

that has been sold to date remains within the franchised dealer network,” he said.

“If you look at data now, we just manage to hang on to the [ICE] cars and customers in vehicles that are less than three years old, everything else leaks out.

“That's something we've been battling with – retention products and bolt-on solutions – forever, but with EV we get to start over again and create the right solution from day one.”

While Ardron said that limited EV penetration today means that many of Perrys recently installed charge points remain the preserve of dealer demonstrators, Tomlinson said OEMs would have to be open to a holistic approach to charging.

He said: “Next year we expect to have a multi-brand site with dedicated EV bays for several manufacturers, but if they all want their own branded charge point then we are going to have a very crowded set-up for very confused customers.”

He added: There's also the consideration of how long current charging technology will be relevant, by rushing in we are exposing ourselves to the potential for huge obsolescence costs.

“Balancing the required infrastructure with a long-term plan is going to be very important.”

**TOM SHARPE**

# AGENCY SALES MODEL BRINGS BENEFITS TO ALL, SAYS REPORT

Is it only a matter of time before the traditional franchised car retail model is committed to history? New report suggests the answer may be 'yes', but not everyone is convinced

**A** new report has suggested that car makers should give the go-ahead to a wholesale shift to an agency model for franchised car retailers to leverage a 4% increase in revenues in the long-term.

Cappgemini's *Agency Sales Model: Accelerating the Future of Automotive Sales* report concluded that a shift away from a traditional franchised car retail model would not only drive OEMs' direct customer relationships, but would bring "financial benefits on all sides".

Interviews with 50 retailers across the globe found that 80% already assumed that their future role would be carried out under such a model, with a handling fee paid to advise car buyers, provide test drives and complete sales.

The report said: "Moving to an B2C agency sales model is not an option but an obligation from the perspective of both customer centricity and financial profitability of up to 4% revenue increase in the long term."

"Even more, taking short- and long-term effects into account, transitioning to agency sales can pay off financially after four-to-five years."



**THERE ARE CLEAR ADVANTAGES TO THE AGENCY MODEL. IT COULD SIGNIFICANTLY FREE UP CASHFLOW FOR RETAILERS**

**PHILIP NOTHARD,  
COX AUTOMOTIVE**

"Therefore, it is now time to act for OEMs and to select a market as well as product to start the transformation journey."

A seamless experience for car buyers, increasing price transparency and consistency and the elimination of price competition between dealers were highlighted as the main advantages of the agency model.

But, while Marshall Motor Holdings chief executive Daksh Gupta has insisted he would "wholeheartedly embrace" the model, others are less enthusiastic about handing over control of their new car margin to an OEM.

John Clark Motor Group chairman John Clark said: "If you're a retailer who manages their margin well and operates a successful business, I'm not sure you would want to hand over control of that to your OEM partner."

## RECIPE FOR SUCCESS?

When consulted on the profitability of the agency model, 22% of respondents to a recent *AM* survey, conducted in partnership with JudgeService, said they felt it would reduce profitability, compared with 4% who suggested it would increase or remain the same.

Cappgemini's interviews with retailers in the UK, Germany, France, Sweden and China found that a "fair and sustainable remuneration model" would be central to the success of any OEM agency model.

The report said: "Fair remuneration for agents, replacing the traditional sales margin, is considered a central success factor at all levels – headquarters, NSCs (national sales companies) and dealers (94% of all dealers)."

"Regardless of company size, dealers emphasise the need for all agents to receive the same fee and

for individualised customer offers to be prevented.

"From the dealers' perspective, only a uniform remuneration model can ensure that satisfaction across dealerships will increase, and they are able to focus more on delivering appropriate customer-centricity across the board."

Responding to the survey, ICDP managing director, Steve Young, said: "We absolutely support that – as some of our own dealer interviewees put it, 'it all comes down to the numbers'."

"Many elements need to be taken into account, including the opportunity for the dealer to still cover the past investment in OEM-specified facilities, but also the effect of transferring risk and some operational activities from the dealer to the OEM."

"Neither of these are black and white calculations. The facilities, admin staff, marketing and IT also support the (typically more profitable) used car and aftersales business, so you can't just go through the financial statements and add up a few lines."

"This could well be the biggest hurdle to jump for a sustainable agency model, and one that requires a level of openness and collaboration that tends to be rare in OEM-dealer relationships."

In a recent dealer sentiment survey carried out by Cox Automotive ahead of publication of its *Insight Report 2020*, almost half of respondents (45%) expected an increase in franchise agency within the UK dealer market in 2021.

Respondents to the aforementioned *AM* survey suggested that it might take time for the new agency model to be introduced to the UK market at any scale.

Responding to the statement "within a year agency model will be

a norm for some manufacturers", 19% agreed, but 21% disagreed and the largest proportion of respondents were neutral on the issue.

Stretching the timeframe to three years, only 25% agreed the agency model would be "a norm for many manufacturers" within that time-scale, with 69% remaining neutral.

The answer is unusual given that manufacturers are already experimenting with an agency model.

In May, Volkswagen announced the introduction of an agency model for its new ID range of electric vehicles (EVs), stating that it laid down "the contractual foundation for integrating online business and showroom-based business".

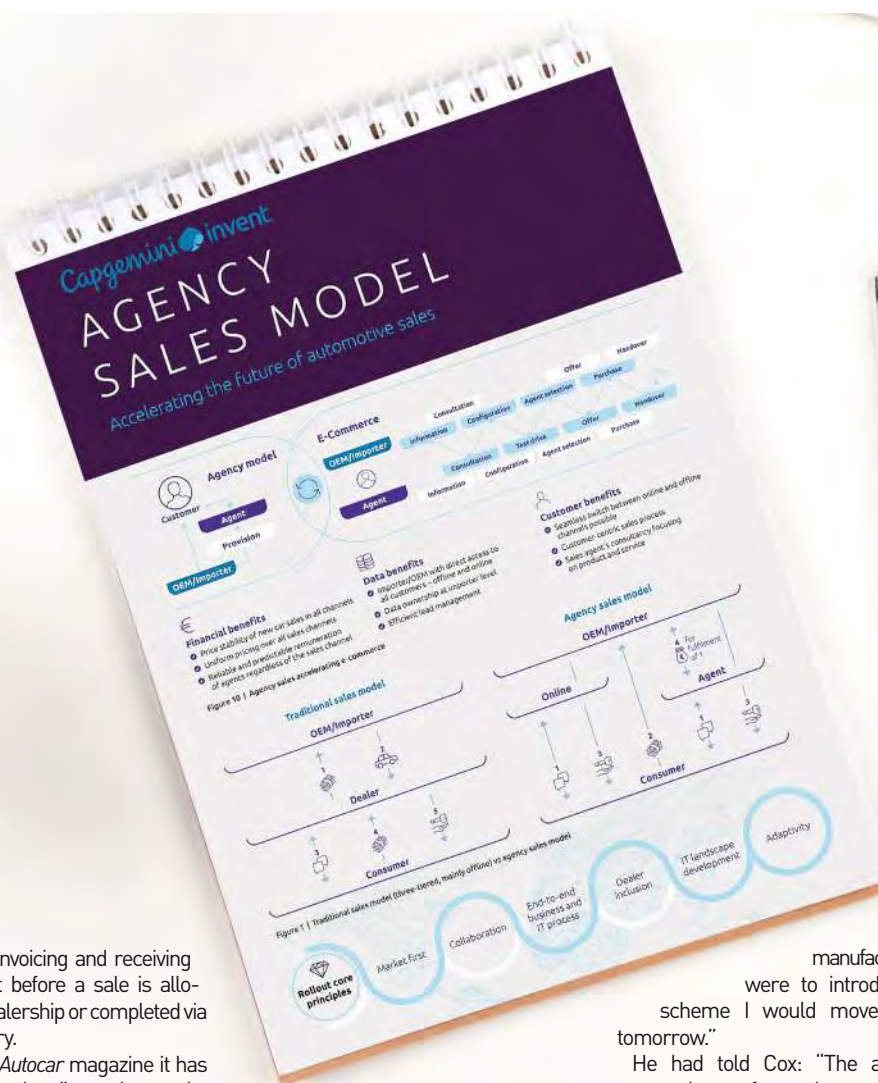
Under VW's new model, dealers look after acquisition, sales consultation, organising test drives, transaction processing and vehicle hand-over in coordination with Volkswagen while the OEM decides on the vehicle price, dispensing with complicated price negotiations.

It said at the time: "Dealers can therefore count on calculable compensation regardless of whether the customer buys their vehicle online or in the showroom."

In South Africa, BMW has also already introduced an agency model, taking orders directly from







customers, invoicing and receiving the payment before a sale is allocated to a dealership or completed via home delivery.

BMW told *Autocar* magazine it has "no current plans" to change its sales model, however.

Cox Automotive's Insight report – compiled with input from Grant Thornton – highlighted teething problems encountered by the Toyota Drive Happy agency model scheme in New Zealand.

The report said: "In the early stages of the implementation, the NSC and dealer could be in direct competition, as seen in New Zealand with the Toyota Drive Happy agency model.

"Some dealers suggested a profit decline of around 30% due to competing with the NSC."

#### BALANCE SHEET BENEFITS

A reduction in turnover would be an expected side-effect of an agency model, with retailers' income reflecting their agency fees rather than the full value of a sold vehicle.

In last month's *AM*, Rainworth Motor Group reflected on the impact of Škoda UK's shift to an agency model for its retailers' fleet transactions. Joint managing director Simon

Beckett stated: "The agency model in fleet has brought our turnover down by £10 million over the past two years.

"That has been great for cashflow, it means we don't have the burden of stocking charges or taxing those 100 cars."

Speaking to *AM* following publication of its annual Insight Report, Cox Automotive insight and strategy director Philip Nothard said: "There are clear advantages to the agency model. It could significantly free up cashflow for retailers.

"I can't help wondering what the investors in the PLCs might think of it, though, how the city's investors would respond to the sudden drop in revenues at the UK's top car retail groups."

PLC boss Gupta contributed comment to the Cox Insight report.

Later, in an interview with *AM*, he reflected on the immediate cash benefits for his group and said: "I would wholeheartedly embrace an agency model on new cars and if car

manufacturers were to introduce a scheme I would move to it tomorrow."

He had told Cox: "The agency approach transforms the model in a number of areas. Notably, it frees up cash, increases returns, de-risks balance sheets and removes new car stock risk.

"In addition, it provides the opportunity for dealers to be more flexible, creates a greater sense of partnership between the manufacturer and the retailer, and will likely offer the consumer a much more integrated and seamless retail experience."

#### OMNICHANNEL EXPERIENCE

Capgemini's report highlighted this need for an omnichannel customer experience, particularly in light of a shift towards digitalisation brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

It said: "The new sales model is embracing the new 'phygital' world by connecting physical and digital experiences for consumers.

"This will create a competitive advantage upon which future success will depend."

Capgemini surveyed 6,000 car buyers across different regions as part of its research.

In the UK, 69% said they expected to be able to buy their next car online, with 95% stating that they require a seamless, simple, and efficient ordering process.

Currently, 64% complained that they made an average 2.5 of visits to different dealers to ensure the best-possible price offer, with 78% of respondents stating a preference for fixed pricing.

Only 23% of participants said they would prefer buying a car without any dealer involvement.

In interviews aiming to gauge franchised retailers' views of the current new car sales process, 59% described the current model as "very outdated", with 37% stating it was "outdated". Only 2% described the process as "engaging".

Regardless of the advantages, Young said that the path to changing the franchised car retail model would not be straightforward.

"We see the changes in the OEM to be much more challenging (though in a positive direction) than the Capgemini report authors," he said.

Young said that, apart from the need for top-down commitment to the improved supply discipline, there was also a need for a different mindset in OEMs' NSCs.

"The NSC today is more focused on stock and market share than on sales," he said.

"One of our members operating with agency made this clear in saying that their NSC now needs to think like a retailer, and, indeed, they will now only employ people who have a retail background.

"Perhaps the acronym should change to NRC – a national retail company?" **TOM SHARPE**

## ADVERTISING FEATURE

# The year ahead will certainly be challenging

By Simon Bowkett

Fasten your seatbelts everyone because the year ahead looks like it's going to be a bumpy ride. The continuing effects of COVID will certainly present challenges for 2021 and beyond. We need to ensure that our sales processes are tight, every opportunity is explored and that we continue to look after our existing customers through the aftersales department, so they come back.

### Help is at hand

With all of this in mind, we obviously believe that training is the key to riding the economic storm. To help we have a interviews with Jayne O'Driscoll – Group Head of Training, Volkswagen Group Ireland as well as Lee Higgins – founder and owner of Rhino Events plus Jonny May its Managing Director.

At the start of our podcast journey, we also promised to deliver some of our top tips for selling in your aftersales department. A selection of these is included in the schedule for January.

Our aftersales departments have been so busy since the summer and it's easy to miss offering the appropriate upsell to each and every customer. But not only is this a great opportunity to create additional revenue, it also helps to retain your customers.

The podcast episodes in January will offer something for everyone to use in their business straight away to get results.

Please tune in, search for **SELLING IN THE MOTOR TRADE** on APPLE, SPOTIFY, AMAZON MUSIC, IHEART RADIO, [www.symcotraining.co.uk/podcast](http://www.symcotraining.co.uk/podcast) or go to [www.symcotraining.co.uk](http://www.symcotraining.co.uk) to watch the video.



# THIS MONTH'S NEWS HIGH

NOV

20

### FURTHER RATIONALISATION OF TRUSTFORD SITES

TrustFord's Alpertown dealership site has been offered for sale as part of Ford's plan to close almost half of its UK franchised retail sites. It comes as part of a series of changes, including the closure of its Banstead dealership – to be consolidated into Epsom – and a move to shift new car sales from Eltham and Perry Bar into Epsom and Erdington, respectively.



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### STONEACRE ADD LEXUS TO ASTON MARTIN IN NEWCASTLE

Stoneacre Motor Group created a unique dual-brand showroom at Silverlink Newcastle after acquiring Jardine Motors Group's Lexus franchise and moving it under the same roof as its existing Aston Martin dealership. The move involved the retention of all 25 of the Lexus dealership's staff.



25

### PRE-TAX LOSS FOLLOWS PAST MISSTATEMENTS

Publication of Lookers' 2019 financial results showed an £87.4m swing into pre-tax losses caused partly by past financial overstatements. The AM100's second ranked car retail group's £25.5m of non-cash adjustments "to correct misstatements in PBT over a number of years" contributed to a statutory pre-tax loss of £45.5m from £4.8bn revenue. Underlying PBT was £4.2m however.

### CAMBRIA REVENUES DROP BY A FIFTH

Cambria Automobiles reported a 20% drop in revenues in its 2019/20 financial year after enduring "the most challenging period in its history" due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Annual sales to August 31, 2020, declined to £524m (2018/19: £677.8m) while underlying profit before tax dropped 9.8% to £11.1m.

27

### CAFFYNS TURNOVER DOWN BUT PRE-TAX PROFITS ROCKET

A trading update for the six months to September 30 showed that Caffyns had recovered profitability despite its car showrooms being closed for 10 weeks. Underlying pre-tax profits rocketed up by 830% year-on-year to £1.5 million, while turnover declined 14% year-on-year from £99m to £85.4m.





**INCHCAPE UK AGREES SALE OF SOUTHAMPTON DEALERSHIP**  
Inchcape UK agreed the sale of its Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) Arch Concept dealership in Southampton to Hendy Group. Inchcape UK told *AM* the sale of the facility – opened in January 2019 – should be completed on December 11 and would deliver total proceeds of £29.65m.



#### CDK GLOBAL SOLD FOR MORE THAN £1 BILLION

DMS giant CDK Global International revealed that it was to be sold to leading global investment firm Francisco Partners in a deal worth \$1.45 billion (£1.08bn).

#### CARZAM PROMISES 'BEST USED CAR STOCK'

Carzam launched its new online car retail platform with a promise to provide "the absolute best used car stock". Headed by Big Motoring World founder and chief executive, Peter Waddell, and backed by former Cox Automotive International president John Bailey, the venture will compete with the likes of Cazoo and BCA's new consumer-facing cinch platform.



#### VERTU ACQUIRES 12 OUTLETS IN FIVE LOCATIONS

Vertu Motors completed the £18.7m acquisition of 12 BMW, Mini and BMW Motorrad (in York, Sunderland, Teesside, Durham and Malton) from Inchcape's Cooper BMW division. The businesses made a £6m pre-tax loss in 2019.

#### CARSHOP OPENS FOLLOWING COVID DELAY



Sytner Group opened the doors to its largest CarShop used car supermarket, a "multi-million pound", 900-car facility in Nottingham. Planners gave the green light for the transformation of the former Homebase DIY store location early last year, but its opening was delayed by COVID-19.

30

DEC

01

03

07

## ADVERTISING FEATURE

# BCA announces major new development in Bristol

By Stuart Pearson, COO BCA UK Remarketing



BCA has announced the development of a new 65-acre mega-centre to support the group's business activities. BCA Bristol will create a new standard within the industry, utilising the latest digital technology to deliver a range of multi-channel remarketing, logistics and technical automotive services to meet customer needs.

In a key strategic location with easy access to J18 of the M5, BCA Bristol will be a full online remarketing centre, with the capacity to handle more than 120,000 vehicles a year. The facility will operate 24/7, delivering a full range of BCA's suite of services – defleet and logistics, cosmetic and mechanical preparation, vehicle remarketing, imaging and retail-ready preparation.

The development of the Bristol location is already at an advanced stage and will create significant employment opportunities across a number of specialist automotive, administrative, remarketing, management and logistics roles.

The new mega-centre brings together the collective expertise of the wider BCA Group operating divisions to deliver the most efficient used vehicle facility in the UK. BCA Bristol will also utilise BCA's advanced decision intelligence services to optimise remarketing channel selection and refurbishment opportunities for customers.

