Digidentity

Driving Data Care

UK drivers prioritise data security
as much as price and location
when choosing garages for repairs

Introduction

With the surge of connected, data-driven vehicles hitting the road, data security concerns are shifting into high gear.

Many vehicles today are practically roving data centres — holding onto vast amounts of their driver's personal information.

Everything from location data to daily driving habits can now be accessed through a person's car. And this has made data security a growing, critical priority for drivers seeking garages for repairs, along with more traditional considerations, such as price and location.

Other threats, such as data exploitation — where personal information is sold to third parties for marketing purposes without the driver's clear knowledge or consent — are also increasingly worrying drivers.
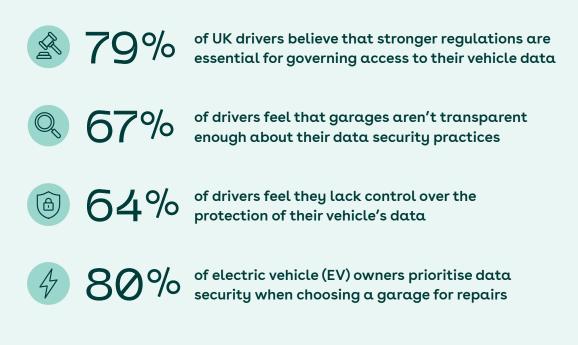
These shifting paradigms are all contributing towards UK drivers becoming much more selective about the garages they trust with their vehicle data, according to Digidentity's recent survey findings.

As such, the ability to maintain trust through secure data handling practices needs to become a priority for garages and repair shops hoping to retain and grow their customer base. Especially as this is a key consideration for women drivers, as well as electric and high-value vehicle owners.

Understanding how to quell these fears and present a digitally capable and trustworthy front will only grow in importance in our rapidly evolving automotive landscape.

This whitepaper will outline many of the data security concerns UK drivers currently have. We'll also offer actionable strategies garages can implement to not only meet these evolving expectations, but also strengthen customer loyalty.

Data overview:

79% of UK drivers believe that stronger regulations are essential for governing access to their vehicle data

67% of drivers feel that garages aren't transparent enough about their data security practices

64% of drivers feel they lack control over the protection of their vehicle's data

80% of electric vehicle (EV) owners prioritise data security when choosing a garage for repairs

The shifting automotive landscape

We've entered the age of the connected car, with around two-thirds of new vehicles sold in the UK now connected to other vehicles, infrastructure and the internet. And by 2026, this will be the case for all new cars sold.

However, the influx of connected cars brings a significantly higher risk of data security issues. Data exploitation, privacy invasion and unauthorised data access to location history, driving behaviour and even payment history, have all become growing threats.

So, vehicle data protection will only rise as a top consideration for customers choosing a repair shop or garage. As such, the pressure is on automotive businesses to show greater transparency with regards to how they approach data security.

The research conducted for this whitepaper by Censuswide, surveyed 2,014 UK drivers and 1,003 NL drivers to gain key insights around their data privacy concerns when it came to automotive repair.

Through this greater understanding of customer concerns, businesses in this sector can begin to adapt to this changing data security landscape – and take advantage of the unique opportunities that may arise as a result.

The trust gap in automotive repairs

When it comes to picking a garage, trust is a fundamental factor influencing customers' choices. As it stands, trust in these service providers is low, with nearly 70% of drivers surveyed saying they don't believe garages are transparent enough about their data security practices.

It's more crucial than ever that businesses in the automotive sector — such as repair shops and garages — recognise the importance of being seen to prioritise data security. Failing to do so in our current, connected world runs the risk of alienating customers, especially high-value car owners and tech-savvy consumers such as electric vehicle drivers.

Electric vehicle owners are particularly cautious when it comes to data security, with 85% of them prioritising garages that demonstrate the ability to securely handle their data, according to our research.

And with both electric and connected vehicle owners set to grow as more people shift to these more modern and sustainable alternatives, pressure is building for garages to improve their data management capabilities.

The role of regulation: How SERMI can build trust

The question of who's authorised to access data — be it an individual or an organisation — has become increasingly contentious over recent years, especially as concerns around data security have grown.

The EU Data Act was introduced in 2023 to establish many of the region's rules around data access and assuage the public's concerns. However, while it has helped with many of the data security challenges, other accessibility issues continue to crop up.

For instance, the right to access important security-related information about vehicles — such as keys, locks, and engine details straight from the manufacturer — is something that has only been available to authorised dealers.

