



Sales communication platform for Ford Retail

In 2010, Ford Retail, the UK's largest Ford dealer group launched **FordRetailOnline.co.uk** with the aim of making the purchase of a new or used Ford as simple and hassle free as possible. To support the online sales function, **mplsystems** has designed a multi-channel contact and lead management system based on their MPL intelligentContact (iContact) platform.

As with most consumer products, the nature of selling cars is changing and car dealers are starting to embrace the internet as a sales channel. Buying a car can be a complex process and locating a car that meets your requirements on model, colour, features and price may require a wider search. FordRetailOnline allows customer to browse a huge range of new and used cars from the comfort of their armchair.

Consumers are also increasingly favouring the internet to save time and money on many purchases, but a car is a high value purchase and so, for many consumers, human interaction is an essential part of the buying process. Accordingly, FordRetailOnline provides phone, as well as email, web and video conferencing customer support from a team of experienced, knowledgeable agents. These agents act as personal shoppers and help locate the best vehicle and price for the customer, as well as providing a part exchange service.

Multi-channel contact

mplsystems was contracted to design an innovative sales management and communication platform to provide the integration of all the channels FordRetailOnline required. With customers demanding an ever quicker, informed response from retail websites, this platform would enable the team of incentivised agents to respond to all types of customer contacts and support the sales cycle.

This solution, named HAL by the FordRetailOnline team, manages every customer contact according to pre-defined business rules; phone calls, emails and web enquiries are queued and routed to an appropriate agent and priorities can be defined depending according to time of day and how busy the agents are.

A comprehensive database is intimately linked to communications and screen pops provide the agent with appropriate customer information. This not only enables agents

to provide a rapid and thorough response but frees up the sales team from admin tasks, allowing them to focus on communicating with the customer rather than searching for and managing data.

Sales management platform

iContact provides FordRetailOnline with an end-to-end sales process which includes the automatic production of branded email responses, response tracking and scheduling management of all call-backs and subsequent customer service actions. Automated responses to emails or relevant web pages can be 'pushed' to customer and the database used for future marketing campaigns and promotional offers.

Integral call recording and monitoring can be used remotely to review the quality of calls. iContact's reporting gives real time and historic performance data and past and future sales predictions, allowing managers to focus their team on the correct activities. Performance is communicated to the team via Wallboards to give agents a first hand, real time view of how the team is performing.

The platform allows agents to be centralised or distributed across different sales locations; by drawing data from the central database, agents, be they in the main centre or showrooms, work in a virtual team. Overflow support is also provided by mplsystems parent company, Message Pad Ltd, to ensure that customer can speak to an agent 24/7.

Cloud based contact

The solution is delivered through mplsystems Cloud based contact centre, Aurora, which offers customers contact technology and campaign management on a pay per seat basis. *"FordRetailOnline combines mplsystems unique technology integration of multi-media contact management, including voice, email, internet, together with rich integrated applications, all delivered seamlessly from the Aurora platform"*, said Paul White, CEO of mplsystems.

Business benefits

- Increase of over 25% in agent efficiency
- Customers have seamless interaction across all contact points and with all agents as data is shared and leads deduped
- Call pick-up times have decreased significantly.



"The introduction of an automated call and email handling and lead management platform has enabled us to improve our service to our customers. Online car sales are a growing area and FordRetailOnline are leading the way, providing the human touch in the sales cycle through this creative use of call centre technology."

Steve Hood, Managing Director, FordRetailOnline