The new centre, with the capacity to store more than 10,000 vehicles on the ground at any one time, forms a strategic part of our growth plans and delivers on BCA's stated intent of driving further efficiencies for customers across the used vehicle supply chain.

BCA is handling growing volumes of stock from both new and existing customers across its range of group services.

Additional capacity such as this new facility in Bristol is critical to bringing liquidity, efficiency and choice to the automotive sector.



# WORST REGISTRATION FIGURES FOR THE BEST PART OF FOUR DECADES

Appetite for electric is growing and EVs have reached tipping point in upmarket segments

**N**ovember's registration figures made predictable – and grim – reading. The overall market was down by 27.3% for the month, and 30.7% for the year. The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) is predicting a full year market of just 1.56 million, the worst figure since 1982.

However, before examining the grisly details of who has declined the most, it is worth looking at which parts of the market have performed the best.

Luxury saloons like the Mercedes-Benz S-Class have been in decline for many years, but are actually out-performing the market this year, with a decline of 'only' 13.4%. The reason is that luxury saloons are no longer like the S-Class – they are electric. The best-selling luxury saloon year-to-date (YTD) is the Porsche Taycan which, implausibly, is outselling the S-Class, 7 Series and A8 combined.

It is not that business tycoons have suddenly become tree-hugging eco-warriors. It is that they are very fashion-conscious. First Tesla and then Porsche have made internal combustion engine (ICE) saloons look so last year, and no chief executive wants to be laughed at for turning up at the golf club in their six-cylinder diesel.

The only part of the market which has performed (fractionally) better than luxury saloons are executive SUVs (down 13.1%). It is no coincidence the best-selling model is the battery-electric Jaguar I-Pace, which is ahead of the Velar, Discovery, X5 etc.

The I-Pace was actually a toe-in-the-water exercise for JLR. It is made by Magna in Austria, as JLR thought it was too much trouble to reconfigure Solihull or Browns Lane for EV manufacturing. It has turned out that the water is pretty nice: in

November, the I-Pace was level with the Discovery Sport and second only to the Evoque in terms of JLR model sales. Unfortunately, Jaguar has still not jumped in with both feet – more than two years after its launch, we are still waiting for the next Jaguar EV.

The sudden shift in electric vehicle (EV) sales in these upmarket segments shows there really is a tipping point for EVs. Only three years ago, a Tesla was an intriguing oddity that implied there could be a strong future for electric luxury cars. Today, the situation has almost reversed: the question is whether a non-electric luxury saloon can survive for much longer.

The situation for large SUVs is more complex, as seriously heavy vehicles like the Range Rover would need huge battery packs, leading to a self-

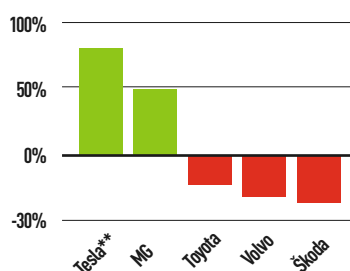
defeating weight spiral. However, for slightly smaller and lighter crossovers, the future is clear.

This is both a signal and a warning for more mainstream segments. As batteries get cheaper, more segments will experience a tipping point. The next one is probably compact executive saloons: already the Tesla 3 is in second place behind the BMW 3 Series, and the Polestar 2 has made a strong start. It will take much longer for the C-segment (Golf, Focus etc.), but it will happen at some point in the next four-seven years.

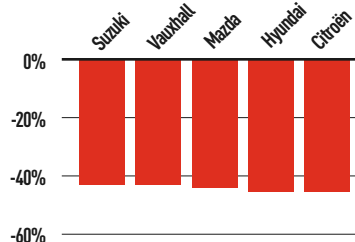
That raises the question of when it will come to the smallest cars, but the A segment (city cars) is experiencing a different tipping-point. Sales have fallen by 53.6% YTD, and market share is down to 4.1% – approximately half what it was 10 years ago.

As city cars are probably too low-priced to

## BEST PERFORMING MAJOR BRANDS\* YTD NOV



## WORST PERFORMING MAJOR BRANDS\* YTD NOV



\* Brands with at least 1.0% market share in 2020 \*\* SMMT category "Other Imports" minus Ferrari and Lamborghini



## SPONSOR'S COMMENT



**By Richard Jones,**  
**managing director,**  
**Black Horse**

I think it's pretty safe to say that most people will be happy to see 2020

move firmly into the rear view mirror.

A new year is always a time for fresh optimism, new beginnings and, dare I say, new year's resolutions. I'm sure that this will be the case more than ever for 2021.

All will be aware that January 28 will see the new FCA rules for finance commissions and disclosures become law.

And, while this is a beginning, for us it really represents the culmination of six years of strong progress, working continuously with our dealer partners to enhance clarity and transparency for motor finance at the point of sale.

The timing really couldn't be better.

At a point when our customers' lives are impacted in ways most of us wouldn't have imagined possible 12 months ago, we have worked together to ensure they are engaged by simplification of products and clear explanations of price and features.

They are protected by a combination of strong affordability assessments and advanced credit checks, and they are looked after and supported if their circumstances change.

The best new year's resolutions build on real results committed to and achieved in previous years.

Our progress means that, at a time of increased vulnerability we are more able than ever to protect and look after our customers.

That's a tradition we follow 365 days a year.



will be fighting for top spot among the premium brands in 2021.

While the premium brands are doing well, some of the worst performances have come from the would-be premium brands.

DS sales are about 10% of what they were when the first-generation DS3 was in demand, and market share is just 0.14%. While consumers can relate to the proposition of "Citroën does funky", the idea of "Citroën does premium" is harder to grasp.

Meanwhile, Alfa Romeo is on an even worse 0.12%, its worst performance in the UK since the 1960s. The Giulia saloon is of no interest to buyers of compact executive saloons and even the Stelvio crossover is rock-bottom of its segment.

The worst performance of all has come from Subaru with a fall of 64.1% and a likely full year sales total of less than 1,000 units. Subaru was never really near-premium, but it was very much "green wellies and Barbour jacket" in the days of the 1990s Legacy estate.

Unfortunately, it was also the hero car for slightly less salubrious types in the days of the Impreza 555, and Subaru never managed to synthesise a consistent image out of those contradictions.

As we approach the end of the year, we can only hope for better days ahead. However, at the time of writing, Honda has stopped Swindon production because of a parts shortage caused by problems at UK ports.

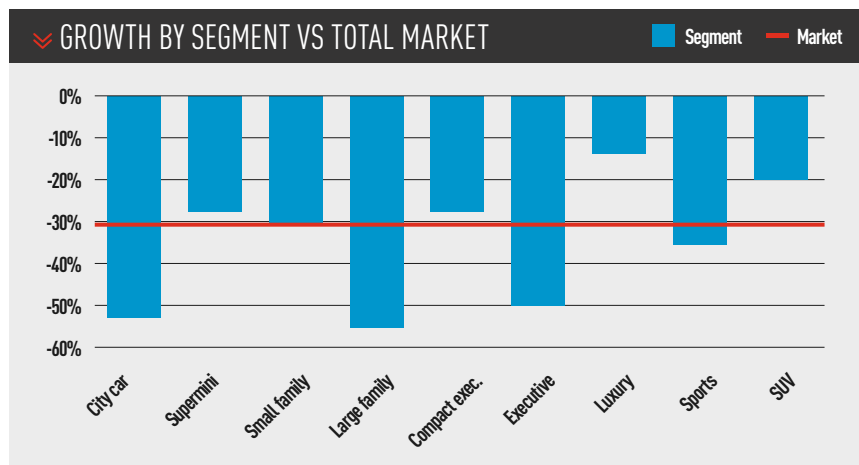
Only time will tell if that is a harbinger of more serious problems to come. Meanwhile, the SMMT is forecasting a recovery to only 2.0 million cars in 2021. That is an improvement on this dreadful year, but it is still 690,000 cars below the 2016 peak. We can only hope that things start to pick up in the second half of next year, and 2022 is the start of a proper recovery.

DAVID FRANCIS

electrify, it is questionable whether this segment can survive in the medium term.

There have been a number of attempts to revolutionise it, from the Smart to the ingenious Toyota iQ, but no one has managed to combine clever design with a sufficiently low price.

Meanwhile, back in the present, the full-year league table for 2020 is now pretty much established, given the expected size of the December market this year. Most manufacturers have not changed their relative positions in the past couple of months, with the exception of Audi. Having been steady at around 6.3% for most of 2020, Audi finally has free supply of new cars, and market share has increased to 6.7%, just behind Mercedes on 6.9% and BMW on 7.0%. Audi is unlikely to catch up in December, but it



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## NEW CAR REGISTRATIONS

# Better prepared for second lockdown

The UK Government's COVID-19 Lockdown 2 took a £1.3 billion toll on car sales during November as registrations declined 27.4%, according to the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT).

There were 113,781 new cars registered, with retail sales fulfilled through forecourt collections or home delivery. But year-to-date new car volumes are down 663,761 units.

SMMT chief executive Mike Hawes said: "Compared with the spring lockdown, manufacturers, dealers and consumers were all better prepared to adjust to constrained trading conditions.

"But, with £1.3bn worth of new car revenue lost in November alone, the importance of showroom trading to the UK economy is evident and we must ensure they remain open in any future COVID restrictions."

The SMMT said November's registrations total had taken the car retail sector back to levels last seen during the 2008 recession.

Private demand fell by 32.2% during November as fleet registrations declined by 22.1%.

Electric vehicles (EVs) and plug-in hybrid vehicles (PHEVs) continued to grow significantly. BEVs recorded their third highest ever monthly share of registrations at 9.1% as petrol declined 41.9% and diesel 56.2%.

## 1 PORSCHE

Hard hit by the RDE roll-out towards the end of 2019, Porsche was the only major car brand to increase registrations in November, by 6.7% to 2,216 units, as 849 pure electric Taycans reached the UK.



## 2 AUDI

Fellow Volkswagen Group brand Audi's sales declined by only 9.3% to 8,519 units. Increased fleet deliveries of the A3 propped it up strongly.

## 3 VOLVO

Volvo showed resilience with a 4.29% decline, to 4,018 units, although private registrations were 8.6% up. The XC40 SUV was its saviour with a 90% year-on-year rise in registrations, as all its other model lines experienced a decline.

Marque	November					Year-to-date				
	2020	% market share	2019	% market share	% change	2020	% market share	2019	% market share	% change
Ford	10,569	9.29	16,238	10.37	-34.91	141,298	9.43	221,107	10.23	-36.10
Volkswagen	10,096	8.87	15,311	9.78	-34.06	132,703	8.86	186,084	8.61	-28.69
BMW	9,733	8.55	11,642	7.43	-16.40	105,171	7.02	155,636	7.20	-32.43
Audi	8,519	7.49	9,392	6.00	-9.30	100,407	6.70	130,223	6.02	-22.90
Vauxhall	7,832	6.88	10,382	6.63	-24.56	88,161	5.88	153,618	7.10	-42.61
Mercedes-Benz	7,822	6.87	10,397	6.64	-24.77	103,403	6.90	162,200	7.50	-36.25
Nissan	5,598	4.92	5,839	3.73	-4.13	64,808	4.33	87,063	4.03	-25.56
Toyota	5,071	4.46	6,244	3.99	-18.79	86,082	5.74	100,466	4.65	-14.32
Peugeot	4,614	4.06	5,504	3.51	-16.17	51,800	3.46	75,132	3.47	-31.05
Škoda	4,391	3.86	5,651	3.61	-22.30	53,812	3.59	69,254	3.20	-22.30
Land Rover	4,362	3.83	5,765	3.68	-24.34	53,957	3.60	72,230	3.34	-25.30
Volvo	4,018	3.53	4,198	2.68	-4.29	41,867	2.79	52,267	2.42	-19.90
Mini	3,972	3.49	4,651	2.97	-14.60	42,008	2.80	58,761	2.72	-28.51
Kia	3,703	3.25	5,998	3.83	-38.26	66,948	4.47	92,343	4.27	-27.50
Renault	2,722	2.39	3,503	2.24	-22.30	40,941	2.73	54,431	2.52	-24.78
Seat	2,701	2.37	5,466	3.49	-50.59	41,243	2.75	65,105	3.01	-36.65
Hyundai	2,243	1.97	5,276	3.37	-57.49	44,141	2.95	79,483	3.68	-44.46
Porsche	2,216	1.95	1,899	1.21	16.69	12,104	0.81	13,517	0.63	-10.45
Jaguar	1,964	1.73	2,434	1.55	-19.31	22,127	1.48	34,214	1.58	-35.33
Citroën	1,905	1.67	2,874	1.84	-33.72	26,342	1.76	47,905	2.22	-45.01
Honda	1,341	1.18	2,712	1.73	-50.55	25,906	1.73	41,117	1.90	-36.99
Mazda	1,123	0.99	2,505	1.60	-55.17	21,467	1.43	37,821	1.75	-43.24
Fiat	990	0.87	1,605	1.02	-38.32	18,351	1.22	28,057	1.30	-34.59
Dacia	869	0.76	1,963	1.25	-55.73	18,555	1.24	28,594	1.32	-35.11
MG	866	0.76	1,186	0.76	-26.98	16,994	1.13	11,373	0.53	49.42
Suzuki	804	0.71	1,348	0.86	-40.36	18,559	1.24	32,298	1.49	-42.54
Lexus	681	0.60	1,044	0.67	-34.77	12,978	0.87	14,968	0.69	-13.30
Mitsubishi	556	0.49	1,109	0.71	-49.86	8,545	0.57	15,406	0.71	-44.53
Jeep	299	0.26	531	0.34	-43.69	4,105	0.27	5,820	0.27	-29.47
DS	173	0.15	512	0.33	-66.21	2,136	0.14	3,623	0.17	-41.04
Polestar	149	0.13	0	0.00	0.00	608	0.04	0	0.00	0.00
Alfa Romeo	147	0.13	196	0.13	-25.00	1,822	0.12	3,211	0.15	-43.26
Abarth	109	0.10	155	0.10	-29.68	2,187	0.15	3,283	0.15	-33.38
smart	99	0.09	41	0.03	141.46	1,288	0.09	3,984	0.18	-67.67
Bentley	69	0.06	74	0.05	-6.76	1,193	0.08	1,409	0.07	-15.33
Cupra	55	0.05	0	0.00	0.00	55	0.00	0	0.00	0.00
Subaru	52	0.05	157	0.10	-66.88	823	0.05	2,289	0.11	-64.05
SsangYong	48	0.04	120	0.08	-60.00	1,423	0.09	1,858	0.09	-23.41
Maserati	44	0.04	49	0.03	-10.20	526	0.04	881	0.04	-40.30
Alpine	9	0.01	13	0.01	-30.77	98	0.01	162	0.01	-39.51
Chevrolet	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	62	0.00	0.00
Infiniti	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	292	0.01	0.00
Other British	139	0.12	232	0.15	-40.09	1,754	0.12	2,834	0.13	-38.11
Other Imports	1,108	0.97	2,405	1.54	-53.93	19,686	1.31	11,762	0.54	67.37
<b>Total</b>	<b>113,781</b>		<b>156,621</b>		<b>-27.35</b>	<b>1,498,382</b>		<b>2,162,143</b>		<b>-30.71</b>





# Whatever's next, let's do it together

When the world changes quickly, it can feel hard to know what your next move is. That's why our Account Managers take the time to really understand your business. With their knowledge of customer service and innovative solutions, they can help you simplify finance and keep your business moving forward.

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## FINANCE OFFERS

# More positive FLA research suggests car finance is 'likely to grow' in 2021

**C**onsumer new car finance fell by 4% in October, but there is a positive outlook for 2021 despite the challenges facing automotive retailers this winter.

While COVID and Brexit negotiations undoubtedly dominate the thoughts of most businesses and consumers, the Finance and Leasing Association (FLA) is predicting consumer car finance new business by value is likely to grow by 18% in 2021, following a contraction of 20% in 2020 as a whole.

Geraldine Kilkelly, head of research and chief economist at the FLA, said: "The economic outlook improved following the promise of a rollout of a vaccine (which began) before Christmas.

"Based on this more positive outlook, our latest research suggests that consumer car finance is likely to grow next year."

There is, however, the potential for EU-sourced models to be hit with tariffs that will push up on-the-road (OTR) prices between £1,000 and £2,000. This will, likewise, create a knock-on effect to the cost of finance for consumers in 2021.

ASI, the company that analyses vehicle manufacturer finance offers, told *AM* that finance offers won't suddenly become uncompetitive overnight and captive finance houses will likely take Q1 to evaluate the market and introduce increases from after March.

The most popular brands that have models that are most exposed to price rises as a result of a no deal Brexit include Ford, Volkswagen, Vauxhall, Mercedes-Benz and BMW.

According to ASI, each of those manufacturers have confirmed there are likely to be "moderate increases" to monthly payments and some may need to introduce higher percentage APR rates.

Ford has confirmed that it will continue with its 0% APR offers regardless of the Brexit outcome.

There are other manufacturers that have pushed ahead in Q4 to tempt customers in the run-up to Christmas.

Peugeot is offering an additional £950 towards all finance deposit contributions until the end of 2020.

The 'Exclusively For You' offer forms part of Peugeot's 210th anniversary celebrations and is specifically available on certain models when bought through its Buy Online platform.

Peugeot said the discount runs up to as much as £8,100 off models like the 208 and 2008.

