

## CASE STORY: DRIVE VAUXHALL

# Drive Vauxhall gives customer service a tune-up with Netop Live Guide



### With Netop Live Guide, Drive Vauxhall has:

- Successfully engaged its online audience, opening up a new sales channel, increasing revenues and reducing cart abandonment
- Strengthened customer relationships by establishing real-time interaction online
- Enabled staff members to work remotely which has improved productivity and 'out of hours' customer service
- Improved customer query response times using 'canned responses'

Drive Vauxhall, one of the UK's largest vehicle sales groups, installed Netop Live Guide to improve customer relations. The tool allows its sales team to interact with customers at crucial stages of the buying cycle, handling several customer enquiries at once helping to generate more revenue through its pro-active customer service.

### Customer service increasingly important

Drive Vauxhall is one of the UK's largest vehicle sales groups, with an annual turnover in excess of £200 million per annum. It currently has ten dealerships across the UK and over 700 staff. To support its dealership network Drive Vauxhall operates a dedicated contact centre based at its Redcar Dealership in North East England. With 25 support staff handling over 14,000 sales and service enquiries per month, customer service is critical to its business and Drive Vauxhall's web site plays an integral role in keeping existing customers happy, and securing new business.

Over the past few years, the Drive Vauxhall website has grown in importance. Through it, prospective customers can explore its vast range of new and used cars, book a test drive, or schedule a service appointment. Industry statistics show that 83% of customers view their prospective vehicle online prior to purchasing a car, so providing the best online experience is becoming a growing and important aspect of the overall sales cycle.

According to Daryl Binelli, E-Marketing Manager at Drive Vauxhall, its historic model for customer service created a disconnect between the online and physical store buying experience. "Our aim was to ensure a seamless customer service throughout the sales process. But when an online customer contacts our call centre, the staff member then had to access the website to establish which model the customer was looking at. Not only was this slowing the entire process, it left the customer feeling as if the website and contact centre were separate entities."

Another area of the web site that required attention was the 'Aftersales' page, where customers view special offers, book MOT's and order car parts & accessories. On this page the form filling process can be particularly lengthy and detailed, and often resulted in customers giving up and leaving the site.

### Providing a seamless online experience

To address this customer service disconnect, the company decided to investigate solutions, and analysed its website. Binelli said, "We analysed exactly how long customers were spending on each page and which pages were most vulnerable to 'shopping cart' abandonment. We also identified that the 'After Sales' web page (which dealt with repairs, services and MOT bookings), was where customers required the most assistance."

Drive Vauxhall decided that enhancing its online capability would provide a cost-effective solution and following some in-depth research, focused on the benefits that an online technology called live chat could offer.

Deciding this was the way forward, Drive Vauxhall was keen to get a live chat solution up and running as soon as possible, and created a list of criteria for the new application. Key to these were acceptable cost, ease of use and ease of installation & maintenance. Binelli decided to investigate live chat solutions himself and experimented with various products. Amongst the solutions he assessed was Live Guide from Netop.

### Fast installation time - a key criteria

"I was particularly impressed with both the product and the engagement from the Netop sales team," said Binelli. "Not only did Live Guide satisfy our product requirements, but Netop went that extra mile in all our interactions."

Following a deeper assessment of the three live chat products short-listed, Drive Vauxhall selected Netop. Binelli said, "The other options proved to be a lot more expensive, required four to six weeks for installation, or needed extended downtime so software and hardware could be installed. The Netop solution was very simple

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Drive Vauxhall

requiring the addition of Live Guide code to the web site and, as a result, was incredibly fast and very easy.”

Another aspect, which proved attractive, was that the staff only needed a day's training - which was carried out on site. “We were up and running in two and a half weeks which was half the time of the nearest competitor and a huge plus point, especially as fast installation was a key criteria,” said Binelli.

### **Driving new revenue streams**

The popularity of the live chat option has proved itself very quickly among Drive Vauxhall's online customers and, as hoped, it has become a fundamental aspect to the sales process. Currently, the sales team deals with over 100 chats per week and as customers get used to this Internet age way of interacting, Binelli expects this to increase. “From our early experience it is clear that customers are making more bookings through the live chat medium and we expect usage to grow. It is proving its worth particularly because it really engages the customer by providing continuous, support throughout the sales process.”

While the adoption of live chat is growing, Binelli stresses that this has not been at the expense of the other support channels. Rather, Netop Live Guide has generated new online customers that were previously missed. “Whilst we are still receiving the same quantity of telephone and email enquiries, live chat enquiry numbers are building strongly,” he said. “The result of this is Live Guide has unearthed a whole untapped revenue stream which we didn't even know existed.”

### **Increasing staff flexibility and business agility**

As well as increased customer engagement, Live Guide has delivered other benefits.

“By being able to log into the chat service remotely, staff can interact with customers out of normal office hours and from the comfort of their own home,” said Binelli. “At the same time, users are able to receive support at a time that suits them, and their enquiries dealt with there and then which increases both our

reputation for excellent customer service, and the likelihood of making a sale.”

According to Binelli another benefit of Live Guide is that it has increased the efficiency of the customer service team. “Before using Live Guide writing an email or dealing with a telephone enquiry meant a one-to-one transaction that utilised 100% of the customer service agent's time. With Live Guide an agent can deal with 4-5 live customers simultaneously, making them more productive. Additionally, by using the software's ‘canned response’ tool, the team can draw on a wealth of existing information, meaning frequently asked questions are addressed immediately whilst online.”

### **A new dimension in customer engagement**

Following its implementation, there has been a positive response from both staff and customers. Drive Vauxhall is already looking to extend its online ‘opening hours’ to cater for more user enquiries through a move to an ‘always on’ customer service model. As part of this, the company plans to add Live Guide to other web pages, including a new accessories website and its Facebook page. By increasing the potential touch points, more customers benefit from a seamless customer service experience and Drive Vauxhall engages with them in a more pro-active fashion, which translates into increased sales closure and higher revenues.

Binelli concluded, “Netop Live Guide is so much more than an online sales tool. It enables us to strengthen our customer relationships through being more accessible and offering a more personalised service. In an economic downturn, where customer retention and satisfaction is a greater challenge than ever, the ability to provide timely answers and personal interaction has certainly given us an edge over our competition. Through Live Guide, Netop has enabled us to stand out in a competitive market, and add a new dimension that allows us to engage with our customers more closely and effectively, whilst more importantly adding to the bottom line.”



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