

Track leads to maximise your sales conversions

As competition for new car sales grows more fierce and dealers face increased pressure on profits from volume targets and customer satisfaction index (CSI) audits, the desire for management information gets even stronger.

Lead analysis business Calltracks is considering giving its clients the ability to monitor their call volumes against an industry benchmark in future, so they have a snapshot of exactly how they are performing and can judge what needs to be fine-tuned.

"Whether your dealership is large or small, you always need to benchmark yourself against your peers," said chief executive Stuart Buckley.

It could be the next phase in a programme of product development at the company, although he said it is just one of the potential future enhancements the company is looking at.

Buckley, who has a background in marketing, founded Calltracks 10 years ago after he identified a gap in the market for enquiry management. He saw that clients wanted to know which sales channels made the phone ring and to pinpoint which of those channels led to most sales and profits.

He employed some developers and the team worked for two years on the Calltracks system, ensuring it was scalable to suit both small and large dealers. It now works with five of the top 10 AM100 dealer groups, said Buckley. Its website proudly lists franchised dealer clients such as

Jardine Motors Group, Lookers, Perrys, Citygate and Renault Retail Group.

"Because we came from the client side, everything we do is still about delivering simple and affordable services so dealers can understand their phone calls better and generate more sales," said Buckley.

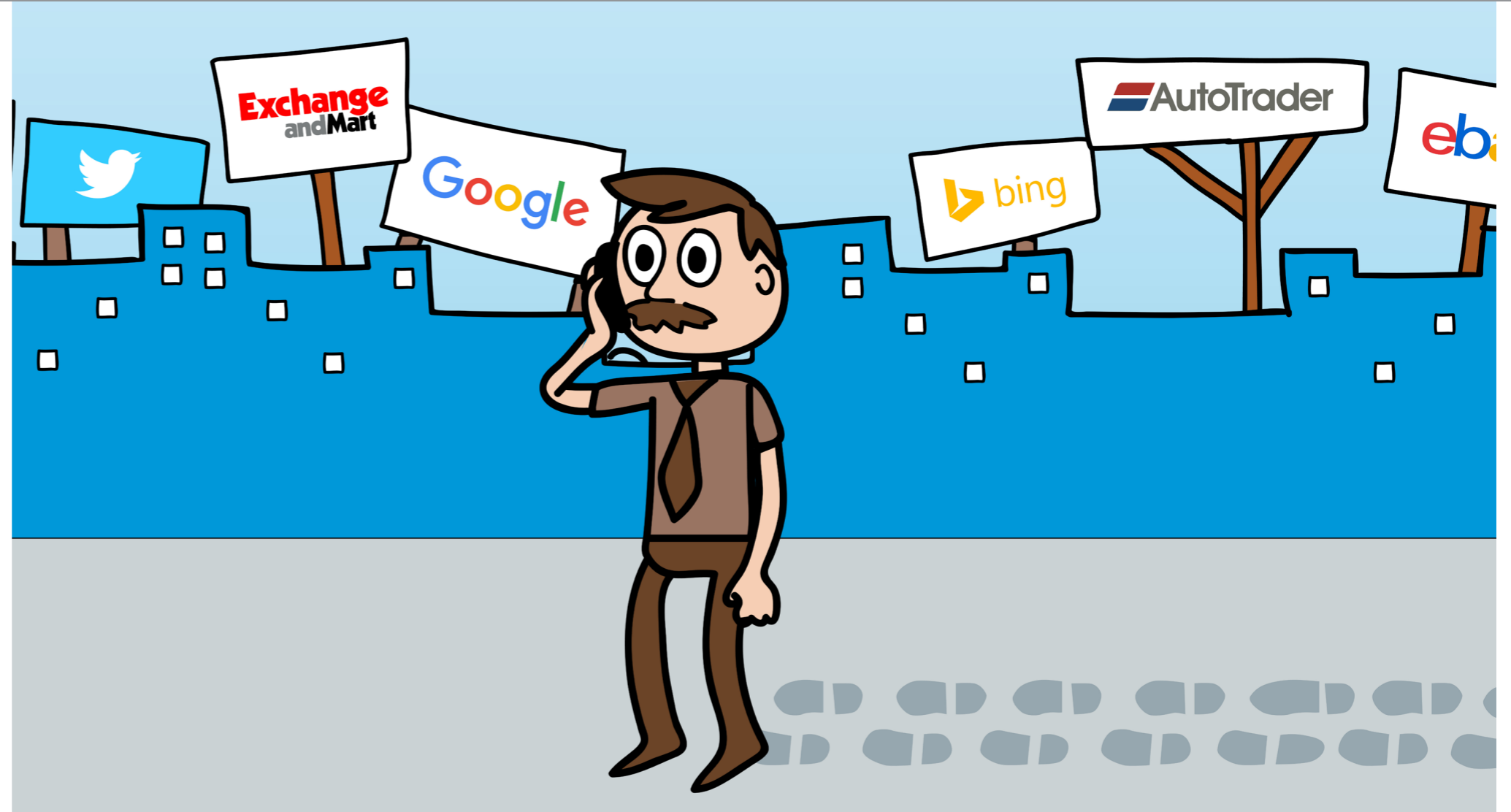
From the outset, Calltracks has been heavily engaged with dealers' marketing departments. However, it is evolving its system to work more closely with the operations management, such as dealer principals and sales managers. New tools in the system since March allow managers to examine what happens, or does not happen, when a customer calls the dealership. Buckley said the aim is for dealers to immediately identify and regain those lost potential sales.

