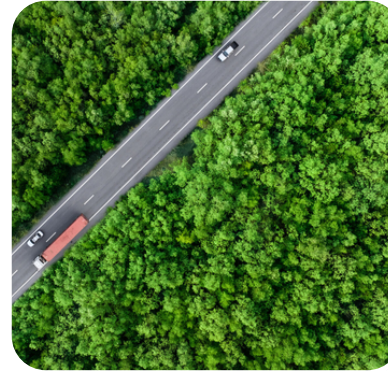


Omnichannel Experiences in Automotive

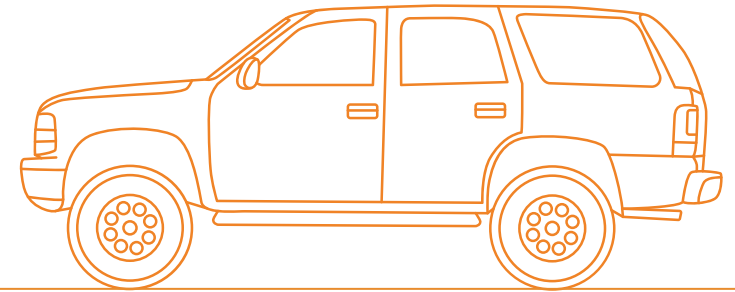
Connecting online and
showroom experiences to
exceed expectations



The digital expectations challenge for automotive

With the evolution of technology and a shift in consumer behaviour towards digital first, the automotive industry is having to play catch-up. This is particularly true in a crowded UK market, where delivering exceptional, joined-up experiences is key to winning conquest customers and driving loyalty.

An omnichannel strategy allows automotive brands to meet constantly evolving customer expectations, yet many are falling short. Siloed channels, inconsistent pricing, and lost online progress risk customers taking their business elsewhere. Consumer trends in 2025 are clear, and it is possible to build and maintain a successful omnichannel strategy by leveraging insights through customer journey mapping.





Customer experience is the new automotive battleground

UK car sales have held at ~2M annually since 2000, while the number of competing brands has more than doubled to 62. With entrants outpacing demand, only an exceptional experience stands out as Chinese EV challengers and digital-first experiences reshape automotive retail.



MORE CHOICE

A crowded market and overseas entrants are eroding technological, product, and price advantages



MORE CHANNELS

Buyers increasingly do their research online and visit the showroom ready to complete the transaction



MORE CONTROL

Buyers require autonomy to design their experience on their own terms, how, where, and when they want

62

brands are present in the UK market, up from 45 in 2019

2/3

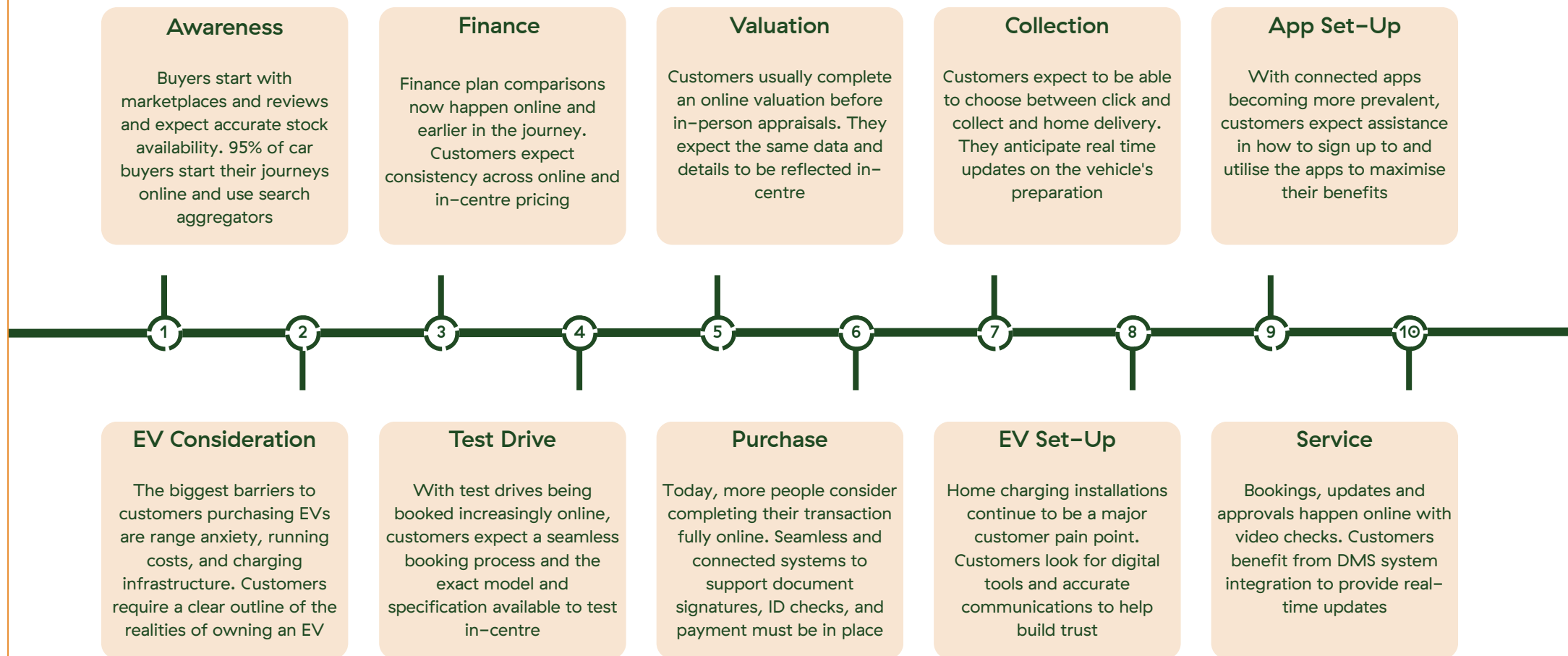
of walk-ins make no prior contact with the centre following online research

