

Are dealers missing out on charge point profits?

Wallbox has issued a rallying cry for car retailers to “take control” of the potential financial gains that can be achieved from retailing electric vehicle (EV) charge points.

UK & Ireland country director Alan McCleave wants retailers to look beyond the politics and headlines to focus on the scale of the opportunity presented by every EV sale in a sector that is moving inexorably towards a zero emissions future.

And he has asserted that long-established European charge point manufacturer Wallbox is perfectly positioned to aid car retailers streamline the process of helping customers make the transition.

“Modern car dealerships are

going through a dramatic period of change that isn't just confined to the EV transition. It can be hard to step back and get some perspective,” McCleave said.

“But for any car retail business leader scratching their head about how to take control of the profit opportunities open to them in this evolving market, the sale of EV charge points and the forging of stronger bonds with linked industries is a clear path to take.

“When OEMs started their EV journeys many mandated the charge point provider a car retailer could use. Now approaches are more varied and retailers should look at taking back control of the package they sell to EV customers to claim a larger slice of the opportunity.”

McCleave added: “Less than 3%



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ALAN McCLEAVE

of the UK car parc is plug-in at the moment. The scale of the opportunity is vast. We're still at the very start of a long journey and the time has never been better to set up a car retail business to cater for customers' needs with a broader, more holistic EV offering.”

According to the latest data from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), plug-in vehicles are anticipated to comprise more than one-in-four new registrations in 2023, representing growth of 32.1% or approximately 487,140 units.

In 2024 it forecasts that almost a third (31%) of the new car market will be plug-in vehicles, at 607,150 units.

The need for exponential growth in the installation of EV charge points at homes and businesses across the UK has never been higher on the nation's agenda.

In 2022, one standard public charger was installed for every 53 new plug-in cars registered, according to the SMMT – the weakest ratio since 2020.

McCleave, who has been working in the EV charging space for nearly six years now, suggested that car retail businesses that buy charge points wholesale and partner with local installers, or those that team up with Wallbox and its UK-wide network of installers stand to see a far larger share of the financial gains presented by a growing charge point installation market.

Where retailers tied into OEM partners' approved schemes might only have realised small gains, referrals directly from a dealer to Wallbox can deliver significantly more revenue per sale, while greater control of charge point provision will accelerate profit per sold unit, he said.

“To date I have bought two EVs and I wasn't offered a charge point on either occasion,” he added. “The sales executive never introduced the conversation.

“If you're a retailer, essentially



selling a charge point on behalf of your OEM partner, much of the profit will flow back to them. For retailers buying charge point units wholesale, the business model is wholly different and the incentive is far greater.

“In that scenario, with the potential of an additional margin added to the dealer margin on every sale – to a customer base looking for more advice and support than ever before – that conversation should always be part of the sales journey.

“For businesses that place more focus on the potential gains, and the benefit of gaining a reputation as an EV expert offering a holistic solution to customers, there are huge benefits.”

Now almost a decade old, Wallbox is a charge point producer which boasts global reach, serving more than 100 countries and employing 1,250 people in its worldwide offices.

In the UK there is a growing sales and technical team to support dealers, with recruitment underway as the business continues to grow.

Wallbox is a business dedicated to changing the way the world uses

energy and its connected chargers – ideal from home and business applications – give users the power to control their consumption, save money and live more sustainably.

Most recently, it launched the Pulsar Max smart home charger to the UK market, introducing a charge point that is designed to make everyday vehicle charging faster, easier and more stylish.

Offering up to 22kW of power output, the small and sleek design is available in black and white with a matte-finish and features proprietary Eco-Smart technology designed to allow users to charge their EV with solar energy.

It ensures users can maximise cost, energy savings and speed of required charge session.

Users can also schedule charging sessions through the myWallbox app – potentially using voice control through Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant devices – to take advantage of off-peak charging to save up to £180 a year.

McCleave said that – if they haven't already – retailers need to equip themselves with the expertise

to talk to customers about such technology as part of discussions surrounding the sale of any EV.

And wider relationships in the EV sector could forge the foundations for other profit opportunities for the future.

“Just as customers and energy providers want greater control of EV charging, car retailers should be doing the same,” said McCleave.

“It might not be that every business wants to buy Wallbox units from us in bulk and forge their own installer relationships in a way that can introduce more complexity but deliver the biggest returns, but the sale of EV charge points is another area where retailers can take control of their destiny in a market that is moving fast.

“Right now, the benefits of that – and being able to meet an EV customer's every need – should be at the top of any business leader's agenda.”



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