

A grayscale photograph of a hand holding a car key, overlaid with a red geometric shape in the top right corner. The text is centered over the image.

DRIVING THE FUTURE OF AUTOMOTIVE WITH INTELLIGENT KEY MANAGEMENT

 iLockerz

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AUTOMOTIVE: A RESILIENT, ADAPTABLE INDUSTRY

The automotive industry has seen significant changes over recent years, having been impacted by unprecedented disruption even prior to the challenges surrounding the coronavirus pandemic.

Auto brands across the globe have had to adapt to conform to key government initiatives which seek to tackle climate change whilst catering to the demands of consumers, for whom sustainability has also become a growing concern when buying or leasing new vehicles.

This shake-up of the industry has seen innovations such as shared mobility, driverless cars, hybrid and electric vehicles, developed in a bid to provide solutions for environmentally conscious buyers of current and future generations.

COVID-19 has presented further challenges, with lockdowns and restrictions causing car dealerships to close their showrooms for extended periods. The UK's first lockdown also saw service centres and garages pause trading as the nation was advised to avoid unnecessary driving and coming into close social contact with others, creating a backlog of MOTs and repairs.

Despite these difficult times, automotive businesses have excelled in the face of adversity, demonstrating a resilience that is certain to bounce the industry back to recovery even as a new normal emerges.

This paper explores the accelerating trends set to reshape the automotive industry and the solutions available to businesses preparing for digital transformation.

THE FUTURE OF AUTOMOTIVE

As operations for the industry reopen, automotive businesses are having to adapt to shorter planning scopes and more rapid industry cycles whilst aligning their priorities with more advanced buying and operational processes.

In the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak, reliance on public transportation has plummeted, with an increasing number of UK adults favouring the use of personal or private cars for health and safety reasons.

Health and safety, along with the demand for a more straightforward buying experience, has led to a surge in online car shopping as more buyers seek out dealerships digitally to research and purchase vehicles. This trend is set to rise further as dealer visit alternatives such as digital showrooms and videoconferences, online configurators and review videos, as well as at-home/VR test drives become more readily available to shoppers.

Enabling car deliveries and collections to be arranged online without the need for human interaction, digitisation not only supports the future of automotive purchasing but will also allow vehicle owners to schedule repairs, MOTs, and other motor services online.

To ensure the automotive industry can successfully manage this digital transformation, businesses must overcome the many challenges posed by traditional operations which typically limit customers to set opening hours and specific processes or company policies. Putting in place an intelligent solution that improves UX will also open many opportunities for any forward-looking auto business.



Car purchases
made **online** up
+75% since 2018*

KEY ASSETS: MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

Advancements in technology have enabled the automotive industry to innovate at an impressive pace and scale, with cutting-edge car designs and online purchase options reshaping the future of the business. However, operational processes across the auto arena are often somewhat limited – particularly when it comes to managing one of its most vital assets: **keys**.

With every vehicle requiring an ignition or wireless key to operate, an administrative burden can be posed to auto organisations where keys are passing through many hands including those of valeters, sales staff, service engineers, workshop mechanics and customers.

Traditional methods for managing keys offer very little in terms of control, meaning visibility of keys is typically limited and can easily become misplaced or lost. Losing valuable time can also have a knock-on effect on employee productivity and, in turn, profitability.

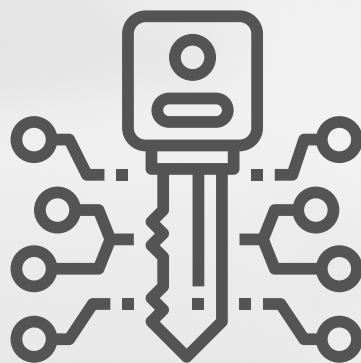
As the industry prepares for a shift in consumer trends, businesses will also need to consider new ways of handing over keys to customers collecting newly purchased or repaired vehicles – not only to improve their experience but to make internal processes much more efficient and to generate extra opportunities which will enhance performance.

ACCESSIBILITY

As the demand for online car buying and service bookings continue to climb in the years ahead, auto companies need to invest in more user-friendly processes for customers.

With modern generations working and living on conflicting timescales, it can be a challenge to ensure customer needs can be met within a 9-5, Monday to Friday schedule. This lifestyle shift has altered consumer expectations and, as hassle-free experiences become an ever-growing priority, self-service options are increasingly sought after.

If the automotive industry is to accelerate sales of motors and related services, key deliveries and/or collections should be automated in line with other processes. Forming an extension of the customer journey, keys should be readily available and easily accessible to enhance UX whilst simplifying operations for staff - ideally using an interactionless system.



CONTROL

Managing multiple vehicles whilst keeping track of a large pool of keys can be difficult, and with staff across different departments needing to access them at various times, it can become even more challenging to know where each key is and who has them.

Whether it is a large dealership or small independent car hire company, the reliance on keys has a huge bearing on the performance of business and productivity of its staff. When keys get lost or stolen, it can have a devastating effect on operations and negatively impact customer experiences.

