



## Making TRUST MY GARAGE a household name

**There are now so many garage schemes available to motorists in the UK that a recognised nationwide consumer scheme is in danger of losing its appeal. When Bridge PR & Media Services won a competitive pitch for providing PR services that would help make independent garage scheme Trust My Garage become a household name, they knew that it would have to appeal widely to consumers and remind them why this particular scheme is so important.**

Bridge was always best placed to find success with Trust My Garage. With a long history working with similar garage schemes we knew the market well and were quickly able to identify Trust My Garage's space in the consumer market. As a truly independent scheme for independent garages, it offered new hope to motorists. There was no commercial influence like that which exists with similar schemes and its member inclusion was not so varied as to make it unfocused. This really was the garage scheme that consumers could trust and we quickly devised an initial six-month PR and communications strategy.



## At a glance

### Objectives:

- To develop an effective strategic marketing communications plan
- Raise the profile of Trust My Garage as an independent garage scheme consumers can trust, throughout the UK
- Demonstrate the high standards of independent garages that Trust My Garage represents
- Make Trust My Garage a household name
- Demonstrate to consumers the wide choice they have when it comes to servicing their vehicles.

### Challenges:

- Making Trust My Garage visible as a new organisation, in a competitive market
- Reaching various different audience demographics in a 6-month campaign.

### Results and benefits:

- Over £80,000 of national and regional consumer press coverage
- Over 4,500 Youtube views
- Hundreds of new Twitter followers and Facebook likes throughout a six-month period
- Consistent visibility through low cost, high impact advertising



Cars are emotive subjects. They are a prized possession for many people, who often have the same car for a number of years. Many have 'pet names' for their cars and treat them as a vital family member, and for so many motorists, the consequences of something going wrong with their car can lead to major expense and disruption.

We spent time understanding the issues that most affect motorists. Why don't people visit independent garages? Why don't people take their cars for regular servicing and why are people so shocked when they do have to come to terms with an unexpected repair bill? How can we get people to trust their garage again and overcome the stereotype that independent garages are less skilled and able than their main dealer counterparts?

### Educating the audience

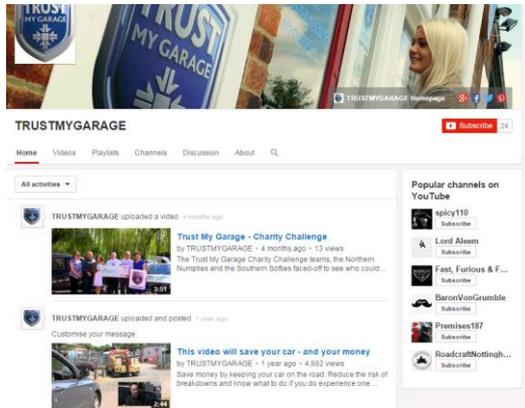
The answer was in the education of these motorists. Other garage schemes had spent years telling people they must visit their approved member garage but never why. Very few showcased the behind-the-scenes work of their members; the training and quality control they regularly demonstrate. Many consumers still didn't know when it was time to visit a garage and when their service was due – some were even using the annual MOT as a replacement for a service! Using the values and ethics of Trust My Garage as a scheme, we re-educated consumers on their vehicles and told them yes, there are maintenance checks you carry out yourself, but it is also important that you visit your local trusted independent garage regularly too in order to ensure that your car is safe on the roads.



**Making an impact:** Trust My Garage was featured in a number of key national consumer publications.

The next step was to identify where these consumers were. Motoring magazines were the obvious answer, but the likelihood is that those reading these types of media already know quite a lot about vehicle maintenance. The real consumers we were trying to attract weren't necessarily looking for information on their vehicles so we had to find them, rather than relying on them finding Trust My Garage. Supermarket magazines, national broadsheet newspapers and consumer finance publications were where real consumers were digesting their news – and this is where Trust My Garage had to be seen.

