Central England Trading Standards Authorities

EnTSA

Writing Compliant Adverts: Dos and Don'ts

For Used Car Traders

Make sure your adverts don't land you in legal trouble. Misleading adverts are one of the top causes of complaints about used car dealers.

Use this guide to help get it right, stay compliant, and build trust with customers.

This resource gives brief general guidance only and does not cover every circumstance. You are advised to look at Business Companion and all applicable legislation to ensure you are legally compliant. If you have any specific queries on your legal obligations, you should contact your local Trading Standards Service.

Navigate Compliance with Confidence: Your Pathway to Building Customer Trust

Do: ✓

✓ **Be clear about your trader status**
Always state you're a business. Hiding behind "private seller" language is illegal.

✓ **Describe the car accurately**
Stick to facts you can back up. If you claim "full service history," you must be able to show it.

✓ **Include material information**
This includes anything likely to influence a buyer's decision — such as faults, category write-offs, or previous commercial use.

✓ **State the correct mileage**
If mileage is unverified or may be incorrect, clearly say so.

✓ **Use plain, honest language**
Phrases like "drives well" should be backed up by test results or checks.

✓ **Disclose your business name and address**
Buyers are legally entitled to know who they are buying from.

Dont:

✗ **Use misleading terms**
"SOLD AS SEEN", "NO WARRANTY", or "TRADE SALE" don't override consumer rights — and using them could land you in hot water.

✗ **Hide problems**
Omitting faults (even if obvious) can be seen as misleading by omission — a breach of the law.

✗ **Inflate the car's condition**
Don't call a car "mint" if it has visible scratches or wear.

✗ **Use vague trader names only**
If you trade as "TopCar Deals," also include the legal entity (e.g. TopCar Deals Ltd). If you are not a limited company you are required to provide your name and address on certain documents.

✗ **Leave out key info to "get them in the door"**
Bait advertising is unfair and illegal. What you advertise must match what's sold.

Why It Matters:

Poor or misleading adverts could:

- Breach consumer law
- Trigger Trading Standards investigations
- Lead to refunds or legal claims
- Damage your business reputation

📌 **Need More Info?**

Read more on Business Companion:

🔗 businesscompanion.info/selling-used-vehicles

#StopCheckGo | #UsedCarCompliance | #UsedCarAdvertising | #ConsumerProtection

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