

Success with GAP benefits from having your name on the product

Sinclair Motor Group builds trust with its own-branded AutoProtect GAP and SMART products

At the heart of the Sinclair Group ethos is personal service. In a values-led culture, added-value services play an important role as a profit centre and as a means of reinforcing the Sinclair commitment to service.

In 2009, the business reviewed its approach to two key products; GAP, branded as Sinclair Asset Protection within the business, and SMART Insurance. The business selected AutoProtect as their supplier, based upon the shared synergy in terms of customer care and what, at the time, were emerging trends in compliance.

Sinclair's head of F&I and compliance, Edward Ellis, points to a collaborative approach as being central to the continuing success enjoyed by both parties: "Customers are reassured by the fact that it is branded with the Sinclair name. Many have been with us as friends for many years and recognise that we would not put our name to a product we didn't believe in. It is a seemingly small, but significant step in best practice and underpins our relationship with our AutoProtect and their transparent approach."

Symbolic step

Another symbolic step is in Ellis' own title – adding the word 'compliance' has proved to be an important factor both internally and externally. "For me, it is a bit like saying you are a safe driver, where the risk of complacency can set in. We work at compliance continuously, working with the

AutoProtect team, we endeavour to ensure compliance is integrated into our 'business as normal' approach, but we never take this for granted."

Benefit from support

Avoiding complacency in compliance and sales penetration benefit from the AutoProtect Management Information (MI) support. Via online reporting, Ellis can drill down quickly to individual performance and this benchmarking has created a highly consistent group-wide performance. "In just a few keystrokes each salesperson can gain an instant snapshot of just how well they are performing. What this has then stimulated is training and sharing of best practices internally."

Clear benchmark

As well as establishing a clear benchmark for the group, the MI can help to identify people who might be operating below or above the wider business standard. In the former, this is about addressing any confidence or process issues, in the latter it is all about identifying any risks that mis-selling might be taking place. The MI from AutoProtect is also overlaid with other data such as an assessment of any complaint with regard to the sale of added-value services.

This openness surrounding the sales of added-value products is not just an internal matter. The business works to identify fresh thinking at industry events,



through its franchise partners and via industry organisations. At the same time, the business looks externally to other business areas. "As a market, motor retailers I feel can continue to learn from areas such as the hospitality sector, where added-value activity, such as offering wine with a meal, is seen as a service not a product. In truth, the term 'added value' can carry with it unhelpful connotations – our mantra is that we are simply delivering good service and that includes options that may enhance the customer's motoring experience."

Own insights

Sinclair looks to its supplying partners for their own insights and thinking. In this regard, the moves by AutoProtect to accelerate the claims process through both app-based technologies and a greater focus on creating good customer outcomes resonates well with the Sinclair Group.

Ellis closes by noting: "There is no 'silver bullet' for improving the value of services such as GAP. Instead, it is a series of showroom behaviours that raise awareness, create confidence and support credibility.

Today, over 35% of our customers opt for Sinclair Asset Protection. It is a performance of which we are proud because it is so consistent across the group.

Personal service is at the heart of the Sinclair Group ethos

Customers are reassured by the fact that it is branded with the Sinclair name. Many have been with us as friends for many years and recognise that we would not put our name to a product we didn't believe in