

Online Booking for MOT Stations

Motasoft is the brainchild of Alan Burgess. The company offers a specialist online booking service for MOT stations throughout the UK.

“I used to run a garage in Weston-Super-Mare that included an MOT station,” said Alan Burgess, Managing Director, Motasoft. “I saw the opportunity to provide a better service to my customers by allowing them to book convenient MOT appointments online.”

The idea for Motasoft grew from that initial concept into what it is today - the provider of a fully featured online service that is doubling its customer numbers every six months. Alan is still based in Weston-Super-Mare but is now fully occupied growing the Motasoft business.

“We’ve spent a lot of time developing and testing the software to get it just right,” continued Alan. “It has now reached a level of functionality that I’m very pleased with and the sales results are proving that we’ve got the mix just right.”

The Virtual MOT Manager (VMM) is a complete MOT Test booking and reminder service with a difference. It is delivered as a managed service over the internet for a rental fee. The MOT station has desktop software that interfaces to the online booking service so that they can control which dates and times are offered for online booking and match this with appointments that might come in by telephone or person.

VMM can be easily embedded within a garage’s current website if they have one, or for a small increase in the rental fee Motasoft will build and host a website specifically for the customer.

Attractive Rental Model

“Our rental model makes VMM very attractive to independent garage owners,” added Alan. “In turn it is very attractive to us to rent a hosted server platform for the service delivery.”

Alan had originally hosted his own garage’s website with a specialist hoster called Shared Knowledge, now part of RapidHost, and had always received a great service.

“It was a natural choice for me to talk to RapidHost about my plans for VMM,” said Alan. “I already knew that it was commercially unacceptable to consider managing the technical architecture in-house. We just didn’t want to take the cost and risk of building the infrastructure for networking and server management ourselves. So I called them up and things moved quickly from there.”

The VMM offer was publicly launched in 2006 and take up grew steadily until the end of 2008 when Motasoft added additional sales resources. Since then sales have grown significantly.

“We are happy that RapidHost can handle the growth in customer uptake,” added Alan. “They built a solid environment of dedicated servers for us with plenty of room for expansion without affecting performance or reliability. Whilst MOT tests don’t take place 24x7, people do want to be able to book them at any time of day or night so we need 100% system availability.”

Looking Forward

Alan has big plans for the future of VMM but is playing his cards close to his chest.

“Motasoft is now a well established business with a great reputation amongst independent garages and MOT stations,” concluded Alan. “A major component of our success is the reliability and scalability of the service delivery platform that is managed for us by RapidHost. But more than that, we have built up an excellent working relationship with their technical and commercial teams. This has allowed us to step outside of our mutual comfort zones and try new ways of improving the service. I can honestly say that without RapidHost’s openness and flexibility Motasoft just wouldn’t be where it is now.”