



MAKING DEALERSHIPS MORE 'USER-FRIENDLY'

The Business

Cotswold Motor Group, established in 1995, operates sales and service facilities – as well as an Approved Bodyshop and PDI Centre – for the BMW, MINI and BMW Motorrad brands in Gloucestershire and Herefordshire.

In 2017 the group merged its Cheltenham and Gloucester dealerships, and opened a new flagship site in Cheltenham – notable for being one of the largest BMW and MINI dealerships in the UK.

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Janine Liddle,
Group Aftersales Retention Manager

The Challenge

After seeing a presentation by Marketing Delivery at a motor industry trade fair, the Cotswold Motor Group team commissioned the agency to deliver a bespoke, programmatic schedule of communications, initially targeted at boosting the number of sales leads and subsequent conversions.

“From the start, the Marketing Delivery programme has been entirely tailored to our business rather than applying a ‘one size fits all’ approach,” says Janine Liddle, Group Aftersales Retention Manager. For example, consistency of data has been ensured by a direct feed from Cotswold Motor Group’s dealer management system, CDK Autoline Drive, which means that contact details and customer profiles are always up to date.

The Solution

A tailored programme of communications was put in place at Cotswold Motor Group’s flagship site, starting with a focus on new car sales. This meant implementing a carefully timed series of emails: an immediate follow-up within 24 hours, a ‘checking in’ message three days later to monitor the request, and further reminders at 10 days and 21 days.

When Cotswold Motor Group’s prospects are moved on to the ‘Car Alerts’ element of the programme, they get immediate notifications about incoming stock that precisely or closely fits their criteria.

"Our sales staff are great, but it would be impossible for them to stay on top of every new arrival and send out rapid, tailored stock updates to every open lead," explains Liddle. "The Car Alerts system handles this so that they don't have to. It's like a 'silent salesperson' that keeps prospects as engaged as possible until the right car comes along."

More recently, Cotswold Motor Group has worked with Marketing Delivery to develop a bespoke aftersales programme, with a series of email and SMS reminders to alert customers in advance of MOT due dates.

The Outcome

Marketing Delivery's programmatic email campaigns re-engage with customers at optimal points in the sales cycle and help to elicit a more constructive response from apparent 'Lost Sale' customers that can be used to reignite interest.

"We found that the email approach was generating what we perceived to be a more honest response from prospects who had not purchased a car," says Liddle. "Someone might not want to tell a salesperson on the telephone that they cannot afford a certain monthly payment – and might make up a different reason for a no-sale – but we found that they were more likely to give us the truthful feedback via email."

"This programme therefore helps to recapture leads, enabling us to revisit the finance to see how we can structure payments differently, or whether we can get them into a different model that is within their budget."

From an aftersales point of view, a significant uplift in communication has also contributed to a boost in the group's MOT bookings (up 9% year-on-year) and workshop utilisation rates.

"The timely email reminders have helped to generate consistently higher levels of inbound enquiries from customers, where previously we would have been making thousands of outbound calls that interrupt our customers' busy working days."

The success of Marketing Delivery's programmatic communications mean that the initiatives have been rolled out beyond the first site in Cheltenham to every sales and service facility in the Cotswold Motor Group portfolio.

"We have built up a great relationship with Marketing Delivery and see a clear benefit from the partnership," concludes Liddle. "It's helped to make our dealerships more 'user-friendly' and perfectly complements everything else we are doing as a business."