

Chat handling approach

The Chat Support Centre handles consumer chats on behalf of our dealers as a representative of Auto Trader. As part of this service, the Chat Support Centre will attempt to provide consumers with assistance where possible and gain contact details in order for the dealers to follow up by contacting them at their earliest convenience.

Its primary objective is to provide a quality experience for the consumer. Lead captured must always be considered secondary.

This document highlights the basic chat approach, as well our approach to the varying query types experienced through Auto Trader.

Basic chat approach:

- Respond as quickly as possible
- Always start with a consistent friendly greeting
- Always ask how we may help the consumer
- Ask who you are speaking with
- Always confirm the car you are chatting about – consumers may be looking at several vehicles at once
- Always be honest - do not provide answers to queries you are unsure of
- Never provide the consumer with the VRN
- Never discuss finance or warranties with the consumer – we cannot comment on regulated products
- If a consumer asks who we are, we must be clear that we are representatives of Auto Trader working on behalf of the dealership who cannot answer at that time
- Never demand consumer details
- Do not make same day appointments on behalf of the dealership; say a representative will be in contact to confirm a suitable time.
- Do not say a dealership representative will be in contact soon or shortly, use “earliest convenience”.

- Always check spelling and grammar before sending a message.
- If a customer is worried that their number would be shared with third parties, inform them that we will not share their data with any 3rd party and will only share it with the dealership in question.
- Always ask for a preferred contact method when capturing lead information• Always suggest a dealership visit
- Always ask if “there is anything else I can help you with?” even if you feel you have answered their query fully.
- Wait ten minutes before terminating a chat if a customer doesn’t respond, unless you finish it off with “Thank you for using Auto Trader.”

Part Exchange chats

Large proportions of the interactions we deal with are for buyers looking to part exchange and gain an indicative valuation of their car as part payment for the cars they are interested in.

In order for the dealer to provide the most accurate valuation when they contact the consumer we must try to gain as much information as possible however, if they struggle to recall any information, the most important pieces of information we need are Registration and Mileage.

Key information required:

- Registration
- Mileage
- Make
- Model
- Full Service History (Y/N)
- Number of Owners
- General Condition (dents, scratches, interior etc)

Should a customer offer to send photos via e-mail, then the standard approach is to explain when the representative contacts them they will request photos where necessary.

Example conversation:

System - Agent David has accepted the conversation.

David - Good afternoon you are through to David, May I ask who I am speaking with?

Customer - My name is John Smith

David - Hi John, I see you are looking at the Fiesta Zetec, do you have any questions for me?

Customer - Yes David, I am looking at the Zetec but I was wondering whether you would consider taking my Ford Fiesta as part exchange?

David - Yes the dealer will accept part exchange, what can do is take some details from you regarding your Ford Fiesta. Can you provide me with the registration of the car and the current mileage?

Customer - Ok no problem the current mileage is 91,000 and the reg is YN54XYZ.

David - Ok that's great John. You have already provided me with the make and model, can you also tell me does the car have a full service history and how many previous owners has it had?

Customer - 1 previous owner and full service history, anything else?

David - One last question how would you describe the exterior/interior condition of the car?

Customer - it's in very good condition both inside and out.

David - Ok John that's great thank you. What I can do for you today, is arrange for a representative from Ford Cars to contact you and provide you with an indicative valuation on your current car and also discuss the Fiesta Zetec that you are currently looking at. Can I take a contact number, please?

Customer - 07589 458 478

David - Excellent I will pass this across and a Representative from Ford Cars will be in contact with you at their earliest convenience. Can I help you with anything else today?

Customer - No thanks, that's all.

David - Thank you for using Auto Trader, enjoy the rest of your day.

Finance chats

Information around finance options is also a common theme from consumers. If a customer does ask anything around Finance, we will always refer them to the dealer and would never make or confirm any offering the customer may have seen on the dealer's advert.

Example conversation:

System - Agent David has accepted the conversation.

David - Good afternoon you are through to David, May I ask who I am speaking with?

Customer - My name is Julie Smith

David - Hi Julie, I see you are looking at the BMW 320D, do you have any questions for me?

Customer - Just wondering what your typical finance rates looked like David? I can pay a deposit of £2000, what would the monthly payments be over 3 years?

David - As I represent Auto Trader I am not able to confirm finance rates however I would be happy to arrange for a member of the Finance team at BMW to contact you to discuss?

Customer - That would be great, my mobile number is 07123456789

David - When would be the best time to contact you Julie?

Customer - Anytime during normal working hours, thanks

David - Thank you Julie, I will pass your contact details to the representative from BMW cars and they will be in touch at their earliest convenience.

Customer - Excellent, Thanks David

David - No problem, is there anything else I can help you with?

Customer - No that's all for now, thanks for your help

Vehicle specification questions

The team will help to answer any questions around the vehicle they are interested in, this includes everything from mileage, service history, previous owners, etc... to more specific questions such as 'does the car have Bluetooth?'.
If the information is available on the full page advert, our team will advise where they can but if the information isn't available, we will offer a call back from the dealer at the earliest convenience.

Example conversation:

System - Agent Christy has accepted the conversation.

Customer - Hi Christy

Christy - Good afternoon you are through to Christy, may I ask who I am speaking with?