94%

of car buyers say they still visit a dealership as part of their car-buying journey

High-impact touchpoints across the car buyer journey

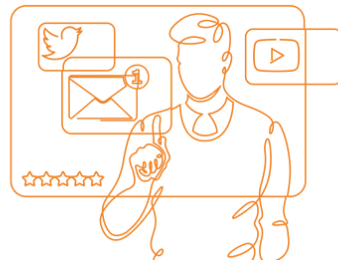
From discovery to service, customers set the pace. Across the car-buying journey, there are several touchpoints which must remain consistent across channels to deliver successful omnichannel experiences. Use these insights to connect online progress to in-showroom action.



To win, you need to build omnichannel experiences that work

Customers now expect a car buying journey on their terms. Brands that seamlessly join moments together earn trust, win new buyers and, most importantly, retain the customers they already have.

A successful omnichannel experience unifies all channels. It connects data, systems and teams so progress made online follows the customer into the showroom, gives advisers the same view as the customer and removes unnecessary rekeying and handoffs. The result is faster decisions, fewer complaints and a service that feels personal.



What works?



Conduct in-depth customer journey mapping to have a foundational understanding of your customers. Focus on the important journeys and use data to support activities.



Capture a real-time view of customer feedback across channels, through a strategic voice of the customer (VOC) programme to continuously meet and exceed customer expectations.



Build an organisation structure around the customer. Enable non-fragmented ownership of channels to ensure consistency between platforms and to break down silos.



Equip people to deliver the hybrid sale. Frontline and back-office teams need tools and training that recognise progress made online. Make sure staff are brought on any change journey.



Prioritise improvements to the most frequently used customer touchpoints and reduce friction between channels to enhance satisfaction and increase revenue.



Ensure you have the right systems to facilitate the best customer experience through a single, central repository and integration of data across channels.

Start by mapping the moments that matter

Customer journey mapping (CJM) should be at the heart of any CX or omnichannel strategy. Use it to identify, prioritise, and deliver the changes that will make a real difference to your customers to align in-showroom and online journeys, measure impact, and continuously improve.

- Identify the set of journeys that drive the most demand, revenue, and complaints, then dive deep. Define the outcomes that matter, such as lead conversion, time to purchase, and complaint rates

- The company's viewpoint often differs from customer wants and needs. Use customer research, voice of the customer (VOC) programmes, and surveys to successfully reflect a customer's reality

- Maximise journey insight by mapping the back-stage teams, systems and processes that deliver each step so you can spot duplication

- Regularly review the map, ensuring it continuously evolves
- Feed in new feedback from VOC analytics and dealer forums

- Use a visual tool to bring the map to life and create one shared artefact that aligns teams around customer pain points
- Involve dealerships from the start so front-line reality shapes the map and adoption in-showroom



Case Study – Redefining CX through Customer Journey Mapping

After an internal audit, a global OEM asked Oaklin to create a cohesive, measured, and accountable approach to CX across four UK operating entities. The objective was to create a consistent and elevated customer experience, assign clear accountability and introduce methods to track outcomes.

Oaklin designed a holistic customer journey mapping framework underpinned by service design. We standardised best practice in modern CJM software and created reusable templates, guides and training so project teams could deliver consistently.

We then built proof of concept maps for business-critical initiatives, including the launch of a new finance product, EV wall box installation and a customer satisfaction campaign. The design and continuous iteration of these maps kept the customer at the heart of all activity, identifying pain points and opportunities across the journeys to positively impact customer satisfaction, retention and advocacy.



Our Recommendations

Engage leadership early on in the strategy, highlighting the benefits so they can set the tone and shape the culture

Run collaborative journey-mapping workshops that unite teams to map the full journey and drive better results

Make maps visible in shared spaces and continually update them; create a dedicated war room for priority journeys and use them for team stand ups

Turn insights into delivery with owners, plans and regular check ins; project manage effectively to track progress and ensure accountability

Get in touch

Do you want to learn more about customer experience, customer journey mapping, or how to stand out in the automotive retail landscape?

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