

Ford deal means drivers could insure by speaking to car

6 January 2017

Amazon and Ford tie-up set to herald a new way of buying insurance

Ford has become the first company to embed Amazon's voice-activated digital assistant in its cars, reports the Financial Times.

Ford drivers will order Amazon Alexa to do things such as read the weather, play music, search for locations nearby, purchase shopping, the FT reports.

The digital assistant will also eventually lead to customers being able to purchase insurance by speaking to the digital assistant, which will have motorist's bank account details logged in.

The Ford and Amazon tie up, which should be ready for cars by the summer, was revealed at Wednesday's Annual Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

"For 100 years people have walked up to an oven and pushed a button", said Jason Mathew, senior director at global connected strategy. Talking to a machine instead is simpler and more convenient.

Elsewhere, appliance maker Whirlpool said this year it would bring voice features to 20 of its models, raising the prospect of customers buying home insurance cover via their domestic appliances.

The revelations of the Ford and Amazon tie up comes after it emerged yesterday that a Japanese insurer was using voice recognition to cut claims handler jobs.

In October, Guidewire chief executive Marcus Ryu said voice recognition was on the verge of triggering 'explosive change' in consumer buying habits and insurance would be part of that change.

He said Guidewire was well equipped to handle the change to a society turning towards voice recognition.

Insurance Times

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