

SUPPLIER SPOTLIGHT

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ASSA ABLOY

Key tracking saves one Jardine Motors service centre £60,666 a year

Assa Abloy's Traka Automotive key safe system has become more than just a hi-tech security solution for Jardine Motors Group – it is also helping to drive efficiency and improve customer service.

The days where general managers ran the risk that cars would “simply disappear between a process like valeting and coming back into the dealership for display or customer pick-up” are gone, said Roger Dawkins, the group's safety, security and facility manager.

“Now all of that has stopped. We have had no incidents of car theft or lost keys since the system was fully networked.”

But the benefits of the system have influenced the broader business much more than Dawkins may have imagined when he brought his knowledge of Assa Abloy's key safe know-how from his time working in pharmaceuticals.

He has overseen the installation of Traka Automotive's intelligent key cabinets, fobs

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and accompanying software at 52 of Jardine's 70 sales, servicing and pre-delivery inspection (PDI) centres.

Not only does the system align closely with his own exacting approach to his job – one that sees him travelling around the AM100 group's UK sites and operating a drone to assess the condition and capacity

of its various facilities – but it has also delivered unquestionable value for money.

Before wider implementation of Traka Automotive's systems across Jardine, the group conducted a ‘time and motion’ study at its Audi sales and service centre sites in Warrington, focusing on the time it was taking technicians to locate a set of keys, find the car for those keys and then drive it into a servicing bay.

Dawkins found that each of the 20 Audi-trained technicians at the 21-ramp Audi Service Centre was losing an average of 10 minutes a day looking for keys and cars.

“That's 200 minutes, or three hours and 20 minutes of lost earnings at £70 per hour, equals about £233 being lost to the business each working day across the whole team,” he said.

“So, over a five-day working week and an average of 260 working days per year, this was a total loss to the business of £60,666 per year.”

Based on this saving, Jardine worked out that the return on investment (ROI) in the Traka Automotive key management system at this site alone was achievable in just over two months.

Dawkins said: “We reckon there was also a 10% to 15% productivity gain in our service centres and PDI hubs.”

Apart from eliminating uncertainty about the location of keys, Traka Automotive's key cabinets, iFob intelligent key fobs and accompanying reporting software also benefited customer service, said Dawkins.

“If someone has left their £70,000 vehicle with you and you're not sure where it is when they come to collect it and have to spend 10 minutes locating it, then that certainly doesn't fill the customer with confidence, doesn't instil them with much trust,” he said.

“Similarly, if someone has come to take a look at a car with the intention of buying it and simply finding it causes a delay, that can be make-or-break for the sales executive.”

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Jardine uses a colour-coded site map as part of its Traka Automotive software, which allows each car to be precisely located in a certain area of the site.

At the end of each day, the system delivers a report detailing every movement of every car in the business.

This has become a vital tool for audits by the group and its manufacturer partners.

The system leaves no question as to the accountability of staff when it comes to the location of keys.

Dawkins said: “The Traka Automotive software's management information and reporting facility enables me to very quickly find out which sets of car keys are not safely secured in a Traka cabinet at the end of each working day.

“Some cars will be out for good reason – perhaps because some specialist body-shop or wheel re-alloying work is being completed on a vehicle offsite, prior to delivery back to us for customer collection – but I'll know who booked it out and for what reason.



The Traka system also helps Jardine in its drive to improve used car sales profitability.

The group uses it to monitor the age of approved used stock, using the system's ‘stationary vehicles report’ function to see how many days any vehicle has been on site and determine when prices need to be dropped as part of efforts to meet a 90-day maximum turnaround deadline policy.

Dawkins said: “If they see used cars not sold for more than 30 days, they will go and have a look at the quality of its online photography, and increasingly video, on Auto Trader and elsewhere.

“They might go to Auto Trader's iControl price comparison tool to make sure it's priced to sell.

“It's just another string to the bow of a system that we have found so much success with.”

“There is no doubt that having full visibility over every set of keys makes all staff think twice about leaving keys in their desk drawer or pocket, or driving one of our more luxurious models out for the night.”

In Milton Keynes, BMW Mini, Audi, and Skoda and Volkswagen facilities, and the 430-car capacity PDI centre which serves them 10 miles away, have all been fully networked into the Traka system to optimise efficiencies.

Across the sites there are a total of 12 Traka Automotive key cabinets and slots for some 2,580 iFobs holding one, two and

sometimes three sets of keys to a single car.

Finger-print recognition provides highly secure access to all cabinets for the 368 authorised staff.

In March 2019 alone, 200 networked laptop and desktop PCs delivered detailed feedback on 55,240 movements across the four sites, revealing the location of a vehicle's keys regardless of whether it is in the showroom, PDI centre, or for servicing or valeting across any of the four sites.

During that same month, 4,481 new sets of keys were added to the Traka Automotive system and 41,453 key searches were performed using the software.

