

AM

AUTOMOTIVE MANAGEMENT

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BACKLASH FOR BCA / P6

Revised cinch platform makes it a competitor, says retailers

WHAT NEXT FOR LEVC? / P22

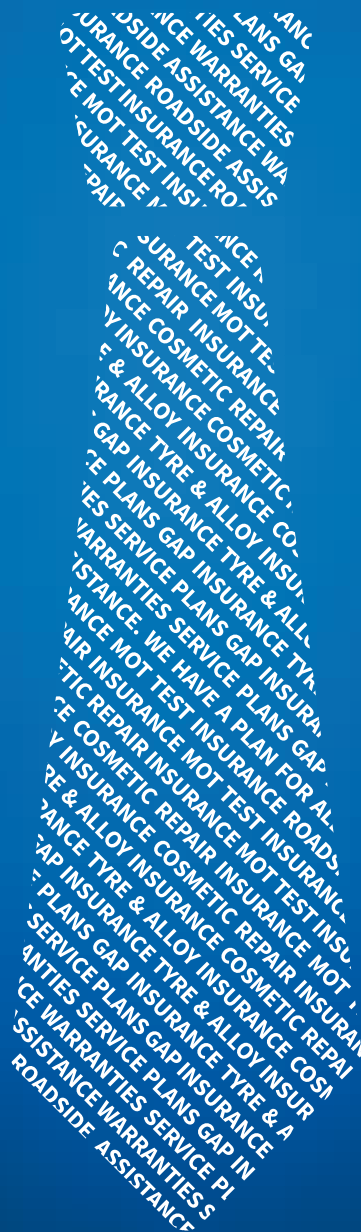
The maker of London tax cabs is branching out into electric vans

DEALER TECHNOLOGY GUIDE / P31

A 31-page guide to suppliers at the cutting edge

'TIME TO RESET AND RESTART'

- SAYS ROBINS & DAY CHIEF EXECUTIVE JAMES WESTON AS HIS TEAM RESPONDS TO THE CHALLENGES POSED BY COVID-19 / P18



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EDITOR'S LETTER

After the lull of this year's second quarter, hasn't quarter four turned into a race for everyone? The pressure is on to finish the year as strongly as possible and keep that confidence sustained into 2021 as we all continually adjust to the changing restrictions.

To help keep you inspired and up-to-date with the latest best practice, and to help you see what your peers have been up to, *AM* has two virtual events scheduled for November and December, which you'll be able to log on to from your PC or phone.

First, there will be a webinar for this year's AM100 on November 18, in association with BDO, where we'll reveal the latest trends and highlights of the UK's biggest motor retailers. Details of how to register for this will be on AM-online shortly.

Second, on December 2 and 3 we're holding Automotive Management Live Virtual. There'll be 20 insightful speakers plus exhibitors to meet on our hi-tech, interactive, virtual exhibition platform and you'll be able to download brochures, view videos and attend live Q&A sessions with industry experts. See page 8 for more details.

I've missed seeing many of you at industry dinners and conferences, so, hopefully, I'll see you – virtually – at those two events.



MEET THE TEAM



Tim Rose
Editor



Tom Sharpe
News and
features editor



Stephen Briers
Editor-in-chief



Jeremy Bennett
Head of digital/
associate editor

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Robins
& Day



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DEALERS HIT OUT AT BCA'S DIRECT SALES PLATFORM

'They have opened Pandora's Box' and are 'cutting our legs away,' say unhappy retailers

BCA has been met with a backlash from car dealers following its decision to relaunch its cinch marketing platform as an online car retailer perceived to be in direct competition with its traditional remarketing customers.

One retailer accused the remarketing giant of "opening Pandora's Box" by going to market with the new offering which will go head-to-head with Cazoo and traditional dealers which have accelerated their digital sales strategies in response to COVID-19.

One retailer told *AM*: "They have opened Pandora's Box and they may well reap their just desserts."

"Many businesses in many sectors of business have considered taking on their customers in the past and the wise ones have thought better of it. Clearly BCA has decided that the rewards are greater than the risks in this case."

Launched in July 2019 as a rival to Auto Trader, the cinch sales platform has now evolved, offering car buyers a choice of more than 4,000 cars for sale, some of which are dealer stock.

Cinch promises free home delivery and a 14-day money back guarantee in a model which emulates that of BCA customer Cazoo.

Last summer, Cazoo signed an exclusive agreement with BCA for a dedicated vehicle preparation site in Corby, Northamptonshire, with



capacity to store more than 6,000 cars and prepare more than 50,000 cars per year.

Speaking to *AM*, Cazoo founder Alex Chesterman insisted BCA's shift into the role of competitor "doesn't affect our relationship at all".

But some of the retailers that spoke to *AM* about BCA's decision to become a retailer said they were ready to reconsider their remarketing partnership as a result.

Many objected to a business model that invited them to buy stock that would be exclusively marketed on the cinch platform in return for a

share of the resulting profit.

BCA's relaunch of cinch comes just weeks after the remarketing giant launched a new "Retail Ready" stock channel. Now it appears that BCA's car retail customers could be asked to fund stock sold via cinch on the one hand, while competing with consumers to buy vehicles on the other, said one concerned trader.

COOL RECEPTION

A short statement issued to *AM* by BCA said that cinch helps its dealer partners "increase their offering to consumers without additional

investments in infrastructure, stock-holding and marketing".

But one franchised retail group director said he felt cinch was "cutting our legs away" and "monetising dealers" by using them as a stock funding tool.

He added: "From my point of view why would I hand over my money to fund cars for cinch to sell?"

Eddie Hawthorne, chief executive of Arnold Clark, said his business had no use for the cinch platform as its in-house digital channels were delivering strong results. But while he said that BCA's move into retail would not affect remarketing relationship with the top AM100 group, that stance could change if the venture proved a success, shifting its position to that of a "rival".

Swansway Garages has a long-held remarketing relationship with BCA but has declined the opportunity to work with the cinch retail platform after discussing terms with cinch retail director, Jason Cranswick.

Director Peter Smyth said that BCA's move into the retail sector had also been enough to consider another remarketing partner.

He said: "What they are wanting us to do is for us to fund and own the stock that they advertise and sell. We are already in the business of selling our cars ourselves and to my mind there are better places that I can deploy those funds."

"I was told we would not be able to advertise the cars on any other marketing platform for 60 days if we went with cinch. Normally we only hang on to our cars for 60 days before we get rid of them, so that's not a gamble I'm willing to take."

Smyth added: "What I'd say to the team at cinch is 'good luck'. It's irritating that they've done this more than anything. I think this is another case of 'vulture capitalists' trying to squeeze more out of the automotive retail sector."

BCA was unable to field anyone to comment on cinch's move into retail



E-COMMERCE PLATFORM MEETS BOTH CONSUMER AND DEALER NEEDS AND WILL DELIVER FLEXIBILITY AND INCREASED PROFIT OPPORTUNITIES IN AN INCREASINGLY DIGITISED POST-COVID-19 MARKET
JASON CRANSWICK, CINCH



in the week prior to AM's publication.

However, a statement from Cran-swick, who made the move from his role as Jardine Motor Group's former commercial director back in August, said: "We have worked in partnership with our dealer customers to develop a direct-to-consumer (D2C) e-commerce platform that meets both consumer and dealer needs and will deliver flexibility and increased profit opportunities in an increasingly digitised post-COVID-19 market."

PUSH FOR GROWTH

Some automotive retail sector investors have suggested that BCA's move had come as a direct result of Cazoo's success in attracting £450m in venture capital funding and a valuation of more than £2bn in early October.

"Previously, BCA's owners must have looked at their business and thought 'we have all this infrastructure and a huge wage bill and yet Auto Trader is making huge amounts without getting its hands dirty', so they launch cinch as a rival," one told AM.

"This year it has seen the valuation of Cazoo and shifted its sights.

"BCA is extremely good at what it does, but it's an old-world business trying to figure out new world business and how they can take a piece of that pie."

BCA Marketplace was bought by private equity firm TDR Capital for £1.9bn in September last year.

Completion of the sale came in the same month that the business posted annual financial results for the year to March 31, 2019, which showed turnover up by 24.5%, from £2.43bn to £3.03bn, and adjusted EBITDA up to £172m from £160m.

Costs of £2.5m were attributed to the creation of the cinch marketing platform, meanwhile.

In its 2019 report, BCA said cinch was the first step in a process which, it hoped, would "remove the faff that consumers feel exists today".

It said that it held unrivalled vehicle data resulting from the eight million used car transactions it dealt with each year and one million vehicles which pass through its auctions, while attracting 20 million private car owners to its WeBuyAnyCar website.

At that stage, it said that the cinch online marketplace had been developed for an estimated 3.4 million consumers that wanted a more intuitive online used car search.

"SOME CAR RETAILERS WILL BE CONSIDERING WHETHER THEY WANT TO CONTINUE TO DO BUSINESS WITH SOMEONE THEY ARE ALSO COMPETING WITH"

MARTIN FORBES, COX AUTOMOTIVE INTERNATIONAL



"IF I WAS A RETAILER, I'D BE SLIGHTLY PEEVED TO PUT IT MILDLY. IT'S ANOTHER BIG FORCE WITH AN AWFUL LOT OF MONEY BEHIND IT COMING INTO AN ALREADY CROWDED RETAIL SECTOR"

RUPERT PONTIN, CAZANA



"I WAS TOLD WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO ADVERTISE THE CARS ON ANY OTHER MARKETING PLATFORM FOR 60 DAYS IF WE WENT WITH CINCH"

PETER SMYTH, SWANSWAY GARAGES



REMARKETING CONFLICT?

Cazana director of insights, Rupert Pontin, highlighted that cinch's reinvention was not the first time BCA had chosen to go head-to-head with its car dealer customers, pointing to the acquisition of WeBuyAnyCar back in 2013.

WeBuyAnyCar encourages motorists to sell to it rather than part-exchange their car.

Pontin said: "It doesn't sit comfortably. If I was a retailer, I'd be slightly peeved to put it mildly.

"It's another big force with an awful lot of money behind it coming into an already crowded retail sector.

"While many might dismiss cinch, for the time being it does raise questions about the stock they might be holding back from wholesale auctions to offer to retail customers, rather than dealers.

"At a time when supply is tight, a lack of choice is the last thing that any trader would like to see."

Martin Forbes, the president of BCA rival Cox Automotive International, moved quickly to guarantee his business would not move into retail just a short time after a *Sunday Times* article on October 18 broke the news of BCA's new cinch offering.

Forbes said his phone had been "ringing off the hook" with car retail group bosses keen to learn of its stance on direct sales.

He said: "The strategy that is being followed by [BCA] puts them front and centre in a position of conflict with a lot of their customers.

"Cox Automotive will not go into direct retail. For years it's a question we have been asked and it's important, as it has been for a number of years, to make our stance clear."

Forbes pointed to the Cox Automotive business's sale of the Motors.co.uk brand and the recent disposal of its Cars Guide and Auto Trader brands in Australia – again to eBay Gumtree – as a reassertion of this move away from any potential conflict with its car retail customers.

"We want to partner with our customers and help them navigate a fast-changing digitally-driven retail environment," he said.

Forbes said that he expected Cox Automotive to benefit from BCA's new direction with cinch.

"It has to drive opportunity for us in the marketplace," he said.

"At board level some car retailers will be considering whether they want to continue to do business with someone they are also competing with."

TOM SHARPE

AUTOMOTIVE MANAGEMENT LIVE VIRTUAL 2020 LAUNCHES

December 2-3 event will allow you to gain great insights – and all without needing to leave your dealership

AM is launching a fully functioning virtual exhibition version of our annual Automotive Management Live event to enable dealers and OEMs to hear the latest insights and best practice plus network with their industry peers.

Coronavirus restrictions have prevented us holding the annual Automotive Management Live show at the NEC, Birmingham. So we've invested heavily in an amazing, interactive, online exhibition platform that will let us deliver its usual fantastic range of expert presenters straight to AM Live Virtual-registered attendees' PCs or iPads.

It will offer delegates a host of features and benefits. We've expanded AM Live Virtual to run over two FULL days – Wednesday, December 2, and Thursday, December 3 – when attendees will be able to meet in the virtual networking lounges, watch presentations designed to inspire and innovate, can quiz the expert presenters in their live Q&A sessions, and can arrange private virtual meetings without needing to go anywhere.

"It's disappointing we can't all gather at the NEC as usual but AM Live Virtual allows us all to get precisely the same experience without leaving the dealership or office. It's going to be a fantastic event – the capabilities of the platform we're using are mind-blowing," said AM editor Tim Rose.

"It's going to be a fun and fascinating two days. I hope to see you there."

AM Live Virtual will feature 20

seminar sessions offering visitors insight, advice and guidance to improve their strategic planning and their day-to-day operations. And the supplier partners will showcase their latest products and services for automotive managers on enhanced interactive stands with video, live chat and demonstrations of new technology.

All of the presenters in the digital and retail sessions at Automotive Management Live Virtual will be joined by a dealer client to provide a real-life perspective on the topic.

And all the insight-packed presentations remain viewable after AM Live Virtual ends for another 28 days, so attendees can simply log in again to re-watch on demand.

Each day will begin with AM interviewing the chief executive of a major AM100 motor retailer to learn how they're planning to drive their business forward in 2021.

There will be four strategic keynote sessions which will examine the economic outlook, property management, dealer sustainability and prac-

tical strategies for leadership and motivation in a dispersed, remote, socially distanced world.

The six digital sessions at AM Live Virtual will include best practice in video, social media marketing, CRM and more.

Hall 1

In addition, there will be six retail sessions covering subjects such as aftersales efficiency, effective use of technology, used car sales efficiency, motor finance and more.

All the presenters will be revealed in the coming weeks.

EXPLORE OUR EASY TO USE PLATFORM



Visitors to Automotive Management Live Virtual will be greeted by a welcome video in the AM Live lobby, the central point from which they can access all the features of the two-day event.

SOME OF THE SESSIONS ALREADY CONFIRMED:

RETAIL STREAM

- The automotive retail ecosystem with CDK Global
- Overcoming CSI challenges with GTechniq
- Advanced technology in retail with Arena Group

DIGITAL STREAM

- Online reputation management with JudgeService
- Digital customer communications with CitNOW
- Social media marketing with Marketing Delivery

KEYNOTE SESSIONS

- Leadership in a virtual world
- The economic outlook
- Motor retail property
- Dealer sustainability

MORE SESSIONS WILL BE CONFIRMED IN THE WEEKS AHEAD



FREE REGISTRATION* is now open at **WWW.**



In advance, dealers and OEMs must register for the show at **automotivemanagementlive.co.uk**, after which log-in details will be emailed direct. This login will give access to both live days plus provides 'on-demand' access to all presentations for 28 days after the live show has finished.



The event is accessible from desktop, mobile and tablet devices on the following browsers: Google Chrome, Safari, Firefox and Edge.



At exhibitors' enhanced interactive stands you can download PDFs of information, watch videos and chat directly with that supplier's staff via text chat, voice or video call.



The AM team and members of the AM Live visitor advisory board will also be on hand to discuss key motor retail topics.



You won't miss anything during the day as pop-up boxes will alert you when the live seminars are about to start, giving you plenty of time to join the sessions. And the navigation bar allows you to instantly access any part of the show.



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*Only motor retailers and OEMs will be permitted to register for AML Virtual

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Five of the biggest trends we've seen in automotive during 2020

By Anthony Gaskell
Managing Director – EMEA at Reputation.com



What a year it's been. Nobody could have predicted how it would play out nor how the pandemic would affect nearly every UK business sector. For automotive, in particular, it's had a huge impact.

I wanted to take a moment to look at five online trends the Reputation.com team have identified to see if they can be of use to you.

1. Automotive is experiencing the strongest uptick in review volume of any industry, and the sentiment within these reviews is very strong. It's important that auto dealers pay attention to their customer reviews and respond to them under all circumstances. Remember, a negative review, responded to properly, can completely turn the situation around.

2. From analysing more than 14,000 points of data, we found customers have been pleased with how dealers have managed showrooms and how service representatives have been in addressing the pandemic. There's much more emphasis on cleanliness and in-dealership PPE, too.

3. Auto dealerships using Reputation.com are seeing up to a 10% increase in total sales by monitoring and improving their Reputation Score.

4. Optimising business data on Google can drive up to 50% more purchases. Ensure that every one of your locations' Google My Business pages are correct, full of information, and actively being monitored.

5. Research tells us that 67% of consumers lose trust in a business when there's inaccurate information on a listing. Of course, the more a business grows, the harder this is to maintain without the right software.

What will we see in 2021? Hopefully, these trends can help us to predict and prepare, but, of course, nobody really knows.

Either way, I'm looking forward to it already!



THIS MONTH'S NEWS HIGH

OCT

2

FORD MD BARRATT TAKES LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Ford of Britain revealed that sales director Lisa Brankin had stepped into an acting managing director role after Andy Barratt (below) took a leave of absence. A Ford spokesman insisted Barratt's leave had "absolutely no connection" to leadership changes made as new Ford chief executive Jim Farley took up his post.



7

Q1 LOSS REVERSED BY VERTU

Vertu Motors' strong COVID-19 recovery reversed a £14.3m Q1 loss with a £19m profit in Q2. The PLC's financial results for the six-month period to August 31 showed that its reduction in revenues had been restricted to 32% year-on-year, at a total of £1.12bn, despite the 10-week lockdown period.

8

CHANGE TO HOW FORD RETAILERS RECLAIM VAT

Ford retailers will have to find £750,000-per-dealership site to fund a post-Brexit change to the brand's VAT invoicing regime. Ford will make its retailers the 'importer of record' from January 1, meaning that vehicles will be invoiced and funded net of VAT, with retailers only able to reclaim the funds when vehicles enter the UK.



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SITE CLOSES TEMPORARILY AFTER EIGHT TEST POSITIVE

Pendragon temporarily closed its Evans Halshaw Wakefield Vauxhall site after eight staff tested positive for COVID-19. Wakefield Council said all affected members of staff, and those



who had been in close contact at the joint Vauxhall and Peugeot franchise, off Doncaster Road, had self-isolated and the site had been deep-cleaned.

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'STUNNING' SEPTEMBER PROMPTS MARSHALL RETHINK

Marshall Motor Holdings reforecast its 2020 performance expectations after a "stunning" September – targeting a £15m underlying pre-tax profit. The PLC shifted its projections from a break-even position spelled out in its H1 2020 financial results after the month delivered a 33.9% rise in new car sales, 29.4% in used cars and revenues up 28% year-on-year.



PROFIT BEFORE TAX SLIPS AT SYTNER GROUP

Sytner Group reported a 1% decline in revenues and 36.6% decline in pre-tax profits in its 2019 annual financial results. The AM100 2019's top-ranked retail group saw revenues decline to £5.9bn, while profit before tax slipped from £113.2m to £71.7m.

VERTU EYES BMW ACQUISITIONS

Vertu Motors confirmed it is in discussions over the acquisition of "a number of BMW dealerships" following speculation that Inchcape is set to sell a number of sites. Jardine Motors Group are also understood to be eyeing acquisitions from the Inchcape portfolio following speculation that the PLC is poised to dispose of its 13 Cooper BMW operations.

FORD SEEKS PARTNER TO MEET EMISSIONS TARGET



Ford informed its retailers that it was looking for a car manufacturer willing to share excess CO₂ emissions credits after stalled Kuga SUV plug-in hybrid (PHEV) sales put it on course to breach stringent

EU emissions targets. Sales of the new Kuga PHEV were stopped back in August following a series of battery-linked fires.

CITYGATE COMPLETES DEAL FOR ŠKODA DEALERSHIP

Citygate Automotive completed the acquisition of Lookers' west London Škoda dealership for an undisclosed sum. Citygate's



acquisition comes nine months after it bought West London Volkswagen and Twickenham Volkswagen from Inchcape.

PROFIT SWING AT PENDRAGON

Pendragon "almost entirely" offset its losses from a COVID-19-impacted first half of the year with an eight-fold increase in underlying pre-tax profits in Q3. A month after H1 interim results revealed a £31m underlying loss before tax, the group reported an underlying profit before tax of £27.3m for Q3 – an increase of £24.3m, (810%) on Q3 2019's £3m.



PENDRAGON

REVISED JOB SUPPORT SCHEME ANNOUNCED

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak broadened the scope of the Government's COVID-19 fiscal support to businesses in the face of increasing regional lockdowns. Employees will become eligible for the new Job Support Scheme by working 20% of their normal hours – compared with the previous 30%.

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ADVERTISING FEATURE

Top tips from industry leaders can point the way

By Simon Bowkett

At times like these we all need some positive gems of wisdom to keep us all motivated. At Symco Trading we have been very privileged to interview some great industry leaders over the past four months and they have enlightened us with their experiences and good practices. Ideas range from creating a group culture, personal best practices and career development, so there really is something for everyone on our podcasts.

Practical advice

These practical tips along with the various training techniques from ourselves, when implemented, can make a real difference to your business and career. We have scheduled more ideas for Sales Managers Second Review, how to handle a "failing salesperson" and even more objection handling skills for "I want to think about it". All of which can help close more deals in your business.

Highlight for this month

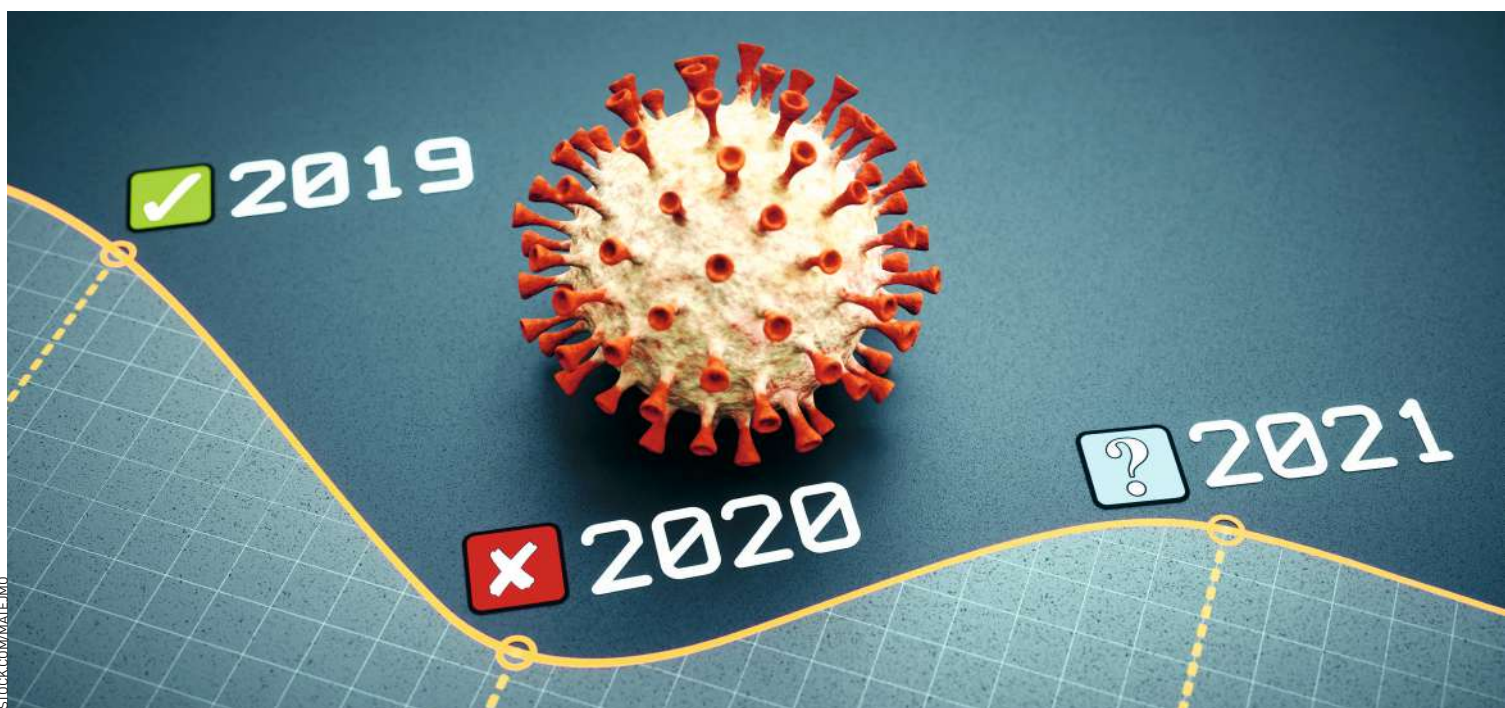
William Brown, managing director – Isuzu UK, joins us for an interview, to give his view of the market for Isuzu and its future plans. We are fast approaching the end of the first series, with the production schedule underway for the second, so there is a wealth of information for you to digest.

To listen to our new or previous episodes search for 'Selling in the Motor Trade' on Apple, Spotify, Amazon Music, iHeart Radio, www.symcotraining.co.uk/podcast or go to www.symcotraining.co.uk to watch the video.



SMALLEST MARKET SINCE THE DOUBLE PLATE CHANGE DEBUT

Premium and large SUVs make progress, but the story in other major segments is bleak



The overall decline in September of 4.4% sounds almost reassuring, until you remember what September 2020 is being compared with. Both September 2019 and September 2018 were affected by supply issues of WLTP-related cars, and a five-year view of registrations shows a far more serious fall of 30.2% (see chart). This year's market is the smallest since the double plate change was introduced in 1999.

Year-to-date (YTD), the overall market is down 33.0% and three segments have lost share as well as sales. The city car segment has fallen from 6.3% YTD 2019 to 4.3% YTD 2020. Large family cars have declined over the same period from 1.9% to 1.2%, while large MPVs have collapsed from 1.1% to 0.6%. Unsurprisingly, the big winner has been premium and large SUVs, with share up from 13.9% to 16.1%. In segment terms, that means the UK car market

is now at its most concentrated since the supermini segment emerged in the 1970s. Just three segments (supermini, lower medium and premium/large SUVs) now account for 84.7% of all registrations YTD.

