



## **Datafeed Important Notes: Manual Usability Guide**

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## **Datafeed Account Management**

This is an important message for both users and AE staff regarding the management of accounts on a datafeed.

### **What is a datafeed?**

Datafeeds provide the ability to send and manage data from a bulk text file. Using a datafeed can greatly improve efficiency over manual entry in cases where a company runs a system which already contains the raw data, such as Kerridge. However datafeeds require some technical undertakings and responsibility on the senders part, and so are not suitable for everyone.

### **Problems with datafeeds?**

The problem with datafeeds is that if the data is concurrently managed by manual methods, this can lead to data integrity issues such as duplications which can break the feed.

We have recently tighten up loopholes to try and stop bad practice and make feeds more reliable and easier to manage.

### **What are the key differences when an account is on a feed?**

- Vehicles CANNOT be manually added
- Vehicles CANNOT be manually deleted
- Vehicles can be updated, but it needs to be understood that manual changes to fields such as price may get overwritten by a future feed.

### **What changes within the manual entry system?**

- The Add button will be disabled and labelled "Feed Lock"
- The Delete links and functions will disappear
- The photo gallery upload method will be disabled and replaced by text explaining a more appropriate method.

### **But why not allow manual entries?**

- Leads to duplications which breaks the feed
- A vehicle manually added will be deleted if still not present in the next feed
- A vehicle manually deleted will be re-added if still present in the following feed
- Points of responsibility become unclear

### **But I need to make a change?**

Unfortunately the key primary administration tasks; addition, deletion, price and mileages must be correct at source due to the nature of how datafeeds work. It is not the responsibility of branch level users or data entry staff.



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## What branch level administration tasks should I undertake?

- Be in contact with your central office and notify them of any inaccuracies in the source data; addition, deletion, price and mileages
- If your feed relies on automation, manually complete any partial data and change the status of any complete vehicles from Pending to Forecourt
- Depending on arrangement, add photos. (Please see below)

## Alarming Statistics

The number of users who try to manually manage additions and deletions manually is alarming, and raises the following questions:

- Do the relevant people know an account is participating in a datafeed?
  - Are people trying to administer accounts without the necessary knowledge?
  - Are manual operations being performed to overcome shortcomings in the source data?
- If so these issues really need to be tackled at source, or the suitability of participating in a feed questioned. Would an accounts data quality improve if taken off a feed and administered manually?

Hopefully reading this document will help users address these issues.

## Datafeed Photo Uploads

If an account is participating in a datafeed photos can be manually added to vehicles already created, however this can be bad practice.

Lengths were taken to provide flexible datafeed image handling. The upload mechanism works by re-labelling a photo by Registration\_PhotoNo.jpg or StockID\_PhotoNo.jpg, depending on datafeed configuration. Images can be uploaded either via the datafeed FTP or Drag and Drop of the group account. Photos attaining to vehicles present in the current feed are immediately attached. Photos which cannot be mapped are held in an archive for a period of up to 2 months and are imported as and when an attaining record appears in the feed.

The benefit of this method is that images can be uploaded completely detached from the current data, quickly and efficiently. A photo cannot be manually added if the attaining vehicle is not yet present in the feed.

Branch level staff should request either FTP or Drag & Drop access from the datafeed groups nominated responsible contact. AE staff can use the group accounts Drag & Drop from within the BackOffice administration.

## Contact

For any further help please email [datafeeds@autoexposure.co.uk](mailto:datafeeds@autoexposure.co.uk) (Please make sure the account(s) the query is in reference to is clear)