

New vehicle sales portal goes live

Eliance, a national provider of comprehensive business solutions targeting the automotive sector has launched a new web portal called CarsOnline (www.carsonline.co.za) to bolster levels of service, boost sales and address challenges within the automotive trade. The information management company believes the online initiative will benefit both vehicle retailers and consumers alike.



Callie Human, sales director, says as the original designers and implementers of the Call-a-Car system, the company has maintained a vigilant approach to the concept of a vehicle portal and its impact and implications in this market.

CarsOnline represents the latest project and the company is already developing a second version of the facility, which, according to Human, will result in even greater levels of benefit, functionality and information for customers.

Online is the place to be

"The reality of this marketplace is that products must be online," says Human. "CarsOnline will provide the buying public with a channel through which vehicles can be viewed and selected in a central virtual showroom, and have the added assurance that the process will be monitored properly throughout."

Whilst the advantages of convenience and careful regulation are expected to pay dividends to the consumer, Eliance has taken strong measures to attract the interests of vehicle dealerships and communicate the business-building benefits of the initiative.

Dealer interest

"At present we have about three hundred dealers onboard. They have understood and identified with the message that we are communicating and they also have confidence in Eliance and the continuous, long-lasting partnership that is in place," adds Human. "The dealer will benefit from increased sales through qualified leads leading to a decrease in cost of sale for the partner."

"The only real measure of success of this investment for a dealer is whether or not it results in an increase in sales. This information, in addition to other relevant statistics, will be shared and discussed between a dealer and Eliance in order to grow business," Human continues.

Call centre assistance

Although CarsOnline is predominantly targeted at the virtual community and those dealerships that have embraced the Internet as an extension of their business, Human says Eliance has developed a call centre

operation to run in support of and coincide with CarsOnline. This, he says, is another means of effective communication for consumers.

"The critical aspect for us and our core competitive advantage, through this product, is to ensure that the general consumer is empowered with as much up-to-date information as possible and also provide them with a comprehensive overview of the entire process. Information management and control are the cornerstones of our delivery model and this solution," says Human.

User-friendly focus

Another key point for the Eliance team is the specific attention to the user-friendly component of the portal

This is an element that has been in development since the inception of the project and a critical focus for all stakeholders.

"An enormous amount of research was done to ensure that CarsOnline will be unique in a market where numbers of other vehicle portals exist. Information will be updated dynamically either by ourselves or our dealer partners thereby ensuring that the data remains constantly refreshed," adds Human.

According to Human the pricing structure has been confirmed as free for the period running until December 2008, after which the service will be delivered at a cost.

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