Within the largest segment (small family cars), a tipping point is approaching. Hatchbacks have fallen below 50% share (currently 49.4%) for the first time in decades, while crossovers have grown to 46.8% – the balance being C-MPVs which took 3.8%. At current rates of growth, crossovers could become the majority body style in this segment within a year or two.

In the premium/large crossover segment, it will come as no surprise that all subsegments outperformed the overall market, except for large non-premium models (e.g. Hyundai Santa Fe). This subsegment fell by 37.8%, partly because customers are increasingly looking for premium brands when

spending around £30,000, and partly because volume brands are trying to align their sales mix with the CO₂ fleet average target of 95g/km.

At a manufacturer level, the only significant brand (i.e. one with more than 1.0% market share) to have increased sales volume is MG. With a market share of 1.1%, MG is now in the same bracket as Suzuki (1.3%) and even Fiat (1.4%). Emerging brands have often seen their rate of growth flatten once they have passed 1.0%, but MG will be hoping that they can buck the trend with the new HS C-segment crossover (including a 258PS plug-in hybrid) and the new electric-only 5 estate.

The other mainstream brand to have outperformed the market by a big margin is Toyota, whose market share has risen from 4.7% to an excellent 5.9%. The two models responsible for this surge are the Corolla (up 14.0%), which is now in an excellent fifth place in C-segment hatchbacks,

SPONSOR'S COMMENT



By Richard Jones,
managing director,
Black Horse

I hope this update finds you well in such uncertain times.

I cannot believe that another month has passed and we are now well into the autumn.

Another lockdown is one of many permutations we face although, critically, none involves the shutdown of our sector. September proved very resilient given the situation. I was struck that private registrations were only down 1.1% on 2019 and that the market share for plug-in vehicles beat diesel – a major tipping point to mark.

I also spent September giving up my hybrid to test drive a BEV. While it was incredible fun, it reinforced the need for scale infrastructure investment in the UK charging network, especially if you live or travel north of Birmingham. However, it is the future.

The full economic impact of COVID looms as Government support mechanisms get reviewed and are steadily withdrawn. We wait to see the impact of new restrictions across the UK – all part of the 'new normal'.

However the sector has proved resilient and will continue to be so. Priorities for Blackhorse are supporting the 100,000+ customers that took repayment holidays. We have a range of further support options for those that need it, adjusting the business to our future ways of working, and continuing to invest in our business with more digital services and continued support to evolving dealer propositions.

Amid all of this we will be implementing the FCA's commission model changes ahead of the January 28 deadline. I am pleased where we have got to as a market under the guidance of the FLA, this change has the potential to allow dealers to grow their finance business and drive more transparency and customer confidence. We are ready to help and support.

Please continue to take care of yourselves as we approach the winter months.

“THE IDEA THAT 2021 COULD BE AS BAD AS 2020 SEEMED UNIMAGINABLE SIXTH MONTHS AGO – BUT NO LONGER (GIVEN COVID-19 AND A POSSIBLE NO-DEAL BREXIT)”

and the RAV4 (up 37.7%), which is finally emerging from years in the doldrums to sell in decent numbers.

At the wrong end of the table in terms of sales decline are Citroën (-48.0%) and what is now a sister-brand, Vauxhall (-47.5%). The only Citroën to have outperformed the market is the C5 Aircross (-20.2%). However, as it is currently only the 20th best-selling C-segment crossover, behind the Mitsubishi Outlander and Nissan X-Trail, that is hardly a cause for celebration.

Incidentally, DS models are faring no better (and arguably worse). The new DS3 Crossback has limited the sales decline of DS to -37.8%, but the new B-segment crossover is selling at one-tenth the rate which the DS3 Hatchback managed in its heyday. Meanwhile, Groupe PSA appears to have made a policy decision not to bother with Vauxhall models based on GM platforms – both the Astra and Insignia are down by more than 70% YTD.

In terms of overall market leadership, Ford is still No1, but it is a sign of the times that such a comment even needs to be made.

Its advantage over second-placed Volkswagen has declined from 1.7 percentage points to 0.6 percentage points. Ford has mainly lost share because the Ka has been dropped, and the Fiesta has seen no benefit from buyers switching – indeed the Fiesta is down by 38.9%.

As more and more new rivals are launched

(not least the new Corsa), life will get steadily harder for the Ford supermini. It is still a superb product, but its styling dates back to 2008, so it is getting harder to persuade buyers that it is the hot product in its class.

Meanwhile, the VW juggernaut rolls on. The new T-Cross supermini crossover is lifting market share and, worryingly for the opposition, the new Golf Mk 8 has finally gotten into its stride this year. If Golf penetration keeps on rising into next year, VW could ease past 9% market share in 2021.

Behind VW, Mercedes-Benz, BMW and Audi have resumed the dogfight for third place. BMW had been leading Mercedes for most of this year, thanks to the success of the new 3 Series (down only 15.6% YTD). However, Mercedes had a very strong September (mostly thanks to sales of crossovers), and is now ahead of BMW by fewer than 100 units YTD. For the past two years Audi has been trailing badly, but it has finally sorted out the supply chain issues related to WLTP homologation, and has set off in hot pursuit. It is now on 6.5% YTD, compared with 6.8% for Mercedes and BMW, and actually outsold BMW in September. With the new Audi A3 being launched, the 2021 race is completely open.

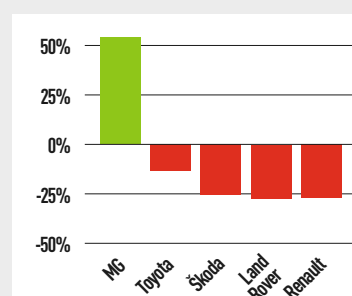
Not that the German brands are having it all their own way. A resurgent Volvo has increased share again (from 2.4% YTD 2019 to YTD 2020), and now has the UK's best-selling premium compact crossover in the XC40. Land Rover has also increased share slightly from 3.6% to 3.7%, thanks to the new Defender.

However, any celebration of good news should be tempered, given the wider picture.

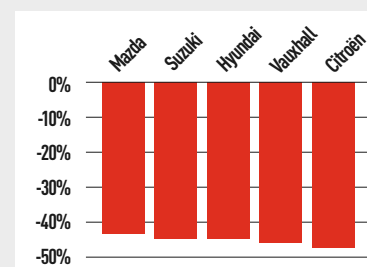
"Winter's coming" has never seemed a more threatening phrase, given the twin perils to the UK car industry of COVID-19 and tariffs/border delays from a no-deal Brexit. The idea that 2021 could be as bad as 2020 seemed unimaginable sixth months ago – but no longer.

DAVID FRANCIS

≡ BEST PERFORMING MAJOR BRANDS* YTD SEPT



≡ WORST PERFORMING MAJOR BRANDS* YTD SEPT



* Brands with at least 1.0% market share in 2020

NEW CAR REGISTRATIONS

Retailers report mixed fortunes

While September's 4.4% new car registrations drop paints a poor picture for a market recovery, private demand was only down slightly at 1.1%.

A total of 328,041 new registrations were completed in the month, the figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) stating that the result was some 15.8% lower than the 10-year September average of around 390,000 units.

Although some retailers may not have experienced order levels as high as usual, others have told *AM* they have experienced a record month.

According to Mike Jones, ASE chairman, the disconnect between the drop in the market and the positive sales some dealer groups have seen all comes down to certain manufacturers foregoing the usual month end pre-registration push and supply issues on some models, rather than any major alarm bells for retail demand.

1 VOLVO

The Swedish brand was one of the few premium manufacturers to turn in a positive performance in September with registrations up 4% year-on-year. Matt Galvin, Volvo Car UK's director of commercial operations, thanked the network for a record-breaking result with more than 12,000 units sold.

2 VAUXHALL

A top 10 place for the Corsa in September with 10,553 sales couldn't help the brand's 28.4% decline to 19,614 units. Registrations fell at a greater rate than other volume brands in September, with volume leader Ford recording a drop of 13.13%.



Vauxhall Corsa was the best-selling car in September

3 MG

MG's 112 dealers continue to help establish a more significant UK foothold as volumes rose by 169.1% to 3,668 units. Almost a third of the volume was attributed to the zero-emissions ZS EV. MG was one of 12 brands to generate a year-on-year increase in sales.

Marque	September					Year-to-date				
	2020	% market share	2019	% market share	% change	2020	% market share	2019	% market share	% change
Ford	28,252	8.61	32,522	9.47	-13.13	117,783	9.47	188,124	10.10	-37.39
Volkswagen	27,328	8.33	19,632	5.72	39.20	110,668	8.90	157,040	8.43	-29.53
Mercedes-Benz	23,522	7.17	30,398	8.86	-22.62	84,693	6.81	140,484	7.54	-39.71
Audi	21,893	6.67	12,741	3.71	71.83	80,435	6.47	113,254	6.08	-28.98
BMW	21,225	6.47	27,834	8.11	-23.74	84,611	6.80	131,906	7.08	-35.86
Toyota	19,671	6.00	17,858	5.20	10.15	73,067	5.88	86,881	4.67	-15.90
2 Vauxhall	19,614	5.98	27,403	7.98	-28.42	72,036	5.79	137,229	7.37	-47.51
Kia	14,896	4.54	16,386	4.77	-9.09	57,155	4.60	80,185	4.31	-28.72
Nissan	14,600	4.45	13,745	4.00	6.22	53,905	4.33	75,007	4.03	-28.13
Hyundai	11,645	3.55	14,418	4.20	-19.23	37,847	3.04	68,669	3.69	-44.88
Land Rover	11,444	3.49	12,791	3.73	-10.53	44,840	3.61	60,713	3.26	-26.14
Škoda	10,892	3.32	9,202	2.68	18.37	43,728	3.52	58,570	3.15	-25.34
Peugeot	10,513	3.20	10,918	3.18	-3.71	41,875	3.37	64,536	3.47	-35.11
Renault	10,454	3.19	11,814	3.44	-11.51	35,126	2.82	47,986	2.58	-26.80
1 Volvo	9,147	2.79	8,803	2.56	3.91	32,184	2.59	44,348	2.38	-27.43
Mini	9,095	2.77	12,691	3.70	-28.34	33,826	2.72	50,743	2.72	-33.34
Seat	7,138	2.18	8,216	2.39	-13.12	34,998	2.81	54,995	2.95	-36.36
Mazda	6,117	1.86	7,600	2.21	-19.51	18,796	1.51	33,324	1.79	-43.60
Honda	5,953	1.81	5,535	1.61	7.55	22,458	1.81	36,176	1.94	-37.92
Citroën	5,471	1.67	6,863	2.00	-20.28	22,107	1.78	42,518	2.28	-48.01
Suzuki	5,424	1.65	3,812	1.11	42.29	16,509	1.33	29,731	1.60	-44.47
Dacia	5,263	1.60	4,300	1.25	22.40	16,434	1.32	25,344	1.36	-35.16
Fiat	4,391	1.34	4,765	1.39	-7.85	15,745	1.27	24,870	1.34	-36.69
Jaguar	4,006	1.22	6,052	1.76	-33.81	18,362	1.48	29,364	1.58	-37.47
Lexus	3,693	1.13	3,852	1.12	-4.13	11,341	0.91	12,826	0.69	-11.58
3 MG	3,668	1.12	1,363	0.40	169.11	14,236	1.14	9,352	0.50	52.22
Porsche	1,576	0.48	1,792	0.52	-12.05	8,653	0.70	10,000	0.54	-13.47
Mitsubishi	1,242	0.38	2,017	0.59	-38.42	7,457	0.60	13,521	0.73	-44.85
Jeep	843	0.26	779	0.23	8.22	3,348	0.27	4,878	0.26	-31.37
Abarth	578	0.18	662	0.19	-12.69	1,851	0.15	2,888	0.16	-35.91
DS	474	0.14	556	0.16	-14.75	1,768	0.14	2,842	0.15	-37.79
SsangYong	391	0.12	395	0.12	-1.01	1,288	0.10	1,646	0.09	-21.75
Alfa Romeo	331	0.10	500	0.15	-33.80	1,533	0.12	2,805	0.15	-45.35
smart	320	0.10	126	0.04	153.97	1,030	0.08	3,868	0.21	-73.37
Subaru	272	0.08	526	0.15	-48.29	672	0.05	2,044	0.11	-67.12
Bentley	263	0.08	153	0.04	71.90	1,010	0.08	1,215	0.07	-16.87
Polestar	218	0.07	0	0.00	0.00	252	0.02	0	0.00	0.00
Maserati	77	0.02	95	0.03	-18.95	436	0.04	760	0.04	-42.63
Alpine	10	0.00	11	0.00	-9.09	83	0.01	137	0.01	-39.42
Chevrolet	0	0.00	7	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	62	0.00	0.00
Infiniti	0	0.00	11	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	286	0.02	0.00
Other British	308	0.09	438	0.13	-29.68	1,443	0.12	2,374	0.13	-39.22
Other Imports	5,823	1.78	3,673	1.07	58.54	18,067	1.45	8,770	0.47	106.01
Total	328,041		343,255		-4.43	1,243,656		1,862,271		-33.22



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Aimee Winder
Account Manager
North East Region

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FINANCE OFFERS

Paying upfront expected to dip below 50%

Car finance is expected to play an even bigger role in keeping the market going as retailers head towards 2021 and consumers look to spread their costs due to uncertain times.

According to new research from Close Brothers Motor Finance, 71% of automotive retailers believe consumers will opt for car finance versus paying upfront next year.

Just less than half (49%) of the 2,000 UK car buyers surveyed intend to pay upfront for their next vehicle, down from 57% the year before. This is the first time this figure has dipped below 50% for Close Brothers' data.

Seán Kemple, Close Brothers Motor Finance managing director, said: "This shift to finance could be far higher as we approach 2021."

"For young people especially, this prompted a shift away from ownership and towards subscription models, or at least models with regular cost instalments rather than single payments."

"This is now the norm for a whole generation coming through the market who are used to being able to upgrade and adapt to suit their needs, and the motor industry is by no means exempt."

Three manufacturers stand out for Q4, in particular, as they set out their action plan to help aid Q4 sales.

Citroën UK has launched its online car shopping platform that allows customers to apply for finance online.

Within the Citroën Online Store platform, customers can now specify their finance term, deposit and monthly payment, before receiving a 'soft-search' acceptance.

This means customers have already received a good indication they can proceed without having to complete a more detailed application.

Customers will also be able to remotely review and digitally complete finance contracts for their next vehicle.

Citroën UK said it worked with PSA Finance "very closely to bring this to market in record-breaking time". The brand was planning to bring the online capabilities to market, but accelerated its plans due to COVID-19.

Eurig Druce, Citroën managing director, said: "As we worked on developing Citroën Online Store, it was important to make sure the experience benefited both our customers and our dealers."

"This experience delivers the functionality and flexibility customers need to select a vehicle at their preferred dealership, then apply for financing before even stepping into a showroom, saving both customers and dealers valuable time."

SsangYong is taking a different approach for Q4 with £1,500 discounts on its previous generation Tivoli, Tivoli XLV and Korando in an effort to help

TOP FINANCE DEALS FOR RETAIL BUYERS

Model	Finance type	Deposit	Term	Monthly payment	Final payment	APR	Offer ends
Kia							
Picanto '3' 1.0 Petrol Manual (4 Seat)	PCP	£1,374.50	37	£199.63	£5,434.38	4.9%	31/12/2020
Rio '2' 1.0 Turbocharged Petrol Manual	PCP	£1,659.50	37	£236.76	£6,097.50	4.9%	31/12/2020
Ceed GT-Line 1.4 Turbocharged Petrol Manual	PCP	£2,309.50	37	£300.11	£9,550.63	4.90%	31/12/2020
Ceed Sportswagon '3' 1.4 Turbocharged Petrol Manual	PCP	£2,326.50	37	£318.99	£8,995.63	4.90%	31/12/2020
ProCeed GT-Line 1.4 Turbocharged Petrol Automatic DCT	PCP	£2,542.50	37	£347.54	£10,151.88	4.90%	31/12/2020
Ceed Sportswagon Plug-in Hybrid PHEV 3 1.6 Petrol Automatic DCT	PCP	£2,999.50	37	£463	£10,429.38	4.9%	31/12/2020
XCeed 3 1.4 Turbocharged Petrol Manual	PCP	£2,410	37	£303.29	£10,475.63	4.9%	31/12/2020
Niro Self-Charging Hybrid 3 1.6 petrol Automatic DCT	PCP	£2,710	37	£360.15	£11,978.75	4.90%	31/12/2020
Niro PHEV 2 1.6 Automatic DCT	PCP	£3,026.50	37	£427.97	£12,649.38	5%	31/12/2020
e-Niro 3 Long Range EV Automatic	PCP	£3,685	37	£464.27	£16,950.63	4.90%	31/12/2020
Soul EV First Edition Long Range EV Automatic	PCP	£3,729.50	37	£477.62	£15,738.08	4.90%	31/12/2020
Stinger GT-Line 2.0 Turbocharged Petrol Automatic	PCP	£3,292.50	37	£551.78	£10,042.12	4.9%	31/12/2020
Stonic 3 1.0 Turbocharged Petrol Manual	PCP	£1,959	37	£267.62	£8,024.38	4.9%	31/12/2020
Sportage 3 1.6 Petrol manual	PCP	£2,644.50	37	£354.43	£10,938.13	4.90%	31/12/2020
Sorento 3 1.6 Turbocharged Petrol Self Charge Hyb Auto AWD 7-seat	PCP	£4,274.50	37	£563.72	£22,027.50	4.9%	31/12/2020
Citroën							
C1 Feel VTi 72 S&S 3-door	PCP	£1,116.87	48	£139	£3,427	3.9%	31/12/2020
C1 Feel VTi 72 S&S 5-door	PCP	£669.13	48	£149	£3,674	3.9%	31/12/2020
C3 Feel PureTech 83 S&S	PCP	£2,377.73	48	£169	£4,845	3.9%	31/12/2020
C3 Aircross Feel PureTech 110 S&S	PCP	£2,189.60	48	£199	£5,650	3.90%	31/12/2020
C4 Cactus Hatch Flair PureTech 110 S&S	PCP	£5,752.30	48	£199	£6,113	3.90%	31/12/2020
C5 Aircross SUV Feel PureTech 130 S&S	PCP	£5,977.04	48	£209	£9,894	3.90%	31/12/2020
C5 Aircross SUV Hybrid Flair	PCP	£4,936.96	48	£359	£15,322	5.0%	31/12/2020
Berlingo Feel M PureTech 110 S&S	PCP	£6,000.53	48	£219	£6,626	3.9%	31/12/2020
Grand C4 SpaceTourer Touch Plus PureTech 130 S&S	PCP	£7,335.53	48	£269	£8,813	3.90%	31/12/2020
SsangYong							
New Korando Ventura 1.5 Petrol Manual	HP	£7,553	48	£329	£339	0%	31/12/2020
Rexton EX Manual Metallic	HP	£9,871.50	60	£389	£399	4.9%	31/12/2020
New Tivoli Ventura 1.2 Petrol	HP	£5,302.69	60	£209	£219	2.9%	31/12/2020
Tivoli ELX Petrol	HP	£3,243.25	60	£219	£229	2.90%	31/12/2020
Tivoli XLV Ultimate Petrol	HP	£4,714.93	60	£249	£259	2.90%	31/12/2020
Korando 2.2 SE	HP	£5,183.81	60	£229	£239	2.90%	31/12/2020
Musso Rebel Automatic	HP	£6,430.62	£60.00	£379	£389	4.9%	31/12/2020

clear stock as new models come to market.

It has also put together low rate 2.9% and 4.9% APR offers on models across the range, but is leading its Q4 campaign with a 48-month 0% hire purchase offer on its new Korando after a £2,000 deposit.

Meanwhile, Kia is continuing its e-Plus programme for its e-Niro and Soul EV models.

Customers who have either of these vehicles on a PCP or PCH are eligible for three free services, regardless of the duration of their finance agreement.

For instance, a two-year PCP agreement or a four-year PCH will receive their first three services free. The service plan will transfer with the vehicle should it be sold by the customer.

As part of Kia's 'Stop Wondering, Start Driving' initiative, both the Sportage 'GT-Line S' with mild hybrid technology and the self-charging Niro Hybrid are being offered on a 24-month PCP contract with 0% APR, with the Niro costing £219 per month. The Sportage is priced at £249 per month.

Kia is also continuing with its scrappage scheme offer in Q4 on its Picanto, Rio, Niro Self-Charging Hybrid, Niro PHEV, Stonic or Sportage with up to a £2,500 saving.

TOM SEYMOUR



SEARCH FOR FINANCE OFFERS

For a searchable list of manufacturers' finance offers, go to am-online.com/offers

Going Virtual



Tim Rose, AM Editor

We may have been prevented from staging the physical event this year, but our virtual Automotive Management Live promises to be a wonderful alternative, offering visitors, exhibitors and sponsors all the things they love – plus some exciting new features – over two days in December.

Our stunning digital platform will put you right in the exhibition hall – but from the convenience of your office. It fully replicates the familiar surroundings of the conventional show in a highly practical format. You'll be able to meet old friends, make new contacts, listen and learn from sector specialists and find out about the latest products and services that will help you manage your marketing, sales and aftersales operations effectively and profitably.

There will be numerous expert presenters sharing best practice, and interactive displays will enable you to get up close to the UK's best motor retail suppliers.

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I can't wait, and I hope to see you there.

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VIEWPOINT



BELIEF IN DIVERSITY TRANSCENDS IDEALOGY AND MORALITY

PROFESSOR JIM SAKER is director of the Centre for Automotive Management at Loughborough University's Business School and an AM Awards judge. He has been involved in the automotive industry for more than 20 years



A couple of months ago one of our Centre for Automotive alumni emailed me to ask if I knew of any research that had been undertaken looking at people with disabilities working in the retail automotive sector.

To my shame I realised that in the past five years I have seen very little written on that or the issue of diversity generally within our industry.

Julia Muir continues to champion the challenge of attracting more women into our businesses through the operation of the Automotive 30% Club and this is being supported by many manufacturers and dealers, but other initiatives appear to be fairly limited.

I do not want to sound 'woke' but it is odd that when you look around the world of automotive retailing, despite some great HR strategies from some top companies, the level of diversity still appears to be underplayed.

Whether it be the number of people with disabilities, the BAME community or women, there seems to be a level of underrepresentation which needs to be examined.

My argument is not based on some idealistic view or even the BLM agenda (which I totally support) but on the basis that the research shows that diversity is good for business. By having a range of perspectives within an organisation it is likely to be able to respond meaningfully to a

wider and more diverse audience. The challenge is how do we build a diverse and resilient workforce when people are not drawn to us as 'being somewhere that they would want to work.'

It is interesting that, even in F1, possibly one of the more attractive parts of the motor industry, Lewis Hamilton has felt it necessary to set up a foundation to look at why there are not more black people involved along the pit wall. A question that could equally be applied to women.

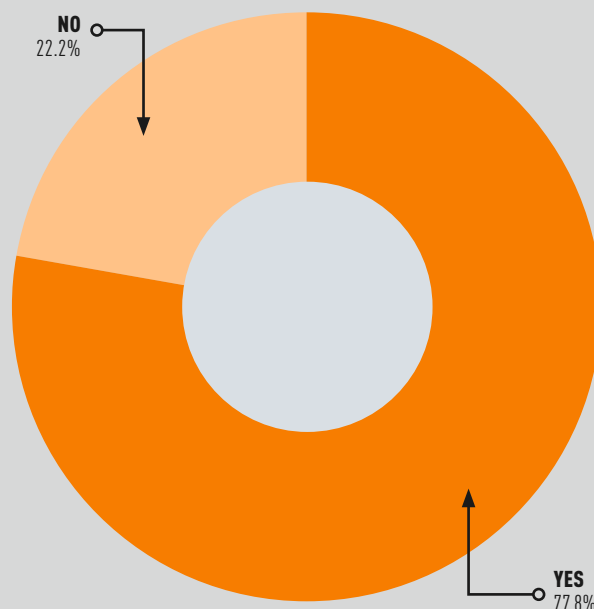
I have written before about the topic of homophily, the sociological term for the idea that 'birds of a feather flock together'. People tend to be drawn to live in areas with people like themselves. We have a tendency to hire people in our own image. We socialise with people like us. The challenge is in breaking the cycle.

A lot has been published recently on unconscious bias and the need to be aware of our own innate prejudices. We can often make the right noises and genuinely feel anger about injustice. But, unless the words are supported by the physical evidence of change, then they become empty gestures. This is not simply a moralistic argument. If we are trying to recruit good people, it makes sense to explore the untapped talent pool of these underrepresented groups. The challenge is how to make our organisations attractive to as wide a diversity of people as possible.

"THE CHALLENGE IS HOW TO MAKE OUR ORGANISATIONS ATTRACTIVE TO AS WIDE A DIVERSITY OF PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE"

AMPOLL

HAS TECHNOLOGY TAKEN JOBS OUT OF YOUR DEALERSHIP?



Growth in the capabilities of technology is sometimes seen as a threat as well as an opportunity. Our poll respondents have varied between positive and negative this time, but the majority feel systems are taking the place of many people they had previously worked alongside.

Automation and artificial intelligence brings the possibility to make motor retail more cost-efficient than ever before, but that means changes to the current ways of working.

"It's taken jobs out of the dealership certainly, but made more for head office. They're different jobs though in IT, software development, management and training, so no good for the salespeople we've lost," said one 'yes' voter. Another highlighted: "Automation has cut our admin team to 30% of its size three years ago."

The advent of electric vehicles caused fear in one respondent for the future of service teams. "If they need less servicing, and their connected systems let them book maintenance from the car, what will that mean for our teams of service advisers?" he added.

Among the 'no' voters, one stated that technology "has just made the job easier" and he could now "get hold of customers much quicker".

NEXT MONTH: ARE YOU TRAINING YOUR STAFF ON COMMISSION DISCLOSURE AHEAD OF THE JANUARY FCA CHANGES?