Brand-mate Citroën is also offering its own discounts on the new C4 and e-C4 electric, with

## TOP FINANCE DEALS FOR RETAIL BUYERS

Model	Finance type	Deposit	Term	Monthly payment	Final payment	APR	Offer ends
<b>Peugeot</b>							
108 Active 1.0L 72 5dr	PCP	£177	48	£176.00	£4,140.00	5.9%	31/12/2020
2008 GT Line 1.2L PureTech 130	PCP	£2,783	48	£329.00	£10,569.00	5%	31/12/2020
208 Allure 1.2L PureTech 100	PCP	£1,209	48	£269.00	£7,203	5%	31/12/2020
3008 Allure 1.2L PureTech 130 auto	PCP	£5,074	48	£329.00	£11,834.00	5.9%	31/12/2020
308 Allure 1.2L PureTech 130	PCP	£914	48	£309.00	£6,624.00	2.1%	31/12/2020
5008 Allure PureTech 130	PCP	£4,843	48	£329.00	£12,408.00	5.9%	31/12/2020
508 SW GT Line BlueHdi 130 auto	PCP	£4,686	48	£390.00	£11,546.00	4.9%	31/12/2020
Rifter Allure Standard 1.5L BlueHdi 100	PCP	£3,228	48	£289.00	£7,671.00	2.9%	31/12/2020
<b>Citroën</b>							
Berlingo Feel PureTech 110	PCP	£6,001	48	£219.00	£6,626.00	3.90%	31/12/2020
C1 Flair 5dr	PCP	£565	48	£159.00	£4,208.00	3.90%	31/12/2020
C3 Feel PureTech 83	PCP	£2,378	48	£169.00	£4,845.00	3.90%	31/12/2020
C3 Aircross Flair PureTech 110	PCP	£2,810	48	£209.00	£6,464.00	3.90%	31/12/2020
C4 Cactus Flair PureTech 110	PCP	£5,732	48	£199.00	£6,113.00	3.90%	31/12/2020
C5 Aircross Flair PureTech 130	PCP	£6,060	48	£229.00	£10,740.00	3.90%	31/12/2020
Grand C4 SpaceTourer Touch Plus PureTech 130	PCP	£7,336	48	£269.00	£8,183.00	3.90%	31/12/2020
<b>Škoda</b>							
Fabia Hatch SE 1.0 TSI 95PS	PCP	£0	48	£240.00	£4,683.00	4.3%	31/12/2020
Fabia Hatch SE 1.0 TSI 95PS	PCP	£2,862	48	£176.00	£4,551.00	0%	31/12/2020
Octavia Hatch SE 1.5 TSI 150PS	PCP	£2,914	48	£295.00	£8,913.00	4.1%	31/12/2020
Scala SE 1.0 TSI 115PS	PCP	£2,250	48	£259.00	£7,121.00	4.9%	31/12/2020
Superb Hatch SE L 2.0 TSI 150PS DSG	PCP	£3,288	48	£379.00	£9,207.00	4.9%	31/12/2020
Kamiq SE L 1.0 TSI 110PS, with metallic paint	PCP	£3,115	48	£260.00	£8,964.00	5%	4/1/2021
Karoq SE DRIVE 1.5 TSI 150PS manual model, with metallic paint	PCP	£3,162	48	£293.00	£10,014.30	5%	4/1/2021
Kodiatq SEL (7 Seat) 1.5 TSI 150PS DSG, with metallic paint	PCP	£3,003	48	£367.00	£12,050.10	3.9%	4/1/2021

customers able to make a free trim level jump worth up to £1,000 in addition to the offers running in Q4.

Those buying an e-C4 before Christmas will also get a Pod Point Solo Smart Charger worth £509 (after the £350 home charge Government grant).

These Citroën new car offers are also available through the brand's online e-commerce platform.

Meanwhile, Škoda is also pushing offers in Q4 with 0% APR and deposit contributions of

up to £3,500 on models like the Kodiatq SUV.

Discounts on finance are also available with the Fabia, Octavia and Superb.

Škoda also guaranteed not to pass on any post-Brexit tariffs for all orders that were placed before December 2. **TOM SEYMOUR**



### SEARCH FOR FINANCE OFFERS

For a searchable list of manufacturers' finance offers, go to [am-online.com/offers](http://am-online.com/offers)





# VIEWPOINT

## ARE WARRANTIES SET TO PLAY BIGGER ROLE IN SEALING THE DEAL?

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



On November 9, *The Guardian* published an article by Miles Brignall recounting the experience of two VW customers who had bought Passat GTE (plug-in hybrids) and had faced problems and potential costs due to the cars being outside their warranty period.

This, of itself, was only of marginal interest as newspapers often carry stories alleging unfair treatment of consumers, some of which have merit; others don't.

The difference here was that Brignall was saying he believed this form of powertrain was presenting a bigger challenge both from a technical, but also cost perspective, when it came to repairing them compared with more conventional systems.

In the last paragraph he said, "anyone else looking to buy a hybrid car may want to stick to one of the brands that offer a five-year warranty. These cars are so complex and expensive to repair, you'll want a model with the longest possible warranty period".

Part of this statement simply reiterates an underlying perception that a longer warranty period is intuitively better than a shorter one, whatever the product or service you are subscribing to. The rationale behind his argument is significant. He is proposing you need an extended warranty because hybrid cars are "so complex and expensive to repair".

The complexity of modern day vehicles is, undoubtedly, increasing,

so it is difficult to argue against the point he makes.

Currently, across the sector, manufacturer warranty lengths range from three to seven years with some powertrains covered for up to 10 years with a 100,000 mile cut-off. The disparity of offer between the different car brands is significant.

In the past, the length of the manufacturer warranty seemed to reflect the newness of the brand in the market coupled with whether the company had been involved in significant vehicle recalls. The warranty gave reassurance if there was any doubt.

It has to be acknowledged that almost all manufacturers and some dealers and third party providers offer the opportunity to 'up-sell' extended warranties at the end of the initial cover.

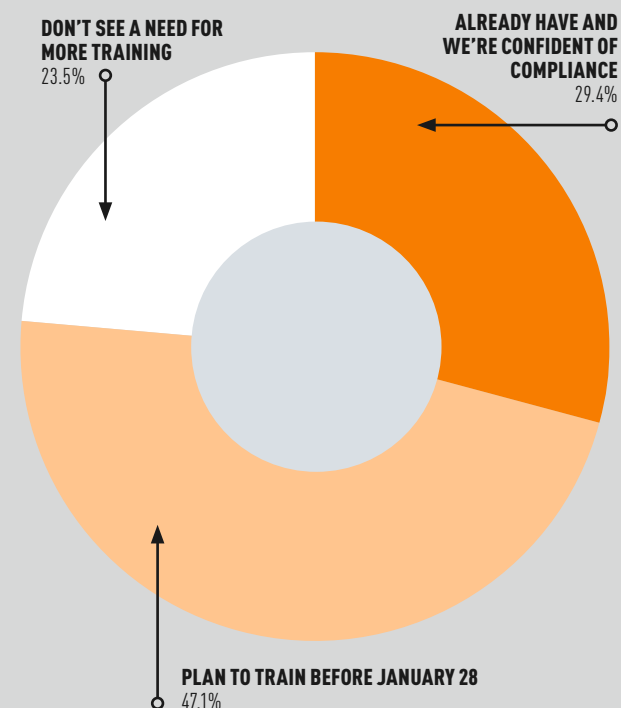
If you accept Brignall's view, warranty is going to play a different role in a market moving towards the electrification of powertrains. As opposed to simply being a reassurance, it has the potential to become an order winner or loser.

In a world where customers understand increasingly less about the technology, the upfront warranty will become an ever-important part in the buying decision. The lack of a competitive warranty offer will, potentially, harm both perception and sales. Usually, as technology advances, reliability improves. However, if Brignall is right, this will have to be accompanied by a more strategic approach to warranty offers.

**"COMPLEXITY OF MODERN DAY VEHICLES IS INCREASING, SO IT IS DIFFICULT TO ARGUE AGAINST THE POINT HE MAKES"**

# AMPOLL

## ARE YOU TRAINING YOUR STAFF ON COMMISSION DISCLOSURE AHEAD OF THE JANUARY FCA CHANGES?



Half of UK motor retailers believe they're ready for the changes to motor finance rules which are being brought in on January 28. Almost a quarter of respondents to our latest poll think there's no extra need for staff training, while slightly more say they've already brought their workforce up to speed.

But when our poll ran between November and December almost one-in-two dealers were still planning to bring in more training before the new rules come into force.

Following the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) 2018/19 motor finance review, it has stipulated that from January 28 dealers and brokers must prominently disclose that they earn commission from arranging motor finance where knowledge of that commission could have a material impact on the car buyer's decision to sign.

Keen to ensure consumers are treated fairly, the FCA has also banned certain commission models which previously allowed dealers and brokers to ramp up their rates and earnings.

**NEXT MONTH: HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE 2030 RULE FOR HYBRID AND ELECTRIC NEW CARS ONLY?**

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# CITROËN UK

A Team Citroën ethic will see best performing retailers assist in the training and improvement of those most in need, reports **Tom Sharpe**

**C**itroën UK managing director Eurig Druce believes he has outlined the plan that the Groupe PSA brand has been “crying out for” in the form of the three-year, mid-term Citroën Advance UK strategy.

And, while a Fair Pricing initiative will aim to deliver greater transparency through lower prices and reduced haggling, a renewed product range and a drive to deliver a greater brand awareness through digital communications are all part of the new direction, the creation of a Team Citroën spirit is at its core.

Druce wants the franchised operators of Citroën’s 130 UK dealerships to set aside their competitiveness to support one another and help drive an improvement from profitability doldrums which delivered breakeven return on sales for dealers in 2019.

“I think the network is crying out for a plan like this that gives them hope for the future,” says Druce, who took over from predecessor Karl Howkins in February after 19 years working within the French carmaker’s UK operations.

“I really expect positivity to shine through,” he adds.

Speaking to *AM* after revealing Citroën Advance UK to retailers, Druce says his retail network is now ready to work together to make the franchise more profitable.

Three peer-to-peer actions will aim to drive the improvement:

First, an elite training programme will be launched to optimise all the key levers of success, with sessions in which the best retailers (some of whom are delivering almost 3% RoS, according to Druce) assist those most in need.

Quarterly performance Zoom meetings will see Citroën UK share the best KPI performances in the business along with best practice, with a focus on profitability and business efficiency workshops to help bring together best practice in a practical way.

Finally, a workshop for mid-term planning in early 2021 will aim to help franchisees identify and embrace the “profit pools available from a transformational industry”, Druce says.

Commenting on the Team Citroën ethic demanded by the plan, Druce says: “You have to have that recognition that a dealership is an independent business and (franchisees) really need that roadmap regarding where we’re going over the next two-to-three-years.



“For 2019, the average Citroën dealer was just above breakeven which is clearly nowhere near strong enough.

“This year, we’ve had the COVID crisis and the pain of the second quarter, but there was a strong recovery and we expect to be back where we were this time last year.

“The top dealers in the network have been able to improve their profitability in the period despite COVID, year-on-year to the end of September.

“That comes from strong used car performance but also from wins on the changes we made at the start of the year to reduce cost base in terms of demonstrators and some of the central charges as well.”

Druce adds: “We want to take the expertise of a top quartile performer into a dealership that might be struggling to see what the differences are and what process can be shared and improved.

“Our dealers want to help their colleagues in the network improve. If you like, it’s not a manufacturer coming to them with theory, as may have been perceived in the past, but a fellow operator with real experience and real accounts, performance and processes. I’m excited with the potential.”

## KEY PRODUCTS



### C3

Despite registrations being 42.7% down year-to-date at the end of November (at 7,788), the C3 hatchback remains Citroën’s biggest seller, with almost 2,800 more sales than the C5 Aircross.



### C4

Replacing the C4 Cactus, which was launched in the summer of 2018, the new C4 claims to combine coupe and SUV style traits in a C-segment hatchback.





Citroën is keen for its brand to be alongside other franchises to make dealerships more efficient and profitable

### New values?

Alongside profitability, Druce is keen to see Citroën retailers improve their sales throughput through a stronger, more defined brand presence backed by a regional digital communications strategy defined by the use of "less industry jargon and more straight talking".

In 2019, the brand was the fastest growing of Europe's 12 largest mainstream car brands and in the UK it managed to deliver 2.39% growth, to 50,806 (2018: 49,618), in a market down by 2.37%.

To the end of November this year, however, Citroën's registrations were down 45.01% at 26,342 (2019: 47,905) as the sector suffered a 30.7% year-to-date (YTD) decline in a year impacted by COVID-19 and ever-more stringent EU emissions regulations.

In light commercial vehicle (LCV) terms, Citroën lies sixth in the sales rankings behind Groupe PSA sister brand Peugeot, with 20,958 YTD.

Its Berlingo is the fifth best-seller less than 3.5 tonnes, with 1,368 registrations.

Druce hopes an influx of new product will help stem the tide of lost sales, with no fewer than 11 model derivatives being



**OUR DEALERS WANT TO HELP THEIR COLLEAGUES IN THE NETWORK IMPROVE**  
**EURIG DRUCE,**  
**CITROËN UK**  
**MANAGING DIRECTOR**

launched over a 16-month period as the brand kick-starts its electrification strategy.

"Starting with the C3 renewal and the first plug-in hybrid (PHEV), with C5 Aircross, the product push is now accelerating our EV journey with e-C4, e-SpaceTourer, e-Dispatch and e-Relay vans," he says.

"In fact, all of our van range will be electrified by the end of 2021 and 100% of our car range by 2025."

Charles Martin, formerly director of after-sales operations for the entire Groupe PSA (including Vauxhall), is joining Citroën UK as its new sales director in January, with a focus on increasing the brand's sales and market share in the UK.

Alongside the new products Druce and Martin hope to use to leverage greater registrations, comes the Fair Pricing strategy, new trim level naming (with Live, Sense and Shine grades), the introduction of a haggle-free fixed-price C-Series, an exclusive five-year warranty deal for online customers and tighter management of residual values (RVs).

Druce acknowledged that RVs play a central part in the majority of car sales

today and conceded that Citroën had been "below par" in the past.

He says the new C4 hatchback would improve residuals over its predecessor, the C4 Cactus, by 12 percentage points at three-years and 30,000 miles, representing a £3,500 cost saving for buyers, adding: "Tight control of trade-in will ensure our customers' cars are worth at least the industry average after three years."

Meanwhile, rental will represent no more than 10% of sales, he says.

### Fair and transparent

Citroën's new Fair Pricing policy ushered in reduced list prices and greater transparency on December 1.

The changes see the C1 City Car reduced by up to £700. The changes see the C1 City Car reduced by up to £700 and its best-selling C3 hatchback and C3 Aircross SUV by up to £1,175 and £1,775.

As part of its drive for pricing transparency and reduced haggling and discounting, Citroën has also introduced a new fixed-price C-Series model range.

Available in showrooms, or with the added bonus of a five-year warranty



### C5 Aircross

The brand's flagship SUV became the first of a new generation of electrified Citroën's when order books opened for a plug-in hybrid version at the start of 2020.



### Dispatch

Alongside the Berlingo and Relay, the Dispatch is a key product for retailers looking to offer an alternative to the Ford Transit. The e-Dispatch EV launch adds another string to the LCV's bow.

Offered exclusively to customers of the brand's CitroënStore and Virtual Showroom online retail offering, the C-Series offers a trim level similar to the Level 2 Shine grade, but with a "haggle-free online price difference of £3,175 with the additional two years of warranty into the bargain", according to Druce.

Asked what the incentive is for customers walking into a dealership to buy a new C3 – rather than heading online – Druce says: "Our strategy is to have bricks and clicks. Not every customer is ready to buy online."

"The C-Series is available in showrooms as well. In terms of an online transaction what we cannot do is have a negotiation."

"The C-Series is priced at a set level, with no additional consumer offers other than the five-year warranty online."

"When you look at the C3 Sense and Shine, they are available with consumer finance and perhaps a customer deposit."

"We're trying to offer the two scenarios, something a customer might require in a showroom and something that will suit a customer buying online."

Citroën followed up the July launch of the Groupe PSA's Virtual Showroom online vehicle showcase platform with that of its Citroën Store end-to-end online car retail platform in September.

Druce would not detail the number of orders or sales generated by the new technology, but says levels of interest in online sales have "grown considerably" in light of the COVID crisis.

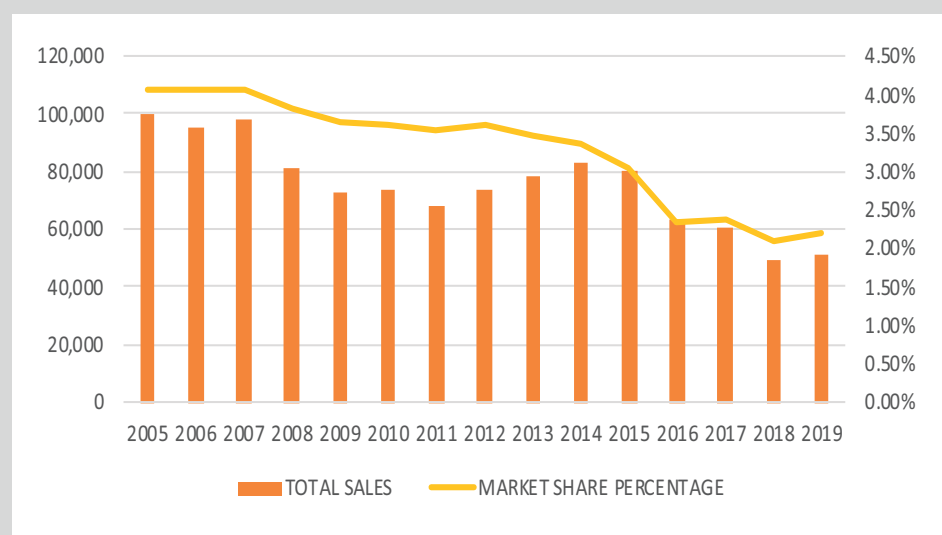
"Digitally, it's fair to say we went into the COVID-19 crisis towards the back of the grid," he says. "We've since deployed tools which might normally have taken 18-24 months and done so in less than six."

