

## Reputation and Retention The Importance of Being Smarter

Against a backdrop of increasing competition with some buyers willing to buy nationally, an ever better-informed customer, new Financial Conduct Authority rules and of course the pandemic, the last year has been both challenging and a steep but positive year of change. This is the high-level assessment shared by Murat Halil, Group F&I Development Manager at Ancaster Group. Crucially, he feels the changes made will have a significant long-term benefit for the Group.

### Ensuring Customers Know They are the No.1 Priority.

*"Ancaster has always prided itself on ensuring our customers know they are our number one priority. The pandemic and shift to online and emergence of online-only competitors have reinforced the value of creating a positive and memorable car buying journey that continues long after a customer drives off one of our forecourts or takes delivery at their home or office.*

*"Focusing upon enhancing the customer experience in F&I, terms during 2020 also coincided with us finalising new procedures to meet the new FCA rules, which came into being in January. Happily, the two were aligned very closely."*

“ Working with AutoProtect, we have re-imagined the long-term role of SMART Insurance, and it has been a winner for our customers, Ancaster and AutoProtect. ”



Murat Halil – Group F&I Development Manager,  
Ancaster Group

### Reputation Building - a Fresh Approach to Products and Process

Ancaster operates in busy urban locations in London, Berkshire, Kent and Surrey with Nissan, Hyundai, Fiat, Jeep, Alfa Romeo, Abarth and with a substantial used car operation. Competition in such crowded locations has always been fierce. The business has combated this with a commitment to superior customer service as a crucial differentiator.

In an increasingly online world, the competition for customers has moved way beyond competing showrooms. Murat points to a change programme centred upon reputation and retention building and a re-assessment of the products and processes that form part of the customer journey, noting;

*"Ancaster is built on the principles of ease of use, quality and reliability. We pride ourselves on our people, and with an average length of service of eight years, many customers have been loyal to our knowledgeable advisors. Nevertheless, we have to keep seeking out ways to enhance our customer relationships and ease of use. In F&I, we have identified some simple, quick wins."*

## A Smart Angle to Optimise PCP Retention

For new and used cars, PCP finance proved to be an invaluable tool over recent years. Customers benefit from the monthly affordability feature and dealers have a built-in end-of-contract retention opportunity. However, in seeking improvement opportunities, Murat recognised that the end-of-retention experience could also create a potential risk and opportunity.

*"The solution to both has been a deeper focus on SMART insurance. The product we offer provided by AutoProtect sees over 94% of customers make a successful claim because those minor car park type dings are almost inevitable, especially in the urban locations in which many of our customers live.*

*"Crucially, SMART insurance has a role to play in PCP retention. Just as a customer is in-market for a new car at the end-of-contract period, the last thing we want is a discussion about minor damage that goes beyond fair wear and tear. What we do want is the opportunity to reward them for offering to return a forecourt-ready car in prime condition. It is precisely what SMART is enabling us to achieve."*

## Re-Engineering Pricing and Processes

Ancaster has re-engineered its promotional process and pricing for SMART to increase sales penetration. AutoProtect continues to work alongside Ancaster, developing and delivering a new training module provided online initially.

The latest pricing approach has seen penetration offset PPU, and while the business could have sustained the previous pricing, the preference has been to think long-term. As Murat observes;

*"Most of us have been here for many years, and we aim to be here for the long haul. SMART helps make buying from us again an easier decision at the end of a three year PCP. Acquisition costs are*

*reduced, and we have a high-quality part exchange. It is a virtuous circle, and we continue to achieve our number one priority – delighted customers who are happy to use us and recommend us as our customer service reviews verify";*

**1881 reviews**  
**91% overall satisfaction**  
**96% would recommend us**

Murat concludes,

*"Innovation is important, but we should never underestimate making new use of the tools we have and in collaborating with partners to optimise them. Working with AutoProtect, we have re-imagined the long-term role of SMART Insurance, and it has been a winner for our customers, Ancaster and AutoProtect."*