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“ THE TOP OF THE BUSINESS WAS DRIVING THE DEVELOPMENT AND THE WEIGHT OF THE BUSINESS WAS DRIVING DAILY BUSINESS. IT REALLY DID INCREASE THE OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

FACE-TO-FACE: ROBINS & DAY BY PSA RETAIL

'TIME TO RESET AND RESTART'

Robins & Day chief executive James Weston is determined his group will emerge stronger and better equipped in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, **Tim Rose** reports

The profile of AM100 dealer group Robins & Day has changed a fair bit since James Weston became its chief executive in 2016.

It has gained a fourth vehicle brand – Vauxhall – following the British brand's acquisition by Robins & Day's owner, the vehicle manufacturer Groupe PSA. It has continued to multi-brand a number of its 43 locations to make them more cost-effective and provide broader representation for the Peugeot, Citroën, DS and Vauxhall brands in crucial metropolitan areas. And Weston's team has continued the work of his predecessor David Peel, now Peugeot UK's managing director, on improving employee engagement, profitability and customer satisfaction.

This year, Weston has needed to steer the business through one of the most unusual and challenging periods in the UK motor industry's history.

"Right at the very start (of lockdown) one of my team said to me that we have to learn from this. We've taken the approach as a group, right from March, that if we came out of lockdown and just do as we always did then it would be 'COVID: 1, Robins & Day: 0'. That was never our intention – we hate losing," said Weston, who has been with the motor retailer since 2001 when he was assistant sales manager at its dealership in Chiswick, west London.

His message to Robins & Day's senior management team in April, as trading ceased except for key workers, was to determine the group's strategic advancement under a 'Faster and Further' strategy that would shape its progress this decade. They studied each department, identified what was essential for its development, and agreed a timescale to launch.

Then, in late spring, the management team launched a 'Back to Better Business' operational plan for all dealerships with three core pillars – eradicating poor performance, eliminating poor processes

and better managing any individuals that were underperforming in terms of productivity or abilities.

Weston said rather than being fixated on reacting to the "white noise" of KPI measures, the focus for the Back To Better Business plan shifted onto the areas that create those measures as an output; so identifying which lead measures are needed to reach those lag measures and what good should look like. His example was setting an aim to sell 1,500 used cars in a week as a lag measure, which can only be achieved if the group first knows what percentage of inventory is in line with the pricing policy, what percentage has been prepared, the quality of the online advertisements and so on, that are the steps to reaching that result. "Focus on the core lead measures and you'll drive the output, the lag measures," he said.

"It meant the top of the business was driving the development and the weight of the business was driving daily business. It really did increase the operational performance."

Familiar yet different

Weston wanted the business to feel familiar yet different when the bulk of the workforce came back in the summer after being on furlough. It needed to be evident that it had taken a step forward, he said.

And that needs to remain evident. "When COVID does gradually subside and things start to ease, we want to look back and think 'yes that was a period of a lot of personal hardship and we had people touched by the virus but, importantly, we used that time to reset and restart to make our businesses stronger,'" Weston added.

One example of the steps forward is Robins & Day's connected customer project. Although different approaches by dealer groups include having a central contact centre to manage internet leads or having dedicated staff in dealerships doing the same, Weston sees Robins & Day

as taking a hybrid approach.

"Sometimes when you take activities into a contact centre all you can end up doing is taking the inefficiency out of the sales departments and put it into a team sat in a cloud while thinking you've made a difference because you have a consistent approach. The reality is, we chase leads but half of those aren't actually leads."

Using the example of an online part-exchange valuation query, Weston said the industry's systems capture their data "and suddenly they're a lead" when actually the customer is at a particular research stage and purely seeks what they think should be available online at that point.

Send those kind of 'leads' to a sales executive, who must secure an appointment for the dealership, and the sales conversion rate will suffer, because the customer is still completing steps in their online research journey.

"That doesn't make sense. Clearly you want that customer to come through, but the challenge is that we disconnect their journey."

Weston has talked to staff about 'domino leads'. He compares the steps involving in selling a car to having to colour in the dots on a domino. He believes if you're trying to sell a car when there's only one dot coloured in you'll be successful far fewer times and it's likely you'll discount more to win that sale early because not all the steps have been completed properly.

So he hopes the group's connected customer approach will help it ascertain that more of those 'domino dots' have been done by the customer before there's an attempt to close the deal.

He said the traditional steps to sell a car haven't changed fundamentally. The customer's autonomy to take those steps when and how they wish is what has changed.

Now some of the group's digital systems have been developed in-house to knit together every touchpoint a customer has across its dealerships, with its

“THERE’S REAL BELIEF IN OUR CORE STRATEGY AND DIRECTION, AND IF STAFF ARE HAPPY WITH WHO THEY’RE WORKING FOR THAT SHINES THROUGH TO THEIR CUSTOMERS

JAMES WESTON, ROBINS & DAY

website and with the Robins & Day’s ‘active response team’ contact centre together into one journey. It’s allowing the business to understand the directions consumers take, so the group can plot which step to serve the customer next. It can also start to measure consumer activity, such as the average time taken between steps in the research, what next steps the group can successfully prompt the online customer into taking, and how long a lead takes to be converted on average.

Beforehand, a customer’s steps might be stored separately by four databases for website, dealership, contact centre and central DMS. “Having four bases that don’t talk to each other is deadly,” he said.

Having a single customer view will help the group to tailor the experience to their needs, and the intelligence gathered through the connected customer project will allow the sales staff to become “volume and quality specialists” because some of the tasks that clog their day can be removed. Weston’s dream is to allow them to focus on their product knowledge and expertise in selling, raising that conversion rate.

This is all the more vital because 2020 was the start of an electric vehicle (EV) offensive from Groupe PSA and Weston believes this adds to the pressure on retailers to deliver the right customer experience. Awareness of EVs is growing among consumers, and his staff must avoid the risk that a customer comes in and knows more about EV ownership than they do.

The term ‘confidence’ came up frequently in Weston’s interview with *AM*. Not simply as the subject of consumer confidence in their dealer, but as the importance of workforce confidence in their leadership during a crisis.

Weston credits much of the work done over the years on employee engagement as critical in how staff have managed the changes to their work and home life in 2020.

This year more than most, business leaders have needed to project confidence to their teams. Decisions have had to be made without the full facts nor long-term certainty, but amid a crisis teams will look to the leadership for direction. The dedi-

cation, care and commitment staff showed to the group and each other “was quite frankly phenomenal”, Weston said and he is convinced that if Robins & Day had not invested in staff engagement for years, the situation would have been much worse.

Even when the majority of employees were on furlough, Robins & Day’s Yammer social networking platform remained a hive of activity, as staff shared their experiences, home activities, hopes and fears with each other.

Weston provided regular video updates and messages, but said he was particularly touched by the number of personal messages from employees in various levels of the business asking about his own wellbeing. “When the people in my organisation at any level feel comfortable enough to ask me how I feel in a time like that, it shows we have that transparency within the business... our people are moving with us.”

How confident were the managers?

In July, as the teams had adjusted to the ‘new normal’, Weston asked his managers how confident they were that they could beat the plan for the second half of the year. Some 93% were confident.

“A pivotal part to my group is that we are one, ‘we are Robins & Day’. There’s real belief in our core strategy and direction, and if staff are happy with who they’re working for that shines through to their customers.”

Like many dealer groups, the return from lockdown has been strong. But now the year-end nears, his latest messages for his managers have emphasised the sustainability of their sales performance. Weston believes that across the industry many businesses have felt the benefits of demand for cars exceeding supply and headcount costs reducing, but they must consider how they can protect the business when conditions change in 2021.

“Supply and demand is totally skewed at the moment. But what do we do when supply increases, or at the end of the year when demand tails off slightly? Are we still geared correctly in terms of headcount and costs?”

Robins & Day’s dealerships tend to be in high cost, large urban areas, but in the



past decade more and more have become multi-marque sites, representing several of the Groupe PSA brands. This has come from a drive for efficiency – allowing properties to offer a broader range of new and used cars can help to attract more customers and offset the cost base.

Multi-branding is reflected in the group’s management structure too. Although the strategic team of chief executive, sales director, aftersales director, finance director, head of HR, head of market and chief financial officer oversee the entire business, they sit above four operations directors, each responsible for a region and all the different franchises within it, rather than have directors heading each brand.

Beneath them, general managers are allowed to show a bit of “flair” in their site. Given the different territories its dealerships occupy, Weston wants local management to bring their own touch to each business while following the group’s strategy and programmes.

It all ties back to that crucial staff engagement in a group where care and confidence remain critical.

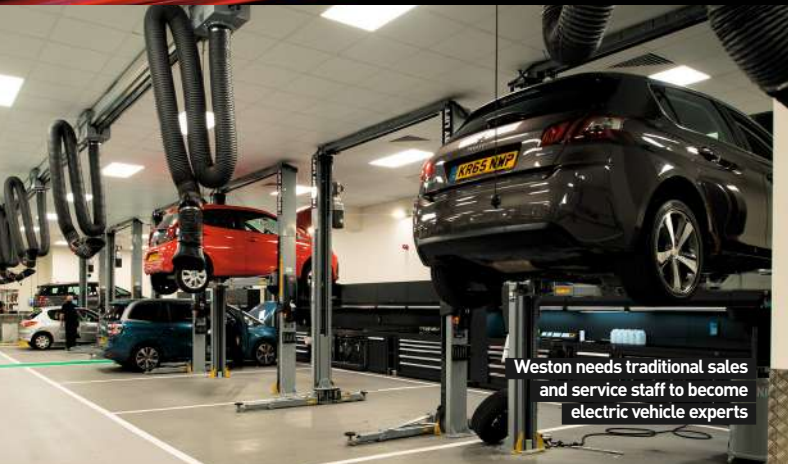
FACTFILE

TURNOVER £1.2bn (2019)
SITES 43
FRANCHISES Citroën (16), DS (10), Peugeot (28), Vauxhall (10)
STAFF 1,600





Multi-branding in evidence at the group's Chiswick site in west London



Weston needs traditional sales and service staff to become electric vehicle experts



Having begun with Peugeot, Robins & Day now represents Citroën, DS and Vauxhall also

ADVERTISING FEATURE

BCA launches new Retail Ready digital sales channel

By Stuart Pearson, COO BCA UK Remarketing



BCA launched a new Retail Ready digital sales channel exclusively for trade customers last month (October).

The channel hosts vehicles prepared cosmetically and mechanically to a new industry retail standard devised and delivered by BCA to meet the needs of its customers.

This new and innovative Retail Ready service provides BCA's trade customers with increased selling opportunities and allows them to drive improved efficiencies within their businesses.

The new channel acts as a virtual showroom extension for BCA trade customers, providing access to a huge portfolio of retail-prepared vehicles that are ready to sell from the point of purchase. It means they can instantly meet the needs of their own customers efficiently and profitably, while avoiding the overheads typically associated with holding, preparing and presenting stock for retail.

Vehicles are available to buy 24/7 with additional sale events to include live online auctions to follow. BCA trade customers can retail the vehicles directly themselves or, if they are contracted cinch partners, list and sell Retail Ready vehicles through the cinch retail eCommerce platform.

By leveraging the expertise and scale of the BCA Group along the automotive supply chain, we can meet the needs our trade customers have to buy retail-ready vehicles quickly and efficiently, whatever the wholesale market conditions may be doing.



LEVC

LEVC has expanded its product portfolio beyond its traditional taxi models to add a van to its line-up. **Craig Thomas** spoke to LEVC CEO Joerg Hofmann to find out more about the company's plans.

Icon is a much over-used word in our modern world. Things that have only existed a few years are described as iconic, without having had the time to cement their place in their particular pantheon.

But the London Black Cab is a true icon. A vehicle built for one purpose – and, for the most part, one metropolitan location – the London taxi has a proud tradition that stretches back to the 1930s, with one company building the majority of coach bodies for Black Cabs since the late 1940s.

That company, previously known as London Taxis International, was bought off the administrator by Chinese carmaking corporation Geely in 2013, then rebranded as London EV Company (LEVC) in 2017, before launching its hybrid electric TX model, to meet the new low-emissions requirements of the capital.

LEVC has now taken the vehicle architecture of the TX and developed a van with the same hybrid-electric powertrain, with an eye on making inroads into the burgeoning market for online delivery solutions.

But the VN5 van isn't just a last-mile delivery option for metropolitan areas, according to LEVC chief executive Joerg Hofmann, who sees a use for it in what he calls "distribution to go". He said: "The logistics companies we're talking to have depots and decentralised warehouses and vehicles are needed to pick goods up, get them delivered to the [low-emissions zoned] metropolitan areas and move out again.

They are all companies that I believe see the biggest advantage as being that there's no range anxiety. That this is not the car where you are afraid after 40 miles to break down before the next charging station: we deliver this peace of mind for more than 300 miles and, looking at the prospect and potential customer lists that we have, I



“THIS IS NOT THE CAR WHERE YOU ARE AFRAID AFTER 40 MILES TO BREAK DOWN BEFORE THE NEXT CHARGING STATION”

JOERG HOFMANN, LEVC

would really assume all of them see that as a major advantage.”

The VN5 joins the TX in helping the drive to lower emissions and strive for a net zero carbon transport ecology, which places LEVC in a strong position to build on its market-leading position. A strong dealer network will help the company achieve this.

Hofmann explained how LEVC is well on the way to this goal. "Our network is growing and in the UK we'll have 50 service points at the end of the year – 22 fully functional dealers and another 28 extra service points by our partner, Rivus, which has a huge service network across the UK, because they're servicing a lot of big fleets.

Fifty service points across the UK is a good coverage, especially for the van, and it ensures that everyone can reach a service point within 45 minutes. From that perspective, we are quite happy with network expansion. This is certainly not an issue where we need to accelerate in the UK. We are in a good position here.

"We need to get the throughput, though. We will have to see what the Covid impact is, long term. Of course, if the plan continues as we wanted, then you have to think about additional partners as well. I would think we need a few more, but this will not be an additional massive expansion. There certainly will be no doubling: just maybe some little areas where you need additional spots. Mainly, we're set up."

REALISTIC FRANCHISE COSTS

For the Volvo Car UK dealers that LEVC has signed up, including the likes of Marshall, Snows and Endeavour in the AM100, the franchise costs are modest.

"They've got an LEVC franchise contract with certain standards, certain rules, margin agreements and they have to put some proper signage on, which, as an investment, is actually quite low," Hofmann told *AM*. This burden is in



Hybrid electric vans and
taxis have given LEVC a





The VN will come into its own in low-emission zones

◀ stark contrast to Hofmann's previous employer, Audi, which requires a significantly higher capital investment from its franchisees.

"It [Audi] was an investment of more than a million. In our commercial vehicle world, it's a couple of thousand pounds, depending on size," he added.

Depending on the size of the dealership, LEVC requires franchisees to have a dedicated salesperson and also use the company's corporate identity and logo, acquire the right tools and access to its service system. Hofmann estimates the level of investment for most dealers to be around £10,000 and thinks that LEVC's hands-off approach is right for the company and its dealers.

"The standards are based on what is really needed to fix a car and to get a minimum brand recognition. But that said, we don't tell our dealers or our service partners what kind of tiles you need on the floor, what kind of colours or whatever. It's a very limited and, I believe, very reasonable investment," he said.

The COVID-19 lockdown has certainly hampered LEVC's progress and plans, with the company unable to operate on anything like the level it was expecting to, prior to the pandemic. As Hofmann said: "It was taken out of our hands because the way the government handled the lockdown here was quite strict. It was different to other countries – in Germany, for example, the dealers didn't close – and from that perspective, dealers were not allowed to open for a

“THE PLANNING IS DIFFICULT BUT I CAN TELL YOU THAT VN WILL BE THE MAIN PRODUCT LINE IN THE FUTURE. THE PLAN IS TO FILL THE FACTORY WITHIN THE NEXT THREE YEARS

JOERG HOFMANN, LEVC CEO



long period. We closed the factory for almost eight weeks, too. But Brewery Road, our own retailer in London, had an emergency team on board and they kept going all the time."

LOW EMISSIONS ARE KEY

LEVC's ambitions will be helped by a number of measures that have been – or are about to be – introduced to improve the air quality of many of the UK's towns and cities. These Clean Air Zones – also known as the Ultra-Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) in London – will make it very difficult (and expensive) for older, diesel-powered delivery vehicles to access their destinations, so a van that can emit no tailpipe emissions will be a useful tool for the likes of delivery companies.

Hofmann clearly sees the potential. "ULEZ are essentially helping us because this is certainly where we expect to be eligible with the TX. With the VN5, we expect the same. This is a good government

steering tool, to promote emission-free products like ours. We support the directive. The time being taken to roll out the different zones is a bit of an issue, however. We were expecting it in other areas as well, but this is a bit slow moving. I recently spoke to the mayor of the West Midlands and he understands our frustration. Apparently, it's the measurements from the government side that are quite limited, but we would certainly encourage and welcome these kind of things everywhere across the UK."

So what is the growth potential for LEVC and its expanded model line-up? Hofmann is cautiously optimistic, given the current pandemic-affected economic turmoil.

"The first three months of the year, we were clearly ahead of plan, ahead of our budget. Last year we sold two-and-a-half thousand TXs, which was a doubling of the previous year's sales.

"We had a plan this year to grow again. Not doubling again – that's not realistic – but to have a reasonable growth on top of the two-and-a-half thousand. We were ahead of this plan in first few months, then COVID came and the market collapsed by 80%. It still hasn't recovered fully. We are still far away from calling it recovery and the statements today didn't really help recovery of the market, unfortunately. AM spoke to Hofmann on the day of the PM's announcement of reimposed restrictions.

"I don't want to talk about year-end volume targets anymore. They're unpredictable. At the moment the most important thing is we have a long-term plan and the VN5 launch. We have exports to achieve, as European expansion will secure the long-term future of the company. But you can't make a proper, definitive sales forecast for this year."

One thing that Hofmann is predicting with some degree of certainty is the potential for the VN5 to outsell the TX taxi. "In the first full year in the UK for the VN5 [2021], we certainly expect to sell more than TX. The volume planning is very difficult and we work with different scenarios and sensitivities, but what I can certainly tell you is that the VN will be the main product line in the future. The plan is to fill the factory within the next three years. We want to sell 20,000 cars. The taxi derivative has the potential to make, let's say 6,000 cars: that means you have another 14,000 for the van, if we are running at full capacity."

Beyond the next three years, and looking ahead at a potential ban on petrol diesel and hybrid sales in 2035 (or even as soon as 2032, depending on the outcome of the government's current consultation), LEVC sees itself developing its vehicles to be fully electric. Hoffman said: "By 2035, you can certainly assume that we will have batteries without range extenders."

In LEVC's hands, it certainly looks as if a clean-running, all-electric Black Cab – and a taxi-based van – will continue to have an iconic status, one that might even be greater than it is now.



MINUTES WITH...

Cameron Wade, Silver
Bullet managing director



What is the USP of Silver Bullet?

We're linking what happens in the traditional showroom environment and making that part of the online buying process. People forget how complex some of the touchpoints can be as part of a car transaction. Areas such as the part exchange, finance and value-added products all have to be part of building a deal online and our platform facilitates that end-to-end process for sales, service and parts.

What is the biggest misconception about online car sales?

E-commerce won't sell cars for you. Dealers shouldn't think for a minute that just by turning on online self-service functionality that sales will start flooding in overnight by themselves. Customers will join and exit the buying process at lots of different stages and it's rare at the moment that there won't be any interaction with the dealership at all. There still needs to be dedicated processes in place to support e-commerce as part of your business.

What are some of those important processes?

Customers will join their purchasing journey in different places and you need to be able to recognise that, and pick up with them in the right way. Preparation standards for vehicles will be vital, as will be the level of communication from sale to delivery. Some of these elements mirror the traditional model, the same with having lots of high quality images and stocking the right vehicles, but all of this has to be incorporated into the e-commerce side of your business too.

THERE WAS AN ATTITUDE IN THE AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR IN GENERAL THAT IT WAS STILL BETTER TO CONTROL THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY IN THE SHOWROOM. I THINK THAT MINDSET HAS BEEN CHANGING

CAMERON WADE, SILVER BULLET

How many dealer groups are you working with at the moment and what is the potential for growth?

We're currently live with 24 groups. That number did increase when we offered free trials during the COVID-19 lockdown for those who were testing the waters. We're currently in discussions with a number of dealer groups and car manufacturers about introducing the platform across their networks. The sky is the limit and it's a very untapped market. The pandemic has turbo-charged how comfortable customers feel with transacting online and I think the proportion of online sales and how the market evolves will happen very quickly over the next three to five years.

The world has been internet savvy for a long time. Why haven't online car sales taken off before now?

There was an attitude in the automotive sector in general that it was still better to

control the customer journey in the showroom. I think that mindset has been changing and COVID-19 has given dealer groups and OEMs a better understanding that customers want to purchase their next vehicle their way.

Should the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) start reporting % of cars sold physically vs online as part of new car reg reporting in the future?

It would be a natural thing to do eventually. As far as I'm aware the OEMs aren't recording whether a purchase was finalised in showrooms or online, but I would imagine it would be something they would be interested in. It would help inform how dealer groups and OEMs approach facilities and staffing investments in the future.

Has COVID-19 put a pause on investment decisions or has it actually boosted interest in e-commerce suppliers?

Businesses are evidently cautious, but from the conversations we're having with prospects, they know that e-commerce is not a luxury, it's a necessity. COVID-19 has brought that into greater focus. I have no doubt that every dealership in the UK will need to have an e-commerce platform in place, whether that's through Silver Bullet or not.

What's to stop dealer groups and OEMs from building their own e-commerce platform?

I'm sure some of the larger groups will invest in their own platforms, but it's whether they see it as an offshoot of IT or as the actual sales function that it is.





Dealers have built their own websites in the past and they had varying degrees of success with that. Building the functionality of an e-commerce platform is complex and it's whether they have the time and focus to develop their own, or want to go with a supplier who has a solution that meets their needs.

Are online sales a threat to the traditional franchised dealer model?

The transition to online sales is not going to happen overnight and there will still be a place for dealerships in that sales process. Online sales will bring down that cost per sale and that might mean a rebalancing between the number of sales executives in the showroom compared with the resource you invest in handling digital enquiries. We're offering in-store terminals so customers can order online. Customers might want to order online and collect at the showroom. The supermarkets are still there, but they've embraced self-service and so I think there will be a middle ground where there's a greater mix of the physical and online shopping experience. It's going to be a natural transition.

Is it more of a challenge to sell used cars online vs new?

Customers will often be doing extensive research for a new or used car. For used I think we still see online sales growth, but consumers might be more likely to stick with dealerships and groups they trust and may have bought through before.

What are some of the trends you have seen from consumers interacting with the Silver Bullet platform?

The most interesting piece of the journey is around affordability. Customers are gravitating towards structuring a deal around the monthly payment. There has also been a large demographic of mid to sub-prime finance business. This could be due to being unsure of their credit

position and so transacting online is more attractive, so this could be a particular growth area in the future.

What is the biggest threat to your business right now?

E-commerce is a very fast evolving market and we need to make sure we're constantly innovating and maintaining our product development. We rolled out version 1.1 of our platform in June and this included an 'adjust payment' option which makes it even easier for customers to calculate and adjust monthly payments.

Beyond that I think the massive challenge that COVID-19 has been for the automotive industry will only benefit those working in the e-commerce industry.

What do you think is the greatest threat to the traditional franchised model?

There is the immediate challenge of COVID-19 and also how electric vehicles will change the market dynamic, but I think generally it will be not being able to adapt the business model quickly enough to mirror changes in consumer demand.

TOM SEYMOUR

FACT FILE

COMPANY: SILVER BULLET
HEADQUARTERS: MOTHERWELL, SCOTLAND
STAFF: 14
LIVE DEALER CLIENTS: 24



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AUTOMOTIVE MANAGEMENT

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Shared Resource programme will help unlock tyre potential

Continental has drawn on its vast experience to support franchised dealers

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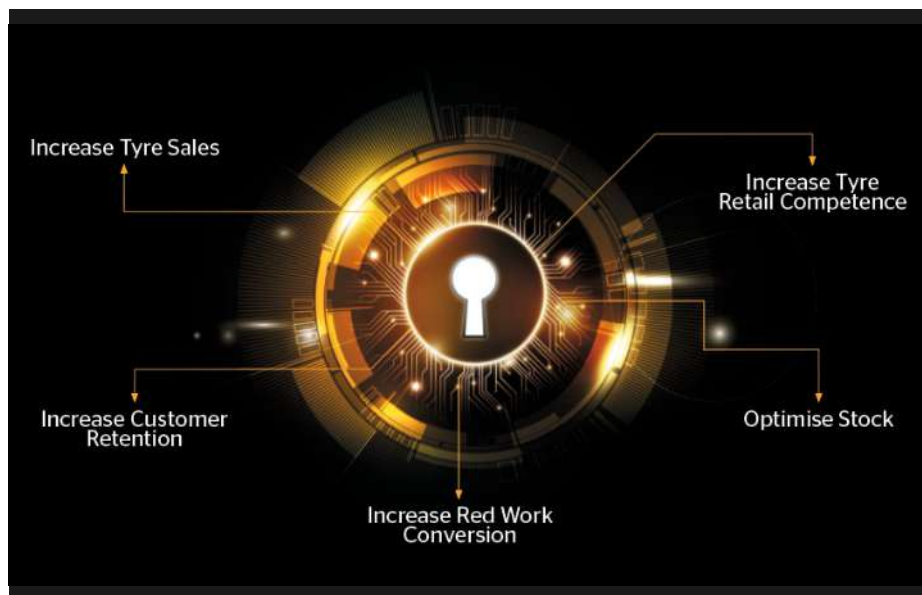
Every franchised dealer should get involved

Continental's Shared Resource programme is a consultative partnership specifically designed to help franchised dealers develop their tyre business. Continental has global tyre retail expertise that has been gained over decades of working with franchised dealers of all sizes, marques, and in different countries.

This expertise has been used to create the Shared Resource programme which is tailored to the needs of individual dealer sites or groups so they can increase tyre sales, improve tyre sales conversion and increase customer retention rates.

This is achieved through working collaboratively to increase the level of tyre knowledge within the dealership, understanding the tyre potential and optimising stock to best deliver on the opportunities available.

