

Pipeline of products from Car Care Plan

Global warranty and value-added product provider Car Care Plan has a pipeline of new products and services which will be rolled out throughout 2023 and into 2024, building on significant developments last year.

Under the direction of newly-appointed Sales Director Simon Cook, who took up his post at the end of last year, the team are continuing to develop Car Care Plan's award-winning warranty product, which, for the 13th year running, was named as AM's dealer recommended warranty product for 2023.

Its value-added products continue to gain traction with its portfolio consisting of GAP, MOT test cover, roadside assistance, tyre and alloy insurance, cosmetic repair insurance and service plans.

As its core product, warranty makes up around three-quarters of Car Care Plan's business although add-on products are becoming increasingly important.

"Our fantastic team are constantly

reacting to what customers want and the products they need as part of the vehicle ownership cycle," Cook said.

Cook is particularly proud of Car Care Plan's move to adapt its core warranty product to include used electric vehicles (EVs), the first warranty company to do so. This was introduced last year prior to his arrival. EV-specific wording has been incorporated into the product, which also covered perhaps one of the biggest concerns customers have when buying an EV – range anxiety.

Cook said: "While there are fewer moving parts on battery electric vehicles (BEVs), they have different considerations and characteristics. Broadly, they are not dissimilar in terms of frequency and severity of maintenance to internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles, because the technology is so new. Our move to treat BEVs alongside our ICE vehicles has been very well received."

After identifying checks not included in a regular service, the team at Car Care Plan launched their EV Drivers Club for even more peace of mind. It



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"I think this year will be just as challenging as 2022," he said. "Global supply chain issues will take time to be resolved and production levels are likely to remain relatively low, making it difficult for new vehicle sales to grow massively. We have a lot of focus from manufacturers moving from a traditional franchised arrangement to an agency model and that will take time and effort to bed in. From an ownership perspective, we are seeing an increasing move from ICE to full battery and hybrids. There has been a lot of talk around whether that will continue, but I think it's inevitable as Government pushes us towards its 2050 net zero goal."

"Adapting the company and its products to the evolving automotive space is a key priority for the team. This will involve building even closer relationships with manufacturers, while continuing to provide relevant and competitively priced products and services for dealer groups and their used car supermarkets. We'll continue to adapt to changing customer behaviours, whereby car ownership costs are increasingly bundled into one monthly payment."

He added: "We are making sure we have the right products for the right customers at the right time. Car buyers want to maintain their vehicles, but the cost remains a consideration. We are continually looking at our pricing and keeping it at a sensible level to try to mitigate the impact of inflation. We want to help people and to ensure our products are priced competitively and offer the best value. The last thing we want is car buyers sacrificing products like ours because of cost."

"However, when times are challenging, people revert to products they can trust and Car Care Plan, with its exceptional team, is a trusted brand in the UK."

Looking forward, Cook expects to further develop products to meet ownership expectations particularly as EV sales increase.

"Everything we do is about taking the hassle of car ownership away from the customer," Cook said.

"There's a considerable amount of product development in the pipeline for this year and into 2024."



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includes EV Drivers Club Assist, Zoom EV membership, SmartFob and Keycare, Zap Map Plus, bonnet charging app discounts, Dent Wizard Ventures discounts, and an annual vehicle health check.

Car Care Plan is now looking at the entire customer journey and how it can support customers from home charging services to infrastructure help.

Other product milestones last year include the launch of Car Care Plan's combined warranty, breakdown cover and service plan product providing one monthly payment over a 12-month period to cover a vehicle's ongoing maintenance.

In fact, Cook sees such monthly payment plans, which incorporate the various aspects of vehicle ownership, expanding and expects to adapt Car Care Plan's products to meet this shift in consumer behaviour. Such packages are also beneficial for dealers providing the opportunity to forge closer customer relationships which, in turn, boosts retention and future sales.

Cook added: "Car buyers are definitely thinking about the ownership cycle as a whole – whether they're buying new or used – and considering all the costs from running the vehicle to the cost of

servicing and repairs. Customers are much more aware of the importance of maintaining the value of their vehicle and are looking at products which can help them."

While Cook recognises the need to meet both customer and dealer requirements, particularly in the used car arena, which still makes up around 70% of its business, he is also acutely aware of the evolving nature of new car distribution as makers increasingly embrace the agency model.

He said: "Manufacturers are looking for a homogenous relationship with its customers whereby all car buyers are offered the same product for the same price. However, it is not yet clear how trade-ins and used cars will be treated, but we're prepared and flexible to meet all these needs."

Club SmartGuard, Car Care Plan's latest new car service, offers an annual membership to customers which incorporates biannual vehicle assessments, specialist cosmetic repair, alloy wheel insurance and discounted dealer rates.

Car Care Plan is also developing its digital applications to further improve its accessibility for customers, enabling them to interact directly, improving efficiencies and ease of use for OEMs, dealers and car drivers.

Last year, Car Care Plan registered in excess of 1.5 million products and paid out more than £130 million in claims. Cook is aiming to consolidate the company's 2022 performance – despite the challenges of the economic climate and the ongoing impact of global events – which saw growth of 9% across all products compared with 2021. However, it was cosmetic insurance which outperformed all other products with a 23% growth in 2022 over the previous year.

Product	% Growth 2022 v 2021
Alloy wheel insurance.....	12%
Cosmetic insurance.....	23%
GAP insurance.....	4%
Joint alloy and cosmetic.....	15%
Service plan.....	14%
Tyre.....	20%
Warranty.....	7%



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