#### New attitudes

Druce's assertion that the brand will move forward with a clicks and bricks strategy is backed by plans to fill nine existing open points in nine months.

He says that there is no plan to reduce the scale of the 130-strong network – down

### ▼ CITROËN UK SALES VS MARKET SHARE %



Citroën and DS Automobiles registrations totals were separated out in 2018, accounting for much of the maker's decline that year



**Charles Martin**  
takes up the role  
of sales director at  
Citroën UK this  
month.

from 158 when *AM* interviewed previous MD Karl Howkins in September, 2018 – but says that there was a concerted push for the brand to be brought under the same roof as fellow Groupe PSA brands Peugeot, DS Automobiles and Vauxhall.

"For us, we see sustainability through growing volumes, through growing the profitability of our dealers and by sharing facilities, so it's a plan for us to have as many of our sites multi-branded as possible," he says.

But he adds: "Some of our most successful sites are solo Citroën sites both in terms of market share and profitability."

Among the recent network changes that have introduced new Citroën showrooms as part of a multi-brand dealership facility, in August Vertu Motors added Citroën under the same roof as its Ford franchise in Worcester as part of a £250,000 upgrade, while Wingrove Motor Company added a Peugeot franchise into its Citroën car

dealership at Silverlink Newcastle.

Improved viability is a core issue for Citroën as it sets out on its Citroën Advance UK Plan in a bid to improve its profile, profitability and sales volumes.

Druce acknowledged that the National Franchised Dealers Association (NFDA) Dealer Attitude Survey had been a key indicator of the need for action.

The brand's "overall" rating rose from 4.9 to 6.2-out-of-10 in the latest (Summer 2020) survey, two years after it scored just 3.4 to deliver a second from bottom ranking.

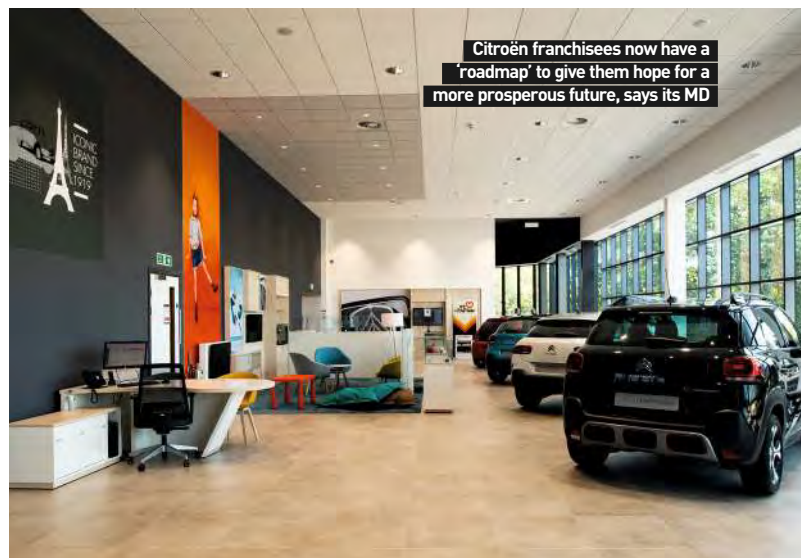
Now a quarterly survey of franchisees is carried out by Citroën UK in an attempt to pre-empt and remedy any issues.

On the NFDA survey result, Druce says: "I'd like to see it improve. I think dealers want to see profit gain. The working relationship is really strong now."

"We have a team ethos, which means we drive performance and challenge one another to improve the business together."



Citroën hopes its new plan will increase sales throughput for its franchisees



Citroën franchisees now have a 'roadmap' to give them hope for a more prosperous future, says its MD





# MINUTES WITH...

Lee Manning, co-founder,  
Armchair Marketing



**AM and Armchair are collaborating to launch the AM & Armchair News Show. Why is there a need for this in the UK motor retail industry?**

Our industry is incredible. It's nothing short of a sense of duty to showcase the people behind the businesses doing great things. We want to use their stories and insight to help others to learn, prosper and grow – and that's the show's mission. It's about getting better together. The UK automotive industry is known for sticking together; it has a beating heart, a personality and a welcoming culture, and we're showcasing it in all its glory.

**Tell us about Armchair's experience with producing shows and podcasts.**

We started The Armchair Show as a bit of fun and it quickly became a huge success – just as many of the best ideas do. We started out using studios in London and, when eBay Motors Group joined the project, we built a state-of-the-art technical studio at Armchair HQ to welcome our guests into the heart of our culture. We turned the whole thing into a really special experience.

We are fortunate in that we consult with the best names in the business and that creates an incredible knowledge resource, which until now, has been reserved for our own consultants. But now we've found a way to 'bottle it' and we're making it available to anyone who can benefit from it, for no cost at all.

**There'll be a host of topical, timely automotive issues we'll be discussing with industry leaders, from business acquisitions through marketing campaigns and onto staff wellbeing. Why is it important to air such big issues?**

The AM & Armchair News Show is all about people. This new and exciting venture speaks to anyone who wants to do well in their workplace. The show will provide the opportunity for our audience to benefit from the advice, learnings and

**“THE AM & ARMCHAIR NEWS SHOW CREATES AN UNLIMITED POTENTIAL – AND THAT BENEFITS ANYONE WHO WANTS TO GET INVOLVED**

enthusiasm of the biggest names in the automotive industry. We will give airtime to people who can help shape an entire industry to make positive change. We're highlighting the change-makers in business management, marketing and technology, sales, aftersales, recruitment, culture innovation and more. It's all designed to help you get the best out of you and your people.

**How many people do we hope to engage and influence with the podcast?**

The show has already passed the epic 250,000 views mark, which is enough to fill Wembley Stadium more than two-and-a-half times. Now we're gearing up for the mighty million by collaborating and sharing audiences with the industry's go-to place for automotive news and their brilliant digital conferences and awards ceremonies. The AM & Armchair News Show creates an unlimited potential – and that benefits anyone who wants to get involved.

**Looking more broadly at the industry, 2020 has brought plenty of challenges. As digital marketing experts, what advice does Armchair have for dealers keen to get 2021 off to a great start?**

Keep positive, do what you do well. You're the right people, in the right place, doing the right thing. Everything's changed, but everything's still the same.

Often, there's a lot of noise around 'digital change', but you're in an industry

that has a digital-to-personal hand-off. So, just do what you do well – pick up the phone, measure the quality of your customer email replies by the number of question marks and optimise your sales processes (and the often neglected three quality follow-ups). Understand that, outside of the automotive industry, it's best practice for the business to support their in-house marketing teams to work with external agencies so the people and the organisation can grow and develop digital and consultational skill sets. If you don't invest in supporting the people involved in your digital marketing, it'll be a challenge to justify an expectation for the results to improve.

**What do you see as the great opportunities for motor retailers in 2021?**

For many industries change is hard to navigate, but our industry is all about people. We are fortunate that car buyers still largely remain committed to buying vehicles from your people, in a 'bricks-and-mortar' environment.

While it's clear that there's some new thinking going on out there, you have to listen to your customers. They want more information online, so they can go from the sofa to the showroom feeling excited, empowered and confident – and they're the hallmarks of a great experience. So for now, if you're all-hands-on-deck for your digital showroom and following the latest advice on enquiry management, then you could be really well set to pick up the rewards.

Don't treat digital as just 'the basics', I plan and manage more than 350 factors when it comes to getting the most out of one of my partners and that leads to definite, measurable results. Knowing what to do, where and why can be the difference between thousands and millions.

When my team worked in-house at Perrys; that was the secret sauce that led to £8m-plus growth in less than four years and 18 digital marketing awards.

TIM ROSE

# iDealFile is the perfect fit for Stephen James Group

The group was ahead of the curve when it made the move to digital deal files in 2016, but took things to another level by switching to iDealFile – embracing a solution that’s tailor-made for automotive retailing

Stephen James Group’s Compliance Manager, Gayle Kelly, first heard of iDealFile in early 2018 via a referral from the Sytner Group. She was already a firm believer in the digital approach having led a successful transition to digital deal files at the group two years previously.

That project involved taking a generalised digital archiving system and adapting the workflow to store deal file documents – eliminating paper deal files.

The hard work initially delivered efficiencies, freed up physical archive space and resulted in cost savings. But the workflow was quite cumbersome and Gayle knew the business could achieve more, so committed to finding an even better solution.

## Introducing iDealFile

While considering potential refinements to their incumbent system, Gayle discovered iDealFile and was impressed by how well the software aligned with the demands of automotive retailing.

She says: “It became clear that iDealFile had been developed by automotive people. It was purpose-built for modern car dealerships with scope to



adapt it further to fit our own sales processes – simplifying deal file completion and auditing group-wide.

Once the decision had been made to switch to iDealFile, Gayle was on the front foot – using her existing digital document knowledge to outline exactly what she wanted the new system to do.

She adds: “The MotorDocs team worked closely with me to understand our workflow and deliver a product that could integrate seamlessly into our day-to-day operations. It fits us, rather than us having to fit in with it.

“The simplicity, support and fit gave me real confidence that iDealFile would be embraced right across the group.”

## Tangible benefits

Now, almost two years on, there are more than 10,000 deal files on the system and countless hours have been saved through a number of efficiencies like not having to chase for files or missing documents.

Gayle continues: “Our initial solution

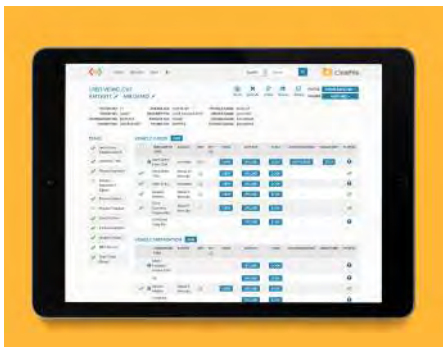
opened our eyes to the benefits of a new way of working but iDealFile has really brought digital to life for us. It’s easy to use, it’s reliable and it’s constantly being developed.

“With features like iShare we can be fully remote – knowing that all important documents are shared, signed and stored using one system. A simple solution for our customers and a breeze for our team too.”

## Future developments

When opportunity allows, there’s a plan to implement digital workflows in other areas of the business: “What I find really exciting is that I know there are even more system developments to come and I’m looking forward to seeing the difference that iServiceFile could make for our aftersales teams.

“I would absolutely recommend iDealFile to other dealer groups. It will save you time, it will save you space, it will save you money and guarantee peace of mind.”





# HUNT IS ON TO FIND MOST INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN IN THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

AM links up with Cox Automotive to promote third Woman of the Year Award

**C**ox Automotive is seeking nominations for the 2021 Barbara Cox Woman of the Year Award, which will honour an inspirational woman within the automotive industry.

Now in its third year, the award is being launched in association with AM and sister title *Fleet News* to recognise a woman that demonstrates a commitment to innovation, leadership or community.

The award is named after Barbara Cox, who served as director of Cox Enterprises, Cox Automotive's parent company in the USA, and recognises an inspirational female leader and role model in the automotive industry. The winner of the award will receive £5,000 to spend on her personal development.

Earlier this year it was presented to Alison Jones, group managing director UK and senior vice-president of Groupe PSA. On her win, Jones said: "I felt very privileged to be recog-

**Pictured at the previous awards are (from left): Alison Fisher, chief people officer at Cox Automotive, winner Alison Jones, group managing director UK and senior vice-president of Groupe PSA, and Martin Forbes, president of Cox Automotive International**



nised by the judges for my contribution to our industry, customers, my teams and the wider community. To be recognised for this by others was a real honour, and it meant so much after many years of service to our industry."

Alison Fisher, chief people officer at Cox Automotive, said: "Inclusion is a priority for Cox Automotive, not only in the UK, but globally. We want to create inclusive workplaces where everyone can be their true self at work. A key part of our inclusion strategy is our Women With Drive initiative which exists to celebrate the work of women in automotive."

"The Barbara Cox 'Woman of the Year' recognises successful women,

like our previous winners Beryl (Carney) and Alison, who make a significant impact on the industry and hopefully inspire other women in the automotive industry to do the same."

Stephen Briers, editor-in-chief of *Fleet News*, *AM* and *Smart Transport*, said: "Diversity and inclusion is a key brand value for our titles, so we are delighted to partner Cox Automotive in this important award which recognises and celebrates inspirational women in the automotive industry."

The nomination window is open until January 22, 2021, and nominees will be invited to provide further details. Both the nomination and supporting information will be

reviewed by a panel of judges that includes *Fleet News*' Sarah Tooze, Cox Automotive UK's Liam Quegan and Alison Fisher; last year's winner Jones and 2019 winner JCT600's Beryl Carney plus Lynda Ennis from Ennis & Co.

The winner will be announced at the next Women with Drive event on March 8, 2021, as part of wider planned celebrations on International Women's Day.

Nominations for the award are invited from across the automotive industry, and should be entered via the Women with Drive website: [womenwithdrive.co.uk/barbara-cox-award/barbara-cox-award](https://womenwithdrive.co.uk/barbara-cox-award/barbara-cox-award)

**SARAH TOOZE**



## THE FOUR MAIN GOALS OF COX AUTOMOTIVE'S WOMEN WITH DRIVE NETWORK

Cox Automotive's Women with Drive network is open to individuals and businesses across the automotive sector. Since its launch on International Women's Day in March 2016 it has grown to regularly having more than 100 people at its events.

Businesses that have pledged support include BMW UK,

Free2Move Lease, Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions, Fleet Logistics and Grosvenor Leasing.

Businesses that join commit to:

- Celebrating the achievements of women in the automotive industry.

- Championing equality both inside and outside the workplace.

- Ensuring every woman has the

opportunity to reach her full potential.

- Challenging inequality and bias.

The events feature inspirational speakers and celebrate the achievements of women working in the automotive sector.

Last month's event, which took place virtually, was an hour-long panel session with Daksh Gupta,

chief executive at Marshall Motor Group and Louise Benford, chief people officer at The AA.

The event focused on inclusion and the role men have in creating inclusive workplaces.

It also looked at the impact of COVID-19 on the automotive industry, how the industry is changing and what 2021 might have in store.

# Automotive management

## LIVE

## VIRTUAL

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In association with



NATIONAL FRANCHISED DEALERS ASSOCIATION

### 20th-21st January 2021

Effective marketing and CRM, profitable car sales and workshop efficiency will be among the critical subjects at Automotive Management Live Virtual in January, ensuring dealers can get 2021 off to a great start

**A**utomotive Management Live Virtual, which runs over two days (January 20 and 21), will share learnings and case studies from more than a dozen UK motor retail groups.

In total, AM Live Virtual will feature 20 seminar sessions offering visitors insight, advice and guidance to improve their strategic planning and their day-to-day

operations. And the supplier partners will showcase their latest products and services for automotive managers on enhanced interactive stands with video, live chat and demonstrations of new technology.

Attendees will be able to meet in the virtual networking lounges, watch presentations designed to inspire and innovate, can quiz the expert presenters in their live Q&A sessions, and can arrange private

virtual meetings without needing to travel. Attendance to AM Live Virtual is exclusive to dealer and vehicle manufacturer personnel. To get into this insightful automotive event for free you must register in advance at [www.automotivemanagementlive.co.uk](http://www.automotivemanagementlive.co.uk)

Our virtual event is accessible from desktop, tablet and even mobile devices on browsers such as Google Chrome, Safari, Firefox and Microsoft Edge.

### SESSIONS ALREADY CONFIRMED:

**Connecting the ecosystem; making automotive commerce faster, better and smarter**  
Presented by CDK Global, CitNOW, GForces, LSH Auto UK & Group 1  
Automotive UK  
Sponsored by CDK Global

**Leadership in a virtual world**  
Presented by Dr William Holden, chairman of Sewells and Katie Saunders, HR director of JCT600  
Sponsored by Real World Analytics

**Drive away the winter blues – beat the bug and smash your 2021 budget**  
Presented by Neil Addley, founder, JudgeService  
Sponsored by JudgeService

**Saved cost, saved time, saves space – Getting digital done**  
Speaker to be advised  
Sponsored by Arena Group

**Motor retail property**  
Presented by Robert Stephens of RS & Co, and Richard Adams of Accendia

**Steer your dealership to online success and turn feedback into action**  
Presented by Phil Capper, enterprise sales manager, Reputation.com  
Sponsored by Reputation.com

**The future of aftersales – how to take market share of the largest vehicle parc in UK history**  
Presented by Gavin Ruddick, consultant and former aftersales director of Stratstone and Lookers  
Sponsored by Book My Garage

**Dealer sustainability**  
Presented by Steve Young, managing director, ICDP  
Sponsored by CDK Global

**Connecting with consumers in a digital world**  
Presented by CarGurus' national field account manager Dan Delderfield and Nathan Quayle, sales solutions specialist and former group marketing manager of Fords of Winsford  
Sponsored by CarGurus

**The acceleration of digital communications in automotive**  
Presented by Jeremy Evans, managing director of Marketing Delivery  
Sponsored by Marketing Delivery

**Driving engaging customer experiences**  
Presented by Alistair Horsburgh, chief executive, CitNOW  
Sponsored by CitNOW

Plus many more ...



Register now to attend FREE – [automotivemanagementlive.co.uk](http://automotivemanagementlive.co.uk)





# Digital transformation heralds the era of online retailing

**Digital transformation in automotive retail has coincided with the growth of personalisation whilst the global pandemic has accelerated contactless selling beyond the most radical of predictions.**

The necessity for remote retailing has catapulted customers literally into the driving seat with more control over how they conduct their own vehicle purchase process.