"Continental has global tyre retail expertise that has been gained over decades of working with franchised dealers of all sizes and marques"



How is it done?

Building sales in any business takes planning, goal setting and a dedication to deliver success. Shared Resource takes those attributes and creates a practical plan that both dealer and Continental follow.

Using initial data collection, profit potential and knowledge gained from talking to dealer's aftersales team, Shared Resource will build tyre knowledge and sales skills while providing a measurement and review system to ensure the dealer is on-track to meet their tyre profitability goals.

How successful is Shared Resource?

More than 1,000 franchise dealers are using the Shared Resource programme and having some great success.

Here's what dealers say:

"Continental's Shared Resource is an integral part of our tyre programme within the group. I would highly recommend the programme for the

knowledge and confidence it brings to our team, that they pass on to our customers when talking about tyres."
Phil Hedley, Vindis Group quality manager

"For a number of years Listers Group has participated in the Shared Resource programme. We have found Shared Resource to be invaluable in many ways in supporting and developing our tyre proposition."

Roy Stokes, Listers Group aftersales general manager

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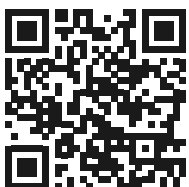




Shared Resource Unlock your tyre potential

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**Pontus Riska, Vice-President,
Sales & Support – UK**



RAPID RTC is a multinational digital communications company that specialises in automotive, serving 4,000 retail and manufacturing clients around the globe. We focus on improving businesses' digital communications and customer engagement practices by seamlessly connecting online shoppers in real-time, using their preferred channel, with salespeople who are not busy with showroom walk-ins. Our brand promise is to bring value to our clients by placing their customer at the core of everything we do. Through the right mix of technology and human interaction we ensure a premium omni-channel customer experience throughout the online purchase journey. We have internal expertise – approximately 20% of our staff have worked directly in the automotive industry. By understanding each client's business holistically, our applications and support are industry-leading for local and global adaptations. RAPID RTC is headquartered in Winnipeg, Canada, with offices in Toronto, Canada; Paris, France; London, UK; Dallas, USA, and is part of the DMT Group of companies. DMT Group was founded in 1996 and is privately held.

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≡ A

AUTOMATED NUMBER PLATE RECOGNITION (ANPR)

Roadpixel

Roadpixel's RPX-SMARTCLIENT is a turnkey system that helps dealers develop a closer working relationship with VIP clients, helping to build customer loyalty. The system also gives sales teams the heads-up when a prospective customer arrives, making the meet and greet process more seamless, and, if they are on the database, it informs them if their vehicle is approaching the end of its contract term. Also, it reduces waiting and check-in time, improving the overall customer experience and increasing retention, as well as alerting staff to sales opportunities. The system also enhances site security, with the ability to easily set up alerts to pick up unexpected vehicle movements, such as an unsold vehicle leaving the premises.

www.roadpixel/anpr-car-dealership-security-system

AUTOMATED TYRE TREAD MONITORING

Sigmavision

The TreadReader tyre measurement system

improves the way in which tyres are measured, allowing dealers to increase tyre and service sales, such as wheel alignment. By detecting accelerated tyre wear and diagnosing problems early, they can also go a long way to improving customer satisfaction and retention. The 3D tyre scans can be presented to the customer within a vehicle inspection report, and will inform the owner of the importance of tread depth by showing the pattern using colour coding. They also identify any unusual wear patterns due to wheel misalignment or suspension problems. The scan may indicate the need for immediate tyre replacement, or to schedule an appointment at a later date.

www.treadreader.sigmavision.com

Hunter Engineering

Hunter Engineering's Quick Tread Edge is a new scanner that automatically measures the tread depth of each tyre from edge to edge as the car drives over it, testing a 10-centimetre patch on each tyre in just three to five seconds. The scanner improves accuracy, particularly for edge wear detection, and eliminates the guesswork involved in a manual inspection. It also requires no labour and in turn can help dealers sell more tyres to maximise their workshop revenue. The scanner is designed to work

seamlessly, even in wet conditions, because it is constructed using corrosion-resistant stainless steel with what Hunter refers to as self-cleaning air-knife technology, meaning it therefore has low service and maintenance costs.

www.hunter.com/vehicle-inspection/quick-check/

≡ C

CONSUMER FINANCE AND COMPLIANCE

Alphera Financial Services

Alphera's new e-retail platform allows customers to complete finance applications online. The platform can be integrated with existing systems and, in some cases, used to adapt entire sales processes to improve efficiencies in the motor finance application process. It gives the customer complete transparency of the finance deals available for their chosen vehicle, enabling them to build their desired finance package and make a decision in their own time. This also gives the dealer an opportunity to evidence a fully compliant finance sale because the customer is in complete control of the process and has full transparency of the finance options available to them. The platform's availability has proven to be particularly beneficial during the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling

A-C

remote finance applications during lockdown and with social distancing in force.

www.alphera.co.uk

Black Horse

Black Horse's Sign-It Anywhere (SA) digital service allows customers to authenticate and sign credit agreements online without the need for signature pads or software updates. Launched in March, SA gives customers the opportunity to review and sign their finance documentation at any time and anywhere, via a secure portal on any device. The service is safe, seamless and simple to use; offering customers a simple onboarding experience, while freeing up dealers to focus on more value-added tasks. In May, SA was upgraded to compliment a contactless home delivery of customer vehicles. More than 30,000 customers have used SA since its launch, while in excess of 1,600 have signed their finance agreement through the portal and received their new car at their home. More than 3,000 dealers have also signed up to use SA.

www.blackhorse.co.uk/dealer/why/systems-and-support-tools

Startline Motor Finance

Startline Motor Finance has started working on motor finance processes with dealers intending to offer online-based home delivery used car sales. This will help with the provision of fast, easy to use, robust and compliant hire purchase and personal contract purchase solutions. By bringing the entire process online, points of contact can be

minimised or eliminated at vehicle handover, including signing a paper motor finance agreement. Dealers can also tap into a new market of car buyers who have safety concerns because of the current COVID-19 pandemic situation.

www.startlinemotorfinance.com

COURTESY CAR MANAGEMENT

AX

AX Connect includes a full range of connected vehicle devices such as traditional telemetry and tracking devices, dash-cams and covert trackers. These devices, which are powered by user-friendly management software and apps, provide valuable information and alerts on the vehicle's location, driver behaviour, utilisation and accident reporting. They also remove any areas of dispute over speeding fines and congestion charges. AX Replace provides a replacement vehicle once a non-fault claim has been qualified and takes over liaison with the relevant parties. It also ties in with AX Repair, which ensures customers' cars are sent to an approved repairer or bodyshop.

www.ax-uk.com/innovation#ax-connect-section

Cooper Solutions

FullCover is a fleet management system which tracks all vehicle movements within a dealership. The system streamlines the handover process for customers, provides an online driving licence checking facility and can generate extra revenue

through the use of collision damage waivers. It also means less administration for service and sales teams, provides accurate monitoring at user, dealer and group level and allows dealers to fulfil their duty of care for their team, customers and the public. Customers also have peace of mind that their data is being protected.

www.coopersolutions.co.uk/public/cooper-solutions-products/full-cover/

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT (CRM)

Three60 CRM

THREE60 CRM has developed three new features for its CRM software over the last 12 months, focused on boosting aftersales, profitability and retention. Cleanse-As-You-Go provides dealers with daily data validation, cleansing and enhancement. The automated marketing allows dealers to send tailored, persuasive communications at the click of a button. The Lead Scoring algorithm uses advanced propensity modelling to automatically prioritise contacts based on profit, retention and likelihood to convert. Hot Leads makes sure that no leads fall through the gaps due to its real-time tracking, enabling dealers to instantly and effectively follow up with customers who have shown an interest but have not yet converted.

www.three60crm.com/#/services



Helping dealers adapt to digital transformation

Our industry's digital transformation is accelerating fast. Pontus Riska, Vice-President Sales and Support for RAPID RTC, and Paula Kemp, Marketing, HR and IT Director for Birchwood Group, share insights on how dealers can adapt

Q Within the next two years, what factors will be important for the dealership sales process to adapt to? And why?

A Riska: In conversations with retailers who use our tools, we hear that most enquiries are now digital. Even before lockdown, the average car buyer spent 13 hours researching online and 3.5 hours at a dealership (CMO Survey) – 270% more time spent online. This change was already well underway, but has been accelerated due to COVID-19. We believe customers were already spending much of their journey in the digital space and, as we move forward, that space is where they'll be won or lost. However, the dealership visit is still highly valued – 80% still want to test drive before buying (What Car?). Dealers only get one first impression, which is based largely on customer expectations for fast, quality and consistent responses regardless of enquiring digitally or physically. In customer experience, dealers with seamless transitions between digital and physical will take the lead.

Kemp: The shift in consumer behaviour fast-tracked by COVID-19 means our adaptation must assume the customer knows more than ever before about the product – even before their first contact. They'll want a seamless purchase process and have more control over how they interact with us. Decisions on how and when to view the product will be made based on what suits them and their preferences, not our opening hours. As customers move toward a purchase decision, they want to be able to dip in and out of communication whenever they choose – without the need to visit a physical showroom, if they prefer not to.

Q What does the current car buyer journey look like? Based on the current landscape, in what ways do you see it evolving?

A Riska: Buyers today are incredibly connected and know how they want to use digital channels. Online information is accessible on everyday platforms (even watches!), and 80% of shoppers use multiple devices to research a vehicle purchase (EY). Video is also growing: three-out-of-four car shoppers say online video influenced their shopping habits or purchases, and we've seen three times higher engagement when video is included in our email communications (RAPID RTC). Evolution is likely going to mean a further personalised journey, with some wanting to complete most of the process online (even all of it) and others still preferring the traditional approach. Key is to recognise these different behaviours and have communication channels available for all.

Kemp: Despite our progress in recent years with digital engagement and our online success during lockdown, I did notice that, post-lockdown, our teams' engagement with digital dipped slightly as they returned to

their traditional showroom environment. For some customers this may always be their preferred route, but the journey has already been evolving into a more digital landscape. The key to the evolution is our sales teams engaging with customers in all environments – giving the customer choice and control.

Q How has COVID-19 affected the current sales process so far? What will the lasting implications be for dealers?

A Riska: In light of COVID, digital communication and online commerce are on fast-forward as customers interact with dealerships digitally much more frequently. Our Dealer Insights team reported that from March-August 2020, chat volumes for our live chat product increased 81%, while 2020 volumes were consistently higher than 2019 over the same period. A lasting change we'll see is an even larger chunk of ad spend being dedicated to the digital space – a global study by Zenith Media says 62% of the UK auto industry's ad spend in 2019 was already being invested in digital, and predicts digital is the only channel automotive brands will spend more on in 2022 compared with 2019.

Kemp: We adapted during lockdown when, from day one, we were able to offer a full end-to-end digital purchase process. In the main, we have now reverted to our previous process with the exception of test drives. These remain unaccompanied, and both customers and sales executives like this change. While the use of online purchasing has been better received in sales teams since then, we still have a long way to go. The lasting implication is, I believe, that consumers will demand even more choice and flexibility in how they interact with dealerships, since they'll now experience these options more commonly with businesses in other sectors.

COMPANY PROFILE

Key products: RAPID RTC Live Dealer and RAPID RTC Lead Manager

Key staff: Pontus Riska, VP Sales & Support

Founded: 1996

Based: European HQ in London; international offices in Paris, France; Winnipeg and Toronto, Canada; Dallas, USA

Visit: www.rapidrtc.co.uk

Email: sales@rapidrtc.co.uk

Phone: 0800 014 8011

RAPID RTC

“ THE AVERAGE
CAR BUYER
SPENDS ABOUT
270% MORE TIME
ONLINE THAN IN
THE SHOWROOM

PONTUS RISKÅ,
VP SALES & SUPPORT, RAPID RTC



Paula Kemp,
marketing, HR
and IT director,
Birchwood Group



**“ WE SAW A 26% HIGHER
CONVERSION-TO-SALE RATE
WHEN ONLINE CUSTOMERS
COULD CONNECT WITH A
SALESPERSON IN REAL-TIME**

Q How would you describe the role of digital communication tools in dealer/customer relationship-building?

A Riska: When we consider the average millennial today is about 32 years old, we see that digital communication has already been a pivotal aspect of relationship-building for some time. Working with a top manufacturer, we saw a 26% higher conversion-to-sale rate when online customers could connect with a salesperson in real-time (RAPID RTC).

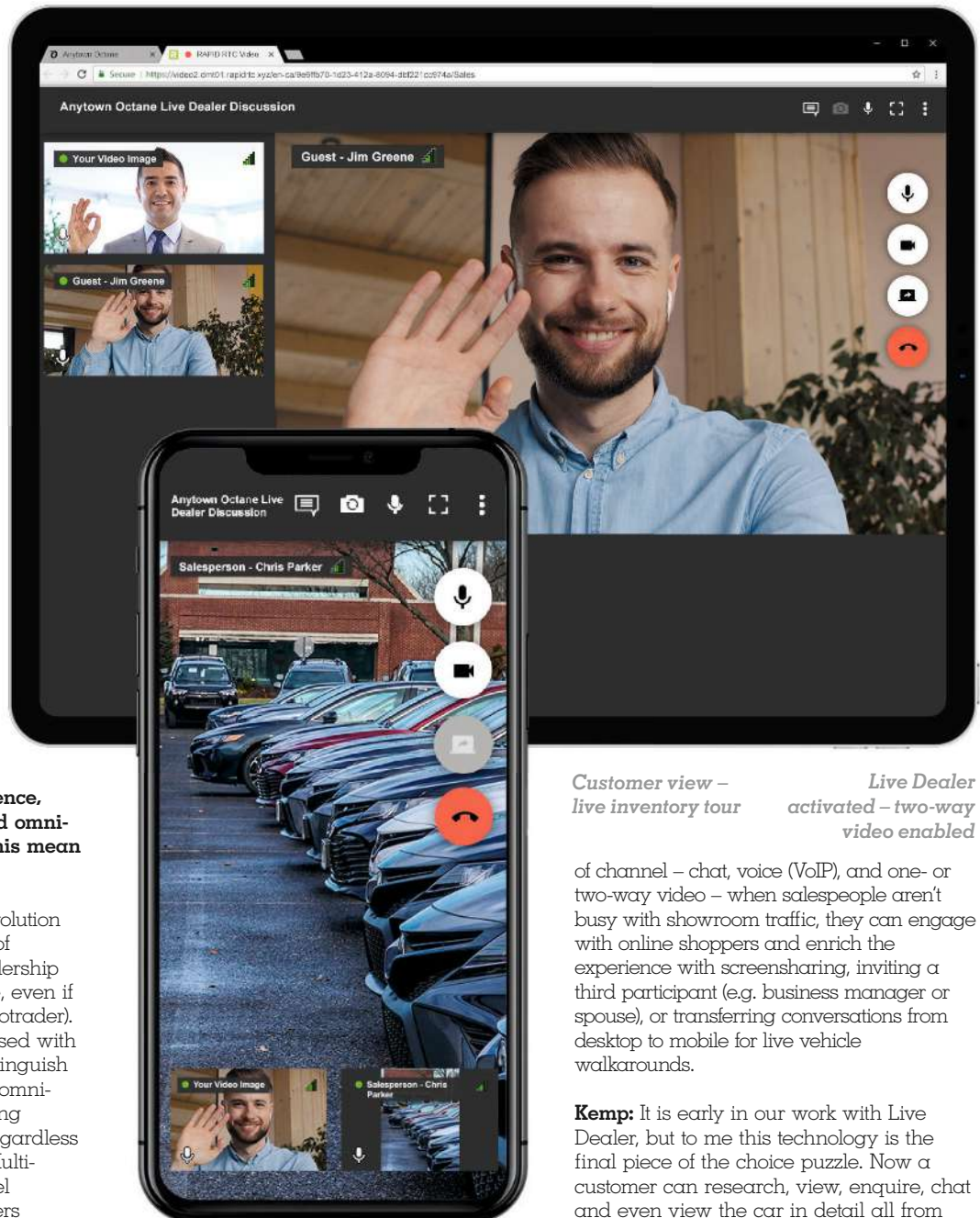
This demonstrates that digital tools are most effective when they connect salespeople and shoppers the same way as in the dealership: the people using the tools are the key to building trusting relationships online. Man and machine – working together – enhance our interactions and help form closer connections online.

Kemp: Digital communication tools are vital because they let you add the human touch to a digital process, while offering consumers the choice and control they're looking for when shopping. Human connection will always be crucial in communicating with car buyers, even when we use technology to build relationships with them. The tools can't build relationships without the people. Our industry needs to learn from the retail high street giants who lacked a clear digital strategy, resulting in loss of market share and in some cases, total collapse.

Q In terms of customer experience, why is the movement toward omni-channel important? What does this mean for dealerships?

A Riska: Generally, it means evolution rather than revolution – 54% of consumers would buy from a dealership offering their preferred experience, even if it didn't have the lowest price (Autotrader). Since omni-channel is often confused with multi-channel, it's important to distinguish them. For clarity, we'll define that omni-channel means a retailer's shopping experience is always the same, regardless of channel (digital or in person). Multi-channel doesn't offer cross-channel consistency: for example, if shoppers connect with a third-party agent when they live chat, but connect with a salesperson when they email the same dealer. Omni-channel ensures dealers avoid inconsistent experiences like these that can cause shoppers to look elsewhere.

Kemp: Though customers interact with us digitally much more often, we can never know how or when they'll do so, making omni-channel experiences critical. When they reach out, we want their experience to be what they expect, which means it can't differ from channel to channel whether they email, live chat or walk into our showroom. Collectively, it will be important not to resist the assistance of digital tools in



helping us deliver a consistent experience so we can ensure all paths to purchase are equally appealing.

Q What sets RAPID RTC Live Dealer apart? How does the platform benefit both dealers and customers?

A Riska: As buyers increasingly seek experiential shopping experiences (which look different for every individual), Live Dealer is the industry's first fully integrated omni-channel platform that facilitates the sales process digitally. Online shoppers seamlessly connect with salespeople in real-time via their choice

*Customer view –
live inventory tour*

*Live Dealer
activated – two-way
video enabled*

of channel – chat, voice (VoIP), and one- or two-way video – when salespeople aren't busy with showroom traffic, they can engage with online shoppers and enrich the experience with screensharing, inviting a third participant (e.g. business manager or spouse), or transferring conversations from desktop to mobile for live vehicle walkarounds.

Kemp: It is early in our work with Live Dealer, but to me this technology is the final piece of the choice puzzle. Now a customer can research, view, enquire, chat and even view the car in detail all from wherever they want to be, using whichever channel they're most comfortable with – while our sales executives only need to learn one tool to engage with them at any point during the digital journey. With our ability to facilitate online purchasing, it closes the loop between the in-store and online experiences and completes the digital journey.

Visit: www.rapidrtc.co.uk
Email: sales@rapidrtc.co.uk
Phone: 0800 014 8011

Are you letting customer feedback do the talking for you?

It's more important than ever to effectively manage your online reputation



**By Anthony Gaskell, Managing Director
– EMEA at Reputation.com**

Nobody could have predicted how 2020 has turned out so far, and as for 2021, that's anyone's guess! But, if one positive has come out of this year, it's been the speed in which digital transformation, especially within automotive, has occurred.

Automotive dealers and brands will require a heightened focus on reputation and CX management so they stand out online against the competition as fewer people opt to visit dealerships.

We're seeing tons of new trends within automotive, whether it's in-depth videos of vehicles, 1-2-1 online walkarounds and viewings, contactless ordering and delivery or something else, it's all happening within automotive.

Of course, not everything is positive. The industry is seeing job losses as more than 250,000 vehicles were not manufactured as expected across

"It's so important to display a positive image online when someone searches for your dealer group"

Europe this year and the fallout from Brexit is still rumbling on. But the industry carries on.

Managing your digital front door

Reputation.com has previously written for AM-Online about the digital front door, and the importance of Google, in particular, to success online. But now, more than ever, it's so important to display a positive image online when someone searches for your dealer group, one of your locations, or even does a *search like 'car dealers near me', or 'Vauxhall showroom near me' for example.

Our research, originally published as part of our well-received 2020 Automotive Reputation Report, looked at thousands of automotive locations across the UK

and found that dealers who effectively manage their online reputations see up to a 10% increase in average sales volume compared with those who don't. The opposite is true as well: Dealers whose Reputation Scores drop see a corresponding decrease in sales. More than three-quarters (76%) of people do research online before they even step foot into your dealership. So, now that people are online more than ever, this number will only increase.

What are my next steps?

Auto dealers of any size, but especially those with multiple sites, need to keep on top of their online footprint. A single location should have profiles on Google My Business, various listing sites, social media and more. For a multi-location group, that just multiplies and gets to a stage where it becomes unmanageable without the right software.

Reputation.com provides the global automotive sector with the most comprehensive Reputation Experience Management platform available today. In the UK, we work with the largest brands in the business, from groups including Arnold Clark, Inchcape, JCT600, Lookers and more; to manufacturers including Hyundai, Kia, Renault, and Toyota.

We know this industry unlike any other platform, so if you're looking to take control of your online reputation via reviews, social media, business listings, your surveys or more – get in touch for a discussion on how we can help.

Additionally, the 2020 Automotive Reputation Report mentioned earlier has recently been updated for the second half of the year, check it out and download the full version at reputation.com/resources.

C-D

Marketing Delivery

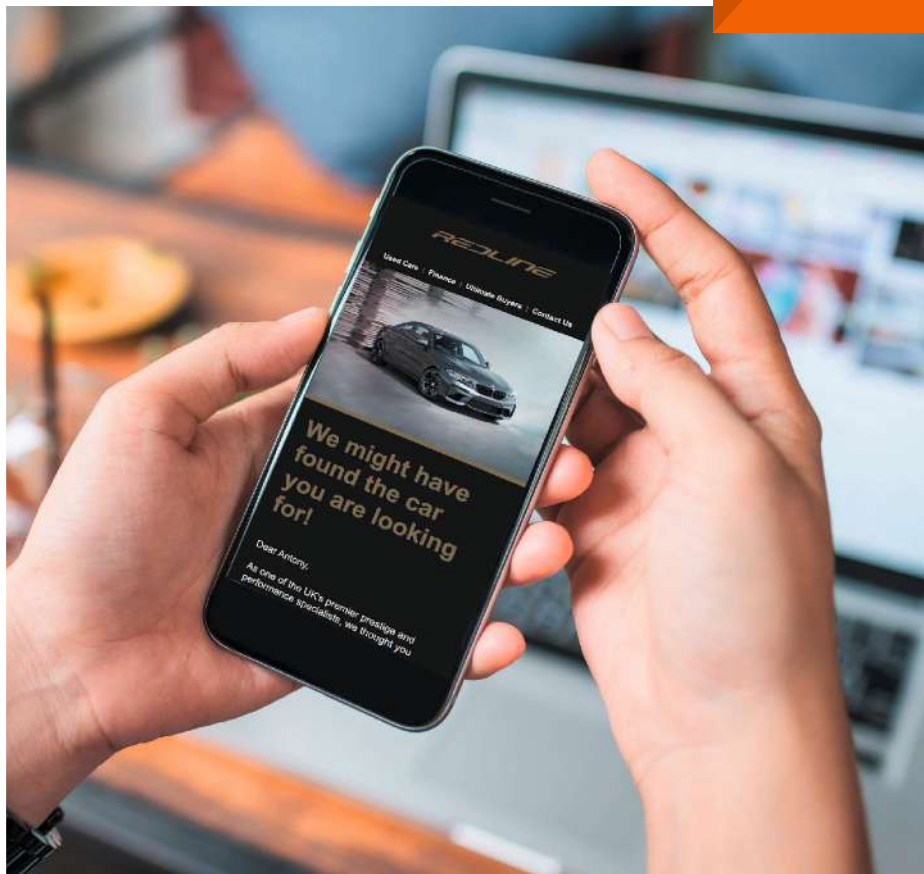
Marketing Delivery's Real-time Click Alert immediately notifies a dealer when a potential customer views a specific vehicle advert. Offered as standard with its Car Alerts system, the technology can detect when that customer opens the email and clicks to view one of the available vehicles. It then automatically sends an alert to the dealer with their contact details and the specific model viewed.

The Car Alerts system aims to keep would-be buyers engaged with a dealership while they are looking for their ideal vehicle by automatically generating and distributing tailored emails to potential customers that have enquired about a used car. This keeps them up to date with new arrivals in stock and any price changes on relevant existing models.

www.marketingdelivery.co.uk/solutions/sales-crm

eDynamix

eDynamix's Stock Master is a platform for managing vehicle stock and improving stock turn while reducing days in stock. The platform, which comes in manager and sales team versions, is fully integrated into AutoTrader and allows dealers to post adverts directly to AutoTrader. It manages stock and adverts on the dealer's website, thus reducing time to publish on the web, and takes video and photo feeds from eDynamix's video platform VIDEO1st. The integration with AutoTrader also enables dealers to receive key performance indicators and compet-



itor information so they can price their vehicles correctly in order to improve sales.

www.edynamix.com

Contact Advantage

Contact Advantage's Claro is the next generation of CA: Automotive. The showroom CRM solution has been piloted by two dealer groups and goes live in early October. The new version, which is modeled on the Vue.js framework, simplifies and makes the showroom process more efficient and quicker for the user through the use of dynamic configurable dashboards. It allows the dealer to build their own dashboards to look at a range of options including stock, enquiries and diary entries and appointments, all presented in a highly visual form using a colour-coded system.

www.contact-advantage.com

D

DISPLAY TECHNOLOGY

Samsung

Samsung Business TV is a scalable solution for car dealerships and showrooms and is well suited to customer waiting areas. With a built-in TV tuner, it provides an easy and flexible way of



Here for you.

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Since 2014, NextGear Capital has been helping dealers grow their businesses with flexible, straightforward and dependable funding. We like to roll up our sleeves, really get to know our customers and look towards the long term - and never before has this way of thinking been more important.

