

Jaguar the brand

I would like Jaguar to succeed as a UK manufacturer and have been worried by recent news reports of poor sales figures and issues over a possible partner. The value of the brand rests in part on the loyal following of past Jaguar owners which they need to consider as they plan their future products.

The company needs to ask itself why it is selling so few Jaguars. Did it lose past customers by the way it treated them in its search for a new generation and style of customer?

When they dropped the S type and went to the XF they allowed the press to write that they were looking for a new younger breed of Jaguar buyer. To find these new buyers they changed from a car which was clearly part of the Jaguar design heritage in modern idiom, to a vehicle that did not have much Jaguar about it. The shape of the XF was similar to the Vauxhall Insignia which did that design well at cheaper prices. They then decided to make the legendary XJ into a stretched version of the smaller car. Maybe that did not work as they hoped.

Did they do some selling down? Were they seeking to get established owners to buy smaller and cheaper variants to boost the sales of newer products?

In recent years the Land Rover and Range Rover brands have powered far more sales than Jaguar. There the company has managed to preserve the essence of the old whilst creating cars that are clearly new. They have kept more past customers whilst attracting new ones.

I read that Jaguar have decided to delay the entry of their electric XJ Jaguar. I presume they have carried out sales research and decided there are too few potential buyers. They should do a bit more research into what people who have liked the brand in the past might buy, as that could still be a useful reservoir of potential custom.

What some like about the brand is its past ability to harness great British design and to produce the cars in a UK factory. Some are not looking for a clone of the great Jaguars of the past, but a modern embodiment of the design inspirations that made past vehicles iconic and distinctive in their day . The theme was Grace, Pace, Space. It is important that when they launch a new car it has some of the flair and brilliance of the E type or the Mark II Sports saloon. They were radical new cars on launch, but they kept alive the tradition of beautiful lines, good performance and a more affordable price than many luxury car competitors. The ageing XF and XJ do need replacement. Bring on a proper Jaguar. We need that to restore the sales. There is no fundamental reason why Jaguar should be so far behind BMW or Mercedes in selling cars.