Unaccompanied test drives to maintain social distancing and the provision of documentation digitally to avoid unnecessary showroom congestion have been welcomed by car buyers.

Far from distancing the customer from the business, such contactless sales procedures have enhanced the buying experience with many automotive tech suppliers, including CitNOW, releasing new products and features early to meet the growth in digital demand.

The 2019 Cox Automotive Car Buyer Study found four out of 10 car buyers visited just one dealership throughout the purchase journey underlying the importance of an exceptional online experience way before Covid-19 forced such dramatic changes.

Given 34% cited the dealer website as helping car buyers reach a final decision in the Cox report, the right online tools to complete the variety of car purchase tasks is now even more likely to attract customers looking for an 'all in one' sales process.

Garnering the trust of customers to undertake online retailing is gained in a number of ways including website content from images, 360-degree views and video footage of cars for sale, transparency of pricing and the ability to calculate monthly payments.

It is cemented by the speed and quality of response, making the personalised video where key points of interest about the car are highlighted to the consumer imperative.

Meanwhile, the ability to undertake even more tasks remotely such as part-exchange valuation and virtual vehicle demonstrations have been made possible with a more sophisticated video platform and suite of products.

Consumers viewed 27% more creator-driven video content in the first half of 2020 compared to the previous period, according to Google. What's more, a staggering statistic from Wyzowl this year shows almost nine out of ten people (84%) have been convinced to buy a product or service after watching a brand's video online.

Dealers utilising CitNOW's suite of products created more than 1.6 million videos in September whilst the global watch rate was up 21% compared to September 2019, a new single-month record. It reflects consumer hunger for digital communications enabling car buying decisions to be made remotely.

As remote retailing gathers pace, CitNOW is introducing product enhancements enabling the expansion of the contactless customer experience. It includes a new desktop sharing facility, a video guidance portal for technicians when evaluating parts requirements and warranty claims and improved video sound quality. More third-party integrations will further drive vehicle efficiency resulting in higher levels of profitability.





## ➔ How to get the max from our virtual event platform

### FILL YOUR VIRTUAL BRIEFCASE

The 'virtual briefcase' will be your online event goody bag. Just like at a physical AM Live, you will be able to collect exhibitor brochures, documents and even videos.

You can add as many documents and videos as you would like to your virtual briefcase.

You can access exhibitor collateral through the 'resources' tab on the platform's navigation bar or within each exhibitor's booth.

To add documents or videos to your virtual briefcase, just press the '+ Virtual Briefcase' button and it will add it to your bag.

You can view the items within your virtual

briefcase at any point, including in the weeks immediately after the event has closed, by simply clicking on the 'virtual briefcase' tab on the navigation bar.

You should also email yourself the resources you have added into your briefcase at the end of the event, allowing you to share them with colleagues.

### NETWORK WITH OTHER DEALERS AND AML'S EXHIBITORS

- Look out for the 'networking' button on the navigation bar. Click on this and you'll arrive at the 'chat' area where you can meet fellow dealers and manufacturers who are attending.
- It's a good idea to keep the chat tab open at all times, even in a second window, so you can easily see who's around and what's going on.
- Within the chat tab you will be able to access topical public chat rooms, plus

the presenters' and exhibitors' chat booths. Look for 'online users' to see which visitors are currently in which chat rooms.

- When you see an online user you want to network with directly, you can ask them to start a direct message conversation by clicking the 'chat now' button beside their name. You can also click on a telephone icon or camera icon to ask for a voice or video call.

- Want to find an existing or new supplier? You click onto the 'hall' tab on the top navigation bar and then choose one of the two halls to enter. There'll be an 'exhibitors index' in the bottom left of the screen in A-to-Z order, and those with booth staff currently online will be highlighted with a green dot. Then once you click onto an exhibitor booth, you'll see the names of the staff online and can click 'chat' to enter the booth chat room.

### WATCH AGAIN WHENEVER YOU WANT

Presentations that you missed because you were watching another or in a meeting can easily be viewed on demand. All will be recorded, including the Q&A sessions, and provided you're registered to attend AM Live Virtual, which has RAPID RTC as its headline sponsor, you'll have until five weeks after the event (February 28) to log back into the event platform and watch any presentations whenever you want.

### Four crucial reasons for dealers to log in to Automotive Management Live Virtual

1. Prepare your business for a prosperous 2021 by understanding how your teams can engage customers better, convert more enquiries into sales and build a more profitable aftersales parc.
2. Come together to learn from your peers and discuss future challenges and solutions with your motor retail community.
3. Discover the latest efficiency-driving opportunities presented by innovative and technology-related solutions.
4. Find fresh thinking and new ideas to manage your dealerships and teams from some of the most successful motor retailers of this era.

**Next issue:** Part two of our AM Live Virtual preview – published January 15

**Register now to attend FREE – [automotivemanagementlive.co.uk](http://automotivemanagementlive.co.uk)**

# Close showroom doors, but don't self-isolate from your customers

It's time to apply lessons learnt earlier in the pandemic



"Buyers would expect a dealer to respond more quickly to emails"

**By Jeremy Evans, Managing Director at Marketing Delivery**

UK car dealers continue to face uncertain business conditions, with the challenge of having to adapt at a moment's notice to changing local situations in the wake of the pandemic. But a saving grace is that dealers are better equipped now to ensure they needn't self-isolate from their customers throughout 2021.

**Doing digital well**

Dealers must be prepared to connect digitally with current and prospective customers, and then ensure contact is frequent, timely, and tailored.

Speed of response is becoming even more important during lockdown, and failure to adapt marketing processes accordingly will affect sales. This is backed by consumer research by Marketing Delivery carried out across the UK in October 2020. Asked what they would do if a dealer didn't respond quickly enough to their sales enquiry, more than half of respondents (51%) know they will simply continue their search with a different dealership. This should be all the incentive that car retailers need to ace their digital contact strategy and provide timely responses to all enquiries.

**Digital contact strategies present a big opportunity**

Qualifying and engaging with indecisive prospective car buyers is always a

challenge, and will undoubtedly be one of the biggest that car retailers face in the months ahead.

Yet dealers in every UK region have already proved they can adapt during lockdown by introducing digitalised, automated processes.

This meant hundreds of businesses were well prepared to respond to customer demand when showrooms reopened in July.

In the same recent survey by Marketing Delivery, 65% of buyers indicated that, due to COVID-19 and the challenges of physically visiting a dealer, they would expect a dealer to respond more quickly to emails.

This highlights how customers are more willing than ever to engage digitally with car dealers, though it's clear that expectations about the quality and frequency of response are also increasing.

Of course, this creates a significant and growing administration burden for

dealers, and that is where automation can help. Nowadays dealers can process large volumes of online enquiries using programmatic tools that create and disseminate tailored messages in a timely manner.

These tools make it possible to quickly and easily provide used car buyers with alerts about relevant new stock, or schedule automated follow-up emails to prospects yet to decide on a potential purchase. For aftersales, it means automating reminders to existing customers that a vehicle's MOT or service is due soon.

In the face of social distancing and changeable rules, it is incumbent upon dealers to take note of the learnings made throughout 2020.

Dealers that effectively use digital communication to keep customers interested and engaged – whether under lockdown or not – will be best placed to respond if local business conditions change for the worse.

Website: [marketingdelivery.co.uk](https://marketingdelivery.co.uk)  
Email: [get.in.touch@marketingdelivery.com](mailto:get.in.touch@marketingdelivery.com)  
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**Marketing Delivery**  
DATA DRIVEN MARKETING





# WE HAVE BUYERS FOR YOUR CARS.

With £48m in vehicle sales turnover in 2020 and over 1300 lots sold, Collecting Cars has rapidly become the UK's number one specialist auction platform for iconic, sporting, and collectable cars.

Dealers can now enjoy the benefits of using Collecting Cars Trade to sell their specialist car inventory and reach a huge audience of highly engaged and motivated buyers. It is free to list, and dealers receive 100% of the vehicle sale price. What's more, the vehicle stays at the dealership throughout the entire auction process, and buyers typically pay and collect within three or four days.

Contact our consignment team today to begin listing your specialist cars.

LISTING IS **FREE**. SELLING IS **FREE**. HASSLE **FREE**.

# COLLECTING CARS

## NOW THE UK'S NUMBER ONE SPECIALIST CAR AUCTION

In less than 18 months, Collecting Cars has disrupted the traditional specialist car auction world, and become the UK's market leader. In terms of both the number of cars sold as well as the total sales value in 2020, Collecting Cars is now the number one specialist car auction platform. To date, it has achieved more than £48 million in sales for its vendors.

The platform curates and showcases cars with detailed photographs and professional descriptions, marketed to a captive audience of passionate enthusiasts. For sellers, there is no listing fee, and they receive 100% of the hammer price. For buyers, the premium on auction lots is levied at just 5% + VAT - substantially lower than traditional auction houses, which typically charge 12.5% or more.

Collecting Cars was launched with a team of just three people in summer 2019, selling its first car – a 1993 Range Rover Classic LSE – in June that year. It quickly grew over the next few months, and in the New Year, PistonHeads founder David Edmonston joined the team, to spearhead the technological development of the platform.

With a '100% online' auction experience, Collecting Cars has been able to deliver value for sellers and buyers, even during the challenging coronavirus pandemic. By the end of 2020, the business expects total sales to exceed 1500 lots.



### Founder Edward Lovett comments on the platform's appeal to dealers:

*"More and more trade sellers are realising that Collecting Cars can act as a 'virtual showroom' for their stock offering specialist cars to an educated and enthusiastic audience of over 23,000 registered international bidders. To further service this demand, this month we established a new dedicated trade sales system, which can progress multiple cars from a single seller even more swiftly. Our passionate team is here to help, and we look forward to working with many more trade sellers in 2021".*

**VISIT » [WWW.COLLECTINGCARS.COM/TRADE](http://WWW.COLLECTINGCARS.COM/TRADE)**

# THERE IS A **GEAR SHIFT** TAKING PLACE ACROSS THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY.

After a year that has seen rapid adaptation and innovation from automotive retailers across the UK, the industry now has more opportunities than ever to evolve and capitalise on new ways of operating.

The CDK Global has put together the Gearshift Manual to provide dealers with key principles, inspiration and practical advice to ensure they are always one step ahead. From listening to customers over the last 12 months, the manual focuses on 3 key areas:

1. **Building a consumer-first culture**
2. **Maximising digital efficiencies**
3. **Embracing the dealerships of the future**

*“ I feel heartened by the strides that we have all made to conquer the challenges encountered together. We’ve seen creative new ways to engage with customers and new streamlined processes across retailers, all of which will make our industry stronger in the future.*

*We want to make 2021 a year where we continue to drive innovation to support our customers and the wider automotive ecosystem. This manual serves as a practical guide for you.”*

**Stuart Miles,**  
Managing Director UK & Ireland, CDK Global

TO DOWNLOAD YOUR COPY, VISIT  
[www.cdkglobal.co.uk/gearshift](http://www.cdkglobal.co.uk/gearshift)





## **AM readers recommend their top suppliers**

The greatest form of marketing is through word-of-mouth referrals, and recommendations are priceless.

A business may have excellent products, but referrals and recommendations are, ultimately, given as a result of outstanding customer service.

AM's annual Dealer Recommended programme allows our thousands of readers to have their say

about the companies they believe offer the best service.

We have gathered opinions via a research programme conducted among AM's audience.

The automotive business sectors highlighted for 2021 are GAP insurance, auctions and remarketing, warranty, service plans, finance, and paint protection.

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# **AM DEALER RECOMMENDED**



# 'Dealer Recommended' – Peace of mind has arguably never been more important

**I**n a year that has seen the car retailing model evolve like no other in the face of COVID-19 and the subsequent impact economically, the role of insurance products that reduce risk and offer customers peace of mind have moved up the agenda.

With the presence of PCP and PCH finance continuing to dominate the financing landscape, the value of GAP (and for other buyers RTI) has arguably never been a more important consideration for customers seeking financial certainty. Aside from the positive customer outcomes that should result from a compliant GAP sale, the revenue stream that is represented by Insurance products such as GAP will become even more crucial in the future - especially if finance commission levels do come under pressure in 2021.

In a year like no other, we are proud and delighted to earn the recognition of the dealer community once again as your Dealer Recommended GAP supplier - for which we would like to say a sincere thank you.

As we look towards 2021, there is room for optimism in addressing the impact of the pandemic, but we can be sure that the effects on people and businesses will continue. Car buyers will return - we saw that in the post-lockdown bounce back in Q3 - and many will choose to visit the showroom, but I don't believe we can doubt that car buying has changed. The move to online, e-commerce and an omnichannel approach is here to stay.

GAP and RTI have traditionally been point of sale products, but this is changing. Car buyers will continue to discover their next car online and it is at this point in time that they should also find added value services and the peace of mind they afford.

As the market evolves, dealers can be assured that as the Dealer Recommended GAP supplier, we will continue to support you at the point of sale whether that is the showroom, online, or any other form of sales origination channel.

## Get it right & it's more than just a profit opportunity

AutoProtect Group is on a mission to change the way people think about all insurance products - including GAP/RTI insurance. This change of thinking is equally valid for dealer personnel and car buyers. When dealers get it right, the benefits are:

- Increased sales;
- Greater trust;
- An enhanced customer experience;
- Excellent customer outcomes, including a better-informed customer who bought a product they understood and valued;
- A deeper long-term customer/dealer relationship.

The way people bought cars pre-COVID was already changing - that has simply accelerated. Customers want control and transparency; they want a fair price and quality. At AutoProtect Group, we can help dealers to meet this changing dynamic.

Our market leading Trustpilot position and our Dealer Recommended status is

something we have earned, but we take neither for granted. We want to keep earning the trust of dealers and car buyers alike by helping both to benefit from a high integrity buying experience and, when it is needed, delivering on claims - the acid-test of our products - with speed and care.

Our success in helping car buyers when it is needed undoubtedly benefits our dealers and their customers alike - quality matters.

**AutoProtect**  
**Trustpilot Rating:**  
**4.5/5**  
**6,131 reviews**

## All GAP/RTI policies are not the same

Reading trusted consumer guidance websites, it is sometimes easy to understand why people often believe all GAP type products are the same. These sites do recognise that generically there is a difference between the cover afforded by GAP and RTI, however guidance sometimes falls short of highlighting that terms and conditions and the breadth of cover frequently varies. Mis-selling, or for those consumers looking to buy online 'mis-buying', could so easily be the unwanted outcome.

All GAP/RTI policies are not the same, even if the principles are. The breadth





**Martin Hill** Director of Strategic Partnerships, AutoProtect Group

of cover is an essential aspect when helping the customer.

All too often, online guidance for GAP/RTI overlooks the importance of understanding the breadth of cover. This detail may only be relevant when a claim becomes necessary. Only then, if 'gaps' appear in the GAP/RTI cover will the damage be realised. We pride ourselves on the span of our GAP and RTI cover and if you want an example of how our approach to detail can help customers when it matters, we have developed a dedicated Personal Contract Hire GAP product. A simple standard GAP product may not do the job that the customer expected for this evolving finance product; ours can!

**All GAP Providers are not the same - AutoProtect Trustpilot Rating: 4.5/5 – 6,131 reviews**

The culture, values, processes and controls of the people who will serve a dealer's insurance customers are not the same. Yet, the experience of those customers should they make a claim, opt to cancel, seek further information, or simply change details such as their address, reflect upon the dealer who

opted to promote their services.

Choose a partner whose approach and ethos are highly customer-centric and the crucial values of satisfaction, retention and advocacy can be enhanced.

We are committed to making our products easier to understand with Plain English copy and easier to claim with our market-leading iClaims apps. An effective claims process is the acid-test for insurance. We aim to ensure that our dealers know that when they introduce a customer to us, we have their backs. After all, an outstanding claims service experience is probably as close as you can get to driving that next sale.

The evidence of great customer experiences is clear from the market-leading reviews of over 6,000 customers available publicly on Trustpilot (an excellent reassuring item to share with customers in the showroom!)

#### Looking Ahead

At AutoProtect Group, we are not resting on our laurels. We have ambitious plans for 2021 and at a time when some other product providers are

either retrenching their position or exiting the market altogether we are making a long term investment and commitment to the automotive sector. We are excited about the future and look forward to sharing the news as our strategy evolves. Our aim in this investment programme is simple; to continue to improve and to be even more relevant to dealers and their customers.

Be assured we will continue to be side-by-side with the dealer community, with ideas and tools to help support you in the increasingly omnichannel, customer-centric and regulated world which is evolving rapidly.

One thing that will not change is our commitment to service. All added value suppliers are not the same and when it comes to GAP insurance, only one comes Dealer Recommended. Put us to the test; we'd love to earn your trust.



# BCA – POWERING THE USED CAR SECTOR IN 2021

**BCA understands that now more than ever before, to be successful, retail operations have to be flexible and be able to respond quickly to shifting consumer demand.**

BCA is energising the end to end wholesale supply chain to match that flexibility and help dealers sell more vehicles. A focus on accelerating the time to retail and supporting dealers throughout the entire process makes BCA the leader in its field.

The BCA business model is unique in its quality and breadth of services across the supply chain and therefore creates efficiencies through synergies across all the divisions.

This scope is highlighted by the newly announced BCA Bristol 65-acre mega-centre, a fully on-line remarketing facility, with the capacity to handle over 120,000 vehicles per annum.

The past year has seen BCA invest heavily in improving its suite of digital products to make it even easier for customers to do business with us. A number of enhancements have been made to the BCA website aimed at developing functionality for the digital buyer

audience, including improvements to the digital sales catalogue and enhancing the wider user experience at bca.co.uk.

A new online Recommendation Engine for buyers was delivered through an enhanced CRM (customer relationship management) capability and support from BCA's in-house Decision Intelligence Team.