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Home to the must-watch automotive industry webinars

Go to the new 'webinars' section on AM-online to see all the latest presentations from AM and major industry suppliers. Hear insights from other dealers and analysts in the quarterly AM Motor Retail Review webinar. Learn about market trends and tips for running dealerships more efficiently in the range of topical webinars, covering all aspects of motor retail operations from aftersales, CRM and reputation management to customer service and sales.

am-online.com/webinars



D



C displaying signage content and accessing live television. Business TV screens can be controlled directly from the app via a mobile phone, with no dependence on existing computer infrastructure. Simple to set up and use, Business TV provides a wealth of display benefits for dealers on a smaller and more flexible scale. It also comes with a three-year commercial warranty.
<https://displaysolutions.samsung.com/digital-signage/business-tv>

Luminati

Luminati supplies three main digital advertising displays into car showrooms. These include large video walls playing corporate videos on loop; video screens, often supplied in sets that sit above reception areas showing corporate messages and sales information; and integrated video screens designed into product displays such as tyres and wheels, showing detailed information of that particular product. It also provides playtables for use in showrooms, particularly at product launch events, offering a reception type area for the sales team to be based and have large storage areas for promotional information. Branded in full colour with RGB LED lighting, they provide an eye-catching base for the team to speak to and collect visitor

information. Luminati also supplies display cabinets featuring car parts or merchandise.
www.luminati.co.uk/showroom-displays

Zerolight

ZeroLight's Re: Connect is a package of three cloud-powered visualisation solutions – Reveal, Concierge and Display – that address the challenges caused by social distancing by reconnecting dealers with their customers and cars. Re:Connect allows dealers to remotely establish a connection and share their stock cars with customers. Concierge is a cloud-streamed 3D configuration product that brings the dealership online by creating a shared one-to-one sales experience for dealers and customers. It also enables both parties to join the same configuration experience, with the customer able to control their viewpoint while the dealer takes them on a virtual tour of the car's configuration options, accessories, and key features.
www.zerolight.com

DEALER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS & ACCOUNTS


CDK Global

CDK Global's Visualiser and Visualiser Advanced

platforms automate data collection and visualisation to provide actionable intelligence for dealers. Part of the Connected Analytics product suite, they integrate with Autoline and Autoline Drive Dealer Management Systems (DMS) and can be viewed anywhere on any device. Visualiser gathers operational and financial data from a DMS and displays it in intuitive dashboards, giving dealers an instant overview of performance by a site, multiple sites or franchises, comparing results side by side. It provides operational and sales figures, enabling dealers to invest in areas that will maximise returns. Visualiser Advanced gives even deeper insight and is tailored to different levels and roles within a team, using custom dashboards and reporting.

www.cdkglobal.com/en-gb/analytics/visualiser

Pinewood

Pinewood's Adobe Sign allows dealers to get approval for repair work by requesting an electronic signature before the vehicle arrives. The new tool also eliminates the need for filling in physical paperwork at the dealership. Customers can initially review and sign the job card remotely as well as track the vehicle's progress online and electronically approve any additional work required using the integrated health check 



The lead management system that's a perfect fit for your business.



The ultimate enquiry management tool



The ultimate lead response tool

For over 15 years, Dealerweb has been instrumental in transforming the lead conversion rates of franchise dealers across the globe.

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Drive dealership success with the UK's most trusted showroom lead management system



The retail automotive industry is facing an unprecedented period of change. To thrive in this challenging environment dealers and OEM's need technology partners who are reliable, agile and innovative, reacting quickly to drive efficiency through the sales process.

Dealerweb has invested in its people and technology ensuring they continue to lead the industry in sales lead management. The all new showroom platform is built on the very latest technology and deploys the features, useability and integrations you would expect from people with over 15 years' experience in developing lead management solutions.

The new system is fully responsive and has been designed to work on all mobile devices, including both Apple and Android, as well as traditional desktop and laptop machines, thus enabling users to maximise their interaction with customers.

As a trusted and experienced partner, Dealerweb have put their customers' success at the heart of its business and enjoys strong and long-lasting relationships with dealers large and small as well as many OEM's.

Dealerweb's core Showroom product is modular and scalable, enabling all shapes

and sizes of sales departments to manage leads effortlessly and effectively. Ongoing customer contact is supported throughout the sales funnel, whilst integrations with a wide variety of other systems from DMS's and Compliance Providers to Finance Providers improve efficiency and saves costs.

Reporting is a key strength of Dealerweb with accurate, reliable, real time reports covering all aspects of sales activity and performance. The Dealbooks module provides detailed and accurate DOC profit reporting, allowing a comprehensive, real-time analysis of the business, driving volume and profit improvement.

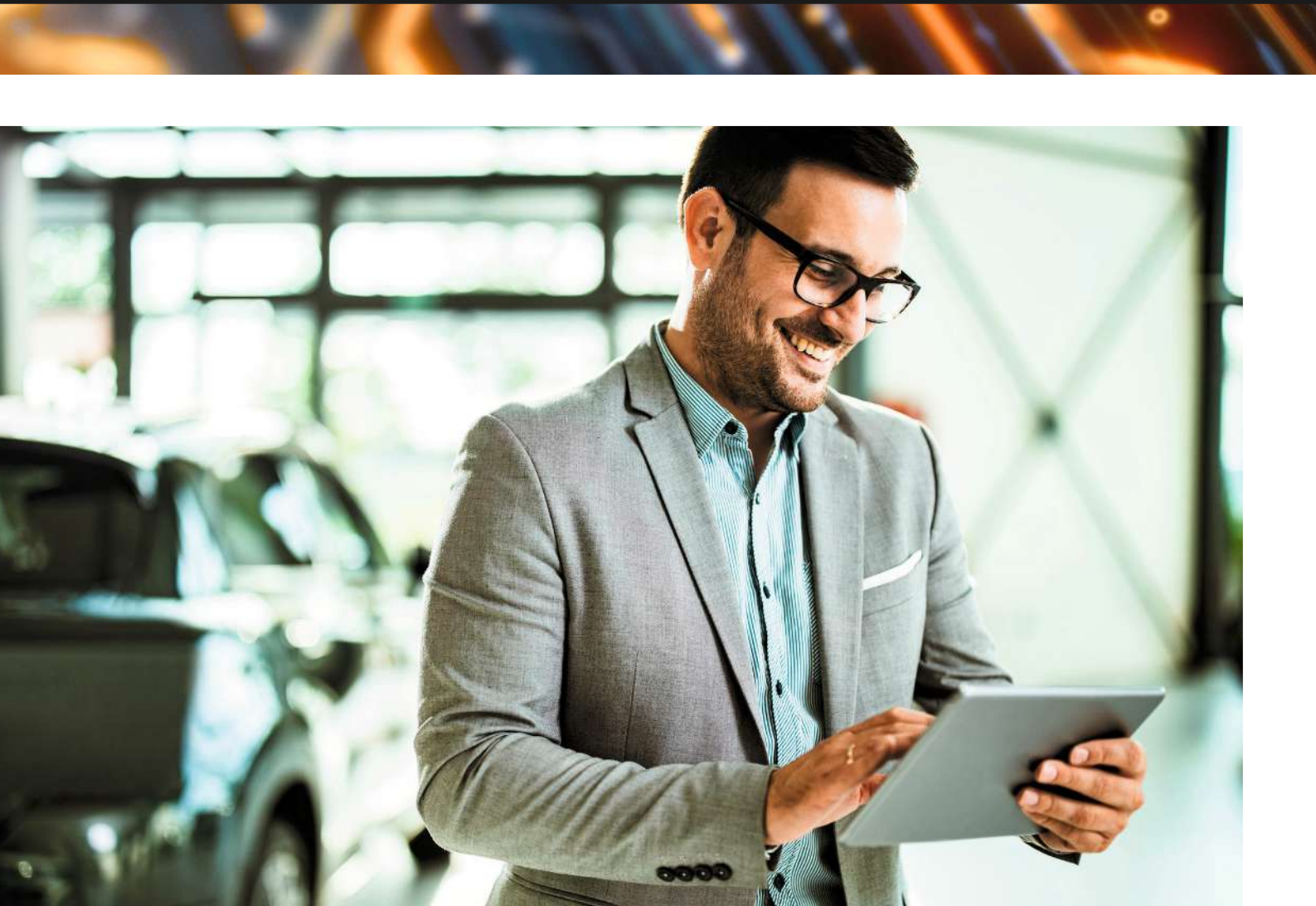
Dealerweb's React lead response tool is an innovative multi-platform system that captures 100% of leads from any digital source. It allows an immediate, personal, and professional response from the sales team, either by email or mobile call. Incoming lead notifications are sent to either a native

mobile app or by email and the fastest finger first then picks up the lead and chooses the most appropriate response for the customer. We all know that incoming leads need to be responded to quickly and professionally, React is tailor made to make this as easy and effective as possible, increasing the conversion rates on these fast growing digital lead sources.

Combining Dealerweb React and Showroom provides the dealer with the most powerful, reliable and effective sales tool in the market today. Dealerweb provides full end to end visibility of the customer journey, from enquiry to conversion, maximising sales volumes and profitability, whilst enhancing efficiency and compliance.

With the sales process in one ecosystem and cutting-edge technology, levels of useability, functionality and integration, Dealerweb continues to lead the industry in helping dealers sell more vehicles, more profitably.

If you would like a demonstration of how Dealerweb can help your dealership then visit **www.dealerweb.org** to book your demo.



and video solution while it is being worked on. Adobe Sign is free for all dealers using Pinewood DMS.

www.pinewood.co.uk/overview/crm/

Gemini

Gemini's Open System Interface allows dealers to update their EvolutionDX DMS data directly from third party applications accurately and automatically through a two-way integration, saving them time and money. It also ensures they are only paying for the services they need rather than multiple licences for users of their DMS. The Application Programming Interface gives Gemini's partners access to customer account, vehicle and stock information, as well as service booking availability. Partners include Key Tracker, Manheim Auctions, Reef Business Systems, 67Degrees, IOData, AutoSLM, Autoweb Design and Closelt.

www.gemini-systems.co.uk/open-system-interface

Reynolds & Reynolds

The Reynolds & Reynolds Power DMS provides dealers with the tools they need to manage every part of their business, streamlining workflows, boosting efficiency and cutting costs. The DMS features fully customisable operating controls,

running in real time to provide accurate performance data. It also has bi-directional integration with Contact Advantage's Claro, a cloud-based suite of mobile showroom applications. By placing links on dealership websites, emails, and newsletters, the DMS enables customers to book their service online. It also allows dealers to view all their workshop, technician and service activity with detailed data on every job. Additionally, the system provides a wealth of customer information to help dealers throughout the sales process, including a complete customer contact history. Its detailed audits and reporting enable dealers to track all their financial activities. With a comprehensive suite of integrated software applications, Power is user-friendly, function-rich and a well-supported DMS, helping manage the modern dealership by providing a strong foundation while delivering a better customer experience.

www.reyrey.com/solutions/dms

Click Dealer

Click Dealer's ClickStock portal allows dealers to source the right stock at the right time and price. With full online access to Aston Barclay's used stock catalogue, dealers can place proxy bids on the vehicles from within the portal with pre-sale and buy-now functionality. Once a vehicle has

been sold and a replacement is required, ClickStock uses data insight from the dealer's DMS to notify them of optimum stock upcoming at Aston Barclay auctions. The system will also make suggestions on vehicle market pricing and profit margins to ensure the dealer increases stock turn and profitability. Once vehicles have been acquired through ClickStock, they are automatically added to the dealer's ClickDMS with images, so they can be pushed out to the advertising portals before they have left the auction premises.

www.clickdealer.co.uk/clickstock/

Dragon2000

Dragon2000's integration with DocuSign allows dealers to digitally sign paperwork. The integration with the DragonDMS enables dealers to send vehicle order forms and invoices to customers to e-sign. Service job cards and invoices can also be digitally signed by the customer for collection and delivery. Once signed, the DragonDMS automatically updates to show it has been completed. It also allows for multiple signatures on one document for order forms or if more than one part-exchange is involved. The new integration also minimises physical contact during the COVID-19 crisis, thus reducing the risk of infection.

www.dragon2000.co.uk/dealer-management-system/

E



E

ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Arena Group

Arena Group's 'mstore for automotive' enables dealerships to replace paper-based deal files, service, warranty, affinity, HR and other processes with more efficient, secure and flexible digital documentation and workflows to improve security, efficiency, flexibility and compliance. The platform can be customised to specific manufacturer and dealership needs and can be integrated with third-party software. Dealerships can maintain a fully audited trail, access documentation remotely, centralise and track workflows while remaining compliant with GDPR and FCA regulation. Functionality includes digital signatures, recall lookups, digital job cards, and AI technology to automate filing from multiple sources, including diagnostic reports and third-party systems. The BMW retailer platform, developed with BMW UK was awarded Highly Commended in the new product category at the 2020 AM Awards.

<https://www.arenagroup.net/automotive>

CMS Software

Textstor Enterprise Report Management and Electronic Document Management software allows paper documentation such as accounting reports, purchase orders and sales invoices to be stored electronically. The system has been designed to overcome problems surrounding the storing and retrieval of paper documents. By 'capturing' documents produced on computers such as report spool files, TIF and PDF, the system indexes and archives them to a network server. Document scanning and storage is also provided.

Textstor stores and retrieves large volumes of paper documents produced on computers providing a solution to the storage and security, issues of archiving paper-based versions.

<https://www.cmssoftware.co.uk/products/textstor/>

MotorDocs

Cloud-based platform MotorDocs enables dealers to remove large volumes of paperwork from the business and manage documentation digitally. Workflow can be tailored through the platforms to align with the retailer's sales and aftersales processes.

The system, which runs on Microsoft's ISO 27001 accredited Azure platform, helps improve compliance processes, saves time, reduces costs and improves efficiencies, in turn boosting the customer experience and aiding CSI performance. Its deal file platform iDealFile allows for the creation and management of post-sales documentation, automatically extracting data direct from the DMS or other third-party software, minimising scanning requirements. Digital documentation management in aftersales is provided via iServiceFile and its secure file sharing and signing platform iShare allows users to share multiple documents and action requests via one email link.

Cloud-based documentation management, document sharing and signing platforms for sales and aftersales provide a fully audited digital trail, storage and retrieval facility.

www.motordocs.co.uk

ELECTRONIC VEHICLE HEALTH CHECK

Autoconnect

Autoconnect's handheld electronic health check application is compatible with smartphones,

tablets and PCs providing a straightforward eVHC management system, with the ability to print and store information.

Accessible via the web, it requires no software installation and includes photo capture functionality. SMS and emails which alert customers when work is required are automated.

The system incorporates reporting for management overviews and usage analysis, as well as diary reminders for customer contact. Technician login is by PIN while the system is designed with distinct work categories and built-in descriptive fault codes with the option to add notes and unlisted items.

Autoconnect's eVHC is a web-based application, enabling dealers to undertake health checks and manage deferred work with an automated follow-up contact process.

<http://www.evhc.co.uk/>

AutoVHC

AutoVHC's cloud-based electronic vehicle health check platform incorporates a user-friendly reporting functionality to monitor workshop performance in real-time, thereby helping to reduce missed opportunities.

Features include integrated autoANALYTICS functionality and a range of add-on automotive solutions modules. Video and images are captured by autoVIEW, enabling technicians to provide a visual record of faults.

Sales can be boosted using autoPREDICTIVE which identifies areas requiring attention before the next scheduled visit sending customers automated email and SMS reminders. A cloud-based eVHC system with add-ons, including the ability to send video and images of work required and a predictive function which alerts customers when deferred work is due.

<https://www.autovhc.com/>



ENGAGE

ENGAGE, CONVERT, TRANSACT for connected retailing

CONVERT



TRANSACT

In 2020, iVendi has launched a completely new three-product range for all vehicle retailers.

ENGAGE, CONVERT, TRANSACT that together deliver something that we call connected retailing.

At its core, connected retailing is a simple but persuasive idea. We link retailer, lender and consumer at every stage of the buying process - research, decision and purchase - through solutions that are genuinely omni-channel and equally effective both online and in the showroom.

James Tew, CEO, explained further: "These new products are the latest iteration of the mission adopted by iVendi when the company was founded in 2009 - to use our technology and knowhow to make it easier for dealers to sell vehicles and consumers to buy them.

"What we have created in **ENGAGE, CONVERT** and **TRANSACT** is something special - a motor retail and finance process that is seamless and effective across retailers, lenders and buyers, allowing complete communication and absolute flexibility anywhere and at every stage of the buying journey.

"Most end-to-end motor retail solutions are quite rigid in approach and provide little of the finesse, and therefore the effectiveness, of the new iVendi range. For consumers in the third decade of the 21st century, it provides what they now automatically expect - to be

able to shop for what they want, how they want.

"And for retailers and lenders, whether you specialise in new or used cars, vans and motorcycles, it delivers an innovative and insightful approach to technology that is focussed on driving sales success.

We believe that you will soon recognise the benefits of the connected retail approach."

James Tew, CEO, iVendi



The iVendi connected retail range

ENGAGE

is designed to help consumers find the right vehicle. It rewrites the rules for online car, van and motorcycle search by completely turning on its head the process through which relevant vehicles from dealer stock are shown to the consumer. Instead of rigid dropdown menus driven by the assumption that people already know what model they want, it uses the natural language adopted by the majority of vehicle buyers, narrowing their enquiry rapidly and successfully so that the best choice becomes apparent much more quickly.

CONVERT

facilitates the process of transforming initial online consumer interest in a vehicle into a sale with key features including a reservation tool, finance eligibility checking, finance application processing, multi-lender quoting, and consumer-centred finance product information and videos. It also introduces iVendi's innovative stock engine technology, which proactively checks for data conflicts in vehicle identification information to minimise worrying and potentially expensive quoting errors.

TRANSACT

develops online consumer interest in a specific vehicle through to a final transaction while managing the complexities of the sales process. It enables deals to be created online in the same way as a face-to-face conversation with flexible negotiation over price and other key factors such as value added products, using something iVendi calls a "digital deal" to enable a natural, ongoing style of negotiation.

Founded in 2009, iVendi is the market leader in online motor retail technology both in the UK and internationally. With a modular product range which engages consumers, converts buyers and manages transactions, iVendi technology interacts with around five million consumers every month and thousands of motor retailers, manufacturers and finance providers. The company is based in Colwyn Bay.

STEP INTO THE FUTURE

of vehicle retailing with
iVendi's
Connected Retailing Platform



ENGAGE • CONVERT • TRANSACT

iVendi.com

tellmemore@ivendi.com

0345 226 0503



Castrol

The Castrol system collates workshop information into three categories – sold work, deferred work and lost sales. Lost sales show potential revenue the business could have enjoyed and deferred work is logged with notifications including automated emails sent to customers alerting them work is due. The system incorporates video enabling a clear, visual record of work to be communicated to the customer. A wide-ranging reporting suite provides in-depth analysis so managers can make informed business decisions to further increase labour and parts sales. Web-based application, Castrol eVHC, allows additional work to be identified and actioned whilst its reporting functionality provides managers with in-depth business insights.

<https://evhc.castrol.com/en-gb#>

eDynamix

Known as iVHC, the eDynamix vehicle health check is an intuitive and interactive system which is fully integrated with all other modules including Video1st, which enables a video and photographic record of work required to be captured, and its finance and repair plans designed to boost red and amber work upsell. The system also ensures any previous unsold amber or red work recorded is automatically fed through into subsequent health check inspections. Customers are able to provide authorisation online through their own personalised iVHC page, where they can also flag up any concerns. Its management app Connect monitors completion rates and red and amber work. Integrations with the DMS and tyre stock allowing for orders to be placed directly from the iVHC with suppliers. The system tracks daily performance

for sold, declined and deleted work.

The eDynamix iVHC is integrated with its wider services such as video, third-parties such as DMS providers and includes extensive reporting and a customer portal.

<https://www.edynamix.com/ivhc>

Infomedia

Accessible via smartphone, Infomedia's online eVHC Superservice Triage generates fully priced vehicle inspection reports together with video and photographic evidence which is emailed to the customer. The customer is able to provide online authorisation while the system records declined recommendations for future follow-up activity. By integrating with its Superservice Menus, VIN-precise quoting is instantly available enabling the creation of quick and accurate quotes. Real-time analytics provide business insights to improve decision-making, performance and profitability.

Superservice Triage is an online vehicle health check system allowing technicians to identify, price and recommend repair work required.

<https://www.infomedia.com.au/service/digital-vehicle-inspection/>

EV CHARGERS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

BP Chargemaster

Providing EV-charging UK-made units with UK-based aftersales services at homes, workplaces and in public places, BP Chargemaster also operates the largest public charging network, POLAR, incorporating over 7,000 public charging points, of which around 600 are rapid chargers. Its Smart Homecharge units, which allow

customers to schedule charging to take advantage of dynamic energy tariffs, are recommended by 13 different vehicle manufacturers in the UK. The company's commercial/workplace charge points can also be partly or fully integrated into POLAR – for example, a dealer could choose to restrict access at their site to their own staff, but use the same access method for those same staff to use public charge points.

<https://bpchargemaster.com/>

Ionity

Ionity is a joint venture between BMW Group, Mercedes-Benz AG, Ford Motor Company, and Volkswagen Group to provide an ultra-fast high-power charging (HPC) network throughout Europe – outside major cities – to create an extensive and easily accessible EV charging infrastructure. Charging points can be found at several locations including petrol forecourts. Users are able to pay by smartphone by scanning the unit's barcode while direct customers have their own pricing scheme. All its charging stations consist of an average of four charging points and deliver 100% renewable energy for both emission-free and carbon-neutral driving.

<https://ionity.eu/en>

Instavolt

Public EV charging operator InstaVolt operates an 'open charger' model, enabling all EV drivers to use its charging points on a pay-as-you-go basis without the need for a monthly subscription or membership card. Drivers simply use their contactless payment card to start a charging session to access its network of ChargePoint rapid DC chargers. Any EV compatible with DC charging can utilise its network.



E-F

Instavolt has ambitions to provide the largest network of public EV rapid chargers in the UK in partnership with ChargePoint.

<https://instavolt.co.uk/>

Pod Point

Pod Point provides wi-fi-enabled charge points for the home, app-enabled charge points for commercial premises and smart charging stations for the workplace. The company has more than 3,000 charging bays nationwide including at supermarkets. Business solutions include commercial charging such as at supermarkets and restaurants; workplace installations to enable employees to reduce their carbon footprint; fleet EV charging to aid transition to a zero emissions fleet and residential charging for flats and apartments, while its built environment solution helps developers meet current and future requirements. Smart home charging installations are undertaken for brands including Volkswagen, Audi, Hyundai and Nissan.

<https://pod-point.com/>

Tritium

Delivering DC fast charging solutions for EVs, Australian technology company Tritium's 50kW chargers resemble state-of-the-art petrol pumps with interactive interfaces. As a preferred supplier to Pod Point, its 50kW Veetil-RT units are now being offered to customers including Tesco. The 50kW chargers can add 40km of driving range in around 10 minutes. The Veetil-RT 50kW also has the world's smallest footprint for an electric vehicle fast charger which means it takes up less room in busy car parks.

Tritium develops and supplies DC rapid-charging units for businesses and partners Pod Point as it expands its public charging network.

<https://www.tritium.com.au/>

F

FINANCE PROPOSAL PLATFORMS

Codeweavers

Offering a range of APIs and interfaces for a full end to end solution, Codeweavers provides finance calculation services together with a wide range of additional features such as part exchange valuations and management and reservation and ordering tools.

Remote Apply enables customers to apply for finance online at a time that suits them, allowing as many finance quotes to be created as required so all options can be explored utilising its customer portal.

Checkout allows customers to purchase the vehicle from the dealer's website incorporating part-exchange, adding service, applying for finance, paying a deposit and arranging collection or delivery.

<https://codeweavers.net/>



Dealtrak

DealTrak connects all aspects of F&I in automotive retailing – dealers, lenders, brokers and insurance providers. Providing support to the UK automotive sector, DealTrak, part of the Auto-Protect group, works with dealers, brokers, lenders, OEMs and Insurers. Proposals can be sent to multiple lenders but information is only keyed in once. Various finance offerings can be

viewed on one screen, while the soft search facility increases first time acceptance for customers and the system ensures all the right details are captured for a more efficient proposal submission. The system includes insights and reporting functions allowing full sight of a dealer's F&I performance. API integrations with third-party systems provide further efficiencies while DealTrak currently boast 65 lenders inte- ➔

Flexible approach to remarketing pays off

From physical to virtual auctions, Aston Barclay has solutions to help it thrive

Aston Barclay is a national independent remarketing group, driving the future of the remarketing industry through offering industry-leading choice, trust and ease.

To keep customers safe during the pandemic, Aston Barclay operates in a completely COVID-safe manner. First to offer virtual auctions once lockdown started, its technology leads the way in allowing businesses to access fully sequential live auctions, with safe vehicle collections arranged through appointments.

More than 50 years of sector experience have combined to create a suite of digital platforms which integrate with a network of six state-of-the-art physical hubs to efficiently facilitate the sale of used vehicles from franchised dealer groups, car supermarkets, banks, fleets, finance houses and manufacturers to used vehicle buyers.

Its digital evolution dates to 2017 when Aston Barclay became the first remarketing supplier in the UK to provide buyers with a mobile bidding app. This created an anywhere, anytime competitive market. With more than 20 application releases to date and over 13,500 iOS downloads, the Buyers App – a core component of the digital platform – has helped generate in-excess of £85.5m in total vehicle sales value.

The Buyers App formed the building block of a long-term vision to create an end-to-end proposition which connects customers to vehicles through a mix of digital and physical remarketing channels.

This platform now combines e-Valuate, e-Hub, e-Xchange, and e-Live products into an end-to-end used vehicle proposition. The digital journey seamlessly takes individual used vehicles from initial



vehicle appraisal, right through to physical delivery with options to increase speed of sale including dealer underwriting from The Car Buying Group.

