

vGroup transforms car accessories market with launch of car mat app



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Retailers and car dealerships will be able to boost sales from car mats and other accessories, thanks to a new application launched by vGroup, working with software company, Zing. vGroup’s MAT APP enables faster and more complete product cataloguing, as well as providing integrated e-commerce, point of sale and logistics.

Currently there are around 8,000 vehicle patterns and with hundreds of options on trim and materials, there are literally millions of combinations of car mats. Many dealerships and retailers find the process of cataloguing these manually arduous, often ending up with gaps in their offering.

As both the retail and car dealership markets are under increasing margin pressure, sales of car mats and other accessories represent a lucrative digital and in-store opportunity. There are currently sales of 10 million car mats estimated in the UK alone each year.

vGroup has already signed its first MAT APP customers, comprising two of Europe’s largest independent car dealerships, which are implementing online and on the forecourt.

“When customers go to a dealership they expect the same digital experience that they have as everyday consumers, but it’s an expensive undertaking for dealers to create this individually,” said Martyn Nash, Chairman of vGroup. “That’s why we’re launching the MAT APP as a platform for them to

easily incorporate car mat configuration and sales into their own service offering.

“It’s part of a deliberate move to go beyond manufacturing and distributing products, to becoming a platform provider, enabled by technology,” added Martyn Nash.

“What vGroup are doing is a fantastic example of digital transformation in what is seen by many as a traditional manufacturing and logistics sector,” added Julian Hucker, CEO, Zing. “We’re bringing this omnichannel thinking, joining up customer experience, e-commerce and manufacturing into one seamless platform.”

As part of a simple four step process, the application works by asking the user for their vehicle registration number (VRN) or maker and model, to pull up the car mat pattern.

From there they can choose from options including materials, colour and trim to create a unique configuration. Upon order, a confirmation message is also sent to the customer via SMS using the Twilio platform.

The application can be integrated into a dealership or retailer’s website as a widget, or work at the point of sale in the showroom or store as a kiosk or iPad application.

vGroup plans to offer the functionality to other accessories, such as paint protection kits and tyre service kits in the next phase of the implementation.

The MAT APP initiative is part of vGroup’s £600,000 digital transformation investment over the next 3 years, as it seeks to become the car industry’s leading vehicle accessories platform provider.

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