

## Hill Street Motorist Shops

Founded in 1979 by owner Frank Furillo, Hill Street Motorist Shops is a chain of motor accessory shops with 465 branches spread throughout the UK. Named after the address of the first shop, the chain is the brand leader in the retailing of car accessories and parts for DIY repair and maintenance. In the last few years they have also added camping and cycles to the already extensive range of products.

The larger stores – that are located on trading retail parks rather than high streets (around half of their branches) – also offer a fitting service for basic items such as batteries, in-car entertainment, roof racks, baby seats and windscreen wipers.

The cycle range in particular has proved to be very successful – in particular the accessories and repair service offered at the bigger stores.

Hill Street Motorists Shops has a limited web presence which is more 'corporate' than it is 'marketing' – for example, it has sections on 'about the company' and its commitment to the environment (CSR is considered important public relations for a firm promoting the use of cars), but has no online shopping facility. Some products are mentioned, but the 'sales' content is generic, describing only the ranges of goods sold and advising customers to visit their 'physical' stores. At present, the website is developed and maintained by a third party web-design company, with a member of the marketing team designated as website manager/coordinator.

Marketing director Mick Belker is very aware that the company is not using the Internet to its best advantage and is looking to spend more of his marketing budget online in the future. Currently, most of the marketing budget is spent on advertising on TV and in appropriate magazines, with PR also being considered an important element of the promotional mix. Most of the offline advertising is in collaboration with manufacturers, who contribute to costs, or where the product ad refers customers to Hill Street outlets to make a purchase.

Since the mid-1980s, Hill Street has produced an annual catalogue listing all products stocked in the shops. However, there is no facility for ordering goods – the catalogue is seen more as a promotional tool than a direct sales vehicle.

