



AM readers recommend their top suppliers

The greatest form of marketing is via 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 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 this year are auctions and remarketing, warranty, service plans, finance, GAP insurance, classified/car listings and paint protection.

The service plans sector saw EMaC recommended by AM readers.

AM DEALER RECOMMENDED





Providing certainty in an uncertain world

Integrated service plans give motorists confidence – and play a vital role in supporting dealers' acquisition and retention strategies

Market predictions suggest that 2018 will be a challenging year for the UK economy. Retail spending is under the spotlight as consumers hesitate about making financial commitments ahead of the UK's exit from the European Union. And, in the motor retail sector, the SMMT forecasts a fall of 5% in new car registrations.

It is crucial, therefore, that motor retailers give their customers certainty in uncertain times. In addition, by building acquisition and retention strategies that fill the void created by the expected fall in new car sales, motor dealers can give their own businesses an added level of financial certainty.

EMaC's service plans are proven to play a vital role in underpinning motor retail businesses across the UK. EMaC reported continued year-on-year growth for 2016, with more than £200 million of aftersales revenue generated by service plans in the past 12 months. Dealers with a solid service plan proposition not only maintained their aftersales activity, but grew it. Their customers embraced the inflation-proof price assurance that is inherent in an EMaC service plan.

Taking control

To ensure dealers fully take control of the benefits service plans can deliver to a business's bottom line, EMaC offers comprehensive training across

all aspects of the business, from sales and aftersales to accounts teams. This means everyone at every level fully understands the benefits of service plans for customers and the business alike.

John O'Donnell, managing director of EMaC, said: "Our commitment to training is central to our service, offering dealers like Drive Vauxhall and Kineholme Garage vital support to help them maximise the benefits of service plans. By partnering with us, dealers are given the practical sales support to enable them to assist their customers in making an informed purchasing decision.

"We also assist in providing the ongoing care, which is such a highly valued method of ensuring an outstanding customer experience."

A focus on sales motivation

Drive Vauxhall invested in training with EMaC, which improved processes and empowered staff, driving sales up by 200% in just 24 months. Similarly, Kineholme Garage, a family-owned franchised Renault dealer, increased its aftersales revenue by more than £165,000 in the 12 months since partnering with EMaC.

In addition to monthly 'new starter' courses carried out by EMaC, regular refresher training sessions can benefit dealers by ensuring established teams remain motivated and focused. Daily and monthly targets are set and progress measured routinely. For Drive



Vauxhall, this resulted in a significantly improved bottom line.

Ashley Connell, group business development manager at Drive Vauxhall, explained how the training made a big difference to success: "The partnership initially enabled us to identify where change was needed and how to implement new processes, in order to secure more sales. We've also enhanced staff incentives, such as changing payment plans and commission for staff who sell

service plans, as well as run internal competitions, all of which have resulted in creating greater motivation among the team."

Creating bespoke solutions in partnership

For Kineholme, creating a streamlined approach to service plan pricing was a key benefit of working with EMaC.

Prior to working with EMaC, Kineholme used a service plan quotation system that could take up to 10 minutes to

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John O'Donnell, EMaC

complete for each customer. EMaC simplified the quotation process and Kineholme now offers customers a tailored service plan solution in a fraction of the time.

"The service plan solution we have created in partnership with EMaC gives us a revenue stream that simply did not exist previously," explained Darren Buckley, aftersales director, Kineholme Garage.

"The simplicity of the pricing structure and the technology behind the process make it a win-win for our customers and us."

The fact that the customer journey is largely driven by email communication has also contributed significantly to the overall success of Kineholme's new process. This bespoke solution has seen service plan sales rise from just 52 in 2016 to 433 to date in 2017, with a corresponding increase in projected aftersales revenue.

Buckley said: "The solution has enabled us to improve wider aftersales upsell opportunities, further boosting our profitability. It's not just our service advisers who are rewarded financially for their efforts. The increase in labour hours is a boost for our technicians, who earn a commission on the hours they work in the workshop."

Driving up customer retention

"What's more, the successful introduction of a service plan scheme will increase customer loyalty and retention for the long term," said O'Donnell.

"We've seen customer retention rates increase to as much as 60% when a service plan is in place, compared with 22% without the plan. By listening to dealers, we can create streamlined, profitable plans that reflect a business's ethos, helping them meet the needs of their customers and radically boost revenue across the organisation."

This has been a crucial benefit for both Drive Vauxhall and Kineholme Garage, which have both enhanced customer retention levels.

"The importance of service plans in terms of increasing our customer retention rate can't be overlooked," said Connell. "Indeed, the success of our service plans business has had a positive impact on vehicle sales."

Buckley agreed: "Both customer and staff loyalty have benefitted as a result of our approach to service plans, making it a no-brainer for our business."

Commitment drives success

Confidence is key in the selling and buying of service plans, believes O'Donnell: "We know that a dealer's commitment to securing a sale is crucial to the success of service plans, which is why we place such a strong emphasis on maintaining support to ensure dealers are adequately armed to help their customers make an informed decision."

"Our results confirm that motorists welcome the opportunity to budget for the upkeep of their vehicle."

"In today's highly competitive motor retail marketplace, where profit margins are squeezed ever tighter, this offers dealers the ideal opportunity to boost their revenue streams significantly."



EMaC

THE SERVICE PLAN THAT REALLY WORKS

**TWO
MILLION
MOTORISTS
CAN'T BE
WRONG**



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**EMaC:
Driving your customers
back to you**

EMaC are the industry-leading supplier of inflation-proof bespoke Service Plans offering you long-term customer loyalty and guaranteed future revenue on every new or used car you sell.

It's a completely flexible platform that brings you and your customers together and provides you with increased upsell and further sales opportunities. An EMaC Service Plan is easy for you to sell and just as easy for your customers to buy either at the point of the car purchase or post-sale.

We're with you all the way, offering...

- ✓ Comprehensive in-showroom staff training
- ✓ Industry insight and expertise
- ✓ Continuing unrivalled levels of support

EMaC Service Plans work like a dream. Across the UK and Ireland we have two million Service Plan customers - and this is growing. Central to our success is a combination of great technology and first-class service. Dealership staff and customers alike can always speak to one of our experts quickly.

- ✓ Innovative technology
- ✓ Realtime reporting
- ✓ Significant recent investment into technology-led product enhancements
- ✓ Our system can be tailored to your preferences

Service Plans are our speciality so it's little wonder we have been winning awards since 2012.

Call us now on 01270 507466 for an informal chat or to arrange a meeting without any obligation. We just want to show you what EMaC can do for your business - and your profits.

