

How startup Fixter has revolutionised car maintenance

From passing an MOT to unexpected damage or simple wear and tear, our cars tend to throw a spanner in the works, often when we need them the most. Keeping on top of things can be tricky at the best of times, but in the midst of a global pandemic where some of us need to drive as a matter of urgency, proper car maintenance is vital.

Temps de lecture : minute

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Enter Fixter, an innovative service that's designed to take the hassle and uncertainty out of looking after your car, by picking it up, taking it to a garage, and returning to your door once the work is complete. For busy people who are unfamiliar with mechanics, the service is a veritable godsend - especially at a time when so many people are self-isolating.

“Maintaining your car should be as easy as booking a taxi. We were sick of calling around for the best quote, having to take time off work to take our cars to a garage and never really being sure if we were being charged a fair amount for the work done.” - Limvirak Chea, Co-founder and CEO of Fixter

Pain-free maintenance

Fixter's network covers hundreds of vetted garages across the UK, and the Fixter team itself is made up from a mixture of tech experts who've worked at the likes of Google, BlaBlaCar and The Ally McBeal Show, to certified mechanics and garage experts.

The latter group of employees play an important role in ensuring that customers' cars are taken to only the best, most reliable garages in their area. "We have automotive experts in our team - people that have built and maintained garage networks before, so we can rely on their expertise," Chea states.

Fixter operates by making a shortlist of recommended garages in each area. Garages only make the list if they're limited companies that have been trading for at least three years, and Fixter representatives visit each garage to determine their quality and equipment, alongside the competence and technical knowledge of staff.

Once garages are chosen, and a car is picked up, customers are offered live picture updates during the work itself - a process that was designed to be as reassuring as possible, especially for customers who aren't familiar with the mechanics of cars.

"A lot of people don't feel comfortable going to the garage and talking to a mechanic. They might not have a clue about what they're being told, and I can totally relate to that," says Frédéric Dermer, Co-founder and Chief Product Officer at Fixter. "One of the motivations behind starting Fixter was the experience of having someone on the phone that can explain to you, in plain English, what's happening with your car, and what's needed."

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"Picked up, repaired, and dropped off - car repair has never been simpler."

This level of service, combined with the easy booking system and car collection and drop-off, is at the heart of Fixter's disruptiveness - namely, taking a traditional chore that's often a daunting hassle for most people, and turning it into a simple, easy task, that reassures the end user.



Disrupting the market

Launched as a startup in early 2017, Fixter was developed through Kamet - a venture investor and builder that focuses on creating disruptive companies like Fixter to challenge the status quo and make an impact on

people's lives.

Backed by insurance giant AXA, Kamet focuses on fostering innovation in insurtech, healthtech and mobility, and has used the relationship with its parent company to provide a solid foundation for startups like Fixter.

“Kamet is the venture building arm of AXA,” Chea continues, “And I think that’s what gave us an extra advantage. We had access to AXA UK which has helped with distributing our product. At the same time, we have benefited from partnering with other companies too, like Coop Car Care, which Fixter operates.” Through their three offices in Paris, London and Tel Aviv, Kamet helps and guides companies like Fixter to fund, develop and scale their business ideas.

As for the current climate, the company has seen bookings grow. “We’ve seen a spike in demand,” Dermer states, “Especially as people are self-isolating and staying at home. All of a sudden, having someone that’s able to collect your car and bring it to a garage becomes even more relevant and useful than before. Demand has almost tripled.”

Fixter has also updated its service to ensure peace of mind during the current climate by sanitising each car after work is complete, with drivers also conforming to social distancing regulations. Customers who are vulnerable or over 65 can also request help for collecting essentials if required.

In these strange times, it’s services like Fixter, who are pushing the boundaries and disrupting traditional services, that shine a light on how innovation can help change our lives.



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