■ **e-Hub** – disposal management portal and comprehensive reporting dashboard, instant access to data and insight

■ **e-Valuate** – innovative and configurable appraisal and inspection app, collates key vehicle data and images ready for action before the vehicle has been collected

■ **e-Xchange** – online 24/7 bidding environment, price management and flexible buy now and real time auction options

■ **e-Live** – virtual auction with sequential bidding functionality, in situ and offside listing with a live auctioneer

Whether customers are experienced or new to vehicle auctions, the Aston Barclay team is on hand to guide them through the process whether they are looking

to buy or sell in volume or use the range of services for their smaller business needs through a range of digital offerings under The Cascade solution.

Cascade provides a transparent, omnichannel process at all stages of retail, sourcing and disposal.

During 2019, the company continued to build on the benefits with the launch of a range of stock funding options. The stock funding is part of a 'three-click transaction' vision of buyers digitally searching, bidding on and funding used vehicle stock via the Buyer's App.

It allows 100% of the purchase invoice to be funded including buyer, online and transport fees, smart repair through Aston Barclay Enhanced up to £1,000, and Aston Barclay Assured.

The leading technology delivers both business- and consumer-facing appraisal applications, online performance management dashboards, disposal channel management, digital routes to market and is supported by the established physical infrastructure.

Cascade presents market pricing insight and drives decision-making to the most effective routes to market and unlocks total management at all levels.



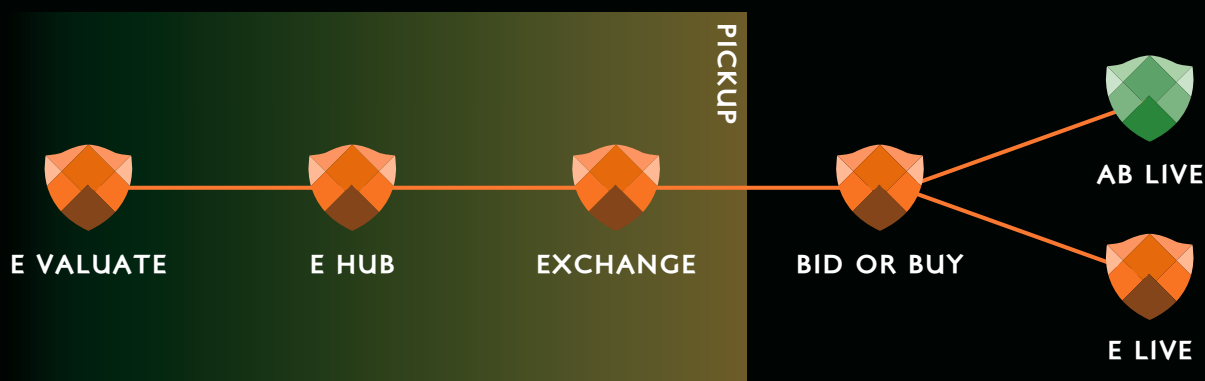
Call: 01245 450700
Email: info@astonbarclay.net
Visit: astonbarclay.net



ASTON BARCLAY

Multi-Channel Remarketing

IMPROVED SPEED OF SALE, RESULTS AND VALUE



APPRAISE

Automated and accurate appraisals.
Configurable.
Supports your sales process.
Speeds up the remarketing process by placing vehicles on sale quicker.



DASHBOARD

Instant view of your vehicle stock.
Channel management for both digital and physical.
Dashboard to help make informed remarketing decisions.



SELL

Upstream part exchange vehicle disposal.
24/7 and continuous sale channels.
Dealer or Aston Barclay managed.
Cascade options into physical sale.



www.astonbarclay.net



The Mary Poppins approach to eCRM

“Programmatic, algorithmic, multi-channel-focused”

No, our sub-heading is not a 2020 cover of the iconic Mary Poppins Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious song. Instead, this is the approach car dealers should adopt in order to make their customer communications practically perfect in every way.

Turning to digital tools can help retailers to overhaul the way they engage their customers. But this shouldn't mean losing the personal touch that has kept dealers in business for decades.

The key is to adapt customer contact strategies to target the right individuals with the right message in the right place and at the right time. The best eCRM (electronic customer relationship management) solutions feature automated 'programmatic' technologies that allow dealers to maintain a personalised approach, while delivering scalability so that high-quality, relevant and timely contact can be achieved simultaneously with all customers and prospects.

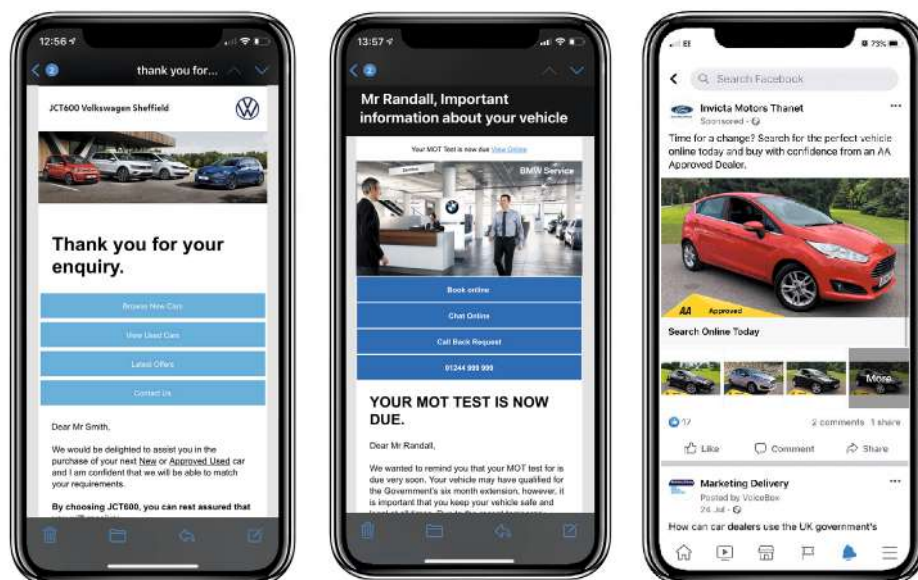
The resulting engagement and conversion rates speak for themselves.

Targeting relevant prospects on social media

With more people researching car purchases online, social media is becoming even more important for generating conquest custom. Tools like Marketing Delivery's 'SocialStock' system help retailers target the most relevant prospects online with products and services that match their needs.

SocialStock helps dealers automatically maintain an up-to-date Facebook 'product catalogue', populated by a stock feed taken directly from their website.

“Data and digital tools really are transforming the way that dealers engage prospects”



Once set up, it's easy to populate organic and paid-for adverts, targeting posts at only the most relevant audiences.

Automated, personalised emails

Used car buyers have a specific idea of what they want in a vehicle – and dealers can use automated emails to alert them to any new stock that matches their requirements. Marketing Delivery's 'Car Alerts' helps dealers engage used car prospects automatically and in a personalised manner.

Our research found that 36% of customer prospects registered as a 'lost lead' by sales staff were still looking to buy a vehicle. Of those still looking to buy, vehicle availability is cited by 39% as the main reason for not progressing to a sale.

Had they received an update about relevant new stock, it's likely they would have re-engaged.

Using data to boost MOT and workshop custom

Some 60% of motorists are more likely to book a service or MOT with a workshop

that reminds them at a suitable time.

Programmatic, eCRM-based aftersales communications provide a competitive edge for workshops seeking to capture this business.

Tools like Marketing Delivery's MOT Box even help dealers identify customers whose cars are due an MOT soon.

This cross-checks a customer database against more than 30 million MOT records held by the UK's Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) – including the millions of cars subject to the Covid-19 MOT extension.

This data then helps dealers identify and target potential MOT customers with reminders and aftersales marketing messages in a way that is GDPR-compliant.

There's no magic involved, and certainly no need to make a song and dance about it, but data and digital tools really are transforming the way that dealers engage prospects throughout the customer journey.

So, all together now: “Programmatic, algorithmic, multi-channel-focused...”

Call: 01892 599 917

Email: get.in.touch@marketingdelivery.co.uk

Visit: marketingdelivery.co.uk

Marketing Delivery

DATA DRIVEN MARKETING

F-L

Cgrated into its platform which has 4 million proposals accepted each year.

<https://www.dealtrak.co.uk/>



IT, CONNECTIVITY AND TELECOMS SYSTEMS

Node4

Node4 owns 100% of its infrastructure, enabling the company to provide high-speed and reliable connections cost effectively. Its data centre uses Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing (DWDM) with dark fibre for fast and secure connections between its data centres.

One of the first providers to implement a Cisco Application Centric Infrastructure (ACI) Software Defined Network (SDN), also known as virtualised networking, it has radically changed how the company builds and manages network environments delivering more agility and flexibility. Connectivity services include ethernet access for uncontended bandwidth with a short delivery cycle, fibre for consistently high speeds, ADSL access or M2M access.

Cloud services include the ability to operate a hybrid cloud environment. Collaboration Experiences enables business teams and their customers to work together anywhere while its Workplace Experiences offering enables collaboration across several channels.

Node4 also offers Security-as-a-Service (SECaaS) with 24/7 monitoring and protection against the likes of malware, phishing, zero-day threats, ransomware and DDoS (Distributed Denial of Service) attacks.

End-to-end IT infrastructure and services, Node4 solutions include connectivity, cloud, security and professional managed services with specialist automotive IT expertise.

<https://www.node4.co.uk/>

Optimising IT

Optimising IT adopts a consultative approach to simplify the complexities of IT services to help clients make the right decisions and avoid costly mistakes ensuring future IT agility. Its UK-based service desk is manned by qualified second line support engineers resulting in the resolution of 78% of issues raised at first contact.

A range of cyber services enable organisations to reduce risk; cloud services incorporate storage, hosted software, antivirus, telephony, networks and backups; IT consultancy guides businesses through change, investment or consolidation, future-proofing the workplace as technology continues to evolve; and managed IT services allows the outsourcing or sourcing of IT.

Clients include luxury car group HR Owen, which required high-level and robust security measures to protect its high net worth customers. IT solutions covering cloud services and cyber security delivered with a consultancy-style approach with



the agility to evolve and adjust according to business demands.

<https://www.optimisingit.co.uk/>

RDS Global

Allows clients to partially or fully outsource IT requirements with services including desktop user support, telecoms, cloud services, CCTV, design, door/gate access control using tags, card, swipe or biometric (finger print) options, telecom convergence solutions, hardware and consultancy solutions including cyber and GDPR compliance.

Its recently launched RDS Black Box is a Management Information System (MIS) which collates data from multiple feeds and systems operating on different platforms including the DMS, CRM, sales tracking, telephony and even CCTV systems, and brings them together into a single database platform.

The company was borne out of the IT needs of a Derby-based automotive dealer group and now provides IT support to more than 200 locations with more than 4,000 end users.

Providing tailored network services, IT support, cloud hardware and consultancy, RDS Global also offers products such as digital access control and CCTV, telecom and convergence technologies.

<https://rds-global.com/>

Vapour Cloud

Offering a cloud-first proposition based on the four cornerstones of voice, video, networks and storage, Vapour counts JCT600 among its clients. Delivering unified communications Höllr is its communications application with the ability to add

multiple 'virtual' services such as call directing, call recording and CRM integration. Sanctm is its secure cloud infrastructure incorporating backups, IaaS, security, firewalls and co-location and with such confidence in its UK data centres and its engineers, Vapour Cloud ensures 99.9% uptime for minimum operational interruption. Connectivity is provided through its Tunnel solutions with eight classes of service across its two MPLS networks with five data centres in the UK and interconnecting with all Tier 1 carriers – BT, Virgin Media, Vodafone, TalkTalk and Exponential E as well as ITS, Virtual 1 and Metronet.

<https://www.vapourcloud.com/>

Oracle

Computer giant Oracle provides cloud infrastructure and applications and software products. Having teamed up with Yamaha Motorcycles to develop the next level of diagnostics using augmented reality (AR), Oracle created a 3D image of the bike to identify issues.

By enabling the digitisation of the routine service process, manuals and manufacturer data can be accessed remotely while integration with Oracle's CRM programme is also possible for further efficiencies. As AR becomes more widely used, servicing will further change as technicians will be able to use (AR) glasses and sensors plugged into the Oracle Internet of Things Cloud Service, in order to identify faults.

Oracle is devising AR solutions to enable workshops to access manufacturer information, diagnose faults and track technician progress.

<https://www.oracle.com/uk/index.html>

K

KEY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Bosch

Perfectly Keyless is a keyless vehicle access system from Bosch Mobility Solutions which allows vehicle access and start to be controlled by a digital key on a mobile phone via an app. The app also enables other authorised users to access their vehicle which can all be managed digitally. It allows for secure and standardised flexible key management for car sharing and fleet management. The app means drivers do not need to have a physical key on their person or in the car and makes car sharing and mobility solutions far more practical, removing the task of tracking physical car keys. The app automatically unlocks the vehicle as soon as the smartphone is close. The app can be deactivated online, blocking access to the vehicle, while a regular key can also be used.

Bosch Mobility Solutions' Perfectly Keyless app allows remote vehicle access and start without a physical key for multiple vehicle use and mobility services management.

<https://www.bosch-mobility-solutions.com/en/>

CCKeys

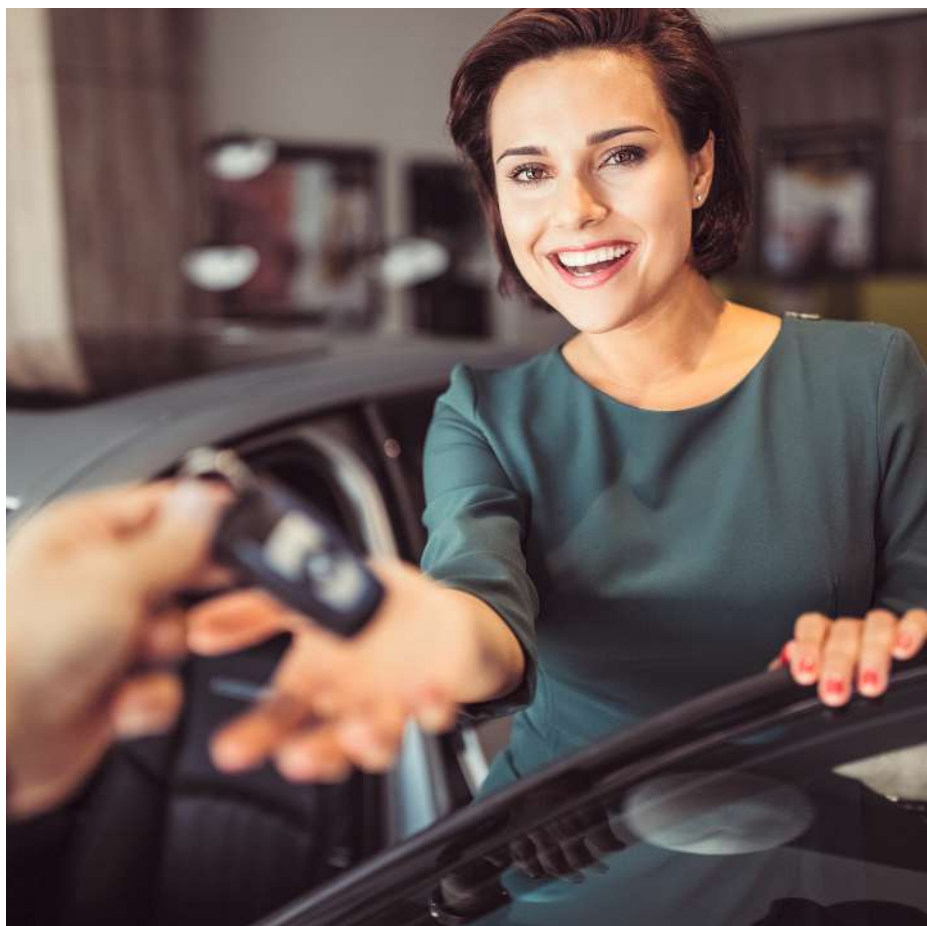
CCKeys develops, manufactures and supplies key storage systems, applying the latest developments in key storage and management technology. Its key systems are made in the UK and its solutions are tailored to the needs of the individual business.

Key Management Solutions enables vehicle keys to be tracked and located efficiently and effectively with the technology custom-built to meet business needs with onsite installation, training and support.

<https://www.cckkeys.com/>

Keytracker

Keytracker delivers key and asset management solutions for vehicles and machinery which require enhanced security. The Keytracker Mechanical Key System provides personalised 'access pegs' to all authorised users, identifying which person has removed a set of keys. Electronic Key Cabinet Management Systems enable keys to be electronically stored and tracked automatically, logging details into the key management software application. RFID technologies can also be deployed for larger access control which also allows a key location to be traced as it passes RFID scanners. Keytracker also offers a range of key management options, including key storage box products with electronic door locks. Its Drop Off and Collection lockers provide a secure way for customers to drop off and collect keys while smart lockers enable employees to share equipment or securely drop off important documents. Key Control Software allows businesses to manage, track and control its keys and assets providing real-time asset movement information. From basic key safe



ISTOCK.COM/MARTIN DIMITROV

box to advanced electronic key control systems, Keytracker delivers secure key tracking and management solutions.

<https://www.keytracker.com/>

Traka Automotive

Traka is an intelligent key and asset management solutions specialist with systems that enable businesses to control and audit access to keys and equipment. By implementing effective management control, user accountability is improved while assets are better utilised.

Specially designed for the automotive sector, Traka Automotive provides bespoke automotive software together with key management cabinets enabling dealerships to better manage their keys and vehicles. Its software integrates with most major dealer management systems while its app allows managers to track key locations even when on the move.

The system provides full key and vehicle movement history as well as the ability to manage access.

Traka Automotive manages key and vehicle location throughout the site and group identifying the whereabouts of demo, stock, courtesy or customer vehicles and keys.

<https://www.traka-automotive.com/en/site/traka-automotive/>

ONLINE VEHICLE RETAILING

iVendi

The iVendi platform spans the entire vehicle purchase process, whether it takes place online, in store or a mixture of the two. The fully connected platform supports dealers and OEMs with both new and used vehicle retailing, allowing consumers to find the right vehicle and create multiple finance quotes before finalising the deal and making the purchase. Engage is its highly personalised vehicle locator; Convert illustrates a vehicle's affordability such as monthly amount repayable, allowing consumers to browse multiple lenders and create a variety of finance quotes and Transact allows the dealer and the customer to digitally build and finalise a deal incorporating part-exchange, any negative equity and add-on products. The system has been developed as a self-service customer experience including applying for finance and purchasing online, while dealers have complete oversight of the deal's progress as well as the ability to interact at vital moments.

The iVendi platform manages online vehicle retailing for dealers and OEMs spanning the vehicle purchase process from search through to financing, part exchange and purchase.

<https://ivendi.com/>



COULD YOUR DEALERSHIP

benefit from offering
your customers a safe,
contact-free way to pay?

*CDK Global is delighted to
announce the solution...*

Introducing **CDK ePayments**

CDK ePayments, powered by Worldpay, offers a contact-free payment option from purchase all the way through to servicing, creating fewer physical touchpoints at a time when enabling less contact really matters.

What do today's consumers expect?

If there is one retail trend that is set to increase in a post-pandemic world it is the need for more contact-free options for the consumer.

The World Health Organization^[1] has been clear in its recommendations that contact-free payments are preferred to limit the spread of COVID-19 and this has been backed by consumer attitudes towards more socially distant options.

According to research this year, as a result of the pandemic, close to half (46%) of automotive consumers want to use online channels for information search and purchase.^[2] To keep up with this sudden change in digital expectations, dealers need to provide more contact-free experiences by stepping up the use of mobile apps, social media, new digital interfaces, and payment platforms.

Social distancing in automotive retail is set to continue for some time with consumers now expecting a safe, secure, and convenient way to make payments whether it's for buying a new car or paying for servicing.

Dealership name: CDK motors Ltd
Customer name: Ms C Kendrick
Payment request description:
Payment to CDK motors Ltd
Invoice SO-11-164
Invoice Number: SO-11-164
Total: £66.00

Name on Card
Chloe Kendrick

Card Number
111133332221111

Expiration 07 / 2021

CVC 123 ?

worldpay from FIS **Pay**

CDK Global is a provider of IT products and services to the automotive industry and is sending this communication on behalf of the Dealership identified above. The payments shall be processed on behalf of Dealership by its nominated payment services provider, Worldpay.

Part of



Pay by Link gives consumers peace of mind

“

CDK's Pay by Link option is giving our customers peace of mind, which is key for them – and for us.

They can agree on a price and pay remotely, then come and pick up their vehicle when they want, safely and quickly, with minimal contact. Given that social distancing measures look like being in place for some time to come, that's a huge advantage for the business. And our accounts teams across multiple sites are finding their processes are much faster and more efficient, thanks to the DMS integration.

”

Paul Parsons, aftersales director
Steven Eagell

Pay by Link, the launch feature within CDK Global's new ePayments solution meets the needs of today's automotive retail consumer by allowing them to pay remotely for sales, services, or repair work.

The dealer sends a link via email and the customer pays quickly and safely, all totally compliant with social distancing requirements.

How can dealerships improve operations with ePayments?

Whether processing the sale of a vehicle or billing a customer for repairs, current payment transactions for UK dealers will likely be multi-staged or paper-based. Each process can take up to 10 minutes to complete, with receipts and additional paperwork providing not only an inconvenient experience for the consumer but also operational inefficiencies for the dealership.

When you have manual processes with dealership staff working through piles of paper receipts, there is a high margin for error and inconsistencies. These inefficiencies are exacerbated by accounts teams taking more time to re-key information to update systems and match invoices with transactions.

CDK ePayments is integrated with your DMS, so every payment is automatically matched to the correct invoice, meaning fewer manual processes and more accurate records.

To learn more about how we can make your dealership contact-free, please visit

cdkglobal.co.uk/epayments

^[1]Global Health Cluster - World Health Organisation - April 2020

^[2]Capgemini - Covid-19 and the age of the contactless customer experience -

<https://www.capgemini.com/gb-en/research/covid-19-and-the-age-of-the-contactless-customer-experience>

Joaquim Croca, VP Commercial at CDK Global explains,

The current climate has posed many challenges for dealer groups globally.

They have to balance getting back to business as quickly as possible with the need to minimise contact. Whether it's paying for a car, servicing, or repair work, we want to enable dealers to give their customers the choice of contact-free payment options from either the showroom or via an email link. Safe, and convenient routes to purchase will give customers peace of mind and the experience that they value and expect.

For dealers, CDK ePayments means:



To enable a safer way to pay for your customers, please visit

cdkglobal.co.uk/epayments

L**LEAD MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS****Contact Advantage**

Contact Advantage operates within the giant US-based Reynolds and Reynolds Corporation, a global specialist in automotive software, and particularly in dealer management systems. Contact Advantage's Claro software operates across multiple devices, providing a customer-facing and intuitive platform tailored for office, showroom or remote use, and supported by an extensive suite of reports and dashboards designed to be easy to use for sales teams, management and other dealership staff. Claro features a new car configurator for all UK franchises, has seamless lead integration with many OEMs, includes an-built digital part-exchange tool, is fully compliant with all FCA and GDPR requirements, and has help screens and video tutorials to keep sales teams up-to-date with the latest features.

<https://contact-advantage.com/>

Dealerweb

Dealerweb creates automotive sales and lead management systems, which helped some 12,000 users manage more than three million leads during 2019. Its flagship product is a lead management system designed for showroom use, which enables sales teams to create customer offers, build customer orders, administer vehicle finance and plan outbound marketing campaigns, and features real-time reporting to enable compre-

hensive analysis of productivity and profitability. Dealerweb also offers a solution intended to ensure that 100% of web-leads are captured – and a swift, professional and personalised response is always sent – and bespoke software including custom-made lead management tools, networked business intelligence reporting and automated centralised lead distribution, tailored for an individual OEM's requirements.

<https://www.dealerweb.org/>

eDynamix

eDynamix develops and delivers a wide array of integrated web-based applications to provide a simple, but effective, platform through which dealers can manage their customers through the complete sales, aftersales and service life-cycle, helping increase productivity, profitability, and customer retention. Dealers can use the eDynamix software to create tailored service plans for routine vehicle servicing, repair plans for planned maintenance items and finance plans for items requiring immediate attention. Its 'MOT Cleanse' app checks information in a dealer's records against DVSA records to improve the MOT date accuracy, identify which vehicles have gone through a change of ownership and which have been scrapped, allowing the dealership to focus more efficiently and accurately on potential MOT sales.

<https://www.edynamix.com/>

enquiryMAX

enquiryMAX specialises in automotive retail software, claiming to bridge the gap between a traditional paper-based appraisal sales process

and the current electronic lead management systems. Among the features of its iPad solution is a link to postcode look-up services, allowing the user to swiftly identify the customer's address, and the ability to start the inquiry process wherever the customer feels most comfortable, removing the need to start with contact details. The desktop solution includes a powerful calendar to organise a sales team's daily, weekly and monthly activities, and the appointment element ensures SMS reminders are sent to both the sales person and the customer. The system is also built on an open architecture platform allowing easy integration with third parties.

<https://www.enquirymax.com/>

RAPID RTC

RAPID RTC creates software solutions for multiple business sectors in 30 countries. Its Lead Manager solution aggregates all digital lead sources from their point of capture, and in real time, then distributes them directly to the person (or people) best suited to reply. The software is designed to integrate with all CRM platforms.

A Response Quality Module scores dealership sales staff judged on such criteria as sending clippings, the use of action terms, the questions they ask and their spelling, and uses predictive measures and AI algorithms to refine all written communications to customers. Its scoring metrics, designed to increase customer engagement, can significantly increase lead conversion.

<https://rapidrtc.com/>



EXPERTS IN AUTOMOTIVE SHOWROOMS

Claro offers a cloud based, multi-device CRM solution for automotive retailers. Claro is designed to be both intuitive and user-friendly to engage your customers whilst being easy to use and insightful for your team. All backed by what is widely recognised as the best support and training function in the industry.

