

User Documentation: CrankOver | Classic Car Parts Exchange

1. Introduction

General marketplaces fail the classic automotive industry. Enthusiasts cannot find parts by specific casting numbers, salvage yards struggle with high fees, and generic search engines ignore VIN compatibility.

CrankOver solves this. It is a vertical marketplace protocol designed specifically for the restoration industry.

For you, the **Platform Owner**, this is not just software. It is a complete SaaS (Software as a Service) asset. You own the platform where restoration experts and mechanics transact. You control the branding, the subscription fees, and the user base, while the application handles the complex logic of inventory management, payments, and payouts.

2. Value for the Platform Owner

As the administrator of CrankOver, you are moving from being a participant in the market to owning the market.

What you gain by running this platform:

- **Recurring Revenue:** You set the "Pro Plan" price. Providers (sellers) must pay this subscription fee to open their storefronts on your platform.
- **Automated Payouts:** The system uses Stripe Connect. When a buyer purchases a part, the money is processed securely. You do not need to manually calculate splits or send checks.
- **Total Control:** From the Admin Dashboard, you can change the platform name, upload your logo, and manage all users and blog content without writing code.
- **Asset Value:** You are building a database of specialized users and inventory, creating long-term value for your brand.

3. Roles & How They Use the Platform

The application separates users into three distinct roles. Understanding these helps you manage your business effectively.

1. Owner / Admin (You)

- **Goal:** Monetize the platform and maintain quality.
- **Actions:** You configure the global settings (Name, Logo, Pricing), moderate users, publish industry news (Blog), and view platform analytics.
- **Access:** You use a secured Admin Gate to access the backend controls.

2. Provider (The Seller)

- **Who they are:** Salvage yards, specialty mechanics, or private collectors with inventory.
- **Goal:** Sell parts and manage their business.
- **Actions:** They pay a subscription fee to you. In exchange, they get a branded storefront (e.g., ``yoursite.com/store/joes-garage``), inventory management tools, and direct payouts to their bank account via Stripe.

3. Consumer (The Buyer)

- **Who they are:** Restoration enthusiasts and car owners.
- **Goal:** Find specific parts reliable.
- **Actions:** They search by keyword or vehicle model, view detailed technical specs (casting numbers), chat with providers, and purchase parts securely.

4. Quick Start: Launch Your Platform

Follow this guide to take ownership of the system immediately.

Step 1: Access the Admin Dashboard

1. Navigate to ``/admin`` in your browser.
2. Enter the initialization credentials (default):
 - **Identity:** ``codeblix``
 - **System Code:** ``codeblix`` (*Note: You should change these credentials or secure this route after launch*).

Step 2: Brand Your Platform

1. In the Admin Dashboard, click the **Settings** tab.

2. **Platform Name:** Enter your business name (e.g., "Vintage Exchange").
3. **Platform Logo:** Upload your logo. The system automatically optimizes the image.
4. Click **Synchronize Global Parameters**.
 - *Result:* The header, footer, and emails immediately update to reflect your brand.

Step 3: Set Your Pricing (Monetization)

1. In the **Settings** tab, find **Pro Plan Price**.
2. Enter the amount (in USD) you want to charge sellers to join (e.g., \$49).
3. Save changes.
 - *Result:* When a user attempts to become a Provider, they will be prompted to pay this amount via Stripe before they can list products.

Step 4: Configure Stripe (Critical)

For payments to flow to you and your sellers, you must link your Stripe account.

1. Ensure the environment variables for Stripe are set in your hosting provider (see the technical `STRIPE_SETUP.md` file included in the code).
2. This enables the "Stripe Connect" feature, allowing your sellers to onboard and receive their share of sales automatically.

5. Real-World Use Cases

Scenario A: The Passive Income Owner

You set the subscription price to \$29/month. You market the platform to local salvage yards. Ten yards sign up.

