

# How automation becomes personal

Delivering the right message to the right person at the right time

**P**ersonalised communications are now a customer expectation and, as automation develops, Marketing Delivery is leading the charge in harnessing dealer data from multiple sources to deliver the right message to the right person at the right time while reducing the need for human intervention.

Using data from the dealer's DMS, showroom and aftersales systems, Marketing Delivery creates and distributes personalised, carefully timed, mobile-optimised customer communications – including email, SMS and social media messages.

The combination of ever-more sophisticated technology, integrations between suppliers now more efficient, secure and widespread than before, and seemingly disparate data sets which can now be compared and cross-referenced, consumer engagement has been boosted even further.

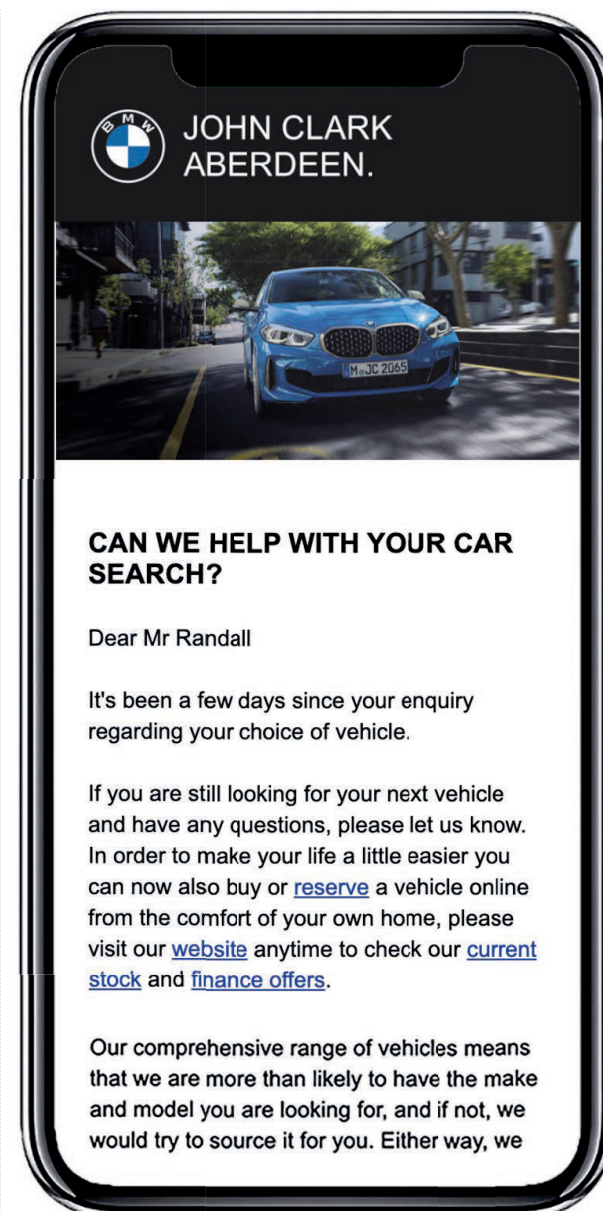
Managing director Jeremy Evans said: "By using proven software which automates many of the communication processes and also compares data sets to ensure customers receive information that's meaningful to them and, crucially, duplicated messaging is avoided, we increase personalisation while, at the same time, dramatically reducing the need for manual input. Providing the personal touch without automation at scale is impossible, but by combining the power of technology with oversight from experts, dealers enjoy the best of both worlds."

"This 'managed automation' means the legwork is done by the system but, ultimately, there are still real people who understand automotive retail analysing the data and maintaining the personal touch with customers."

Marketing Delivery's solutions enable dealers to engage with customers and prospects throughout the buying and ownership cycles. Tailored eCRM sales and aftersales campaigns are deployed via mobile-responsive email and SMS, reaching a wide audience in a highly productive, cost-effective and measurable way.

The benefits of automation are numerous including keeping enquiries warm, freeing up time for staff, keeping customers up-to-date with information including alerts on new vehicles matching their criteria, putting customers in control of their contact preferences ensuring dealers communicate on their terms thereby increasing retention and satisfaction, and dealers can be confident they are GDPR-compliant.

Take Marketing Delivery's latest data project whereby MOT due dates from the DVLA are overlaid with the dealer's database following the Government's MOT extension during the lockdown. Many dealer databases will now be out of date. So, by comparing the data sets, Marketing Delivery's systems can highlight and resolve any discrepancies between dealer data and DVLA data enabling them to communicate accurately with customers.



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**VoiceBox**  
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All updates are automatically fed back into the dealer DMS where two-way integrations are in place such as with the sector's largest DMS provider Keyloop, improving data quality and eliminating duplications.

Evans said: "The days of double-keying are fast coming to an end. We are not there yet with all automotive suppliers, but our partnership with Keyloop is showing dealers what's possible, not to mention, the increased benefits and efficiencies."

"We are now moving to a point where the elusive overall view of the customer is in sight. Having long been the bane of dealers' lives due to the number of unconnected systems operating in a dealership, the ability to view a customer's entire history and contacts with the business has been a pipe dream for years, but it will soon be a reality."

