



Case Study:

Redefining the finance first journey



EnquiryLabs leverages **Experian AutoEngage+** for data driven affordability and higher quality leads

The car finance ecosystem, like others, has undergone significant changes over recent years, driven by digital innovation, shifting consumer expectations, and increasing regulation. As a result, dealers, brokers and lenders have had to rethink traditional processes.

While these changes have been accepted as opportunities to explore how customer journeys could be improved, decisions streamlined, and finance options tailored, the reality is that significant pain points have persisted. Fragmented workflows, inconsistent data, slow decision cycles and the lack of transparency still characterise the vehicle finance journey in most cases. The inability to leverage newer technologies or richer data streams to address these pain points has been a major barrier.

In 2023, a team of experienced technical founders and developers – the original creators of a widely adopted CRM platform in the UK vehicle finance space – came together with a new ambition. With a strong track record in broker and dealer technology, they saw an opportunity to meet the evolving needs of today's market and build something fit for the future.

The result was EnquiryLabs – a next-generation AI-powered CRM platform designed to complement and advance the progress already made across the sector. Built from the ground up using modern architecture, real-time data intelligence and embedded automation, EnquiryLabs delivers smart workflows and innovative tools for every part of the journey.

The AI-powered CRM platform includes everything required to run a modern, compliant vehicle finance operation at scale. From integrated consumer portals, dealer payout workflows and e-signing, to full call centre functionality, advanced communications, and sophisticated enquiry management tools, EnquiryLabs delivers end-to-end capability.

With fraud prevention features, and full UK lender panel coverage built in, the platform enables brokers and dealers to streamline operations, reduce risk and drive better outcomes across the board.

Inefficiencies in early stage applications

From early conversations, the EnquiryLabs team identified a critical obstacle in the finance first journey. Brokers and dealers often submitted large volumes of consumer enquiries to numerous lenders without reliable pre-filtering. This created added cost pressures for lenders, who were running soft checks on applicants that were not always well matched.

Consumers, accustomed to instant feedback in other sectors, grew frustrated with unclear or drawn out processes. While existing bureau data clarified credit profiles, they could not reveal real affordability. Consumers who appeared creditworthy on paper, were often over committed when income and expenditure were factored in.

It was clear that central to their ambition for a next generation platform was the need for early stage pre-qualification and affordability insight to ensure brokers and dealers only guided consumers toward good outcomes. This would enable brokers to filter enquiries before reaching lenders, reduce wasted effort, and ensure only viable applications proceeded. Lenders would then receive high quality applications aligned with their proprietary criteria.

For this, they needed a data provider with deep coverage in the automotive lending market and the capability to supply an affordability score at the soft check stage. Furthermore, they needed a commercial partner willing to collaborate closely with a startup that was still scaling volumes.



The right data, the right fit

In assessing potential data partners, EnquiryLabs recognised our strong position in the market. With most UK vehicle finance lenders already dependent on Experian's data, it would provide a consistent link between pre-qualification checks and lenders' own decisioning processes.

Furthermore, our coverage in the automotive finance space, serving approximately 72% of the market, far outstripped alternatives, guaranteeing that insights drawn at the broker stage would align with lenders' expectations.

Moreover, we had recently introduced AutoEngage+, a new product combining credit file information with an affordability score delivered through a soft check, offering both an eligibility banding and an estimate of sustainable monthly commitments.

The EnquiryLabs team saw this as a unique differentiator. Embedding this intelligence into their finance first journeys would enable more precise vehicle recommendations and improved outcomes.

Crucially, we demonstrated a good understanding of EnquiryLabs' startup profile and saw significant future potential. Our willingness to structure a supportive agreement and allocate domain experienced technical and security resources underscored their belief in EnquiryLabs' vision and the broader potential to reshape the vehicle finance ecosystem.



Delivering innovation through partnership

Bringing a new solution into a startup environment posed natural challenges, so we worked closely with EnquiryLabs to map how affordability and credit data would integrate into the platform, ensure scores were clearly visualised for brokers and dealers, and maintain a seamless, credit safe experience for consumers.

Once aligned on design and data flows, the technical integration moved quickly. We guided EnquiryLabs' developers through API specifications and testing, while EnquiryLabs' team built real-time logic to apply affordability bands within the user interface.

The technical build took around six weeks, and thanks to early collaboration on strategy, security, and commercial terms, this laid the foundation for a smooth and successful launch.



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Embedding affordability into the journey

With AutoEngage+ in place, EnquiryLabs is set to redefine the start of the vehicle finance journey.

Brokers and dealers can now embed a simple form online or in showroom to capture key consumer details. This triggers an instant soft search through Experian, returning a credit snapshot and affordability score that outlines likely APR bands and monthly payment thresholds.

This insight drives intelligent vehicle discovery, filtering listings to match the consumer's budget and displaying realistic payment options. If a vehicle exceeds affordability, the platform suggests alternatives, guiding consumers toward viable choices from the outset.

The result is a more transparent, efficient experience. Consumers avoid frustration, brokers focus on qualified leads, and lenders receive applications aligned with their risk criteria, reducing soft check costs and accelerating decisions.

Early wins and broad impact

- Brokers immediately reported confidence in filtering enquiries with data driven clarity, reducing time spent on unviable cases and improving overall conversion ratios.
- Dealers, meanwhile, appreciated the ability to offer prospective buyers immediate, realistic guidance on the types of vehicles they could afford, enhancing in showroom engagement.
- Lenders, aware of the alignment between pre-screening and their in-house criteria, anticipate fewer declined applications and reduced soft check charges, contributing to leaner acquisition spend.
- Moreover, embedding affordability assessments at the outset addresses regulatory expectations around Consumer Duty and fair treatment. Consumers receive structured, evidence backed information early, helping ensure decisions are suitable and informed.
- Overall, EnquiryLabs valued the collaborative spirit of the implementation. Rather than a transactional vendor relationship, a true partnership has been fostered.

Supporting regulatory confidence

With increasing regulatory focus on fair treatment, cost transparency, and affordability, the vehicle finance sector faces growing compliance demands.

EnquiryLabs' platform addresses this by providing affordability insights upfront, enabling brokers to document clear, structured decisions based on a consumer's financial capacity. This builds trust, ensures suitability, and creates audit ready records that align with evolving standards, and ultimately a more confident, compliant finance journey.



A blueprint for sustainable innovation

The partnership between EnquiryLabs and Experian marks a pivotal step toward a smarter, more transparent vehicle finance journey.

By embedding data driven affordability checks and automation from the outset, the platform empowers brokers, improves consumer outcomes, and delivers lender ready applications that align with credit criteria.

This is just the beginning. With scalable APIs, a robust data foundation, and a roadmap focused on deeper AI integration, including predictive decisioning, smart compliance prompts and fraud detection, EnquiryLabs is positioned to lead ongoing innovation across the vehicle finance ecosystem.

Find out more about how we can help your business:

Explore AutoEngage+ >>



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