

# Extended test drives bring customers into the brand



**D**emonstrations are a key part of every dealership's sales process – and particularly so at Infiniti retailer Mana Premiere Automobiles.

"We're a new brand and potential customers don't know our cars, so we have to provide

more extended test drives than if we were, say, an Audi or a Land Rover retailer," said the chief operating officer and operations director Lisa Ford.

"On the other hand, with a relatively small line-up, we are much more likely to have a demonstrator available with the same spec, engine size and transmission as the car the customer is interested in than, say, a Mercedes retailer where there are so many different combinations and you end up with a compromise."

## 48-hour test drives

The company is careful with its assets, and doesn't give extended test drives to everyone. The salespeople do a qualifying test drive first, then interested buyers are welcome, if they wish, to take a 48-hour test drive and experience the product in their own surroundings.

Mana also operates a 'have car, will travel' policy with its demonstrators, and has gone as far as Devon from its Birmingham centre for example.

## Demonstrator control

To keep control of its costs while still delivering a high level of customer service (Mana has a 97% positive rating from around 72 customer reviews on the Feefo website), the company has just signed up Cooper Solutions for support with its demonstrator bookings.

## Putting the boardroom to work

Mana lets local businesses use the boardroom for meetings at its flagship stores in Stockport and Leeds. "They don't need to hire a room at the Holiday Inn. It brings people through our doors and we have sold cars from it," Lisa Ford said.

Its Infiniti centres in Birmingham, Leeds, Stockport and Glasgow now use Cooper's FullCover fleet management system to handle the 200+ demonstrator bookings they take every month

## Seamless process

"Cooper Solutions provides us with a very straightforward insurance solution which minimises the paperwork for both the dealership and the customer," Lisa said.

"This makes it an incredibly user-friendly and seamless process.

"It gives us an efficient way of allowing customers to experience our products, at a reasonable daily insurance rate. It was a cheaper alternative to the other providers out there and has more functionality. It's a very easy system to operate from the centre manager's point of view as well."

Lisa added that Cooper Solutions was also "very good at letting us know if, for example, one of our team has forgotten to take a car off, or if we are using the car list price for a 'previously enjoyed' vehicle and are therefore paying too much on our day rate.

"It's unusual to find a supplier who will ring you up to tell you that the way you are operating is probably costing you more than it needs to."

## More photos means more hits

Mana puts a lot of photos on its website, for customers not familiar with its cars. "We want to make sure you can see everything about the car before you come to see us," Lisa Ford said. "We aim for at least 20 photos per car and it works well for us – our hits are very good."

## YOUR ACTION PLAN

- Review the costs of managing your demo fleet
- Take cars to your customers for the test drive
- Offer extended test drives to qualified customers new to the brand
- Let local businesses use your boardroom for meetings

“It's a very easy system to operate from the centre manager's point of view”

