

Car Aftermarket - UK - November 2012

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“The replacement car parts market has in recent years been stubbornly affected by competitive pricing and reluctance by many motorists to invest in their vehicles. Overcoming this problem is vital for value to be added back to the market as well as in preventing replacement parts increasingly becoming commodity items.”

– Neil Mason, Head of Retail Research

In this report we answer the key questions:

- How can consumer demand be stimulated?
- What can be done to encourage trading up?
- What is the impact of increased reliability of modern cars?
- How can greater confidence be created for consumers to use new distribution channels?
- How successful has branding been?

This report presents a review of the car aftermarket. It covers a number of parts that are commonly purchased by motorists as part of the maintenance of their vehicle as well as a review of how these parts are purchased and fitted. It is an update to Mintel's last report on this market that was produced in December 2011.

The impact of the recent downturn is known to have had a major impact on the replacement parts market. Not only has the recession affected the automotive market, which suffered falling sales at its height, but it has also changed the way that drivers maintain their vehicles. Price competition has become an ever-present feature both for consumers and those looking to sell into the market. Equally, and where possible, consumers have been looking at ways of minimising their expenditure when they need to replace parts by trading down or by looking at low cost channels through which to obtain and fit those parts.

Car aftermarket parts are defined as products that need to be replaced in order that, mechanically, the car may function better or, indeed, at all. In this respect, they differ from car accessories, which may include comfort, security and/or appearance as the prime motivators to purchase.

For the purpose of this report only a number of major aftermarket parts are reviewed. These are defined as those parts that are typically able to be serviced at automotive fast fit centres in addition to dealers and garages. Replacement tyres are also included in this definition.

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