BCA continues to enhance the Buyer app, making it even easier for our professional buyer customers to acquire stock safely, efficiently and profitably. The BCA Buyer app is the most widely used transactional mobile app serving the wholesale used vehicle sector, delivering a range of benefits for buyers and generating significant additional demand for sellers.

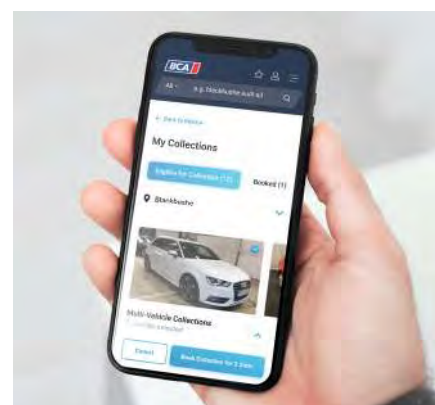
BCA also introduced a new Click and Collect online booking service to arrange vehicle collection nationwide.

## **BCA Buyer app**

The BCA Buyer app is a highly successful addition to BCA's suite of remarketing tools creating an incredibly easy digital platform to support buyers.

The app generates insight that helps BCA meet the needs of its buyer customers, creating additional buying power by ensuring that buyers never miss the vehicles that they are interested in and helping buyers bid on any vehicle being sold, whatever their location.

BCA regularly updates the app to meet the changing needs of customers who are





increasingly operating digitally. In the past year, BCA added the new digital Sale Day catalogue, proxy bidding capability and access to MyBCA via the Buyer app, new functionality that makes it easier for buyers to do business with BCA.

#### BCA Valuations

BCA Valuations predicts the final hammer price on vehicles sold at BCA and uses fully automated machine learning algorithms to calculate fair and unbiased valuations, based on over 200 distinct data points across 5 million real transactions. It is the most accurate automated way to predict final sale prices at BCA auctions.

The pricing model is updated daily using the latest auction results for BCA customers using the BCA Dealer Pro system and underpins a range of pricing services BCA provides for the used vehicle sector. Uniquely, BCA Valuations also provides future auction values, allowing dealers to make informed decisions on retail customers' part-exchange vehicles today that might not come back into their network for sale for several weeks.

#### BCA Dealer Pro

BCA Dealer Pro is an easy to use car appraisal app that allows for the part-exchange process to be managed quickly and easily. Using a simple guided process to appraise, image and then accurately value part-exchange vehicles, Dealer Pro captures all the information needed allowing deals to be done with confidence and is powered by BCA Valuations.

Dealer Pro is used by leading franchised and independent dealers across the UK and is integral to many manufacturers' used car and online retailing programmes.

BCA integrated Partner Finance into the app to enable dealers to finance a part-exchange at the touch of a button on the forecourt.

Dealers benefit from real time visibility of the status of all part-exchanges, including their condition, value and location. Valuable decision intelligence can help to understand sales trends and manage risk. The Dealer Pro system shows how many vehicles have been offered in part exchange and those that still have the opportunity to close, which helps to focus attention on the deals that can be done.

The Dealer 2 Dealer area in BCA Dealer Pro now

allows dealers to transfer stock between sites, offering a seamless route to disposals. With just a few clicks Group Stock controllers can move vehicles to other sites within their group, maximising ROI and effortlessly fulfilling customer requirements.

#### Upgrades and growth for BCA Partner Finance

BCA Partner Finance has seen sustained and strong growth due to a series of innovations aimed at helping dealers manage their used car programmes more efficiently and continues to invest in the technology that drives the BCA Partner Finance service.

Partner Finance continues to see lending grow significantly, an endorsement of the BCA funding model from dealers who value its accessibility, value and contribution. The strong growth is due to a series of innovations aimed at helping dealers manage their used car programmes more efficiently.

Partner Finance supports over 1,100 franchised and independent dealers of all sizes with up to 120 days funding on vehicles purchased at BCA or part exchange stock. The service funds the entire auction purchase, including fees and VAT applied to both cars and LCVs eligible for funding using the scheme.

#### BCA announces major new development in Bristol

BCA has announced the development of a new 65-acre mega-centre to support the Group's business activities. BCA Bristol will create a new standard within the industry, utilising the latest digital technology to deliver a range of multi-channel remarketing, logistics and technical automotive services to meet the needs of our customers.

In a key strategic location within easy access of J18 of the M5, BCA Bristol will be a full on-line remarketing centre, with the capacity to handle over 120,000 vehicles per annum.

The development of the Bristol location is already at an advanced stage and will create significant employment opportunities across a number of specialist automotive, administrative, remarketing, management and logistics roles.

BCA Bristol will operate 24/7, delivering a full



range of BCA's suite of services – defleet and logistics, cosmetic and mechanical preparation, vehicle remarketing, imaging and retail ready preparation.

The new mega-centre brings together the collective expertise of the wider BCA Group, creating the most efficient used vehicle facility in the UK. BCA Bristol will also utilise BCA's advanced decision intelligence services to optimise refurbishment opportunities for customers and remarketing channel selection.

The new centre, with the capacity to store over 10,000 vehicles on the ground at any one time, forms a strategic part of the Groups growth plans and delivers on BCA's stated intent of driving further efficiencies for customers across the used vehicle supply chain.

BCA is handling growing volumes of stock from both new and existing customers across the range of services the Group offers. Additional capacity such as this new facility in Bristol is critical to bringing liquidity, efficiency and choice to the automotive sector with Covid-19 safety guidelines.



#### Cinch works with dealer partners to launch home delivery service

cinch.co.uk, the online platform that makes it easy for consumers to find and buy a used car, has launched its new direct to consumer offering, with a home delivery service in the UK in partnership with selected dealers.

Consumers use cinch to select their used car on the cinch website from a range of vehicles including dealer stock. Purchased vehicles are delivered direct to the consumer with a 14-day money back guarantee. The new service runs alongside cinch's classified lead-generation provision, which remains a core offering for both consumers and dealers.

The new digital platform has been designed in response to feedback and service needs from both cinch's consumers and BCA's dealer customers.

The cinch platform helps its dealer partners increase their offering to consumers without additional investments in infrastructure, stockholding and marketing.

Jason Cranswick, Retail Director for cinch commented "We have worked in partnership with our dealer customers to develop the cinch direct-to-consumer eCommerce platform to meet both consumers and dealers needs. cinch delivers flexibility and increased profit opportunities in an increasingly digitised post-Covid19 market."



#### Key Contacts



**Dene Jones, Chief Marketing and Data Officer**



**Stuart Pearson, Chief Operating Officer**



**Craig Purvey, Chief Commercial Officer**

Go to [www.bca.co.uk](http://www.bca.co.uk) for full details of the BCA sales programme, services and products.

# We're getting through the challenging times together

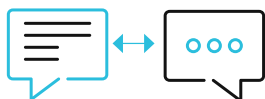
2020 has been a year like no other for our industry. National and regional lockdowns have changed customer behaviour faster than ever. Digital has become integral to the buying journey, forcing rapid uptake. And it's become vital to create connections with customers without ever seeing them face to face. So, how can you make those connections happen – even as uncertainty lingers?

## Contactless customer service matters more than ever

As an industry, lockdown has proved our resilience. We've come up with innovative ways to cope with changing customer behaviours. Services like click and collect and home deliveries are helping to alleviate a lack of footfall, and allowing customers to continue purchasing vehicles even when showrooms are closed.



But while every other part of the customer experience has moved online, the need for signatures on paperwork still poses a challenge. That's where our digital signature tool, SignIt Anywhere, comes in. It allows customers to sign for Black Horse finance on a vehicle without ever having to enter the building. So your dealership can provide a truly seamless customer journey, all from a safe distance.



*"Feedback from our Sales and Delivery team has been exceptional. Customers absolutely take comfort in conducting business remotely, confident in the knowledge that the functionality is being provided by Black Horse."*

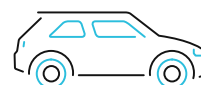
Jon Baird, Commercial Director  
Motorpoint Ltd



With everything being done from a distance, another challenge is ensuring communication to customers stays ongoing, relevant and engaging. Many dealers are using their call centre staff and digital teams to build relationships online. For example, using video tours of vehicles to give customers the chance to browse from their own home.

The digital sales journey may lack the human touch but it more than makes up for it in convenience and safety. If you're not already looking at how you can replicate some or all of your customer experience digitally, it might be time to start.

Of course, joining up your online and offline offering means a lot of different systems and data need to talk to each other. To make this easy, we've created a set of simple APIs. These digital tools give your customers access to Black Horse finance options without having to leave your website or dealership systems. Designed in collaboration with dealers, manufacturers and software experts, they provide real-time connectivity between your systems and ours. Which means you can create a smooth customer experience, regardless of your business' size.



## Support on the road to recovery

With so much news coming from different sources, it can be hard to know where to start. To make sure you have all the latest advice, guidance and insight in one place, we recently launched our Dealer Resource Hub. You'll find commentary from industry peers, along with tools to improve your online presence and connect with your customers.



# H-O-R-S-E

## Our five-point checklist for generating sales



- 1 **Handling**  
Make every customer enquiry count. Our Black Horse Account Managers can talk to you about how tools like Portfolio 3Sixty and SignIt Anywhere can help with customer retention and remote sales.
- 2 **Opportunity**  
Lower footfall will remain an issue for the foreseeable future. Treat every customer interaction as an opportunity (whether online, on the phone, or – when rules allow – face to face) and make it count.
- 3 **Realism**  
Market values are fluctuating, so be realistic about price and strike a deal. Stay in control of your pipeline, prepare stock and ensure that it is ready for online sales.
- 4 **Stock**  
The supply of good-quality used vehicles is an issue, so stay focused on maintaining a flow of stock.
- 5 **Engagement**  
Keeping your staff happy and engaged will help them connect with your customers. Black Horse's online training tool LetsULearn is a great way to support their development.

If you're looking for additional support, our highly qualified team of Account Managers are always available to discuss your business needs and aims. As specialists in all aspects of finance, customer experience delivery, digital tools and the latest FCA regulations, they'll be able to offer tailored advice and guidance.

Our team are also continuing to receive national recognition. At the AM Awards 2020, we took home the AM Dealer Recommended for Finance award for the 10th year running. This award is particularly valuable to us because it's voted for by people in dealerships across the UK – the people we work with every day. So if you voted for us, thank you.

As you support us, we're here to support you. Our focus remains on helping our dealers and your customers through the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. The world is changing, but our commitment to your dealership isn't.

*"Matt from Black Horse has been incredibly helpful with SignIt Anywhere, from training to quickly responding to messages. Matt has also been supportive through emails and phone calls, and he has switched seamlessly to phone review processes to replace review processes which used to be done face to face."*

Laura Sandle, Director of Sandles Car Supermarket

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For the latest industry information and insight visit:

**[blackhorse.co.uk/dealer/resource-hub](https://blackhorse.co.uk/dealer/resource-hub)**

**A better way of doing business together**

**blackhorse** 



# Dealerships grow their aftersales with Car Care Plan

With more and more drivers discovering the benefits of motor aftersales products to help keep their vehicles running, it's important for dealers to work with an aftersales provider they can trust to deliver exceptional service to customers. With simple claims processes, products designed to meet customer needs and plenty of dealer supports in place, Car Care Plan (CCP) is the natural choice for motor aftersales.

Being Dealer Recommended for the 10th year running is testament to CCP's success in supporting clients and customers through their motoring journey.

For more than 40 years, CCP has been working on providing exceptional protection for motorists. Now active in more than 50 countries and registering in excess of 1.8 million products each year, it's little surprise that many major manufacturers, group and independent dealerships trust CCP to deliver quality aftersales products to their customers.

CCP offers a wide range of aftersales options, including: Warranty, Asset Protection, MOT Insurance, Service

Plans, Roadside Assistance, Tyre, Alloy and Cosmetic Insurance products. Dealerships who choose CCP can expect to find a wide product range designed by experts, underpinned by high quality service and support for clients and customers. All backed by a reputation built on reliability, quality and knowledge.

## A product range to drive sales

Every customer that walks into your dealership has different requirements, so it's essential you have the right aftersales products to help meet their needs. All products Car Care Plan offers are designed to be customer-centric, relevant and well-priced. That way you can rest assured that your customers are receiving the best protection and value.

CCP tailors its products to each client, adopting the view that each client also has specific requirements.

Before the launch of any aftersales programme, CCP gains an understanding of the necessary requirements by conducting a full

consultation. It considers regulatory positions; franchise representation; independent sole trader; used vehicle supermarket; business managers; stock profiles and whether or not servicing facilities or body repair facilities are available. These are all factors which CCP assesses to create a programme moulded to the clients' specific requirements.

This helps create a bespoke product range, catering to the needs of motorists while ensuring that products are the best fit for each dealership.

With products also underwritten in-house, Car Care Plan has the ability to provide dealerships and manufacturers with a flexible and transparent approach to aftersales.

Down the line, detailed analysis of performance means products are continually improved and the product range enhanced.

With a knowledgeable in-house compliance team, CCP ensures all products comply with FCA guidance, making sure they add value to clients and to consumers.



**"CCP tailors its products to each client, adopting the view that each client also has specific requirements"**

To find out more about what Car Care Plan can do for your aftersales department,



### Made to measure service to fit your business

Car Care Plan believes the best way to help dealers increase aftersales revenue and, ultimately, offer more motorists protection, is to invest time in each client to really integrate into their business. This looks like tailored, ongoing dealer support throughout the entire aftersales process.

CCP has the capacity to offer this support because of the wealth of knowledge and expertise within the company. With in-house marketing, compliance, customer services, account management, e-commerce and auditing, CCP is fantastically equipped to support dealerships through the entire aftersales journey.

CCP provides regular training to

dealers to boost understanding of each product and its benefits. It ensures the service it provides is the perfect fit for each business's needs, tailoring the approach we take with each company.

Providing the best service possible to customers is essential, which is why Car Care Plan's business principles focus on the Treating Customers Fairly initiative.

Many of the claim handling staff at CCP have prior experience as service receptionists or vehicle mechanics. They are experts in their field, making them more than capable of handling and understanding the claims the company receives on a daily basis.

CCP is continually revising and reviewing its processes to ensure quick, smooth and simple service to clients and customers alike. New technology is developed and innovative processes put in place to make its service the best in the business.

### Reputation that brings revenue

When choosing a service or product, it's always helpful to know that it has been tried and tested by others. Having Dealer Recommended status for 2021 is a fantastic indicator of how dealerships have found working with CCP.

Throughout its time in business, CCP has worked on building a reputation as a reliable, innovative

aftersales provider. It excels at helping dealerships to generate customer loyalty, increase footfall and offer high quality, beneficial products.

CCP's reputation is built on the foundation that its products must deliver on their promises, offering great value and service to consumers. Many of our products carry a five-star Defaqto rating, a testament to the value they give consumers.

CCP ensures that all products are of exceptional quality by investing in ongoing performance analysis. Where necessary, products are adapted to better fit the needs of clients and customers and new products introduced.

### Choose Car Care Plan to grow your aftersales

With aftersales bringing in crucial streams of revenue to dealerships, it's essential that you can trust your provider to deliver fantastic products and service. To grow your aftersales, build customer loyalty and ultimately boost your bottom line, choose CCP. You'll find knowledgeable teams who offer ongoing support and training.

Relevant products that help keep your customers satisfied. And service levels that make all processes quick and simple.

simply visit [carcareplan.com](http://carcareplan.com) today



Car Care Plan

An AmTrust Financial Company



# The CarGurus Difference



## High ROI Marketing Channel

A high return on investment marketing channel that delivers competitively priced leads

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"It's about how much money we are spending and if we are actually achieving a return, and CarGurus is absolutely focused on that. And still, in 2020, one of the only suppliers really focused on ROI."

*Anna Ling, Marketing Manager at Swansway Group*

"CarGurus is extremely competitive. The return on investment is something we're happy with and that's why we continue the partnership gladly."

*Milen Kolev, Group Marketing Manager at Riverside Motor Group*

## About CarGurus

CarGurus is the fastest growing online automotive marketplace in the UK.\* 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 this number 0808 196 4869 or visit [cargurus.co.uk/signup/AM\\_Online](https://cargurus.co.uk/signup/AM_Online).





## Informed Buyers

Speed up the car buying process by attracting informed buyers to your dealership

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“There are two things in particular for me that stand out about CarGurus. Firstly, it’s the transparency to customers. CarGurus has been leading the market in terms of pricing transparency, so I always feel that it has the customer’s best interests at heart. The other thing I really value about CarGurus is that it is completely focused on delivering return on investment for us. And that’s what we talk about most with our account manager. It’s never about just how many enquiries or how much visibility, it’s all about the quality, and delivering that return on investment.”

*Anna Ling, Marketing Manager at Swansway Group*



## Strategic Partner

A proven partner that challenges the status quo and aligns to your business goals

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“Like friends, you realise who your best business partners are in times of crisis. We’ve had those moments with Coronavirus and CarGurus was there as a valued strategic partner with new solutions, with help and with an excellent account manager. We were definitely looking in the same direction.”

*Milen Kolev, Group Marketing Manager at Riverside Motor Group*

To learn more about the challenges CarGurus solves for consumers and dealers, call 0808 196 4869 or visit [cargurus.co.uk/signup/AM\\_Online](https://cargurus.co.uk/signup/AM_Online)



# A post-lockdown toolkit from your aftersales partner; supporting dealers beyond service plans

EMaC is the UK's leading aftersales partner, with a portfolio of clients including 15 major vehicle manufacturers and thousands of motor retailers, all of whom already benefit from EMaC's constantly evolving, technology-led product range to drive consumer retention.

We drive an aggregated £250 million of aftersales revenue into the UK network, annually, through our range of solutions.

