

In conversation with Sabelo Nxele AKA 'The Car Guy'

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Sabelo Nxele is a sales executive at Alpine Motors in Pinetown, KwaZulu-Natal. He is affectionately known as the 'The Car Guy' and has a massive following on Twitter because of his dedication to helping consumers make better decisions when it comes to buying cars.



Sales executive Sabelo Nxele

Here, Nxele reveals the reason he willingly gives out valuable advice to car buyers on social media. He also tells the short story of his path to the automotive industry and offers more wisdom on the car buying experience to first time buyers.

 ***Your passion for cars is very loud. Please tell me about yourself and your career choice and did you always know***

that you'd pursue a career in the automotive industry?

I am a father, a husband and a God-fearing man whose core values are principle and integrity. I've always loved advertising, I grew up imagining myself coming up with ideas, pitching ideas and working for an ad agency. I also grew up not knowing actually where I'd end up, so by default, I ended up in the motor industry as I was working under my dad who had an Auto Armor franchise. Auto Armor works hand-in-hand with dealers, if you look them up, you'll know what they do.

■ I have seen your work on social media, you are always giving out advice to people wanting to buy cars. Why is educating people on these matters so important to you?

Generally, I am a person that cares about people around me even if they are not family, it was paramount to me because our industry is viewed as an environment of dishonest people who want to make a quick buck off of unaware customers or take them for a ride. I wanted to prove to myself more, one doesn't have to lie to gain customers. Also, assisting customers to understand what they are signing for and what they get themselves into is important.

■ What advice would you give to a first-time car buyer?

There's a lot of advice to give, but one thing for sure is that doing research is vital. First-time buyers first need to ascertain their budget then see what type of options their budget gives them, then consider warranties/maintenance plans depending on the type of vehicle new or used. So, know your budget and then options must be shown. From there they should start shortlisting brands, the availability of parts, resale value and maintenance of the vehicle.

■ Please share some of the mistakes you have seen made by first-time car buyers.

Not focusing on their budget and putting wants over needs are the biggest mistakes. One needs to be practical and ask "why am I buying a car?" to avoid mistakes. People need to be cognisant of reality vs wants that may not necessarily serve their current situation.

■ Do you think buying a brand-new vehicle rather than a used vehicle is always the best option?

The best option is to allow your budget to speak to you, it will lead you where you need to be.

■ When purchasing a car, what add ons would you advise against and why, also which ones do you think are necessary?

Add ons may vary from customer to customer, so I cannot say there are bad add ons but rather unbeneficial ones which I will not mention as this wouldn't be fair but rather a personal perspective. So, whatever value-added product that serves as longevity to the car and also protection would be something I go for – maintenance plan, warranty, tracker, shortfall cover, credit life etc.

■ How does one choose car insurance?

They all operate the same way generally, look out for the benefits, maybe they give cashback if you haven't claimed, look out for premiums vs. excess.

■ What other information do you think is important for buyers to know before making any buying decision?

Find a salesperson who has time to listen to your needs, a person who isn't rushing for a sale, a person who will have your best interest at heart. Research, compare and also listen to your gut, if it feels right then that place deserves your business.

ABOUT NTANDOKAZI NTOZAKHE

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