As Marketing Delivery paves the way for the single view of the customer, it continues to evolve its communications concept with the launch of the latest generation of its eCRM system. Launched in January and piloted throughout Q1 and Q2, Voicebox Sales and Voicebox Service is now being rolled out to existing clients while new sign-ups will be launched on the new system.

Marketing Delivery has improved functionality such as incorporating a 'preference box' feature enabling consumers to select their preferred method of contact which also updates the customer record on the dealer DMS.

Evans said: "Voicebox is the next stage in the evolution of eCRM. It allows dealers to put their content together once and distribute through various channels including social media as well as turning it into a personalised email communication to relevant customers."

He added: "While we continually develop our systems and improve automation and integrations to achieve the one view of the customer, the pandemic forced all of us to rely much more heavily on our digital applications to operate, resulting in a much higher demand for faster and more sophisticated services. Many of

the dealers who have come on board during the past 12 months had run their digital communications manually, but recognised the benefits and efficiencies of migrating to an automated and outsourced system."

The proof, as ever, is in the pudding.

Redline Specialist Cars enjoyed its best sales month ever in June last year following the first lockdown by maintaining communication flows with would-be car buyers through Marketing Delivery's automated system, even when staff were furloughed and with only a skeleton team in place.

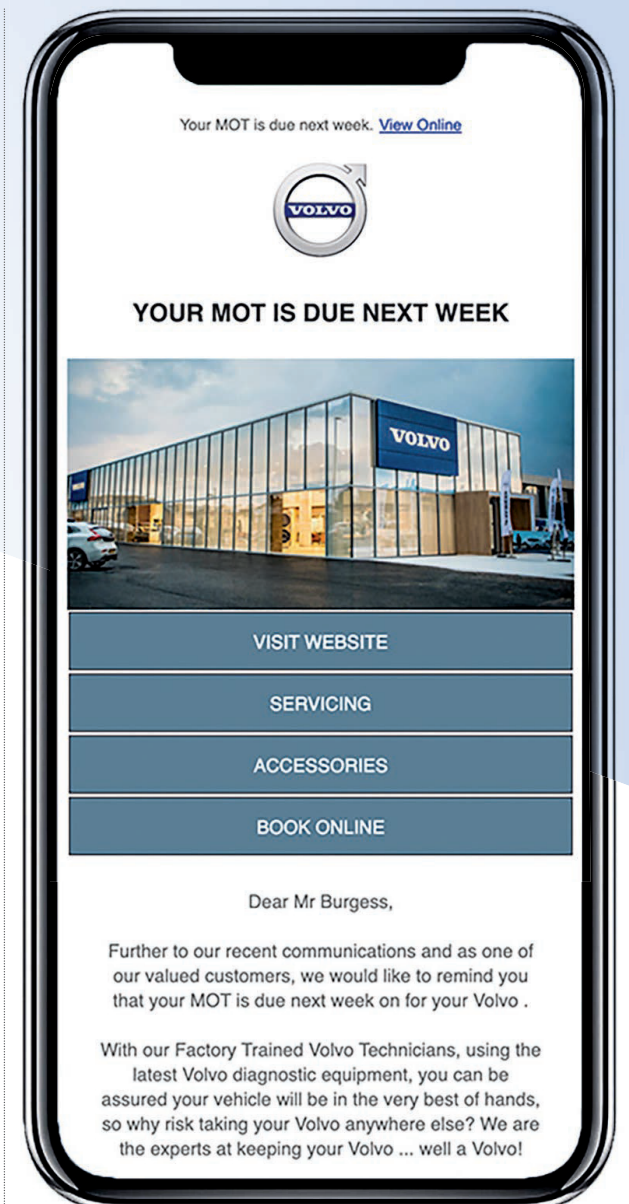
The independent prestige, performance and supercar dealer in Knaresborough, continued to receive the same level of enquiries (around 600-800 per month) but with most of its team furloughed and the showroom closed, the business was in danger of losing sales.

With Marketing Delivery's 'Sales CRM' and 'Car Alerts' electronic customer relationship management (eCRM) software in place, Redline's communications were already automated so customers continued to receive the same level of responses as when the business was fully operational.

John Graeme, finance director at Redline Specialist Cars, said: "The lockdown put us in a position where high-quality automation of customer contact suddenly became incredibly important to us. The vast majority of our customers already communicate with us over the phone or via email, rather than visiting the showroom, and many have a clear idea of the exact car and specification they're looking for. For those customers who were unable to find their perfect car, we used the Car Alerts software to sign these prospects up to automated, GDPR-compliant email updates."

By maintaining its communication levels, Redline achieved a record 200 cars sold in June last year compared with its 150 cars a month average while its 4.9-star Google rating remained intact.

Graeme added: "Marketing Delivery's systems shouldered a significant burden for us, keeping



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customers interested and engaged throughout the lockdown period. By focusing more on the use of digital tools and personalised, automated communications, it meant we were in a really strong position when we opened doors again in June."

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