Customer - I'm Jordan, was just wondering does the Golf GTI car a full service history and when was the last service?

Christy - Hi Jordan, I will just check that for you. Do you have any further questions while I look?

Customer - What is the postcode of the car's location?

Christy - Golf Cars have not stated this in my spec sheet, this is something they would have to confirm for you. If you could provide me with your contact number I can have a representative of Golf Cars contact you and confirm the service details of the Golf.

Christy - The address is 4 Symington Place, Irvine. Postcode is KA11 5DE

Customer - I would prefer email as I am not normally able to answer my phone during working hours

Christy - No problem Jordan, I can pass your email and have this information mailed to you.

Customer - Excellent it's Jordan@emailaddress.com

Christy - That's great Jordan, I will forward your address and the representative from Golf cars will be in touch to confirm that information for you, at their earliest convenience. Is there anything else I can help you with?

Customer - No thanks

Christy - Have a good night and Thank you for using Auto Trader

Dealership specific questions

Specific questions related to what the dealer offers rather than specific to the car the customer is viewing. Examples include Drive away insurance, Warranty or Overseas export.

Approach here is to have a quick check through the advert to see if the requested information is provided. If information is not listed on the advert, we must offer a call back from a dealership representative at the earliest convenience.

Example conversation:

System - Agent Anne Marie has accepted the conversation.

Anne Marie – Good afternoon you are through to Anne Marie, May I ask who I am speaking with?

Customer – Hi, you are speaking with Chris.

Anne Marie – Hi Chris, I see you are currently looking at the Audi A4, how can I help you today?

Customer – I was looking at the website and see that this car comes with warranty, can you give me some more information about this?

Anne Marie – Unfortunately Chris, I don't have any further details regarding the warranty attached to this car. However what I can do for you today is take a contact number and have a representative from Audi Garage contact you at their earliest convenience to discuss this.

Customer – I would prefer to use e-mail

Anne Marie – No problem Chris, the representative can contact you via e-mail, could I take a note of your e-mail address please?

Customer – chrissavage@emailaddress.com

Anne Marie – Thankyou Chris I will pass over your contact details to the representative and they will be in touch at their earliest convenience. Is there anything else I can help you with today?

Customer – No thanks that's great Bye

Anne Marie - Thank you for using Auto Trader, enjoy the rest of your day.

Complaints queries

Should we chat with a customer who complains about not being contacted after being in a chat with an agent, we need to firstly apologise, and then ask for their contact details again and what the matter was regarding. The customer is then informed that we will pass the details on and mark as 'URGENT'.

We should then, where possible, attempt to contact the dealership and make arrangements for the customer to be called as a matter of urgency.

Example conversation:

System - Sarah has accepted the conversation.

Sarah – Good afternoon you are through to Sarah, May I ask who I am speaking with?

Customer – Hi this is Martin Taylor, yes I hope you can help. I recently spoke to someone and they said that the dealer would get in touch with me yesterday and no one has?

Sarah – Hi Martin, firstly I would like to apologise for any inconvenience that this has caused you. I see you are looking at a Ford Focus offered by Ford Birmingham. Is this the car which you queried about yesterday and were informed that a representative would contact you?

Customer – yes it is and no one has contacted me – still waiting!

Sarah – I understand your frustration Martin. Can I ask what the conversation was regarding?

Customer – I just wanted to know whether the Ford Focus was still available or not.

Sarah – Ok, what I can do is take your contact details and pass these over again to the Ford Birmingham representative and mark as urgent.

Customer – Why do you need my contact details again? I've already provided this information yesterday.

Sarah – Unfortunately Martin I do need to confirm the details again to ensure that they are correct and that the correct information is passed over to the dealer.

Customer - Ok then my number is 01254 125125

Sarah – Thankyou Martin, I will pass over your details again and mark it as urgent. Can I help you with anything else today?

Customer – No that's fine

Sarah – Thank you for using Auto Trader. Once again I can only apologise for any inconvenience this has caused

Rude customers/Time wasters

If someone is being rude, swearing, or threatening then we must remain professional but issue them with a warning explaining that you will terminate the chat if they continue. This will be operated on a 3 strikes and you're out policy.

The Chat Support Centre reserves the right to blacklist any consumer who repeatedly engages in bad behaviour.

Example conversation:

System - Ian has accepted the conversation.

Ian - Good afternoon you are through to Ian, May I ask who I am speaking with?

Customer - Hi Ian I am looking at your picture and I must say I like it very much. You can call me Chancer.

Ian - Hi Chancer I see you are looking at a Suzuki Swift. How can I help?

Customer - I am actually looking at you. Can I have your number?

Ian - Unfortunately I cannot provide that information, if you have any questions regarding the car I am happy to help?

Customer - No not interested in the car only you. What are you wearing?

Ian - Sorry Chancer I need to let you know, if you are not here to talk about the car I will need to terminate the chat. Do you have any questions about the Suzuki Swift?

Customer - Does it look attractive?

Ian - Looking at the pictures on the advert, I would say it looks like a nice car. Any other questions I could help you with?

Customer - I wasn't meaning the car, I meant you.

Ian - I am going to terminate the chat now.

TERMINATED