- **Outcome:** You earn recurring monthly revenue from subscriptions. The yards manage their own inventory and shipping. You simply maintain the platform hosting.

Scenario B: The Provider Experience

"Classic Fords LLC" signs up on your site.

1. They select "I'm a Seller" during registration.
2. They pay your \$29 fee.
3. They are redirected to Stripe to link their bank account.

4. They upload a rare "1967 Mustang Intake Manifold" with photos and casting numbers.
5. Their product appears instantly in the global search.

Scenario C: The Buyer Experience

A restorer searches for "Mustang Intake".

1. They see the part from "Classic Fords LLC".
2. They add to cart and pay \$350.
3. **The Money Flow:** The funds are processed. "Classic Fords LLC" receives their funds (minus fees) directly to their bank. You do not need to intervene.

6. Key Features Guide

For the Owner (Admin Panel)

- **Entity Protocol (Users):** View a list of all users. You can edit their roles manually (e.g., promote a user to Admin) or ban users who violate policies.
- **Editorial Feed (Blog):** Content drives traffic. Use the built-in blog editor to publish articles about market trends or restoration tips. This improves your SEO.
- **Communication Hub:** View contact form submissions from the "Contact Us" page. Mark them as read or replied to keep track of support tickets.

For the Provider (Storefront Dashboard)

- **Inventory Management:** Providers can add products with high-detail fields: Part Number, Casting Number, and VIN Compatibility. This reduces returns caused by incompatible parts.
- **Order Tracking:** Providers see a dashboard of "Processing" and "Shipped" orders. They can update status to notify buyers.
- **Stripe Wallet:** Providers can see their payout status directly in their dashboard.

For the Buyer (Marketplace)

- **VIN-Specific Search:** Buyers can filter parts by Year, Make, Model, and Engine type.
- **Secure Checkout:** Uses standard secure credit card processing.
- **Direct Messaging:** Buyers can ask technical questions before buying to ensure fitment.

7. Step-by-Step Instructions

How to Add a Blog Post

1. Log in to the **Admin Dashboard**.
2. Click the **Blog Feed** tab.
3. Click **New Article**.
4. Fill in the Title, Category (e.g., "News"), Excerpt, and Content.
5. Upload a cover image.
6. Click **Publish**. The article is now live on the `/blog`` page.

How to Manage a User

1. Log in to the **Admin Dashboard**.
2. Click the **Entities** tab.
3. Locate the user by email or name.
4. Click the **Edit** (pencil) icon.
5. You can change their Name, Email, or **Role**.
 - *Tip:* If a user signed up as a buyer but wants to sell, simply switch their role to "Provider" here.

How a Provider Connects Banking

1. The Provider logs in and goes to their **Dashboard**.
2. They will see a banner: "Payouts Inactive."
3. They click **Setup Payouts**.
4. They are taken to a secure Stripe form to enter their checking account or debit card details.
5. Once complete, they are returned to your site, and their status updates to "Active."

8. FAQ & Handling Objections

Q: Do I need to handle shipping for the parts sold? A: No. The platform operates on a marketplace model. The Provider (seller) is responsible for shipping the item to the Buyer. Your role is facilitating the connection.

Q: Is the payment data secure? A: Yes. All payment data is handled by Stripe, a

global leader in payment processing. Credit card numbers are never stored in your application database.

Q: What happens if a Provider doesn't pay their subscription? A: The system automatically checks their payment status. If you have set a price greater than \$0, they will be blocked from accessing the Provider Dashboard until they subscribe.

Q: Can I charge a percentage of every sale instead of a monthly fee? A: The code supports a `transactionFee` setting in the database. While the current Admin Panel focuses on subscription pricing, the backend infrastructure exists to support per-transaction commissions with minor configuration updates.

9. Next Steps

Your platform is ready to accept users.

1. **Log in** to the Admin Panel immediately.
2. **Set your Platform Name** to establish your brand.
3. **Set your Price** to determining your revenue model.