The other challenge in this campaign was reaching such a wide number of people in an effective and immediate manner. There are over 30 million car owners in the UK and they aren't all reading the same publications. Some use social media to consume their news, others scrawl blogs and some are best found by strategically placed online advertisements. As such, we devised an effective PR and communications strategy that stretched activity across national and regional media, social media activity, thought leadership blogging, video PR and low cost, high impact advertising.



Interactive: A Youtube channel for Trust My Garage attracted over 4,500 views in just six months.

We focused a series of national press releases on the issues consumers were facing and why regular servicing at a Trust My Garage member could help avoid these issues. Consumer polls about car maintenance, facts about garage labour rates and the greater value for money offered at independent garages over main dealers, and articles looking at the innovation of Trust My Garage members themselves earned over £80,000 of national and regional press coverage by the end of the first six months, based on Advertising Cost Equivalent (ACE.) Alongside this we placed informative articles in regional magazines and proactively engaged Trust My Garage members in local advertising around Trust My Garage articles that offer tips to drivers on seasonal driving and show readers where they can find their nearest Trust My Garage workshop.

Successful social media advertising and fun, engaging campaigns helped Trust My Garage attract hundreds of new Twitter followers and Facebook likes throughout a six-month period and attracted over four million impressions of the Trust My Garage shield logo by UK consumers.

A series of fun, educational car maintenance videos on Youtube attracted over 4,500 views in the same time period. The key to these was looking at the issues motorists face through lack of vehicle maintenance and a particularly popular video was a spoof of the famous Basil Fawlty breakdown, where a Trust My Garage member came to his aid.

### Strategically planning activity

Bridge also conceptualised and produced frequent Trust My Garage blog posts which offered a number of motoring and car maintenance advice and tips to UK consumers. This also involved engaging the garages on guest blog posts and allowed them to share their advice from the workshop. Many posts looked at the training that Trust My Garage members go through in order to offer the very best service to consumers and these helped promote the quality of Trust My Garage members.

Linking this activity together was strategically placed, low cost, high impact advertising campaigns that consisted of advertisements in printed consumer magazines, online banner advertisements and newsletter advertising. The key was once again finding the places that motorists go, when not necessarily looking for vehicle maintenance advice. Well visited consumer websites like the MET Office and AA Route Planner were key to banner advertisements and resulted in high click through rates directly to the online Trust My Garage postcode finder tool, where motorists can insert their postcode to instantly find the details of their local Trust My Garage member.



Keep your car in  
**shipshape condition**  
by having it regularly  
**maintained &  
serviced**  
at your local  
**Trusted Garage.**



Reaching thousands of consumers: Advertising in publications such as the National Boat Show guide was a cost effective way of raising the profile of Trust My Garage.

Printed Publications such as Camping magazine and the National Boat Show guide placed Trust My Garage in front of thousands of consumers who will have been using their cars but not necessarily thinking about their maintenance and upkeep. This was far more cost effective than an advertisement in a typical consumer motoring magazine costing tens of thousands of pounds, in terms of reaching a maximum number of consumers.

### **Maximum consumer awareness in just six months**

A well thought out, effective marketing communications strategy, and subsequent execution of said strategy helped us to achieve maximum consumer awareness of Trust My Garage in just an initial six month period. With over 2,000 unique blog views, in excess of 4,000 Youtube channel visits and total press coverage equating to the advertising cost equivalent of over £80,000, we have placed Trust My Garage in front of consumers all over the UK.

Combining advertisement impressions, social media follows and blog views, the Trust My Garage shield was viewed by over five million consumers in six months, building a solid foundation on which to start position Trust My Garage as the UK's leading and most trusted independent garage scheme.

*"Trust My Garage has been working with Bridge PR for a while. Throughout this time we have built an excellent working relationship based on mutual trust and respect. The work that the Bridge PR team have delivered has been highly professional and innovative, yet remaining perfectly on message."*

**Terry Gibson**  
Operations Manager  
Trust My Garage