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PART-EXCHANGE APPRAISAL AND DISPOSAL

Aston Barclay

Aston Barclay's e-Xchange is an online trading platform for used vehicles, allowing vendors to sell unwanted, or duplicate, stock 24/7. Sellers can choose between List Only (where the transaction is concluded between them and the buyer) or List and Collect, where advertised vehicles are collected by Aston Barclay's national logistics team, held at an Aston Barclay centre, and the sale is fully managed by its digital solutions team. Unsold vehicles are automatically cascaded into pre-agreed physical or E-live sales. Dealers can upload images on to the e-Xchange platform, with their preferences about timings and any reserve prices. Progress of vehicles through the sales process can be viewed via Aston Barclay's e-Hub dashboard.

<https://www.astonbarclay.net/>

BCA

BCA Dealer Pro is an appraisal tool designed to help dealers manage every aspect of handling part-exchanges, via a simple to use app for tablets. The valuations feature uses the biggest data-set in the industry, combined with the latest in machine learning techniques, to provide real-time valuations. Dealer Pro provides real-time visibility of the status of all vehicles, including their condition, value and location. It also shows how many vehicles you have been offered in part-exchange, and those you still have the opportunity to close. New features include a damage prompt

if no damage is reported on the cosmetic appraisal. A link to the Dealer Pro site and the ability to record such equipment as sun-roofs, tow-bars and parking cameras.

<https://www.bca.co.uk/Services/BCA-Dealer-Pro/>

Cooper Solutions

Cooper Solutions FullAuction is a trade-only online vehicle auction site, where No Sale means No Fee for sellers. A full range of automated message notifications keeps buyers and sellers up to date with all auction activity. FullAppraisal is a mobile vehicle appraisal tool which allows sales executives to move from outdated paper-based processes to electronic appraisal of part-exchange vehicles, capturing vehicle and customer information accurately for greater visibility into potential leads. Up to 15 photos can be uploaded, VRM look-up reduces the time spent on vehicle details and increases time spent with the customer, and a comprehensive checklist of appraisal points creates a 'duty of care' with the customer. The tool is designed for use on tablets and desktops.

<https://www.coopersolutions.co.uk/>

Epyx

Epyx 1Link Disposal Network covers all aspects of the de-fleeting and remarketing process, including client recharges, logistics, refurbishments and vehicle sales with a full service history. Trade buyers can access an extensive range of ex-fleet, leasing and manufacturer vehicles. The system provides an instant and integrated communication tool for auction houses, dealerships, drivers, manufacturers, retailers and traders. Messages are sent to drivers six weeks before the vehicle's

end of life, including an automated sales quote. Scheduling of key events, such as inspections, movements and repairs is automated, with tools allowing agents to raise and validate work. Invoicing and validation are carried out instantly online.

<https://www.epyx.co.uk/disposal-network/>

Manheim

Manheim Seller Advance uses real-time data and daily market activity to send used-vehicle valuations to a salesperson's PC or digital device. Its 97% accuracy gives sales staff the confidence to offer the most competitive – and the most profitable – part-exchange prices. Manheim has such confidence in its valuations it can arrange BACS advances into a dealer's bank account on the following day, and then settle any difference between the valuation and final auction sale price once the transaction is completed. Its ImageCapture tool provides up to 20 high-resolution digital images, showing a vehicle's type, specification, colour and trim, as well as evidence of any damage, wear or tear, with brief descriptions accompanying each images, plus tags to specific areas.

<https://www.manheim.co.uk/>

PRICING AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Autorola

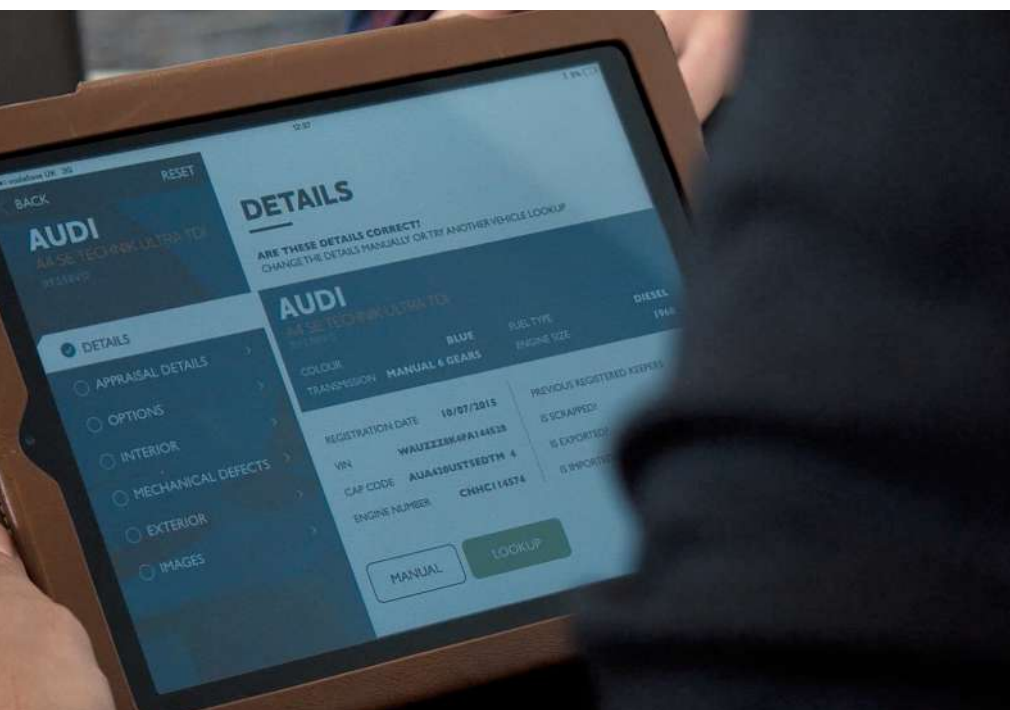
Autorola's Indicata claims to be the next-gen of business intelligence and market insights software, for the management of used vehicle inventories. It improves market transparency for OEMs, dealers, fleet operators and vehicle finance suppliers, protects and increases current residual values, predicts future residuals, and analyses, manages and reduces risks. Indicata also has an integrated suite of modules, features and functionalities to help users at all levels manage their used car operations more efficiently.

Its inventory management module offers real-time information about a user's KPIs, such as inventory age, price to market, pricing strategy and stock turns, and also highlights vehicles whose prices have remained unchanged, or which have too few pictures accompanying their descriptions.

<https://www.indicata.com/>

Auto Trader

Auto Trader Retail Accelerator is a car management tool which helps retailers manage their stock more efficiently, tracks changing market conditions 24/7, and delivers pro-active alerts and dynamic performance reporting to improve retailers' competitive position. Its 'AT Retail Rating' claims to provide unrivalled insight on the latest buyer demand, market supply and the best days to sell, allowing dealers to enhance profitability by buying and selling using the latest retail prices, rather than last month's trade prices. Detailed filters and dynamic market views



Because not all car buyers are the same



In recent years, Startline has brought the concept of near prime motor finance into fashion, approving many used car buyers who have been rejected by principal lenders while offering comparable terms.

Our Finishline product takes this a step further.

Designed for people who don't quite fit the conventions of our core hire purchase product, it satisfies a neglected need for mid-market motor finance that is below prime but a long way from the punishing rates and conditions of sub-prime.

Finishline means we can say yes to more used car buyers – and are already doing so for some of the largest, most forward looking dealers in the UK.

It embodies the whole Startline approach – more flexible motor finance, competitively priced, with excellent service standards. Why not get in touch to find out how our products could look just right for many of your customers?

enquiries@startlinemotorfinance.com
www.startlinemotorfinance.com

startline
MOTOR FINANCE

C also allow competitor activity to be monitored in seconds. Dealers can configure the tool at site, brand or group level, ensuring stock levels are always monitored, and the data is available via any device 24/7.

<https://trade.autotrader.co.uk/help/retail-accelerator>

Cap HPI

CAP HPI Black Book Live claims to be the only independent and fully-researched 'live' tool keeping track of valuation movements throughout each month, thus allowing companies to maximise their margins. Such changes typically impact 60% of the available stock, meaning users can easily pay too much for a car – or sell it for too little. Its mileage-adjusted values are accurate 365 days a year, and available at three condition points. Black Book Live also monitors six million real-time value movements between each of its monthly publications, explains why values moved, which derivatives have moved, and offers opinion values as soon as a vehicle is launched, based on the accumulated expertise and experience of its team of editors.

<https://business.cap.co.uk/blackbooklive>

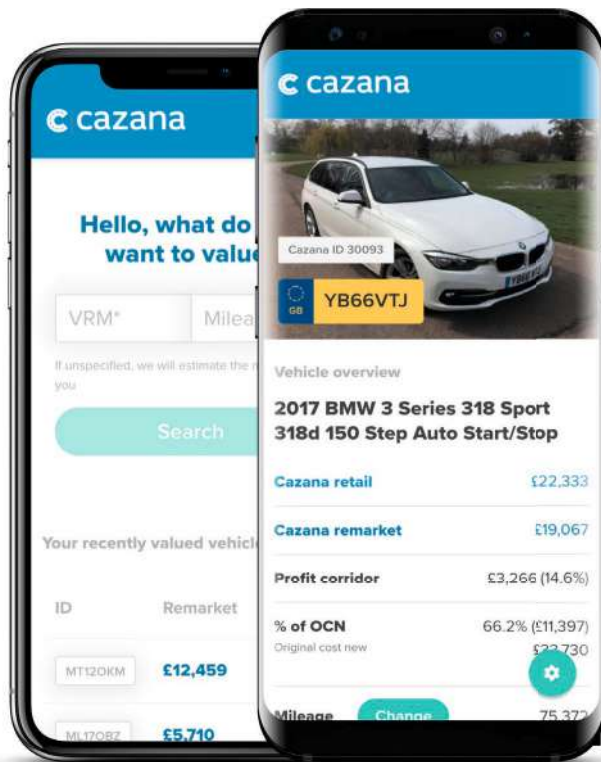
Cazana

Cazana is a disruptor in the field of vehicle data and valuations. Its methodology is underpinned by Big Data and AI, rather than sampled data and editing, to produce impartial and accurate views of every vehicle's value, provenance and market position. Cazana believes its insights and analysis help dealers better understand today's complex and fast-moving market, and stock the right vehicles for a faster turn and higher profits. It collects vehicle data 24/7, and its team of data scientists and machine learning experts are constantly building new models to interpret what the retail market is doing, allowing customers to create stock mixes balanced for diversity, profitability and speed of turn, rather than use legacy trade guides.

<https://cazana.com/uk>

Glass's

Glass's GlassNet Radar uses a mix of trade valuations and live retail pricing, powered by Radar, (which searches more than 8.5m trade-only real-time adverts), to deliver accurate and real-time values across the UK, or in specified locations. Its data covers more than 68,000 models, and is based on 1.8m trade and 8.6m retail market observations. Valuations can also be tailored to include such influences as mileage, condition and options. GlassNet can be used across tablets and mobiles, and is available for all types of car, commercial vehicle, motorcycle and caravan.



Radar can also identify which competitors are stocking a similar vehicle, its asking price, how long it's been on their forecourt and how often its price has changed.

<http://www.glassbusiness.co.uk/>

R

REPUTATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Hootsuite

Hootsuite allows dealers to devise, schedule, deliver and monitor all their social media, marketing and promotional activities at scale from a single platform.

The dashboard provides real-time insight into which content is performing – and which isn't – and the collaborative calendar allows team members to view and manage the content.

Dealership staff can engage effectively and instantly with customers, suppliers, OEMs and anyone else in their social media landscape. Simple and secure permission levels ensure that your online presence is as structured and organised as in the physical world. Response times and efficiency levels of individuals or teams can be easily monitored and boosted, relationships can be strengthened, and business outcomes enhanced.

<https://hootsuite.com/>

JudgeService

JudgeService specialises in bringing authentic

customer reviews to the marketplace, offering people who have bought or sold vehicles, or interacted with dealership staff, to speak about their experiences via verified online reviews, and then providing a rich array of data and opinions to its customers.

It sends out bespoke surveys to customers and lost leads, verifies the feedback it receives via calls, e-mail, text or post, and then (if permission is granted) publishing those reviews.

Judge also uses that information to provide dealers with insights about their service levels, and the performance of products and services they have supplied to the reviewers.

The resulting rich mix of customer data is then used to help companies monitor and improve their performance.

<http://www.judgeservice.com/>

Sprout Social

Sprout Social provides an all-in-one social management solution that allows dealers to achieve more from their social media activities, letting them better connect with existing and potential customers to promote their

brands, products and services more effectively and efficiently, and to extract social data in meaningful insights at scale.

Among its services are the ability to provide information about trends and actionable insights to clients who can then fine-tune their marketing strategies.

The independent software review site G2 rates it very highly for usability, customer support and satisfaction, user adoption levels and ROI.

Sprout Social also specialises in providing automated presentation-ready reports for clients, and access to data via its easy-to-understand toolkit.

<https://sproutsocial.com/>

TweetDeck

TweetDeck is a free web-based tool which can help individuals, teams and corporate organisations manage and post to their Twitter accounts.

It has also been designed to improve organisation, which typically would mean viewing separate columns for your home feed, direct messages and activity related to your account.

The dashboard can easily be customised, making it easy for businesses which need to organise and monitor their social profiles, and to manage several accounts in real-time.

If users want to follow specific trends or topics, they can add columns which will manage all tweets relating to their choices.

Equally, it's easy to get rid of unwanted updates about particular issues and topics, or to filter out particular information sources if required.

<https://tweetdeck.twitter.com/>

RFID TAGS**Assa Abloy**

Assa Abloy leads the global market for access controls, from locks, gates and automated entrances to vetting identities via an array of sophisticated smart-cards, tags and biometric systems. Maintenance-free RFID (radio-frequency identification) tags automate and simplify vehicle identification and location. Ultra-rugged tags can be connected to a vehicle's electronics to provide data on such operational issues as vehicle use, distance driven and engine cycles. RFID-enabled components can even be integrated into fuel control systems to simplify management for commercial fleet and retail fuelling stations. RFID tags can also be used to verify the identities of people entering premises, warehouses or other secure areas, and trying to log into business networks or using cloud-based apps.

<https://www.assaabloy.com>

Paragon

Paragon ID specialises in identification solutions, and RFID is at the heart of all its activities.

Years of working with the automotive industry has seen it devise ID 'labels' for engine components, vehicle interiors and exteriors, tyres, and after-market products, and use them to combat counterfeiting and fraud. Its tags simplify the management and maintenance of cars, especially in a large and busy environment, and are of great help when trying to locate a vehicle in a crowded park.

RFID also allows inventory management to be carried out in real-time, tracing parts and products in warehouses and vehicle service areas. It has also partnered with geolocation specialist Apitrak



to develop a cloud-based platform to track assets, inventory and people.

<https://www.paragon-id.com/>

Traka Automotive

Traka Automotive operates within Assa Abloy Global Solutions as a specialist in intelligent management solutions for keys and equipment. Traka was established in 1995, and twice won a Queen's Award for Enterprise in recognition of its rapid international growth. In 2012, it was acquired by Assa Abloy and in 2015, Traka Automotive was created via a merger with eTag Solutions. The features of Traka's keys include the ability to track them when moved from one cabinet to another – wherever they are. They also immediately identify who was responsible for speeding and parking tickets, provide a full audit trail of all key movements by all employees, and allow controlled access to vehicles by valeters and external staff.

<https://www.traka-automotive.com>

process from any location. As soon as one of their vehicles is offered for sale, they can switch to Vendor Mode to place vehicles on hold, accept 'best bids', or message the auctioneer.

<https://www.astonbarclay.net/>

BCA

BCA Live Online gives professional motor traders a fast, simple and secure way to acquire vehicles, whether they are in their office accessing via their desk-top, or out and about on their iPad. Users have real-time access allowing them to bid on and buy vehicles as they pass through the auction hall. Up to four sales can be accessed at any one time via four bidding screens. All vehicles offered via BCA Live Online come from known sources, and their condition is graded from 1-5, unless they are unclassified. The service also offers access to e-Auction and Bid Now, Buy Now sales, when vehicles can only be bought online and will include 'off-site' stock located at a vendor's location.

<https://www.bca.co.uk/>

Manheim

Manheim Simulcast is an online platform which allows users to bid from anywhere in the world they can get safely online. Fully optimised for laptop, tablet or smartphone, it uses a combination of 'live' video and audio streaming so buyers can watch and hear auctions. Users can also bid and buy with a single click or swipe, send the auctioneer an instant message, and switch easily between different auctions. Simulcast has six membership categories, with the Premier+ option offering a dedicated national account manager, complimentary pick-ups and drop-offs, and a valet service.

<https://www.manheim.co.uk/>

**≡ S****STOCK ACQUISITION APPS****Aston Barclay**

The Aston Barclay Buyer App is designed to bridge the gap between the physical auction hall and the outside world via a simple and transparent process. Buyers can identify vehicles from across the group, and then source them on the go. The app allows users to search each vehicle, view its full condition and study its Aston Barclay Assured report, place a proxy bid, and then bid live in sales throughout the UK. Sellers can take complete control of the

MG5 EV



MG5 EV will test the UK public's appetite for electric estate cars

MG dealers are about to get their second pure battery electric vehicle to retail, plus a plug-in hybrid, as the brand expects its new car sales in 2020 to exceed 20,000 units.

The MG ZS SUV B-segment electric car, launched mid-2019 and now the fourth biggest selling electric car in the UK, will be joined in November by the MG5 EV estate and in October by the MG HS plug-in hybrid.

"Electric is now, and MG is electric," said Daniel Gregorious, head of sales and marketing at MG Motor UK.

To date, 27% of MG's new car sales this year have been plug-ins, and in 2021 he expects 51% to be plug-in models.

"The key to our success will be bringing affordable, high tech and electric cars to market, all wearing that iconic MG badge," said Gregorious.

Sold in China under the Roewe brand, and powered by a 115kW motor coupled to

52.2kWh batteries, the MG5 EV is capable of 214 miles maximum range (combined WLTP) and as much as 276 miles in purely city environments.

It will be priced from £24,495 (after the £3,000 plug-in car grant in taken into account) in Excite trim and it gives users a 0% benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax rate currently, or 1% in 2021-22 tax year.

MG expects half of the electric estate car's sales to be in the fleet and business market segments.

There is a higher specification Exclusive model which costs from £26,995 and adds artificial leather upholstery, heated front seats and door mirrors, climate control, keyless entry and start, sat-nav and automatic wipers.

Alongside a touchscreen and reversing camera, a rotary gear selector brings a premium-style touch to the cabin, and there are three driving modes – eco, sport and normal – which allow the driver to prioritise



WE BELIEVE THE MG5 EV IS A REAL BREAKTHROUGH IN TERMS OF VALUE-FOR-MONEY, PRACTICAL EVs IN THE UK

**DANIEL GREGORIOUS,
MG MOTOR UK**

battery range or driving performance as they desire.

Charging with a Type 2 charger at home will take around 8.5 hours, said MG, and fast-chargers will provide 80% of charge within 50 minutes.

MG is promoting the aerodynamics, lower centre of gravity and driving dynamics of the C-segment electric estate car in comparison with a trendier electric SUV, in a bid to counter the UK's decline in mainstream estate car sales.

"With MG5 EV we're turned over a new leaf with Europe's first SW (sportswagon aka estate) EV. With a big boot, a big range and a small price tag, we believe the MG5 EV is a real breakthrough in terms of value-for-money, practical EVs in the UK."

He admitted this was a "test" of how well an electric estate car would be accepted by UK consumers.

With batteries integrated within the chassis, boot space is not compromised.



Boot space on the MG5 EV is not compromised by the battery



Exclusive trim adds faux leather and heated seats to the MG5 Excite's entry-level specification

From less than 446 litres with the load cover in place, retract the boot cover and that rises to 578 litres, and drop the rear seats and buyers get 1,456 litres – about 24% larger than the Nissan Leaf.

This is part of the reason MG expects half of the sales of this car to be in the fleet and business markets, which will be unusual for MG whose buyers have been mostly retail customers until now.

Gregorious also highlighted that the much smaller Renault Zoe is the only pure EV that's cheaper than the MG5 EV.

So, for family transport, MG has a huge advantage.

Gregorious concluded: "Many EVs now are based on an SUV bodystyle, but MG5 EV bucks that trend. With fewer compromises, we believe this bodystyle offers the optimum combination of maximum driving efficiency, internal space and driving dynamics. We expect to see more manufacturers follow our lead." **TIM ROSE**



£24,995-£26,995
(AFTER GRANT)



SINGLE ELECTRIC
MOTOR WITH
52.5KWH BATTERY



0-62MPH
8.5 SECONDS;
TOP SPEED
115MPH



AUTOMATIC



RANGE:
214 MILES



0G/KM CO₂

Q&A



DANIEL GREGORIOUS,
HEAD OF
SALES AND
MARKETING,
MG MOTOR UK

What are MG's latest achievements?

In 2016, we passed the 4,000 annual sales mark for the first time and only topped 10,000 sales for the first time in 2019. In 2020, MG is the only mainstream brand in growth. We will exceed 20,000 sales. This tremendous sales volume improvement is underpinned by our 'momentum and growth' mid-term plan.

In 2019, we set out to treble our sales volume in just three years with the volume growth being driven by new dealer appointments and new model launches. The key to our success will be bringing affordable, hi-tech and electric cars to market.

During 2020 we've continued to expand the size of our dealer network, bringing our cars closer to more and more British consumers. We've 112 dealers across the country, and by the end of the year we'll reach our 'momentum and growth' objective with 120 MG dealers.

What's helping you recruit dealers?

We've been very busy over the past two years refreshing our model range.

Our longest-serving car is MG3, which received an extensive mid-cycle enhancement two years ago. Since then, we've delivered a new C-segment SUV, MG HS, and refreshed our best-selling B-segment SUV, MG ZS petrol.

In July 2019 we launched our first battery electric vehicle (BEV), MG ZS EV. It's proven to be a big sales success in the UK. It was the first truly affordable family-friendly electric car with space for all the family, five-star EuroNCAP safety, high levels of technology, a seven year warranty and a low starting price.

ZS EV has helped MG to achieve the highest EV mix of any mainstream manufacturer. Only the two 100% electric brands, Tesla and Smart, can claim a higher mix. This year a third of our sales will be plug-in cars.

How will this car help dealers in 2021?

With the addition of the MG5 EV and the HS Plug-In SUV, MG now has three plug-in cars, all offering something different to buyers. We can be confident of being the go-to mainstream brand for electric cars with a model for everything and everyone.

In 2021, we aim to achieve a 51% plug-in mix. More than half of our cars will be electrified.

The MG5 EV is a unique offering in the market, combining a practical family bodystyle and a full electric powertrain.

≈ KEY RIVALS



Nissan Leaf



TRIED AND TRUSTED



MORE EXPENSIVE,
LESS LOAD CAPACITY



Ford Focus diesel estate



CHEAPER PRICE



FUEL AND TAX BILLS,
LESSER WARRANTY



Kia E-Niro



CROSSOVER STYLING,
SEVEN-YEAR
WARRANTY



BOOT SPACE, COST

≈ REVIEW RATINGS

CARBUYER



AUTO EXPRESS



WHAT CAR?



VOLVO XC60 T8 R-DESIGN PRO

REPORT
PROGRESS



BEST USED CAR ACCOLADE COMES AS NO SURPRISE

Volvo Car UK's new car sales reached a record high for September this year, with 9,147 registrations and a 2.8% market share.

Its smallest car, the XC40, was the best-seller by far with 5,653 registrations, but 1,327 companies and buyers took delivery of its bigger brother, the XC60, like the one on *AM*'s test car fleet since the start of the year. Volvo's biggest SUV, XC90, came third and achieved 767 registrations.

"Now more than ever people want to make sure they are getting the best products and value for their money, and they are increasingly putting their faith in Volvo," said VCUK commercial operations director Matt Galvin.

In September, Volvo's headline PCP offers on XC60 had 0% APR, allowing private buyers to get into the upper-medium premium SUV for £402 per month over three years (in B5 Momentum guise) provided they had a £7,630 trade-in or deposit.

Given the success achieved, that offer has now been extended through Q4.

Volvo dealers were also buoyed in September by XC60 winning the trophy for best used large SUV in the 2021 What Car? Used Car of

the Year Awards. "Bought at a couple of years old, it's superb value for money and a worthy winner of our award," said What Car?'s used car editor Mark Pearson.

"Despite sitting in a class full of compelling competitors, its impressive combination of luxury and refinement, and its strong safety credentials, gave it the edge this year."

Now that XC60 has been in the market almost four years Volvo's dealers are poised to capitalise on its appeal to used buyers as any cars out of the original warranty will gain 12 months' cover under the Selekt approved used scheme, plus a year's roadside assistance and MOT.

Months of using our own plug-in hybrid SUV has shown that, whether new or used, the XC60 certainly stands out from its premium rivals with its distinctive, cool Scandinavian-inspired styling, safety technology and blend of comfort and practicality. There have been no issues with the car, even after several weeks of inactivity during the coronavirus lockdown in the spring.

Now, as winter nears, I'm particularly enjoying its heated seats and steering wheel as I run the kids to school under pure electric motion.

TIM ROSE



£65,870
INC OPTIONS



2.0-LITRE PETROL-
ELECTRIC PLUG-IN
HYBRID, 406PS



0-62MPH 5.2SECS,
TOP SPEED 140MPH



104.6 (WLTP)



60G/KM (WLTP)

CURRENT
MILEAGE

0 2 4 5 2

START
MILEAGE

0 0 5 6 4



AWARD-WINNING, CLASSY STYLING,
LUXURIOUS INTERIOR



UNDERSTANDING THE
ON-BOARD TECH

≡ GUESS THE CAR COMPETITION

THIS MONTH'S WINNER



Simon Hayes,
service advisor at
Hammond Group
in Halesworth,
correctly
identified the Fiat
Cinquecento
Soleil shown in
the last issue.

See if you can identify this month's model for your chance to win a £20 John Lewis voucher. Email am@bauermedia.co.uk with 'Guess the car' in the subject line and include your job title and company in your entry. The closing date is Friday, November 6.



...THE SEARCH IS OVER



Introducing Assurant's NEW range
of cosmetic insurance products.

95% of dealership customers want protection from scuffed alloys, scratched doors or chipped paintwork*, so is it time to put the spotlight on your current provider...

