Low Key Tax Disc Communication Could Harm Used Car Trade, Warns Auto Trader

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With just a week to go until new rules governing vehicle excise duty (road tax) begin, Auto Trader has added its voice to concerns over poor communication by DVLA.

From 1 October 2014, neither dealers nor private owners will be allowed to sell the unexpired portion of road tax with a used vehicle. The seller will receive a refund from DVLA and the responsibility to tax anew will fall squarely with the new owner, in a process that will take place either online, over the phone or in the nearest Post Office.

However, according to recent surveys up to half of the population are still in the dark about the changes. And Auto Trader has today warned DVLA about the detrimental effect that lack of proper engagement will have on those who buy and sell cars.

“This is a very significant change to the way road tax will be administered by DVLA and the message from our 12,000 retail customers is that the communication has been, at best, low key,” said Sharon Randall, Auto Trader sales director. “The changes affect 30 million motorists and if half are unaware that new rules are imminent, then we have a big problem. There is a real risk that transactions could be delayed and that dealers will be in the firing line when it comes to the consumer backlash.”

Many dealers, particularly those retailing luxury cars, have also expressed concern that they will no longer be able to sell a vehicle with what amounted to a significant benefit for the buyer. “For the seller of a car like a Range Rover for example, nine months road tax adds more than £300 to the value of a car,” added Randall. “But come October, this part of the retail buying landscape will be lost forever.”

As part of the changes, cars for sale on dealer forecourts will not have to be taxed. However, if taken on public roads - for example for a test drive - trade plates will have to be used.

Although it’s the buyer’s responsibility to tax the car, a dealer can manage the process on their behalf by using the buyer’s name and address. This can be done through the online application process at www.gov.uk/tax-discor by calling 0300 123 4321, or by paying at the local post office, using the 16 digit reference number from the car’s V11 tax disc renewal letter or by the 11 digit reference from the car’s V5C form.

These and other issues regarding the tax disc changes are covered in Auto Trader advice for dealers, published on its website at the following address:

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About Auto Trader:

Auto Trader is the largest motoring marketplace in the United Kingdom with over 11.5 million unique monthly users making more than 159 million searches among over 475 000 new and used vehicles. 64% of all visits are made using a mobile device, through the mobile-optimised site and apps. Over 12 000 automotive retailers use Auto Trader tools and services to buy, sell, manage and market their businesses.

Auto Trader generates £250 million of revenue per year and employs 830 people. For more information, visithttp://www.autotrader.co.uk/ or download the iPhone, iPad or Android app. Auto Trader is the most popular market place for selling cars in the United Kingdom: http://www.autotrader.co.uk/cars/selling

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