



Deloitte.
Digital

Transforming the Automotive Customer Experience

An OEM-Led, Dealer-Enhanced
Omnichannel Vision

Introduction

The automotive industry is at a crossroads. Declining brand loyalty, the rise of disruptive online marketplaces, and increasingly price-conscious consumers are forcing OEMs to rethink their approach to the customer journey. Billions have been invested in digital solutions, yet many OEMs see limited returns. This is because the current fragmented multi-channel approach leaves customers frustrated, dealers struggling with inefficient processes, and OEMs failing to deliver on their brand promise.

The result? A sub-optimal experience that is eroding trust and undermining growth.

But this isn't news; it's a well-known, expensive problem which OEMs and dealers have been trying to tackle for years.

So why can't they overcome it? Because the focus has been on technology, not the customer. For too long, OEMs have looked for the answer to their problems in another CRM solution or online platform. However to deliver real value, and address the problems that they and their customer face, they need to switch focus. There needs to be a fundamental shift in how we design and deliver an automotive customer experience, transforming it from a transactional model to a relationship-based, data-driven eco-system which put customers at the heart. Only then can OEMs begin to think about being able to deliver on their visions of an omnichannel experience and begin to compete again in an increasingly crowded market.

The current landscape

A perfect storm

At a time where customer expectations are rising, traditional OEMs are struggling to keep up in what is becoming an increasingly crowded and competitive market.

The reasons for this are multifaceted:



Carwow results demonstrate strong revenue growth

Posted by: Jasleen Mann | in Latest News | Monday, 30 September 2024 | 0

Online Marketplaces

These platforms have disrupted traditional retail, forcing price transparency and creating powerful intermediaries that shift leverage towards the consumer.



The average UK car is now 9 years old, as drivers delay replacements

41.4 million vehicles are on the road, but they're getting older faster than they're getting cleaner

Vehicle Price Inflation

Consumers are holding onto their vehicles longer as a result of soaring prices, delaying purchases and pushing the average age of vehicles on the road up to 9 years old.



Interest in Chinese EVs from UK car buyers soars

(Alliance News) - UK car buyers' interest in cars built by Chinese manufacturers has soared, new ...

Auto Trader sees rise in platform visits as interest in EVs and Chinese brands grows

Auto Trader reports a year-on-year rise in new car visits and stock in April, with discounts on EVs softening and rising consumer interest in new models from BYD and Jacoo.

RYAN FOWLER | APRIL 25, 2025 | DEALER INSIGHTS, ELECTRIC VEHICLES, INDUSTRY & MARKET NEWS, LEAD STORY, NEWS

New Entrants

The emergence of Chinese OEMs, offering comparable technology at lower prices, is eroding brand loyalty among established manufacturers.



THE BIG SHIFT—WHY OMNICHANNEL DEALERS ARE WINNING, AND FRAGMENTED STORES ARE FALLING BEHIND

Fragmented Experiences

The proliferation of touchpoints – from online marketplaces to insurance providers – creates a fragmented customer experience, diminishing trust in traditional OEMs and dealers.