"We believe every dealer needs intelligent lead-tracking to make best use of their marketing budget. Without it, they either waste money on the wrong channels, or fail to deal properly with their calls, and then strong sales leads are simply lost in the mix.

"Lots of good phone enquiries are lost, resulting in lost sales. These can be recovered," said Buckley.

"We have seen as much as 50% of all sales enquiries go astray, and another 25% are sadly not answered effectively, so most dealers are very keen to hear how they can improve their performance."

Buckley said dealers can achieve a far better return from their online investment by managing the leads into their websites. The focus should be on conversion, not quality,



he added. Calltracks can measure the journey each prospective customer takes to a dealer's website, and then see which pages they look at. Each visitor is logged with a unique number, and their data is automatically linked to any phone calls they make, so the system has a complete record of their activity.

Every call is also recorded, to allow clients to assess if they have been handled correctly. Alerts are then sent to the client's chosen manager, followed by a detailed management report at the end of each month.

Calltracks has identified that about 80% of all calls into a dealership are not related to sales. Its system is able to focus on the remaining 20%, which are typically about new car and used car sales and finance options, said Buckley. It means it can "extract nuggets of gold and pass them on to our dealer partners in real time".

"We only engage when a potential sales opportunity may have slipped through the net. This amounts to only one or two notifications a day, so it doesn't increase their workload, but does increase productivity and lead directly to extra sales." Dealers can monitor its effectiveness through improvements in

their lead-to-sale conversion rate.

Calltracks has been providing the service in real-time since March, and data from that period shows the time between the first call into the dealership and the alert going back to a manager is three to five minutes.

Buckley said Calltracks has received "great feedback about how we might further enhance our services".

"We're not here to educate dealers about data, we're here to listen, learn and adapt. Some people sell digital platforms and run to the hills, but not us. We're all about long-term partnerships, because we work with clients to help increase their return on investment over time. We work with them to solve their specific problems."

One campaign with Swindon-based TH White led it to optimise its keywords, ad text

and landing pages to better engage prospects. Through keyword call tracking and sales linking, TH White found its sales conversion rate rose from below 1% to just above 4%.

Buckley summarised 10 points that dealers should expect of their lead analysis partners:

- Find and inform you of important 'lost' sales calls – in real time
- Provide a 'journey history' at the start of calls
- Immediately identify all webpages viewed
- Track and follow-up every call you receive
- List third-party sites making your phones ring
- Track all sales leads and each customer
- Improve the customer journey and conversions
- Integrate with your other high-quality systems

■ Provide key people with real-time tracking data

■ Deliver tailored reports to all your stakeholders

During implementation, Calltracks' technical team will set up the call tracking system to a dealer's own requirements, make sure the staff are comfortable with every aspect of the process, and provide a dedicated account manager to help with later inquiries.

"As we evolve, we expect to be working more with the operational teams in addition to marketing. Calltracks can now help improve both parts of the sales journey, by giving dealers the complete picture of leads coming into the business, and then managing the calls and lost sales opportunities," said Buckley.

“LOTS OF GOOD PHONE ENQUIRIES ARE LOST, RESULTING IN LOST SALES. THESE CAN BE RECOVERED” STUART BUCKLEY, CALLTRACKS

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