



AM readers recommend their top suppliers

The greatest form of marketing is via word-of-mouth referrals, and recommendations are priceless.

A business may have excellent products, but referrals and recommendations are ultimately given as a result of outstanding customer service.

AM's annual 'Dealer Recommended' programme allows our readers to have their say about the companies they believe offer the best service.

We have gathered opinions via a research programme conducted among AM's audience.

The automotive business sectors highlighted this year are auctions and remarketing, warranty, service plans, finance, GAP insurance, classified/car listings and paint protection.

The classified/car listings sector saw Motors.co.uk recommended by AM readers.

AM DEALER RECOMMENDED



Motors.co.uk – driving fairness, transparency and value

A successful 2017 has laid the groundwork for Motors.co.uk to help dealers sell more used cars in 2018, says Managing Director, Phill Jones

2017 was another year of successful innovation and growth for Motors.co.uk. Here, the company's managing director, Phill Jones, explains how the business is seeking to build on a prosperous 12 months by further widening its reach and services as it seeks to support the industry in a 2018 that will see used cars become even more important to the financial performance of UK car dealerships.

Record-breaking performance

Commenting on last year, Jones said: "We ended 2017 with more dealers and more vehicles listed on Motors.co.uk than ever and have planned the right procedures and product developments to ensure this rise continues over the next 12 months.

"We are now reaping the rewards from investing in our website and our partnerships, with more than five

million monthly visitors to the Motors.co.uk network and a 12% year-on-year increase in new users in 2017.

"There has also been a substantial improvement in our Google search rankings for key industry terms, such as 'used car', meaning we are now giving our dealers greater exposure online as our pages frequently appear ahead of the market leader."

Creating 'win-win' advertising relationships

Motors.co.uk has always been committed to offering fairness and transparency to ensure dealers receive a measurable return on investment (ROI) for their media spend.

In 2017, the business introduced Value Based Pricing which gives dealers a performance target to ensure there is a clear ROI. This new model charges dealers for the consumer response delivered to their vehicles – as measured

by "Lead Assists" such as detailed page views, telephone calls and email enquiries. Motors.co.uk believes that moving beyond the traditional "per car, per week" model creates a win-win relationship between publisher and advertiser, with both parties incentivised to increase response on a mutually agreed basis.

Jones said: "The introduction of Value Based Pricing last year was an industry first and we are proud to be offering our customers transparent value for their advertising.

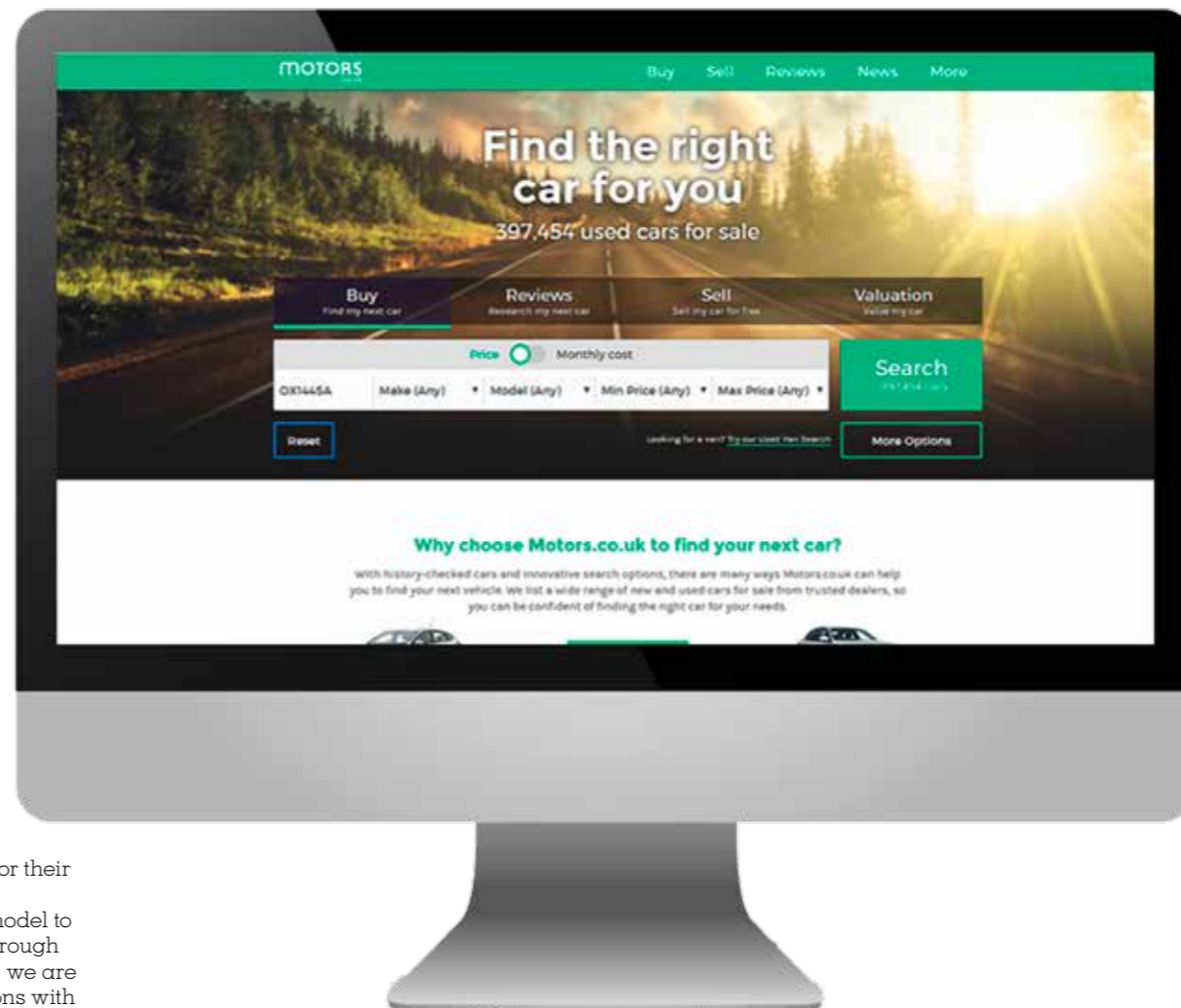
"By aligning our business model to reflect the reach we deliver through Motors.co.uk and our network, we are able to have clear conversations with our dealers, helping them understand the performance of their digital advertising on a vehicle-by-vehicle basis.