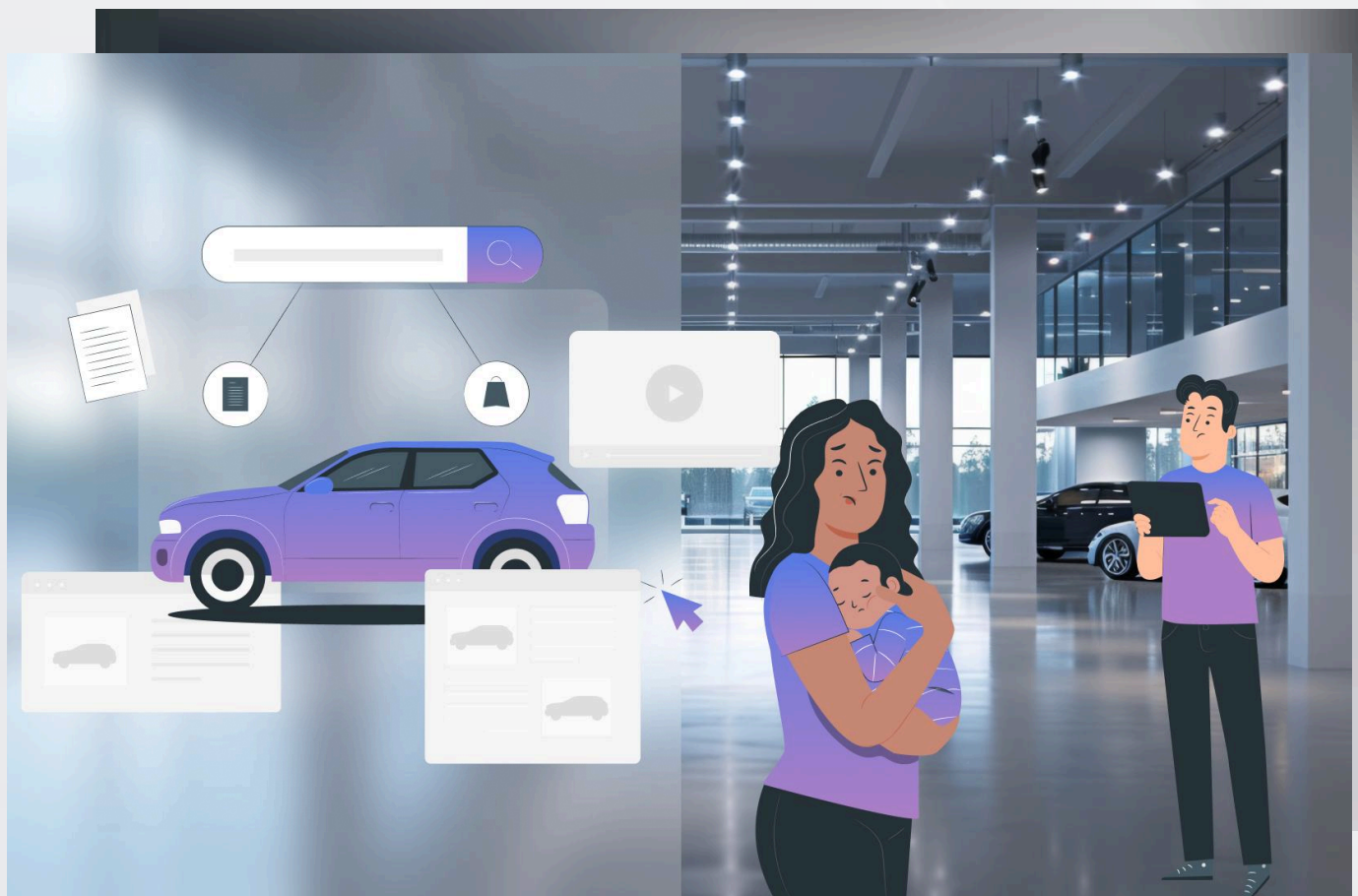
Today's experience

A story of disconnection

Imagine Kate, a busy professional and parent, searching for a new vehicle. She begins online, researching various brands and models, but finds herself overwhelmed by conflicting information, inconsistent pricing, and lack of personalised guidance.

Meanwhile, Sam at the local dealership struggles with limited visibility of his customer's needs. When Kate visits, he's starting from scratch – unable to access her online journey or understand her specific needs.

Kate finds the experience jarringly different from her online research. Information isn't shared, stock and prices aren't aligned, and Sam can't leverage her digital footprint to personalise the experience. The result feels disjointed and frustrating for both parties. This is the reality for far too many car buyers and dealers – and this is still just the shopping stage.



Looking to the future

An OEM-led, dealer-enhanced digital ecosystem

So what should the future look like? The answer lies in a seamless, omnichannel experience – an "OEM-led, dealer-enhanced" digital ecosystem that connects every touchpoint across the customer's end-to-end relationship with their vehicle, from initial online research to post-purchase service. It's no longer about being present across multiple channels; it's about creating a cohesive, personalised, and interconnected experience that works across every touchpoint, for everyone.

So what does that mean in practice?



For Customers

A streamlined, personalised journey where they can browse, configure, and purchase vehicles on their terms, seamlessly transitioning between online and offline channels.