Do they own a UK based insurer?

Do they have over 50 years' experience?

Are they financially stable to offer
confidence to your business and customers?

Get in touch to find out more on our Scratch and Dent,
Tyre & Alloy and Alloy Wheel Insurance products.



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*Assessing the consumer appetite for Automobile Cosmetic Insurance research, June 2020.

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TIME FOR AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY TO ADDRESS MENTAL HEALTH

New initiatives want to focus spotlight on stress and depression

Two advocates for mental wellbeing have called on the automotive industry to address what they believe are systemic flaws in car retail culture that exacerbate anxiety and depression.

Steve Whitton, owner of automotive consultancy SSW Automotive, has founded Menable (a portmanteau of men and enablement) to work with senior management teams at dealer groups and car manufacturers to help employees with mental health issues before they reach crisis point.

Menable aims to coach chief executives and all leaders, through strategy reviews and workshops, to help open up the conversation around how the automotive industry deals with mental health.

Automotive Minds has also recently been launched by David Cain to offer e-learning, web-based training and face-to-face mental health training for those in the automotive industry.

Both are looking to collaborate and raise awareness of mental health in the automotive industry.

Whitton told *AM* he was driven to set up Menable due to his own personal circumstances.

He said: "For many years the public persona I projected was very different to

what was going on on the inside. I was a victim of my own thoughts and limiting self-belief, that most people wouldn't believe when they see the confidence and personality you portray."

Whitton said there are many HR teams at dealer groups that are doing good work around mental health and while he said he does not want to talk down any company offering sessions and counselling, he thinks there should be caution in "putting a plaster over a gaping wound".

Whitton believes the automotive industry is often guilty of promoting people before they're ready. He said: "We put people into management positions that don't have the skills or emotional intelligence to deal with their own issues, let alone the issues their teams might be having."

The automotive industry is geared up for mass production. OEMs need an outlet for their product and this is what drives targets and bonus schemes across the country.

Whitton said as an example: "Culturally we've had this belief with sales executives that you can employ them on a relatively low basic pay and give them the promise of unlimited earnings."

"I've seen how the stresses of this and modern life can lead to compulsive behaviours, whether that's gambling, alcoholism, problems with relationships or even drug abuse."

"How we deal with all of that has got to come back to the culture of the business."

This is particularly relevant at a time when hundreds or perhaps thousands are facing redundancy and uncertainty as the Government's furlough scheme ends on October 31.

While Whitton is not suggesting immediate wholesale change, he wants



IT WOULD BE GREAT TO ESTABLISH A MENTAL HEALTH CLUB FOR THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY, LED BY SENIOR EXECUTIVES



DAVID CAIN,
AUTOMOTIVE MINDS

Menable to front a new movement in encouraging the automotive industry to speak more about mental health and wellbeing.

Cain said it's his ambition to establish a mental health-focused version of the Automotive 30% Club, which is a voluntary network of MDs and CEOs from UK-based automotive companies with the purpose of achieving a better gender balance within the automotive industry.

Cain said: "It would be great to establish a Mental Health Club for the automotive industry, led by senior executives to come forward and talk about what they're doing in their own businesses and how we can better raise awareness more widely."

"I'm also keen to collaborate with Steve at Menable to draw more attention to wellbeing in the automotive industry."

Whitton is currently working with a client through Menable who has said that to be an employer of choice, you have to be ready to disrupt your culture.

He added: "I want to see the industry talking about this topic much more frequently and to get a real movement going to make it so that open and frank conversations can be had by all."

"Only then are we going to start making progress."

TOM SEYMOUR



I WANT TO SEE THE INDUSTRY TALKING ABOUT THIS TOPIC MUCH MORE FREQUENTLY AND TO GET A REAL MOVEMENT GOING



STEVE WHITTON,
SSW AUTOMOTIVE

RESOURCES

SANE NEW WORLD: TAMING THE MIND

Ruby Wax – comedian, writer and mental health campaigner – shows how our minds can jeopardise our sanity.

<https://www.waterstones.com/book/sane-new-world/ruby-wax/9781444755756>

FIVE STEPS TO HELP A MATE

CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably) highlights five steps taken from suicide prevention training that can help friends and colleagues in all sorts of situations.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crVyblRi7eQ>

MEN'S HEALTH NOVEMBER

The Mental Health Foundation has a specific focus on men's mental health in November each year. It tells men's stories and shares tips, statistics and topics about mental health.

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/blog/our-work-mens-mental-health>

TALENT ON THE MOVE



**AUGUSTIN MARTIN,
PRESIDENT AND
MANAGING DIRECTOR
OF TOYOTA GB**

Toyota GB has welcomed Augustin Martin as its new president and managing director, following the retirement of Paul Van der Burgh.

Martin was previously the chief executive of the London-based Toyota Connected Europe (TCEU) and vice-president Connected Technologies at Toyota Motor Europe. He officially took up his new post on October 1.

His career with the Japanese carmaker began in 1995 and has included spells as president and chief executive of Toyota Spain (from 2015), Toyota Motor Europe (TME) marketing director (from 2012) and previously TME product planning general manager.

Most recently, Martin has focused on developing the key digital technologies that will enable Toyota future mobility.

Van der Burgh, who said he is retiring to Northumberland, a region which he described as "one of the most beautiful parts of the world", was appointed president and managing director of Toyota GB in July 2015 following a series of executive roles in Toyota Motor Europe, including marketing director and director of the Lexus brand.

Toyota acknowledged that Van der Burgh had fostered pioneering solutions and technologies such as online sales and mobility as a service (MaaS) during his time with the company.

A notable achievement during Van der Burgh's tenure is Toyota GB's success in terms of employee engagement and satisfaction, as testified by the 2020 *Sunday Times* Best Companies employee engagement survey where the firm ranked 15th and number one within the industry.

Van der Burgh also supported a range of diversity initiatives as a founder member of the Automotive 30% Club.

MOVERS IN BRIEF



MARK COX, VOLVO CAR UK

Volvo Car UK has named Mark Cox as its new network and business development director, with head of fleet

and remarketing Steve Beattie moving to a head of sales role. As part of a series of leadership changes Suzanne Woolley and Johan Olsson will also join as digital director and chief financial officer.



PHILL SARGENT, SSANGYONG

SsangYong has appointed Phill Sargent as its new regional aftersales manager

for the south of England and Wales. He joins Peter Howe, who is responsible for the north of England and Scotland.



MICHELLE FAIRCLOUGH AND LIAM NICHOLAS, VANSDIRECT

Vertu Motors has appointed two new national fleet sales managers – Michelle Fairclough and Liam Nicholas – for its Vansdirect (LCV) business. The appointments follow Samantha Ward's appointment as operations director.



DR ESTHER HILLS AND RACHEL LEECH, THE IMI

The Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI) has welcomed BP's Dr Esther Hills and the Rail Safety Standards Board's Rachel Leech as non-executive directors. Chief executive Steve Nash said the new hires would help it to remain "relevant and representative" in a challenging climate.



MARK TASKER, MFG

MFG's associate partner Mark Tasker has been named as its new aftersales programmes manager.

He will be responsible for developing and launching MFG's aftersales training programmes offering and will report directly to chief executive, Declan Gaule.

Tasker is credited with delivering successful programmes and results across the UK, China and Japan.



**WAYNE GRIFFITHS,
PRESIDENT
OF SEAT**

Cupra brand chief executive and president Wayne Griffiths has been appointed as the new overall president of SEAT.

He will continue in his leadership role with Cupra, while Carsten Isensee, who has been acting SEAT president, will continue as executive vice-president for finance and IT.

Griffiths' main goal in his new role will be to drive the continued transformation of SEAT towards electrification and sustainable mobility and further develop the Cupra brand.

The son of a car dealership owner, Griffiths began his career working in the family business before studying international management and German in Leeds.

His Volkswagen Group career started at Audi, in Ingolstadt, in 1989.

After working for SEAT for two years (1991-1993), he returned to the German brand, where he held various positions in the new commercial division in different markets.

In 2016, he was appointed vice-president for sales and marketing at SEAT, before stepping up to run the Cupra brand in 2019.



**DOMINIQUE BOESCH,
MANAGING DIRECTOR
OF GENESIS MOTOR
EUROPE**

Audi's former head of future retail, Dominique Boesch, has joined Hyundai Motor Group's premium division Genesis Motor Europe as its first managing director.

His appointment comes as the brand steps up preparations for a European market launch,

which is expected to include the UK.

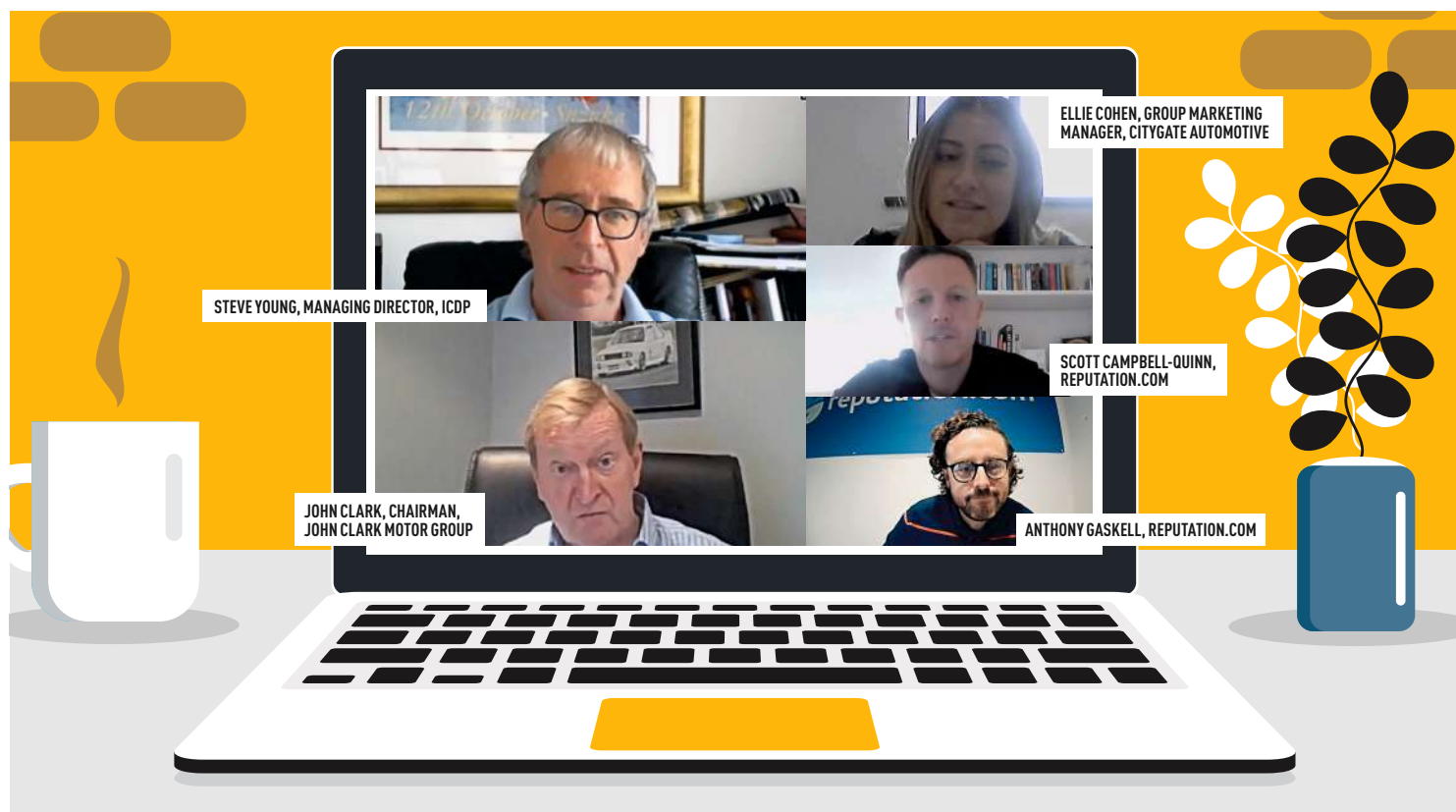
As Genesis Motor Europe's first managing director, Boesch is based at the company's new regional headquarters in Germany.

He will report directly to Jaehoon (Jay) Chang, global head of the Genesis Brand, who is based in Seoul.

Boesch joins from Audi where he held the role of sales director in France, before serving as managing director in Korea, Japan and China, respectively, during 20 years with the Volkswagen Group brand.

He is the latest in a series of strategic hires for Genesis.

Former Polestar UK managing director Andrew Pilkington joined the brand as operations director two months ago.



AM ROUNDTABLE GOES VIRTUAL

Expectations are high as the automotive industry continues its emergence from lockdown, but there are warning signs that the coming months could still be tough

Some retailers are feeling the pressure as manufacturers demand they to get their digital houses in order to take advantage of any market recovery ahead of what is expected to be a tough Q4, according to delegates at AM's first virtual round table (held on August 18, before further lockdown measures were introduced).

THE RETURN FROM LOCKDOWN

Ellie Cohen, group marketing manager at Greater London Volkswagen specialist Citygate Automotive, said: "The pent-up demand has been crazy. It's been about managing that correctly and converting those enquiries.

"Everyone has had a bit of a break in terms of the sales teams, but now they're ready and raring to go.

"As long as we're feeding those enquiries through to them, they're up for it and they want those sales.

"We're on track to deliver a strong September. We had a successful July and August. The biggest task for us is Q4. Our message is that it's not just business as usual, but business is better because we've learnt from everything that's been thrown at us during COVID-19.

"We've kept everything going, whereas I think some retailers have stepped back a bit.

"The customer experience hasn't really stopped. From my perspective, as a consumer, I'm ready for companies to get back to normal and I think it can be refreshing for other consumers that want to get back to a bit of normality."

John Clark, chairman of John Clark Motor Group, which has dealerships up and down the east coast of Scotland, said used car sales have been particularly strong during lockdown, despite showroom doors not being able to open until June 29.

Clark said: "During lockdown there was a significant swing to remote selling. That has continued, but there are also still a lot of people locally looking for their next car.

"New car business hasn't risen to the expectations the manufacturers would like. I'm very disappointed that some OEMs are talking about big numbers coming in Q4. The final quarter will be the big push and I don't think the market will be there. We're starting to realise how many people will be unemployed and Q4 will be very difficult as a result.

"We've built a reasonable order bank in September, but not what we would in a normal year.

"We've eaten into that new order bank in July and August, so the numbers the SMMT is looking for are not going to be realised, unless it's by self-registrations, which we are steering completely clear of."

Clark said there has been some push into fleet markets on deals that

are "unrealistic" in order to get stock into the market.

He said: "We're also seeing a reluctance from consumers to commit to PCP at the moment and more of a swing into people buying used vehicles on finance.

"This swing away from PCP could be because some of the residual values are not looking realistic and there's not enough equity in the vehicle.

"Credit is also tightening. People who were seen as good risk before are not as good any more."

While Clark said July was good for the group, the business still needs to make up on ground it lost during the lockdown.

Clark added: "There's no group in the country that didn't lose money during lockdown. If they didn't, they're probably fiddling the numbers.

"We're at 82% capacity in terms of welcoming staff back from furlough to the business.

"We're considering very carefully what we do about bringing back the remaining numbers. I'm optimistic because we can control our stock, we're cash rich and we have all the good people back. But I'm pessimistic about manufacturer demands and what's going to happen with Brexit."

REMOTE SELLING AND VIDEO

Clark said remote selling has increased since lockdown, with the majority of sales being used cars that have the right price, right spec and warranty.

He said: "We've seen that on all the premium brands and even some of the non-premium stuff. For new cars, it's been entirely based on price."

John Clark Motor Group set up remote selling hubs during lockdown that included sales teams of three executives and one manager working from home, dealing with enquiries for all of the company's 12 franchises.

Test drives were offered at people's homes and completed sales were delivered by transporter. All cars were sanitised before delivery.

Clark said: "I think a lot of consumers appreciated that approach."

The average sales executive at John Clark is selling 28 cars a month and some are doing 45 a month. Before lockdown it might have been 12 or 14.

Deliveries and product knowledge is left to other people in the team, so the sales executives have been selling more as a result.

Clark said: "Lockdown and working remotely have actually meant everyone is planning their time a lot better."

Cohen said that London has seen a higher number of customers happy to come back into physical showrooms compared with Clark's experience in Scotland.

However, the lockdown has been an eye-opener for some concerning the benefits technology can bring to the sales process.

Cohen said: "For years it's been a struggle pushing video and technology. It's been an eye-opener for some of our team members in terms of what technology can help you do."

"It's meant the teams are a lot more

engaged with creating good video content."

Steve Young, managing director at ICDP, the automotive distribution and retailing research company, counselled that, with increased reliance on video in the sales process, manufacturers should start to introduce standards for this content.

Young said: "When you can't put personality into the sales process, it then starts to become more of just a conversation around price and you're then in a race to the bottom."

MANUFACTURER STANDARDS AND RATIONALISATION

Clark said the view from manufacturers on targets and demands will all depend on how Brexit goes.

He said: "I would hate to think the manufacturers have a whip hand on top of the dealers again."

"The level of investment we have had in bricks and mortar will have to change in the future."

Young said: "The problem is that OEMs are setting things centrally, sometimes away from the UK."

"From their point of view, Brexit isn't an issue for the guy that is setting the standards for a showroom."

"Network strategy directors can see that showrooms won't be required at the same scale, but there's still someone sitting in their same building with a hat that says, CI facilities, and his job depends on coming up with new ideas."

"In a corporate environment, he's not going to get very far if he tells his superiors that the standards that are already in place are good enough as they are."

Clark said: "There will be a reduction in the number of dealerships in the UK. Dealer groups will be working across larger territories and that reduction in the number of showrooms is going to require the dealerships to be different."

"There isn't the level of cash kicking around to invest in those peripheral things. We need to concentrate on customers, service, stock and your people. That's where my priorities are for the next two years at least."

TOM SEYMOUR



“WHEN YOU CAN'T PUT PERSONALITY INTO THE SALES PROCESS, IT THEN STARTS TO BECOME MORE OF JUST A CONVERSATION AROUND PRICE”
STEVE YOUNG, ICDP

SPONSOR'S COMMENT

Virtual roundtable is great, but here's hoping for future face-to-face sessions

By Anthony Gaskell

Managing Director – EMEA at Reputation.com



Earlier this year, I took part in an AM-Online virtual roundtable along with my colleague, Scott Campbell-Quinn. The roundtable was a fantastic opportunity to discuss the importance of a number of key topics, including building sales

momentum, customer experience in the 'new normal', CX automation in a customer-centric world, and maximising efficiency within motor retail. We were joined by three industry experts.

It was interesting to discuss the importance of your 'digital front door' as more and more people look online to buy, or at least reserve, their vehicles. As well as the usual importance in terms of what your customers are saying about your brand and locations across reviews and social media, we are also seeing increased attention and criticism around topics such as cleanliness (especially vehicle cleanliness) and PPE. So, focusing on these areas can drive significant impact right now.

From analysing more than 14,000 points of data, we found that customers have been pleased with how dealers have managed their showrooms and how service representatives have been in addressing the pandemic. In terms of the new normal, how dealer groups are presenting themselves now, can pay dividends in the future.

Even now, it's worth noting that automotive is experiencing the strongest uptick in review volume, and the sentiment is strong. It's important that businesses pay attention to customer reviews and respond to them under any circumstance.

It was great to get the opportunity to speak with Ellie, John, Steve, and of course, AM editor Tim, to discuss everything over a few hours. Hopefully, at some point, we can get back to face-to-face meetings and roundtable discussions in future.

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EIGHT QUESTIONS TO A...

GROUP PARTS MANAGER

Chris Marsh of Mercedes-Benz truck and van dealer Rygor Commercial



What are the main responsibilities of your role?

Ensuring our eight parts managers and our entire parts team is engaged and motivated to provide exceptional customer service. It's all about the fastest route to get parts to our customers, whether they are trade, retail, key accounts or our own workshop, to ensure we maximise vehicle uptime. Keeping our customers' vehicles on the road is the most important thing, as they all have jobs to do themselves and their fleets are an essential part of this.

As a business we work hard to ensure the accurate and smooth supply of commercial Mercedes-Benz GenuineParts to customers, and central to this is utilising every avenue to get the right part, to the right place at the right time. We regularly check stock levels and think outside the box to be able to supply our customers with what they need, including national and European stock searches where required.

What are the most significant challenges ahead in your field of work?

2020 has been a challenging year for all businesses and although we are exceptionally proud of the hard work and commitment from our team and where we are today, it is obviously our goal to get back to and even exceed 2019 levels.

How might these challenges be overcome?

Key to achieving this is motivating our team and keeping the focus on providing excellent service. This will of course encourage customers to further invest in our products and the Mercedes-Benz GenuineParts range.

We also utilise our business development team, to work with key account customers and help market our business offering. Over the past few years we have invested in many of our sites and facilities to offer customers an even more retail-friendly environment, and this includes the opening of our dedicated Truck Centre in Heathrow, which opened in September 2020.

What attracted you to this area of expertise?

After I completed my A-Levels, I wanted to get into the workplace and start earning a living. This was back in the mid-nineties, when computers were still quite new to businesses. Having just completed my A-Levels

though, I found that I could pick up the technologies pretty quickly, which was a plus when starting a fast-track parts apprenticeship in the passenger car industry. On completing my apprenticeship I became a parts advisor and then moved into a supervisor role. I was in the passenger car industry for 12 years, before I moved to the Mercedes-Benz brand and I haven't looked back since. I've always looked to progress and learn, and always wanted to get into management. Rygor promoted me into my current group management role, which I really enjoy, as I can also mentor and develop people in their career paths.

What's the most important thing you've learned in your career, and how have you made use of it at your company?

Transparency and being open. Customers want you to be clear and open with them – it's about building relationships which are trusted and mutually respectful. And it's the same with colleagues and team members: being honest and open is key and it allows the team to know that they can come to you with anything, which is essential to great teamwork. Some of our sites are open 24 hours and that means everyone needs to work well with each other, to ensure smooth and clear handovers and to deliver excellent customer service. We spend so much time with our work colleagues and, for me, building these positive relationships is paramount.

MATT DE PREZ

QUICK-FIRE QUESTIONS

What drives you?

Getting results and seeing my team and the entire business achieve.

What's your favourite app?

Sky Sports!

How do you relax?

I coach my daughters' football team and I love playing football myself too. I am a keen runner and it's great to be able to safely socialise with friends again.

AM

AM, Media House, Lynch Wood, Peterborough PE2 6EA
Email: AM@bauermedia.co.uk

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION TO THE AM TEAM:

If you could choose another Christian name what would it be? And why?

EDITORIAL

Editor Tim Rose 01733 468266

tim.rose@bauermedia.co.uk

AM_editor@bauermedia.co.uk

► **Sebastian – If only I could run.**

News and features editor Tom Sharpe
01733 468343 tom.sharpe@bauermedia.co.uk
tdSharpe_Tom

► **Charlie. It's what I called my boy, so I'd have to make out we made the best choice**

PRODUCTION

Head of publishing Luke Neal

► **Kingsley. So my nickname could be 'The King'**

Production editor David Buckley

► **Robert after my hero Sir Bobby Charlton**

Senior designer Chris Stringer

► **A favourite musician or film star's name, so Tom (Hanks), Jimmy (Page), or David (Bowie)**

CONTRIBUTORS

Ian Halstead, Debbie Kirlow, Professor Jim Saker, Tom Seymour, Alex Wright

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Head of project management

Leanne Patterson b2bpm@bauermedia.co.uk

Project managers

Kerry Unwin, Chelsie Tate, Niamh Walker (maternity leave), Hollie Ismail

ADVERTISING

Commercial director Sean Childerley

Group advertising manager

Sheryl Graham 01733 366467

Account managers

Sara Donald 01733 366474

Kelly Crown 01733 366364

Kate Atkinson 01733 366473

Recruitment enquiries 01733 366473

EVENTS

Event director Chris Lester

Event manager Sandra Evitt 01733 468123

Event manager Kate Howard 01733 468146

Head of exhibitions Katie Gordon-Hill 01733 468289

PUBLISHING

Editor-in-chief Stephen Briers

Head of digital/associate editor Jeremy Bennett

CRM & marketing manager Lauren Annis

Managing director Tim Lucas

Office manager Jane Hill 01733 468319

Chief financial officer Lisa Hayden

MD Automotive group Niall Clarkson

CEO of Bauer Publishing UK Chris Duncan

President, Bauer Global Publishing Rob Munro-Hall

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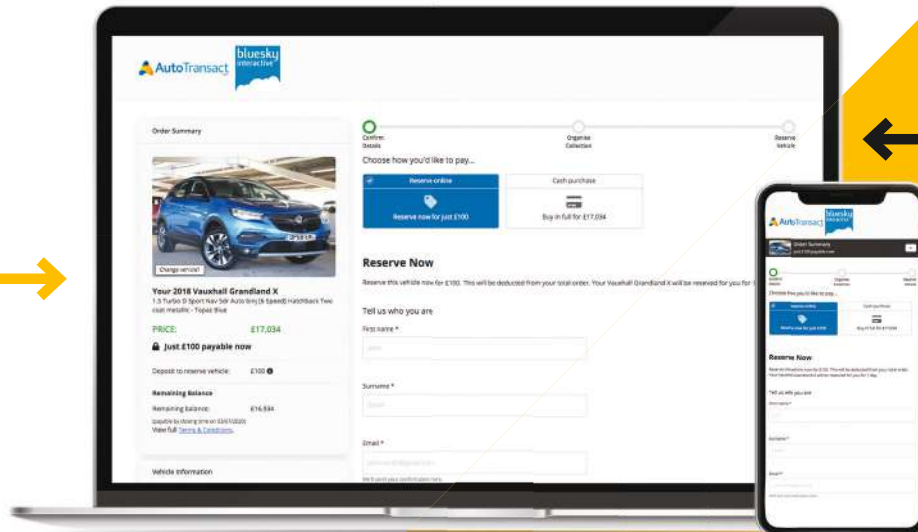


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