Working in partnership with

dealerships and service providers allows EMaC to deliver tailored solutions that meet the needs of each individual business.

We constantly invest in innovation, supporting the continued success of our service offering and driving wider aftersales opportunities to increase revenue for dealers. We offer customer service that is second-to-none and we take responsibility so our clients can focus on their strengths, knowing that

their consumers are in great hands.

In these uncertain and challenging times, we've been busy working on an enhanced range of products to help dealers generate competitive advantage and improve profitability.

By broadening our offering beyond Service Plans and identifying new areas to add value, we are able to support the quality of the after-sales experience and increase the loyalty between vehicle owners and dealerships.

Call EMaC today on 0330 099 6826 and see how partnering with us can increase



## EMaC. All taken care of...

**Ignite:** Our new outsourced consumer sales and communications service will compliment your existing communication strategy to maximise consumer satisfaction, help you manage your costs and optimise revenue generation.

With our flexible, scalable and skilled resource you can ensure every opportunity is captured and maximise the value of each consumer interaction.

We've invested in industry-leading telephony and CRM solutions to deliver outstanding outcomes to you and your consumers.

**Remote Payment+ :** Remote Payment+ from EMaC provides a quick, easy and compliant means of remotely collecting consumer payments, designed to remove the need for physical consumer contact. This new payment facility is an ideal solution for the unique challenges that Covid-19 has presented and beyond. Remote Payment+ is fully compliant with the latest regulatory requirements for GDPR and the payment card industry and can be used for any dealership purchase.

**Drive Now, Pay Later+:** A flexible, interest-free monthly installment plan for dealers to offer to their consumers. It not only enhances business revenue and profitability throughout the ownership cycle, but also builds lasting relationships and increases consumer satisfaction.

With an increased consumer appetite to spread the cost of unexpected bills, Drive Now, Pay Later+ is the ideal solution. Your consumers will welcome the opportunity of an alternative payment option for the cost of their vehicle repairs. Drive Now, Pay Later+ can be used to pay for any dealership



purchases – ideal for red/amber work, accessories and parts.

**Warranty:** A unique range of products designed to maximise dealer profits and relieve regulatory burdens, while ensuring long-term consumer retention. Our range includes Lifetime Warranty, which combines the benefits of a service plan, warranty and breakdown. Make a statement about the quality of your used vehicle stock by offering an EMaC Lifetime Warranty. Your cars will stand out from the crowd and give consumers the extra confidence to buy from you!

### **Cosmetic maintenance plan and tyre and alloy wheel maintenance plan:**

Your consumers can maintain the condition of their vehicle with a range of maintenance and repair plans from EMaC. Our innovative Cosmetic Maintenance Plan and Tyre and Alloy Wheel Maintenance Plans have been designed to maintain the visual appearance of your consumer's vehicle through regular scheduled check-ups. Giving peace of mind and enhancing the ownership experience, we can direct consumers back into your workshop for any future repair work or use the EMaC national network.

### **Integration opportunities**

You are able to integrate your systems seamlessly with those of EMaC. Doing so will improve business efficiency and enable you to have a snapshot of your



consumer's aftersales journey.

EMaC's system integration will enable dealers to strategically market to consumers at key stages of the vehicle ownership cycle.

Example uses include aftersales revenue identification as part of a service booking journey.

Our system integration will fit seamlessly into an existing dealer website and compliments the retailer's existing sales channels, offering consumers and dealers optimal flexibility and choice.

**Service plans:** All our research tells us that an affordable, flexible and tailored approach to servicing costs is a big tick for your consumer experience. Some 1.8m consumers in the UK benefit from an EMaC-supported Service Plan and they renew year after year. Every service plan sold is, on average, three years of servicing.

Maximise the winter period and go the extra mile for your consumers.

**“With our flexible, scalable and skilled resource you can ensure every opportunity is captured”**

consumer loyalty and aftersales profitability!

**EMaC.**



# Spread the word – not the virus!

## Give your customers and staff peace of mind with Supagard's new sanitising technology

Supagard is the UK's No.1 for protecting your customers' cars... but now its recently developed sanitisation machine is offering thousands of customers a new kind of protection too!

With the news dominated by the rapid spread of coronavirus around the world, understandably, every business is extremely concerned about maintaining the maximum cleanliness of their workplace in order to protect their staff and their customers.

### **The new Supagard Sanitisation machine is the answer!**

The machine has four different settings, which can be selected to cleanse a variety of environments. These include cars, vans, offices, workshops or showrooms. The chosen setting can provide safety for all.

Many dealers are now able to go home at night with peace of mind knowing

that their offices and showrooms are being cleansed to a medical grade level by setting the machine to run overnight while the dealership is closed.

### **What about the customer's car?**

Did you know that vehicle interiors hold millions of particles and pathogen agents carried by the air, people and animals? When it comes to catching or spreading a virus, this is a concern. But you can help protect customers with the Supagard Sanitisation System – a device so powerful it renders viruses inactive by killing more than 99% of germs and bacteria.

### **How clean is that car?**

It's hard to believe, but studies have shown that the average vehicle has 283 different types of bacteria every square centimetre, 356 different types of bacteria

on the gear stick and 850 different types of bacteria in the boot. The average steering wheel is four times dirtier than a public toilet seat. Protection starts with thorough cleansing of the surfaces we touch and the air we breathe. The Supagard Sanitisation System is proven to be far superior to liquid cleaners as it uses ozone to deep-clean any vehicle. For viruses, germs or bacteria – it's bad news!

### **So what is ozone?**

We've all heard of the hole in the ozone layer, but few of us know that ozone is a natural gas formed in the stratosphere and its presence in greater concentrations in the mountains gives us the perception of freshness and purer air.

Ozone is regarded as a 'safe agent' and a natural solution for the sterilisation of environments contaminated by viruses, bacteria, spores, etc. Its high oxidative power makes it the most effective disinfectant in nature – it's not flammable, abrasive or explosive, it doesn't damage people, animals or the environment and it doesn't cause irritation to skin.

### **How does it work?**

When activated in a vehicle, the Supagard Sanitisation System sterilises the interior to 'medical grade' levels by converting the oxygen in the cabin to ozone, generated by the device's advanced scientific technology. This ozone penetrates every part of the interior and renders viruses inactive by killing more than 99% of germs and bacteria in the cabin and air conditioning system, making the car a safer and healthier place for the driver and passengers.

It also purifies the air by removing unpleasant smells, leaving a





## "It's the ideal answer to sterilising and deodorising any vehicle to the highest possible standards"

regenerated and deodorised environment. An average car can be fully sanitised in around 15 minutes and after treatment, any remaining ozone is converted back to oxygen by the device, so reoccupation of the vehicle can be done as soon as the treatment has finished.

It doesn't stain, leave residues or damage the materials used in the interior, so it's the ideal answer to sterilising and deodorising any vehicle to the highest possible standards.

Unlike some other sanitisation machines, the Supagard Sanitisation machine does not require any additional chemicals or refills, only the air in the car or space being treated is needed.

### Dealer process and profit opportunity

A number of dealer groups have now introduced ozone vehicle sanitisation as part of their offering to service customers, which is now producing a welcome additional profit stream.

By including the sanitisation process as part of the service booking confirmation e-mail and with the help of the Supagard animation, the customer is introduced to the concept of their car being sanitised to a medical grade level using ozone.

Where a customer has not selected the treatment as a result of the e-mail, the option to have the ozone treatment is then included as part of the service booking customer pre-call. When the

process is followed consistently, these dealers are enjoying conversion rates as high as 25% which is now producing additional profit in excess of £77,000 per year based on a recommended retail price of £29.95 + VAT per treatment.

An additional benefit of the machine is that it is very effective at removing odours from problem used cars that smell of smoke, pets or other unpleasant smells that are difficult to eradicate even by use of other chemicals such as smoke bombs.

The ozone destroys the bacteria in carpets and fabrics that create the bad smells which means there is no longer the need for the valeting team to waste time using a variety of chemicals to try to mask the issue.

Sanitisation treatment is a real benefit that can be offered to your customers as part of a service or as a standalone option, giving them protection and peace of mind, so ask about the Supagard Sanitisation System today and spread the word – not the virus!

# MERCEDES-BENZ EQV



The footprint of the EQV is large enough to make it tricky to navigate small streets and country lanes

**M**PVs, or 'people carriers', have fallen out of favour with the UK car buyer and now only account for around 3% of the market. Instead, motorists are choosing to cram their families into SUVs and crossovers – meaning the humble seven-seater is now mainly bought by taxi companies.

But, SUVs are not really a suitable replacement for an MPV – as you can't fit seven adults (and their luggage) in them.

Van-derived people carriers, therefore, are much more practical, yet far less desirable, to the average buyer as they often lack the creature comforts and 'sporty lifestyle' looks of an SUV.

Once you introduce electrification into the mix, the reality is that a van-derived vehicle like the new Mercedes-Benz EQV is the only solution currently available that can carry more than five people comfortably while producing zero-emissions.

Next year, the EQ range will be bolstered by the EQS, a fully-electric version of the new S Class, followed by the EQE executive saloon; plus a pair of related SUV models. An EQA compact SUV and larger EQB will also begin production next year.

The EQV is based, largely, on the Mercedes eVito van; but comes with styling tweaks, the more luxurious interior from a V-Class and a 100kWh battery, providing a WLTP range of 213 miles.

Mercedes believes the EQV will appeal to private buyers as much as it will the commercial taxi and chauffeur businesses.

For the latter, the EQV is a compelling product. The traditional diesel-heavy taxi fleets are under pressure to electrify, driven by increasing restrictions in city centres.

Priced from £70,000, the EQV doesn't come cheap. It's designed to provide a luxurious car-like experience. So, there's plenty of leather, sound-proofing and high-tech equipment on board.

**“THE EQV'S INTERIOR IS SO VAST IT IS DIFFICULT TO REACH THE VARIOUS STORAGE COMPARTMENTS FROM THE DRIVER'S SEAT**

The interior can be configured so there's two seats in the middle and three at the back, or vice versa. Passengers can also face each other, with a folding table between them, or all face the front.

Up front, there is plenty of space. In fact, the EQV's interior is so vast it is difficult to reach the various storage compartments from the driver's seat.

A 10-inch MBUX infotainment screen provides the brand's latest in-car services, including live traffic information, digital and internet radio and smartphone integration.

The 204PS electric motor provides modest performance, with 0-62mph taking 12 seconds. The EQV's throttle has been calibrated to ensure passengers are comfortable, which means setting off on busy roundabouts requires a thorough shove of the pedal to get it moving. There's plenty of power on the move to keep up with traffic and, of course, a refined and almost silent experience.





There's plenty of leather, sound-proofing and high-tech equipment on board



Electric sliding rear doors  
Access easy



£70,665  
- £77,145



150KW  
ELECTRIC  
MOTOR



0-62MPH  
12.1 SECONDS;  
TOP SPEED  
98MPH



N/A



213 MILES



000G/KM CO<sub>2</sub>

As a vehicle primarily designed to carry people and stuff, it's rather good. The electric sliding rear doors provide easy access, even in tight spaces and everyone on board should be comfortable.

It's not really a 'car', however. The footprint alone makes its tricky to navigate small streets and country lanes, while parking requires a higher-degree of skill. While the EQV is easy to get along with, there's no escaping the fact it drives like a van.

During our testing, the EQV was achieving around 2m/kWh, which would suggest a total range of 180-200 miles could be comfortably achieved.

When it comes to charging, the EQV's big battery will take 10 hours to replenish using a domestic socket, but it can achieve an 80% charge in 45 minutes using a rapid charger.

If the price tag is too high, the less refined eVito tourer offers the same powertrain and has seating for eight; for around £20,000 less. [MATT DE PREZ](#)

## Q&A



**RACHAEL THOMPSON,**  
SALES DIRECTOR  
AT MERCEDES-  
BENZ CARS UK

### What do you expect the most common use-cases will be for the EQV?

The EQV is truly a unique proposition – a full-electric MPV with an impressive electric range and flexible seating for up to seven occupants. From families, to those who enjoy outdoor activities, to businesses such as the taxi and chauffeur market – all can benefit from the EQV's offering.

### Will the EQV be more popular as a fleet or retail proposition?

We see it being popular for both private and fleet customers, because of its unique proposition and the flexibility that this model brings.

### How have you ensured the dealer network is prepared to sell the new model?

All of our retailer partners are "EQ franchised" – from offering EQ models such as the EQC, to supporting our customers throughout ownership. Our network is ready for not only the EQV, but also our upcoming models in our ever-increasing EQ battery electric and EQ Power plug-in hybrid portfolio.

### How does the brand support buyers with EV ownership?

It is not only the car, but the services and technology included that are important in EV ownership.

The EQC and EQV come with three years' Mercedes me Charge as standard – our public charging service that includes major charging networks including BP's Polar Network and Ionity.

Customers, therefore, don't need to worry about subscribing to multiple networks. With the MBUX infotainment system in EQV as standard – customers can enjoy route-optimised navigation – calculating the best route for your journey, and rerouting you to available charge points if required.

We have partnered with BP Chargemaster (now bp pulse) to provide customers with home charging solutions. The EQC and EQV also have an eight-year, 100,000-mile HV battery warranty – giving customers additional peace of mind.

**“WE SEE IT BEING POPULAR FOR BOTH PRIVATE AND FLEET CUSTOMERS, BECAUSE OF ITS UNIQUE PROPOSITION AND THE FLEXIBILITY THAT THIS MODEL BRINGS**

## ≈ KEY RIVALS



**Tesla Model X**



PERFORMANCE,  
RANGE



LIMITED SPACE IN  
SEVEN-SEAT GUISE,  
MORE EXPENSIVE



**Peugeot e-Traveller**



CHEAP, SEATS EIGHT



LESS REFINED,  
LOWER RANGE



**Nissan e-NV200 Combi**



VERY CHEAP



STYLING,  
DRIVEABILITY

## ≈ REVIEW RATINGS

### PARKERS



### TOP GEAR



# Connected Retailing

Connecting online and showroom sales



## Why flexibility will drive motor retail in 2021

**The pandemic has changed motor retail, of that there can be little doubt. *But exactly how?***

There are key trends on which we can probably all agree. A refocus on overhead reduction is one, as is a desire to streamline processes but the most important, we believe at iVendi, is the requirement for absolute flexibility.

Since the start of the pandemic, car, van and motorcycle dealers have had to learn to become businesses that can switch between extremes of being primarily online and showroom-based models – or inhabit any point in-between – at a moment's notice.

This is a crucial development. It has changed the relationship between those two spheres, almost certainly permanently. Dealers who saw themselves as digital-first or showroom-first now exist only in niches; almost everyone has adopted a hybrid approach.

There is a growing and widespread recognition of something that motor retail probably knew at heart and hadn't yet fully embraced but which the pandemic has made clear, that the majority of car buyers use both paths at some time in their vehicle buying journey and expect to be able to switch between them at will.

Certainly, there is plenty of evidence of this. For example, the average car buyer spends about 270% more time online than in the showroom (reference, CMO Survey) but 80% still want to

complete a test drive before buying (reference, What Car?). These are not contradictory impulses. Instead they are the best use of each channel at different moments in the purchasing process.

So what does this mean as we head into 2021? Even with the welcome promise of a vaccine now appearing on the horizon, it is still likely to be a difficult and unpredictable year, and the ability to offer absolute flexibility will remain key. We believe that the majority of consumers will continue to want – and expect – to carry out more and more of the purchasing process online and arrive at the dealership essentially ready to buy or to collect. This means that dealers will need to provide an equally positive and complementary experience for buyers digitally and in the showroom.

It therefore makes sense to consolidate the technology used to handle their needs across one system and, at iVendi, we're looking at the year in terms of a simple but persuasive idea that we are calling 'connected retailing.' We link retailer, lender and consumer at every stage of the buying process – research, decision and purchase – through a range of online solutions that are uniformly effective both online and at the dealership.

Connected retailing is all about enabling everyone involved in the process to move seamlessly between channels at will. That means using technology to let your customers go wherever they want in this new, hybrid online-showroom world – while our technology enables the dealer to make that journey possible, whatever path the buyer uses, whenever they choose to use it.

There is much discussion at the moment about the new normal and what it might look like. When it comes to motor retail 2021 and beyond, we believe the world we are describing here is the new normal. At a moment when consumers expect absolute flexibility and the ongoing threat of the coronavirus demands it, this hybrid approach is very much the best solution available.

**James Tew, CEO, iVendi**



Founded in 2009, iVendi is the market leader in online motor retail technology both in the UK and internationally. With a modular product range which engages consumers, converts buyers and manages transactions, iVendi technology interacts with around five million consumers every month and thousands of motor retailers, manufacturers and finance providers. The company is based in Colwyn Bay.

Visit [www.ivendi.com](http://www.ivendi.com), e-mail [tellmemore@ivendi.com](mailto:tellmemore@ivendi.com) or call 0330 229 0028.





# STEP INTO THE FUTURE

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# REMOTE ONBOARDING BECOMING THE NORM DURING PANDEMIC

Digital staff communication is growing in importance, especially for new recruits

**D**espite the COVID-19 pandemic, some dealerships are continuing to hire staff and, for safety reasons, many have been forced to move all or part of the process online.

That has been extended to onboarding new employees remotely, driven by the need for social distancing, home working and the rise of video conferencing.

While it's not always feasible to do some aspects digitally, many dealers have already transferred their entire onboarding process to online.

Drayton Motors is a motor retailer which was ahead of the curve. It took the decision to digitalise its onboarding back in 2015. Initially, this involved simply getting employees to e-sign their employment contracts. It has since been developed to include other documents such as GDPR and health and safety agreements, and, more recently, videos showing how to deal with customers in a COVID-19 safe environment.

