

SPEAKERS UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT



Laura Jones
Head of
Connected Car
Finance
**DSG Financial
Services**



Keith Bell
Sales Director
**Evolution
Funding**

Q: Covid-19 took hold of the economy, what has been the biggest challenge for your business?

LJ: Technically we coped well with deploying people to work from home. Changing the way we engaged with our dealerships, as an alternative to physical visits wasn't just challenging for us, but also the dealer.

That's why we developed solutions to give the same service and interaction in ways we'd never relied on before such as Facetime, Zoom videos, Whatsapp and Canva. Tools that we now would never be without.

KB: Undoubtedly the issues surrounding 300 employees all working from home.

Business has remained surprisingly strong outside of the first lockdown but service levels have been under real pressure throughout this period. We have invested heavily in remote working technology and additional training which has seen significant improvements; but as all lenders and brokers are finding, efficiencies are affected when your whole business is working remotely.

Some of us are lucky enough to have a quiet space to work in but for many it's not an easy environment to work in at home.

Q: What have you learned with regards to maintaining business continuity effectively?

KB: Lots. Solid investment in phone systems, laptops for all and enhanced internet connections have been a game-changer for us and it's also opened up the



Panel discussion - Car Finance Conference 2020

opportunity to recruit well outside of our traditional geographical area.

LJ: Masses of communication and being open! Most of all leading with positivity, enthusiasm and drive so that we can all get through this together.

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Q: What sessions are you most looking forward too at the Car Finance Conference 2021?

KB: Sadly I enjoy the compliance aspect so they are always my favourite session. I do also enjoy hearing the variations on thoughts about the future of how people will buy and fund their vehicles.

LJ: Definitely interested to hear the thoughts of the panel on how Covid has affected the dealer retail and finance experience.



Opening Address of Car Finance Conference 2020

Q: What do you think is the biggest challenge facing Car Finance Lenders at this minute?

LJ: The past 12 months has seen the industry tackle some big challenges with Brexit, FCA changes and Covid.

I would like to hope that like us, most of this is mainly behind us, and we can all take some time to focus on the wellbeing of our people and as an industry, be recognised for the long hard work we have achieved.

KB: The FCA changes in January have forced almost everyone to re-think their customer proposition and for many, their initial proposition has been driven more by technical shortfall rather than what the Regulations actually say, or what the Lenders and Dealers actually want

Fixed Rate is not really the answer yet 50% of businesses have gone down that route and commercially it remains to be seen whether that is the right path.

As above I know the issue of service is also very high on everyone's agenda and we see the pressures all lenders are under currently due to the size of our lending panel. It has highlighted for everyone that as an Industry, many businesses hadn't fully grasped the nettle of the full Omni-Channel online customer journey pre lockdown but we've moved forward several years within a few months.

ABOUT THE CAR FINANCE CONFERENCE

Join us on 23 March as Europe's 'premier car finance event' brings a wealth of industry experts together to discuss time-critical topics. From managing strategic growth during this latest lockdown, to compliance, digital transformation, the customer journey and supporting individuals through forbearance, we'll cover it all.

Our TV broadcast platform delivers a fully immersive experience. With live Q&A sessions, polls, targeted attendee matchmaking and a virtual exhibition, our digital broadcast provides all the benefits of in-person events from the safety and comfort of your home.