For Dealers

Access to high-quality, actionable leads, efficient processes, and the tools to personalise the in-dealership experience.



For OEMs

A single view of customer data, increased brand loyalty, and the ability to drive uptake of products and services.

A connected tomorrow

The omnichannel customer journey to aim for:



The power of omnichannel

Delivering data-driven outcomes

Getting the customer experience right, and delivering a truly integrated omnichannel approach brings significant benefits:

Increased Lead Conversion

An OEM saw their conversion rate increase by

3.6x

by implementing individualised omnichannel engagement.¹

Reduced Customer Acquisition Cost

OEMs developing new omnichannel sales approaches can cut

20%

of sales and marketing costs.²

Higher Customer Lifetime Value (CLTV)

Customers encountering seamless experiences spend more and are

2.3x

more likely to recommend the brand.³

Increased Sales & Fewer Lost Opportunities

OEMs can help dealers recover the

23.5%

of leads that currently slip through the cracks due to fragmented online channel management.⁴

Optimised Inventory Management

Integrated omnichannel inventory systems deliver

22% faster inventory turnover

and

\$38 lower carrying costs per vehicle monthly.⁵

Increased Finance & Insurance (F&I) product penetration

Consistent F&I product presentation across online and dealership channels resulted in

32%

increase in product attachment rates.⁶

So how do you achieve this?

The key digital initiatives to deliver an omnichannel customer experience:

This target experience is founded on a series of customer-led initiatives, which if delivered, will enable the delivery of a seamless and personalised customer experience which begins to unlock these benefits.

Shop

Insight-Led Leads

Harnessing customer data to personalise the experience and provide dealers with valuable insights in real-time, improving lead quality and conversion.

Shop

Simplified Product Discovery

Simplifying complex vehicle specifications, enabling customers to easily find the right vehicle using conversational AI. Dealers can also leverage AI tools for complex configurations.

Purchase

Omnichannel Save & Share

Providing full visibility of the customer's vehicle configuration to the dealer, enabling seamless collaboration between online and in-dealership experiences.

Purchase

Online Quotes and Deal Stacking

Empowering dealers to generate online quotes with specific pricing and discounts, allowing customers to take their time with the purchase while ensuring dealer involvement.

Own

Up-sell and Cross-sell

Enhancing the OEM's purchase and post-purchase experience with add-ons, subscriptions, and services, driving improved margins for both OEM and dealer, and simplifying the customer experience.

Own

Reimagined Ownership Experience

Maintaining customer engagement post-purchase through personalised loyalty campaigns and targeted communications, fostering long-term relationships.

What's under the hood?

The enabling capabilities required to deliver this experience

A series of clearly domained business capabilities powered by underlying technology platforms is essential to deliver the identified digital initiatives

AI-Based Search

For tailored product discovery.

Simplified Product Discovery

Up-Sell And Cross-Sell

Basket & Core-Commerce Microservices

To enable seamless online and dealership transactions.

Omnichannel Save & Share

Simplified Product Discovery

Loyalty & Discounting Engine

To drive sales and advocacy.

Online Quotes & Deal Stacking

Reimagined Ownership Experience

Centralised CRM & Analytics

For personalised communications and data-driven insights.

Insight-Led Leads

Reimagined Ownership Experience

Common Cataloguing

To ensure consistent product information across all channels.

Online Quotes & Deal Stacking

Simplified Product Discovery

Dealer-Enhanced Digital Platform

To empower dealers to co-pilot the customer journey.