"The benefit of all this is that the employee can log back in and review any platform at any time as well as having date- and time-stamped electronic forms to show that the employee has fulfilled the initial onboard training and recruitment process," says Darren Bradford, director at Drayton Motors.

Arnold Clark also recognised the need to update its onboarding process, with its in-house digital development team

**“THE BENEFIT OF ALL THIS IS THAT THE EMPLOYEE CAN LOG BACK IN AND REVIEW ANY PLATFORM AT ANY TIME**



**DARREN BRADFORD,  
DRAYTON MOTORS**

**“**

**THE SYSTEM KEEPS US FULLY INFORMED AT ALL TIMES AS TO WHERE OUR CANDIDATES ARE IN THE PROCESS**



**LYNNE MCBURNEY,  
ARNOLD CLARK**

building a bespoke system that went live in June 2019. Videos by department heads explaining the different parts of the business and group managers and HR giving an overview of procedures were also uploaded for new hires to view, as well as short quizzes to complete.

"The system keeps us fully informed at all times as to where our candidates are in the process; previously where packs were sent out we were working blind if we hadn't heard anything back from the candidate," says Arnold Clark group head of people Lynne McBurney.

Jardine Motors Group has also moved to a more sophisticated system used by high street retailers which enables full assessments to be carried out virtually as a seamless start to the onboarding journey. In addition, its Online Learning Innovation platform enables training modules to be completed at home.

"A lot of training can be done online now, so employees can do, for example, much of their COVID-19 ways of working safely and FCA training beforehand," says Clare Wright, group HR director at Jardine Motors Group.

There is a host of technology and software available to help with the onboarding process, including contactless platforms such as Adobe Sign, for new starter signatures. Microsoft Teams is also a valuable communications tool.

Arnold Clark uses its employee portal to

provide joiners with information about its values and culture, and policies and benefits, as well as news stories and video interviews with directors. The ACE (Arnold Clark Employee) learning platform also delivers its induction course and regularly updated COVID-19 safety training.

"For new starters this gives a real sense of reassurance that we have everything in place to ensure their safety while at work," says McBurney.

Aside from doing away with unnecessary paperwork, a key advantage of digital onboarding is that any major or structural changes affecting workers or processes can be updated automatically, keeping staff induction content up to date.

However, there are also significant challenges involved in remote onboarding, not least the absence of physically face-to-face engagement and making new employees feel like part of the company's culture. To overcome this, the use of video and other forms of communication is key.

Another problem is checking the authenticity of an individual's documentation. When drawing up an online onboarding strategy, Bradford recommends setting up a working group with a range of specialisms and experience, encompassing senior managers, HR and marketing. Only then can motor retailers truly start to shape the future of their onboarding processes.

**TOM SEYMOUR**

**“**

**TRAINING CAN BE DONE ONLINE NOW, SO THAT EMPLOYEES CAN DO, FOR EXAMPLE, MUCH OF THEIR COVID-19 WAYS OF WORKING SAFELY**



**CLARE WRIGHT,  
JARDINE MOTORS GROUP**

## RESOURCES

### REMOTE ONBOARDING STRATEGIES

MotorVise offers a host of off-the-shelf remote onboarding strategies for dealers to integrate into their business.

<https://www.motorvise.com/car-dealership-recruitment/>

### EIGHT STEPS TO ONBOARDING SUCCESS

Specialist recruiters Morgan McKinley provides an easy-to-follow guide for onboarding new employees digitally, including video.

<https://www.morganmckinley.com/uk/article/8-steps-remote-employee-onboarding>

### HAVING THE RIGHT TOOLS

An in-depth look at what tools are needed for a smooth remote onboarding process by recruitment firm Robert Walters.

<https://www.robertwalters.co.uk/content/dam/robert-walters/country/united-kingdom/files/whitepapers/RW-Remote-Onboarding-Guide.pdf>

# TALENT ON THE MOVE

Charles Martin has been named as the new sales director for Citroën UK as the brand begins to implement its Citroën Advance UK retail strategy (see p18).

Martin has worked for parent company Groupe PSA for more than 17 years, most recently as director of aftersales operations.

Martin will assume his new post on January 4.

In a second senior appointment this month, Groupe PSA has promoted Andy Hall to the newly created role of light commercial vehicle (LCV) and strategy director for the Peugeot, Citroën and DS brands in the UK.

He was previously director of PSA's Eurorepar business in the UK.

DS Automobiles UK is also under new leadership, following the appointment of the premium



**CHARLES MARTIN (LEFT), ANDY HALL AND ALISON JONES, GROUPE PSA**

brand's European commercial director, Jules Tilstone, as managing director.

Tilstone, who has more than 20 years of experience within PSA and succeeds Alain Descat.

Alison Jones, Groupe PSA UK managing director, has been named as the new vice-president of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) in addition to her current role.

**DOMINIC CHAMBERS,  
HEAD OF MARKETING AND  
COMMUNICATIONS AT GENESIS**



Genesis Motor Europe has appointed former Audi and Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) marketing chief Dominic Chambers as its new head of marketing and communications.

He joins the Hyundai Motor Group's premium division following the appointment of Dominique Boesch as its first managing director.

Chambers is the latest in a series of hires as Genesis gears-up for its long anticipated arrival in the UK.

In July, former Polestar UK managing director Andrew Pilkington joined the brand.

**NEIL SMITH, FORMER  
RETAIL OPERATIONS  
DIRECTOR AT CAZOO**



Former Imperial Cars operations director Neil Smith has revealed that he intends to remain in the automotive retail sector after leaving his role as retail operations director at Cazoo.

Last April, he organised social media discussion and support forums to allow car retailers to discuss business issues and advice via LinkedIn and WhatsApp in light of the COVID-19 coronavirus crisis.

Smith is now offering a free consultancy service to fellow car retail sector colleagues ahead of his next career move.

**PRESTON ROGERS,  
HEAD OF ALPHERA  
FINANCIAL SERVICES**



BMW Group Financial Services general manager for digital, sales channels and insurance, Preston Rogers, has been appointed as the new head of Alphera Financial Services.

Rogers, a graduate of the University of Johannesburg, has been employed by the German premium car manufacturer's finance division for the past 14 years.

He takes up his new post from current incumbent Spencer Halil who is moving to the role of chief commercial officer at Alphabet (GB) next month (February).

## MOVERS IN BRIEF

**STEVE BRIDGE, MANAGING DIRECTOR  
OF ESTAR TRUCK & VAN**



Mercedes-Benz Vans UK managing director Steve Bridge is set to join eStar Truck & Van as the newly-established

commercial vehicle business's MD.

Bridge will leave his current post on January 31.

eStar Truck & Van was established in September when it acquired parts of the Roanza Mercedes-Benz commercial vehicle group from administration.

**MIKE PEARCE, DIRECTOR  
OF OPERATIONS, AND LEE O'CONNELL,  
SALES DIRECTOR, AT SOGO**



Mike Pearce and Lee O'Connell have joined Cambria

Automobiles-backed mobility provider SOGO ahead of its January 4 launch.

Pearce, previously head of brand at BCA Marketplace and commercial director at Autologic, becomes director of operations.

O'Connell joins as sales director, having previously held the role as sales director at Agility Fleet and a number of roles at Vauxhall Motors.

**GUY PIGOUNAKIS, COMMERCIAL  
DIRECTOR AT MG MOTOR UK**



MG Motor UK has appointed former Richmond Motor Group operations director and Hyundai Motor UK sales

director Guy Pigounakis. Pigounakis, also a previous managing director of the Rover-owned Phoenix Venture Motor Group, was announced as MG's new commercial director at the same time as David Pugh was appointed marketing director.

## » GUESS THE CAR COMPETITION

**THIS MONTH'S WINNER**



Ian Elliott, sales manager at Leslies Motors Isle of Wight, correctly identified the BMW 7 Series in our previous issue.

See if you can identify this month's model for your chance to win a £20 John Lewis voucher. Email [am@bauermedia.co.uk](mailto: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 January 1.



In association with **pib Group**

# Helping dealers find post-COVID cost efficiencies

**I**n a period of transition for UK car retail, PIB Group finds itself positioned as a key supplier partner in a sector with a steely focus on maximising efficiencies and profit opportunities in a post-COVID era.

Launched as a start-up five years ago the group of insurance advisory businesses has grown through no fewer than 35 acquisitions.

Following its purchase of Cooper Solutions 12 months ago, PIB finds itself equipped with an automotive retail toolbox and breadth of industry know-how which leaves it uniquely placed to root out hard-found levels of operational efficiency and cost savings for its clients.

PIB is based centrally in Retford, Nottinghamshire, but its motor trade team is spread across the nation with 23 regional branches. The company has injected a new level of insurance expertise, a premium-reducing business risk management service and an employee benefits offering to Cooper Solutions' existing fleet management, used car stock control, service prospecting, financial forecasting and trade auction offering.

PIB Group chief executive, Brendan McManus, told *AM* he feels that PIB and Cooper Solutions can help dealers drive profitability and create more resilient businesses in the most challenging of times.

"We've had a relationship with Cooper Solutions for some years," he said. "Clearly its well-established offering is about driving revenues through better stock control, unlocking the sales potential of service customers or trading through online auction. They also deal with a lot of insurance distribution and day-rate insurance and that's where PIB felt it could really strengthen the proposition and add new levels of value for clients."

"The relevance of the Cooper proposition has never been more marked than it is now. I think it's brilliantly positioned as dealers increasingly look for partners who can reduce costs and increase revenues from their existing operations."

**PIB FEELS IT COULD REALLY STRENGTHEN THE PROPOSITION AND ADD NEW LEVELS OF VALUE**

**BRENDAN McMANUS,  
PIB GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

McManus said he has no plans to rebrand Cooper Solutions under the PIB banner following the October change of name to PIB Insurance Brokers for Cooke & Mason.

Among the insurance businesses now trading under PIB Insurance are Wilby, DE Ford, Franklands, Loric, PIB Private Clients, PIB SME Insurance, QPI, WW Group, BKG West and Cobra Insurance Brokers.

McManus said: "Cooper Solutions is a

brilliant brand and I won't make a change. There's nothing I can add to the business's existing offering that Dean (managing director, Dean Pipitone) doesn't already do."

"The plan is to invest to make its offering stronger for customers while driving value for them by leveraging PIB's insurance expertise."

Cooper Solutions' market share with its FullCover day rate insurance offering is around 50%, meaning it serves around 2,000 franchised car retailers in the UK.

Pipitone is in no doubt of the advantages PIB's input will bring to both existing and new clients. He said: "The breadth of motor trade solutions offered by PIB Group now extends to risk management, motor trade and general corporate insurance broking, employee benefits and the FullCover day rate insurance platform. Used individually, each will enrich your business, but used collectively, they're greater than the sum of their parts and uniquely placed to better manage dealership exposures, increase breadth and quality of cover, whilst lowering the total cost of risk."

"We've always been sat on the customer side of the broker relationship and never exposed to the insurer side, from a risk management point-of-view to health and safety. The PIB relationship has helped us fully understand and take advantage of that to benefit our dealer partners."

Pipitone said Cooper Solutions' AM100 clients were already starting to see the "joined-up advantages" of extra mitigation of risk, cost savings and increased profitability.

Through PIB Risk Management, dealers are able to take advantage of full business audits to identify changes that could be made to facilities and processes to improve safety, reduce insurance premiums and protect against litigation in the event of an incident.





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Services include COVID-19 safety measures. Health and safety training can also be provided to automotive sector employees, either face-to-face or – more commonly into 2020 – online.

Elsewhere, Cooper Solutions has continued its efforts to liberate greater profitability for retailers through access to data which can bring about incremental vehicle sales.

Functionality from its new FullCycle platform produces a sales prospect list of service customers up to seven days ahead, and by complimenting Cooper Solutions data with CDK DMS and other 3rd party data it identifies 'prime' prospects based on important 'triggers to change' e.g. length of ownership, finance expiry, loan car upgrades etc.

"I recall from my time in car sales that it's hard to know who to commit time to – particularly among aftersales customers. Prospecting service customers is not a new concept but FullCycle's unique approach is transformational, ensuring sales teams increase customer engagement in a timely and targeted manner, maximising opportunities to do business and generate incremental sales. As retailers exit the second lockdown and turn their attention to strategies for 2021, I would encourage them to take another look at their service customers for the quick wins that they can represent," Pipitone said.

Cooper Solutions data shows that up to 50% of aftersales customers did not buy their current car from their servicing retailer. FullCycle is helping retailers understand the big numbers that are



flowing through their service departments on a daily basis, putting them in the running to sell customers their next car.

It claims that a typical dealership utilising its FullCycle prospecting tool can expect to attribute four-to-five incremental vehicle sales per month and a six-to-eight times return on investment (ROI) to the system.

While Cooper Solutions is avid to see retailers maximise every showroom visit, it is also keen to ensure that sales teams do not lose out due to an inability to provide test drives during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Back in 2017, it highlighted the benefits of an unaccompanied test drive through a survey which revealed that 49% of used car buyers would feel more positively about a dealer if they were offered an extended or unaccompanied test drive.

In early 2020 the business ensured retailers could also insure customers on unaccompanied test drives in untaxed used cars under

COVID-19 restrictions. It also developed a system which allowed customers to scan a QR code to view and sign insurance documentation for a test drive or loan vehicle on their smartphone – ensuring contactless transactions.

As a result, Cooper Solutions' sales vehicle loan days, which totalled 29,053, 29,137 and 21,228 in the first three months of the year, soared to 55,931 in June, 72,746 in July and 77,075 in August.

Pipitone said: "Across our business the aim is to deliver the solutions to allow our dealer partners to trade as efficiently and profitably as they can, and the provision of unaccompanied test drives was a great example of that. Through our partnership with PIB, our offering is set to go from strength-to-strength and I know the more we can demonstrate that, the more dealers see that, the more growth we will see as a business."

## EIGHT QUESTIONS TO...

# A PRODUCT GENIUS

Lucy Ford, a Kia Genius at Bolton Kia



### What are the main responsibilities of your role?

The Kia genius role aims to help guide customers through the sales process in a non-pressurised way. We help them feel at ease while they are deciding which model best suits their requirements, for example through personalised demonstrations and test drives. Another part of the role is to assist with online enquiries, we go the extra mile and make personalised videos and photographs of the specific car a customer has enquired about. We're also trained to know all the specifications of the entire Kia range and this helps us guide customers in the right direction for what they seek.

### What are the most significant challenges ahead in your field of work?

The ever-changing landscape of the car world, with announcements such as "electrification by 2030". Helping customers understand what electric and hybrid cars are and how they would fit into their lives is a further challenge, as they're new to most people. We also encounter a lot of incorrect preconceptions and it can be difficult to change people's minds on electric vehicles (EVs). At the moment, most of the people who enquire about EVs have never really looked at them before, so our task switches to being an educator and we need to confidently tell people how good EVs can be to put people at ease when they consider moving that way.

### How might these challenges be overcome?

It helps that Kia has a really wide range of electrified vehicles, so for anyone not ready to go full-electric, there are other choices ranging from mild hybrid, hybrid or plug-in hybrid that can each act as stepping stones to make the journey more acceptable. Electric car technology is rapidly improving and the infrastructure is only getting better, so I think the job of conveying this to people is getting easier with every step the industry takes forward. Kia also has announced its next-generation of electric cars that will be based on the new E-GMP platform, offering up to 500 kilometres (310 miles) of range and less than 20-minute charging thanks to a dual 400/800V system. That's game-changing and helps reduce any anxieties customers may have.

### What attracted you to this area of expertise?

I genuinely have a passion for cars, but I had no previous experience working in the car industry. The Kia genius role made a lot of sense to me though, as it nurtures that passion and allows me to really learn in-depth information about the product range so I'm better able to help customers with decisions. It's especially exciting

working for a manufacturer like Kia, as it's a fast-moving company that's introducing a lot of new products.

### What's the most important thing you've learned and how have you made use of it at your company?

Asking the right questions and then being able to really listen to a customer's needs is the most important part of the role. When you truly listen, you get a really good understanding of what somebody needs, which helps further through the sales process. A lot of customers already know what they want, as they may have already researched cars online or completed a test drive and it's vital to listen to them instead of assuming anything. Also, the ability to adapt how I work with the customer is really important, as some customers want to be led through the sales process more slowly than others and gauging this accurately can really make people feel at ease and allow them to enjoy the experience.

## QUICK-FIRE QUESTIONS

### What drives you?

When a customer steps into the showroom, you already know they're serious about buying a car. Being in a position to really help them understand what Kia has to offer and leading them through the options resulting in them driving away in their new pride and joy once they've completed the purchase with a sales executive is very rewarding. It also helps that we're in an ever-changing automotive environment, which keeps things interesting and never stale. So, it's also great to rise to the challenge of keeping up-to-date with all the Government changes, car taxation, and, of course, new Kia products – all to be able to comfortably provide assistance to people entering a world they're not used to.

### What's your favourite app?

I spend a lot of time on Reddit, as it's a great source of information, whether that's global news, automotive news or just funny videos. It's a news aggregator site, so you can get different perspectives instead of a biased view.

### How do you relax?

It's hard to switch off from work because I'm genuinely interested in cars and working with Kia's exciting model range only adds to my enthusiasm! So, I enjoy watching videos about cars and playing PC games.

# AM

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### THIS MONTH'S QUESTION TO THE AM TEAM:

Which series of TV programmes would you like to binge-watch (if you haven't already)?

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► **Boardwalk Empire** – I got a couple of series in, but lost my way during a house move

### PRODUCTION

**Head of publishing** Luke Neal

► **Game of Thrones**. Half way through season three

**Production editor** David Buckley

► **The Vicar of Dibley** – I must be on my third go

**Senior designer** Chris Stringer

► **I'd love to re-watch all eight-and-a-half series of 24, back-to-back** Jack Bauer (no relation)

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