"If we miss our target, it is clear to see and we openly address this. But we are also able to work with dealers to deliver more response if they need to increase used car sales."

Adding value

The business has also focused on improving its dealer management tools making both its response tracking platform – The Eye – and its stock management tool – AutoEdit – faster and more mobile-friendly. It has also added features to The Eye to allow dealers to quickly and easily produce professional-looking invoices.

In terms of its core listings proposition, Motors.co.uk is also working hard to drive more footfall for its customers by improving detailed vehicle pages and adding new functionality that makes



"We ended 2017 with more dealers and more vehicles listed on Motors.co.uk than ever"

Phill Jones, Motors.co.uk

it even easier for consumers to engage with dealers.

For example, its Dealer Merchandising pack enables advertisers to amplify the reach of their in-dealership marketing campaigns through promotion on their Motors.co.uk listings. Dealers can customise key messages and promotions and drive visits straight from their vehicles on Motors.co.uk to their own website.

Jones added: "Dealer Merchandising

allows dealers to communicate brand messages or special offers that can otherwise be lost on classified advertising sites. We are helping consumers understand 'who' they should buy from, as well as 'what' to buy.

"Instead of relying on consumers to visit their own website or the forecourt to find out about these offers, dealers can display them on Motors.co.uk in front of millions of in-market car buyers."



Improving efficiency through integration

Motors.co.uk is also working with fellow Cox Automotive UK brands – such as Manheim, Modix, Next Gear Capital and Dealer Auction – to identify ways to increase efficiency across the vehicle life cycle.

In 2017, the business joined forces with Dealer Auction to reduce the number of days between buying a car via the online auction and getting that vehicle in front of the Motors.co.uk audience. The integration, which enabled mutual customers to list 'won' vehicles almost immediately after buying them, reduced administration time and increased stock turn.

Jones said: "The sooner a car is listed on the internet, the quicker it will generate the interest required to lead to a sale. On average, our integration with Dealer Auction is saving dealers seven days between purchase and listing, a huge percentage reduction and one that enables them to maximise their profit opportunity. This is a service that has an immediate, quantifiable upside at no additional cost to the dealer."

Certainty in an unpredictable 2018

While the ongoing macro-economic effect of Brexit, interest rate rises and inflation may be hard to accurately forecast, what Motors.co.uk can predict is the importance of used vehicles to dealerships in 2018.

Commenting on the latest data from more than 600,000 vehicles, Jones said: "With a softening in new car sales, we've seen pro-active franchise dealers increase their focus on the profit opportunity in used cars. Franchise groups are stocking more used cars and selling them quicker. We expect this trend to continue into 2018.

"Every dealer group will have a need to sell more used cars in 2018 and Motors.co.uk is perfectly placed to support dealers with this. As an industry partner, we exist to work with dealers on a fair and transparent basis to help them increase their visibility to in-market car buyers to drive more sales."



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