Putting in place a solution which can offer real-time visibility over keys can streamline processes, reducing time and resources which are often wasted searching for keys that have been misplaced.

Restricting access to authorised staff or specific vehicles whilst automatically generating a full audit trail of all key movements by all members of staff can be accomplished with an intelligent locker system, putting control back in the hands of forward-thinking auto businesses.



SAFETY

Not knowing the whereabouts or activity for each key not only threatens to disrupt an auto company's operations, it can also pose health, safety and even security risks.

Ensuring keys are placed only in the hands of those legally permitted to operate a vehicle can be difficult without sufficient information readily available or secure facilities in place.

This highlights a need for the automotive industry to effectively control or restrict access to the vehicles under their management, making keys available only to approved employees and customers. By mitigating potential risks, businesses can achieve regulatory compliance whilst demonstrating a commitment to quality standards.

An increasingly popular solution is the implementation of an intelligent system which allows keys to be securely stored and all key activity to be easily monitored, offering greater reassurance to both business and customer.



AFFORDABILITY

Modern technology is a necessary investment for future success of the automotive industry, but it can cause a big dent into the budgets of all businesses when keys are having to be replaced frequently, and lost keys can cause delays to sales or service orders.

Traditional management practices fall short of maintaining keys effectively, leading to unnecessary expense and wasting precious resources.

Overcoming such losses can in itself improve profitability and adopting a smart system can also save all departments time, effort and money.

Businesses therefore need to consider a simple, cost-effective solution which can offer greater control and awareness of the keys under their management, generate automatic alerts whenever keys are overdue on returns, and delivers ROI for long-term revenue growth.



USER EXPERIENCE

Playing a vital role in the automotive industry is user experience (UX), which has been propelled to the forefront of auto design and innovation over recent years.

Bridging the gap between technology and human capability, businesses realise the importance of driving optimisation and the quality of the end-to-end UX which has led to a surge in innovative new products and processes being designed.

With such significance being placed on UX, businesses need to enhance the services being offered to their customers. As buyers increasingly demand a user journey which is simple, convenient, and straightforward, lengthy waiting times and complex manual order processes will no longer suffice.

In order to improve UX, businesses will need to embrace the power of automation. One way this can be achieved is through the implementation of an intelligent locker system, allowing key drop-off and collection services to be automated and made available to customers any time that suits them.



INTELLIGENT KEY LOCKERS: A SMART SOLUTION

The implementation of an intelligent key management system provides a valuable solution to the ever-increasing demands of customer expectations by enabling automotive businesses to provide a 24/7 self-service facility.

Allowing customers to drop off or collect keys using a secure storage location removes the need for staff intervention, allowing businesses to operate around the clock without the expense of employees having to oversee handovers out of hours.

Using an automated system which automatically triggers notifications and alerts, customers can collect keys easily by inputting a PIN number or presenting a QR code that has been sent to them by email or text, allowing them to access their keys instantly.

Not only enhancing experiences for customers, staff can also benefit from a more straightforward operational process which offers full audit information in real-time for greater control and accountability over its assets.

With the ability to integrate with Data Management Systems, intelligent key lockers can further streamline processes to help maximise stock levels, identify vehicles nearing or overdue their MOTs, and notify relevant employees when keys have not been collected or returned as planned.

Some of the businesses that can benefit from an intelligent key management solution include:

**AUTO DEALERSHIPS | HIRE CAR COMPANIES | FLEET
MANAGEMENT COMPANIES | SERVICE CENTRES | MOT
GARAGES | AUTO REPAIR SHOPS | TYRE FITTERS |
VALETING COMPANIES | MOTOR BODYSHOPS**

MAXIMISING BUSINESS POTENTIAL

As the UK's automotive industry prepare for the next generation of innovations and vehicle owners, iLockerz presents a solution to key drop-off and collection which can generate many valuable opportunities.

Allowing an interactionless 24/7 service will enable businesses to keep employees and staff safe, extending business hours whilst reducing overheads and offering a convenient, hassle-free experience for customers.

Drastically minimising waiting time and customer dwell time, businesses can rapidly and effectively increase their bottom line and boost profitability whilst driving business forward.

Intuitive touchscreen and advanced web software provides total administrator control and reporting so that system status and locker availability can be managed remotely, thereby increasing efficiency.

By implementing a secure, reliable, and robust IP65 locker solution to manage keys, the full benefits of the digital buying revolution will be clear to all businesses within the automotive arena.

As all iLockerz systems are designed and manufactured 100% in the UK, with all software also developed in-house, organisations can be guaranteed greater control, security, and versatility.

Two-year warranty is included as standard, with extended warranty options available, providing ongoing support for all locker systems installed to ensure a seamless service.

**MADE IN
BRITAIN** 

Accelerate business potential with an automated key drop-off and collection solution...

 **iLockerz**

 **Station Road Industrial Estate
Rowley Regis
West Midlands
B65 0JY**

 **+44 121 270 6153**

 **tellmemore@iLockerz.com**

 **www.iLockerz.com**

