Distance sales category added to The Motor Ombudsman Knowledge Base

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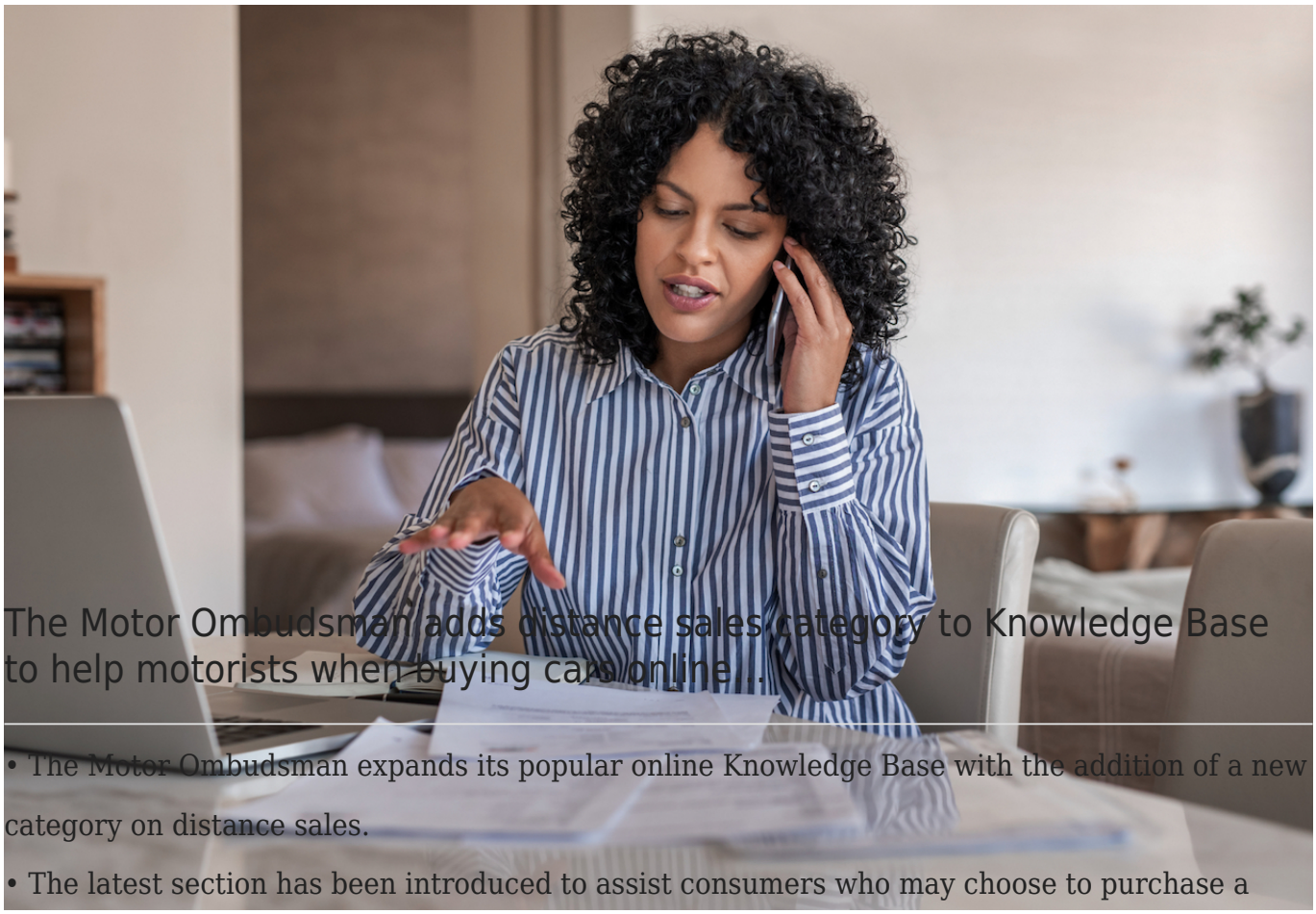

The Motor Ombudsman adds distance sales category to Knowledge Base to help motorists when buying cars online...

• The Motor Ombudsman expands its popular online Knowledge Base with the addition of a new category on distance sales.

• The latest section has been introduced to assist consumers who may choose to purchase a vehicle online or over the phone whilst car showrooms are temporarily closed.

• The 17 questions and answers cover the legislation which governs distance sales, a consumer's right to return a vehicle within 14 days, and what action a customer can take in the event of a dispute with a seller.

With car retailers temporarily closing their showrooms during the second national lockdown in response to COVID-19, and the online marketplace continuing to grow, motorists may turn to the Internet to purchase their next car. The Motor Ombudsman has therefore introduced a new category on its online Knowledge Base dedicated to distance sales, to help clarify the rights and obligations of businesses and consumers, and answer some of the possible questions from customers who choose to buy and pay for a car without any physical contact with the seller between the point of ordering and delivery.

The unveiling of the eighth section on the popular easy-to-navigate library, which has been designed to provide responses to some of the most common queries from motorists on car ownership, vehicle maintenance and dispute resolution, builds on the distance sales resources already live on The Motor Ombudsman's website (TheMotorOmbudsman.org). These include a dedicated page of FAQs and a Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved virtual training course for businesses.

The 17 questions and answers within the newly-added Knowledge Base category explore subjects, such as the relationship between distance sales and the Consumer Rights Act 2015, the 14-day 'no-quibble' full refund period enshrined in the Distance Selling Regulations, whether a 'click and collect' service is classed as a distance sale, if a refund by a business could be subject to mileage deductions and the condition of a vehicle, and what action the customer is able to take in the event of a dispute.

During the first nine months of 2020, articles on the Knowledge Base, which span electric vehicles to new car warranties, were viewed over 178,000 times, with more than 79,000 recorded in the third quarter alone, the highest figure seen for a single three-month period this year. In addition, further highlighting the tool's continued popularity, user searches surged to their highest ever level, with over 23,000 taking place between the 1st of July and the 30th of September.

Bill Fennell, Chief Ombudsman and Managing Director of The Motor Ombudsman, said: “Buying a car online offers added convenience and the opportunity to make a purchase at the click of a button, especially at a time when many showrooms have temporarily shut due to Coronavirus restrictions. However, some consumers may not be fully aware of how their rights differ compared to when buying a car at bricks-and-mortar premises, as well as the implications for not test driving a vehicle or seeing a seller in person during the entire transaction.”
Bill added: “The new category has therefore been launched to provide greater clarity on some of the key considerations and finer intricacies of making a purchase over the Internet or by phone, and to answer some of the queries that motorists may have prior to entering into a contract at a distance.”

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To view The Motor Ombudsman’s new distance sales category on its online Knowledge Base, visit TheMotorOmbudsman.org/kb-cats/distance-sales.

About The Motor Ombudsman

The Motor Ombudsman is the fully impartial Ombudsman dedicated solely to the automotive sector, and self-regulates the UK’s motor industry through its comprehensive Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved Codes of Practice. Thousands of businesses, including vehicle manufacturers, warranty product providers, franchised dealers and independent garages, are accredited to one or more of the Codes, which drive even higher standards of work and service, and give consumers added protection, peace of mind and trust during the vehicle purchase and ownership experience.

For more information on The Motor Ombudsman, visit www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org.