

SUPPLIER SPOTLIGHT

In association with **JudgeService** 

Your window on your world

For online insight and review company JudgeService, 2020 has seen the business grow, new products be developed and substantially increased interest from the sector in its services.

While revenue is down as a result of discounts given to clients in April, May, June and November, both January and October showed a 10% year-on-year increase.

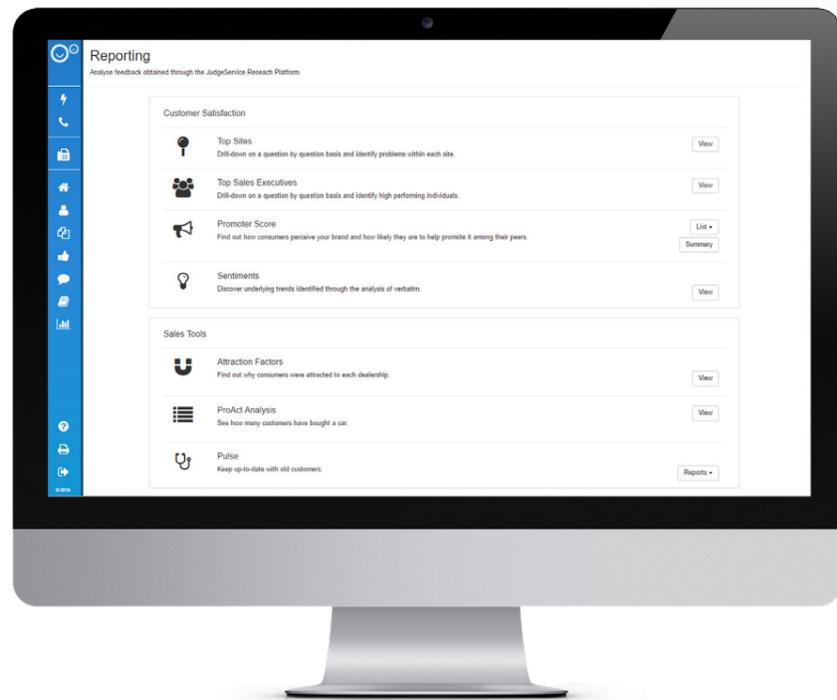
During lockdown, JudgeService increased its team by six in marketing and customer service roles, bringing its headcount to more than 50. Founder and managing director Neil Addley is confident of double digit growth every year over the next three years with an expectation of creating 15-20 new positions over this time.

Meanwhile, three new products are set to launch this year [2021] and new clients have come on board with the sales team busier than ever as increasing numbers of dealer groups recognise the need to boost their online presence and ensure their customer service is the very best.

Addley said: "It's been a strange year, but it has brought into focus the importance of client reviews as consumers are relying much more heavily on online content to make their buying decisions."

This year JudgeService has signed up Renault Retail Group and several Land Rover and Jaguar dealerships including Hatfields and Marshalls with more to come.

He added: "We are experiencing much higher levels of interest in our products and services as a direct result of the pandemic. Dealers are looking at ways to enhance their online presence and their customer satisfaction levels, which have become even more pressing in our current climate,



together with the impact of fewer colleagues in dealerships."

With its new products, JudgeService's portfolio will cover the entire ownership lifecycle. **REPUTATION MANAGER** is its 'all-seeing' platform collating customer satisfaction and service levels from review sites such as Google across the internet.

"Tending the review garden is essential in maintaining an exemplary online reputation and allows issues to be dealt with promptly and effectively," said Addley. "If you tend those negative reviews, you can turn them into positive ones with a well-managed and timely response."

PROACT sees JudgeService's in-house team contact car buyers who are identified as loss leads. With around a third still in-market, Proact has a sales conversion rate of around 5%. Addley said: "Every lead has never been so important and with many dealerships not as staffed up as they were pre-lockdown, it is easier to outsource."

REACT is JudgeService's core customer satisfaction programme in use at more than 1,000 dealerships nationwide.

"It not only provides dealers with a means to enhance their online reputation but offers a window to their world allowing them to identify and put right any issues," said Addley.

The team has been hard at work during the pandemic to finalise and launch three new products later this year.

OUR MISSION IS TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE ONE CUSTOMER AT A TIME WHETHER THAT'S ENHANCING CUSTOMER SERVICE, IMPROVING THE MANAGEMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICE ISSUES OR SPOTTING UNHAPPY CUSTOMERS BY WHAT THEY HAVE

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RENEW has been designed to help dealers turn existing customers back into new prospects creating a defined process which is less fallible than relying on individuals in the business to undertake follow-ups.

RESOLUTION manages customer service issues in aftersales by collating comments from online reviews and allowing employees to log complaints and comments.

TOUCHSTONE will be available towards the end of this year and is what Addley refers to as the 'ultimate referral product'.

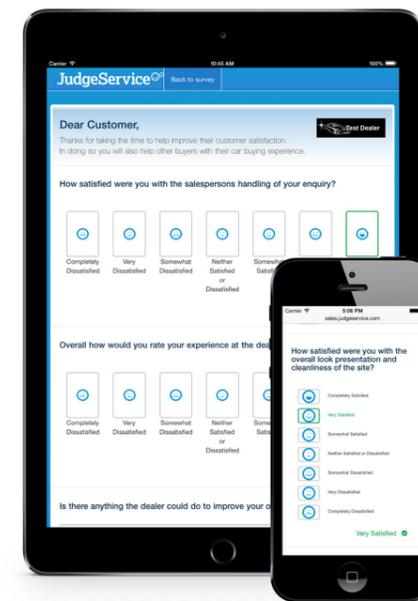
He said: "It will out take the ambiguity of referrals so the process is managed properly, fairly and transparently as well as ensuring those customers who do make genuine referrals which result in a sale are justly rewarded."