As a result, auto repair shops can often find both the task of over-riding in-built anti-theft measures or attaining certain manufacturer information, very tedious and time-consuming.

In response, the European Union has since introduced the Secure and Repair Maintenance Information (SERMI) scheme. With this new programme, local repair shops with proven credentials can be remotely authorised, enabling them to safely get the information they need to make repairs in far less time.

Digidentity has been chosen as the scheme's approved Trust Centre, offering secure electronic identification across the EU. Our system helps ensure the positive identification of professionals, granting access through a secure virtual certificate developed and deployed by us.

SERMI is already in effect across the EU. Beyond simply meeting the upcoming regulatory requirements, SERMI accreditation offers garages a valuable chance to stand out as trustworthy and secure — appealing to the growing cohort of data-conscious consumers.

79% of UK drivers select garages based on trust

Transparency, price and security

Every auto repair shop needs to consider how they can introduce data security protocols into their businesses to improve their transparency levels.

In the long term, these sorts of actions will have a dramatic effect on helping foster lasting customer partnerships — encouraging repeat business and positive referrals.

Trust has always played a key role in decision-making when it comes to garages. And now that vehicles store so much personal information about their owners, the need for trust has only intensified.

Today, 79% of UK drivers select garages based on trust, with 60% also concerned about data exploitation. That's not to say price is no longer as important, but for high-value vehicle owners, security has become a much more consequential factor. We found that half of UK drivers who own cars worth more than £55,000 say they now prioritise garages that ensure data protection.

It's evident that as more cars on the road become connected, data safety will become more of a consideration for all drivers. So, developing strategies today that offer both competitive pricing and secure, transparent data handling, is a matter of urgency for every garage in the nation.

The digital future: integrating technology into the customer experience

There are a number of digital tools garages and repair shops can begin to integrate to enhance customer experience and meet their growing expectations for convenience and transparency.

Garages that offer the ability to compare their costs with competitors will have a powerful way to inject greater transparency into their interactions with customers, thereby building greater trust with their clientele.

Similarly, by strategically utilising other innovations such as secure digital payment methods and encrypted data exchange, garages can start to foster more digitally-savvy reputations. And in turn, convince customers that they can be trusted to dutifully handle their personal information.

Trust - your competitive edge

In today's data-driven automotive market, garages that prioritise robust data security practices have a unique opportunity to build lasting customer trust.

By staying ahead of regulatory requirements and adopting secure, transparent data practices, businesses in the sector won't only be able to meet incoming compliance standards but also strengthen customer loyalty.

With Digidentity's proven expertise in digital identity verification and its role in SERMI, we're well-positioned to help you navigate these emerging challenges. Our platform ensures secure, compliant identity management, while supporting the automotive industry to adapt to an increasingly data-conscious market.

Digidentity is committed to making sure the right people have the right levels of access to data or information at all times. Digidentity not only verifies employees, partners and clients, it also improves digital workflows and all without compromising safety and security.

Learn more about how Digidentity can support your digital transformation into a more data-secure business and help you foster greater trust with your customers.

This research was conducted by Censuswide, among a sample of 2014 drivers from the UK and 1003 drivers from the Netherlands over 17 between 16th September 2024 and 18th September 2024. Censuswide abides by and employs members of the Market Research Society and follows the MRS code of conduct and ESOMAR principles. Censuswide is also a member of the British Polling Council.

About Digidentity

Digidentity is a pioneer in the digital identity space. The platform has successfully verified over 25 million high-assurance identities, offering the convenience of reuse across multiple services. The platform is designed to make it easy for our customers to verify identities across multiple platforms and services, making it a one-stop shop for all verified identity needs. The platforms focus on security, regulatory compliance and interoperability ensures identities are accepted across multiple services, sectors and even borders; providing value for the end user whilst meeting the compliance requirements of the service provider.

We proudly serve as a trusted partner to governments, healthcare providers, and 175,000 corporate businesses, with verified identities from over 180 nationalities. Our commitment to security is evident in our inclusion on prestigious trust lists, including the EU Trusted List, the UK's Digital Identity and Attributes Trust Framework (DIATF) and the Adobe Approved Trust list (AATL).

Digidentity is owned by Solera, the global leader in vehicle lifecycle management software-as-a-service, data, and services. Solera empowers its customers to succeed in the digital age by providing them with a "one-stop shop" solution that streamlines operations, offers data-driven analytics, and enhances customer engagement, which Solera believes helps customers drive sales, promote customer retention, and improve profit margins.

Find out more here: www.digidentity.com

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