Insight-Led Leads

Online Quotes & Deal Stacking

Underpinned by a core set of principles

1. A data sharing commitment between OEM & Dealer for a single customer view

2. Composability, enabling a more flexible and agile technical architecture

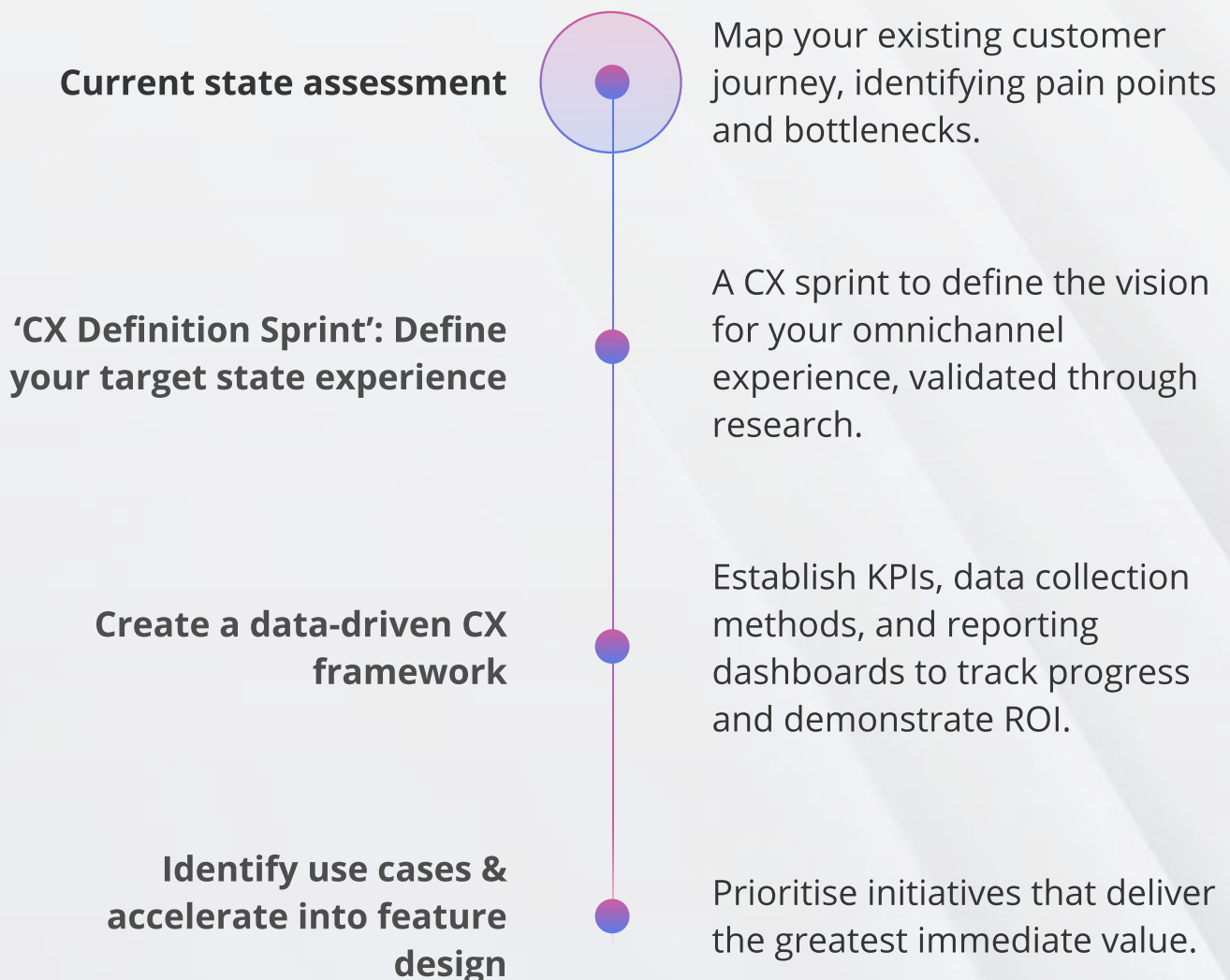
3. Data privacy & consent to ensure customer data is handled and shared appropriately

4. Test & learn culture-shift to continuously improve the experience based on customer insights and data

Getting started

A phased approach to kick-start your omnichannel journey

Re-defining your customer experience can feel a daunting task. We recommend taking a staged approach, beginning with a set of clearly defined activities to put in place the foundations which will enable the rest of your omnichannel transformation.



These steps will provide an invaluable foundation to kick-start your omnichannel transformation as you progress from discovery into design and delivery.

The Future of Automotive Customer Experience

The automotive industry is evolving rapidly. To survive and thrive, OEMs and dealers must embrace a customer-centric, omnichannel approach. Are you ready to transform your customer experience and unlock the full potential of your business?

Get in touch to learn more and discuss how we can help you build a future-proof, customer-centric automotive ecosystem.



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