JudgeService has also undertaken insight analysis to understand consumer sentiment as the country emerged from the first lockdown enabling it to predict a surge in demand for some of its key clients, including Brindley, FG Barnes, Hendy and Vertu Motors. It found COVID-secure measures were mostly impressive and reassuring and, although some discrepancies were identified, these tended to be isolated incidents which were tackled quickly.

Two specific car-buying trends emerged – customers were either buying locally, reluctant to travel outside their immediate area, or they were buying online nationwide. Crucially, sales across medium distances declined.

One area the pandemic focused all our minds was the environment as fewer vehicles on the road and hardly any flights overhead saw air quality improve. With that

How satisfied were you with the overall look presentation and cleanliness of the site?	How satisfied were you with the attitude of the salesperson during your purchase?	How satisfied were you with the choice of vehicle?	Were you offered finance - yes	Did you find finance elsewhere? - no	How satisfied were you with the explanation of the paperwork and documentation?	How satisfied were you with the explanation of the finance package available?	How satisfied were you with the attitude displayed by the salesperson at handover?	How satisfied were you with the interior and exterior cleanliness of the vehicle?	How satisfied were you with the mechanical preparation and condition of the vehicle?	Since delivery have you been contacted by someone from the dealership? - yes	Overall how would you rate your experience?	How satisfied were you with the steps taken to ensure adequate social distancing?	Would Recommend	Total
97.96%	97.96%	93.80%	85.71%	71.43%	97.96%	97.96%	97.96%	97.96%	97.96%	23.57%	95.92%	95.92%	100.00%	7
100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	1
100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	1
100.00%	100.00%	85.71%	100.00%	0.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	1
91.84%	100.00%	91.84%	71.43%	71.43%	91.84%	92.86%	93.80%	91.84%	91.84%	11.43%	93.80%	93.80%	100.00%	7
92.86%	100.00%	92.86%	50.00%	50.00%	92.86%	85.71%	92.86%	78.57%	100.00%	100.00%	92.86%	100.00%	100.00%	2
92.86%	100.00%	97.92%	66.67%	50.00%	95.24%	89.29%	97.92%	100.00%	97.92%	50.00%	96.43%	97.92%	100.00%	6
100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	83.33%	33.33%	97.92%	97.92%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	6
92.86%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	2
100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	96.43%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	4
95.24%	100.00%	100.00%	66.67%	66.67%	95.24%	100.00%	95.24%	95.24%	95.24%	33.33%	100.00%	95.24%	100.00%	3
100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	66.67%	66.67%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	3
100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	2
92.86%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	75.00%	100.00%	96.43%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	75.00%	92.86%	92.86%	100.00%	4
100.00%	100.00%	98.21%	100.00%	62.50%	96.43%	96.43%	98.21%	100.00%	98.21%	97.50%	98.21%	98.21%	100.00%	8
100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	66.67%	100.00%	95.24%	92.86%	100.00%	95.24%	95.24%	66.67%	95.24%	100.00%	100.00%	3
100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	1
Group Average	96.96%	99.77%	97.42%	81.97%	62.30%	96.96%	95.43%	98.13%	97.89%	96.72%	72.13%	97.19%	97.66%	61
Selection Average	96.96%	99.77%	97.42%	81.97%	62.30%	96.96%	95.43%	98.13%	97.89%	96.72%	72.13%	97.19%	97.66%	61.00
JudgeService Average	95.17%	96.15%	93.92%	81.00%	56.77%	94.05%	92.38%	95.34%	93.61%	92.83%	93.93%	95.65%	96.24%	11317
JudgeService Average (Top 25%)	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	2829



in mind, JudgeService asked motorists whether they would consider buying an electric vehicle (EV) and, while interest had increased, it was still less than 20%. Consumers put their choice of next vehicle in order with petrol coming top, diesel in second place and hybrid third with a tiny percentage saying an EV would be next.

Addley said: "There's a long way to go to end the internal combustion engine (ICE) in customers' eyes."

Interestingly, the research for south coast-based Hendy asked customers for their thoughts on off-setting the carbon footprint of acquiring their new vehicle with most massively overestimating the cost at around five times too much. With the off-set cost of a new vehicle typically £5-£10 a year, a carbon off-set product could prove popular.

JudgeService is undertaking further research on consumer reaction to the government's announcement of its plans to end new ICE vehicle sales by 2030 which is due for publication in January.

Addley is confident that, despite the year's setbacks, the outlook is bright.

He said: "There is a long-term trend for either centralising or outsourcing functions like this and that has been accelerated as a result of furloughing and redundancies as well as tightening up of processes."

"Our mission is to make the world a better place one customer at a time whether that's enhancing customer service, improving the management of customer service issues or spotting unhappy customers by what they have posted online. All these things are about helping clients look after their customers better and overall improve customer service on an on-going basis."

"We are seeing increasing demand for what we do and, despite the shock to the economy in 2020, we expect 2021 to be strong for us and dealers. People will want to buy cars, especially those who have saved money as a result of curbing their spending such as on holidays, and that's certainly what our research is telling us."