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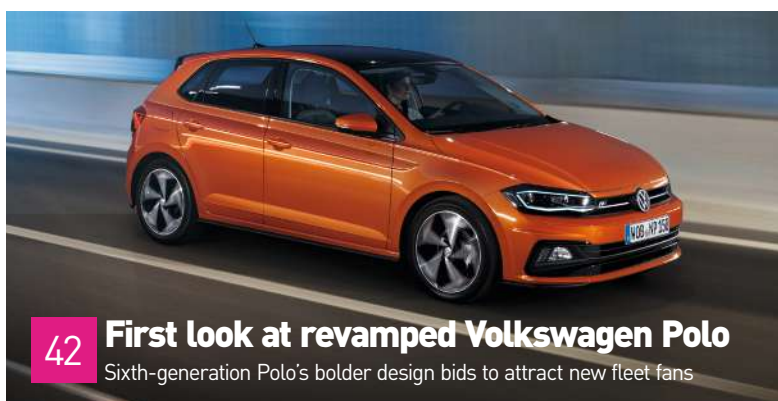
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No pun intended, but DriveTech's new management team, including sales director Chris Thornton (left) and MD David Wilson, seeks performance "step change" in the fleet sector



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Sixth-generation Polo's bolder design bids to attract new fleet fans

Make connected car data access free say fleets

Survey shows 86% of respondents feel they shouldn't have to wrestle with manufacturers for information

By Sarah Tooze

Fleet managers and leasing companies have sent a clear message to car manufacturers: we expect to get free access to connected car data.

Around 70% of respondents to the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) Fleet Technology survey said that manufacturers have an obligation to provide connected vehicle and driver data, with 86% saying they should not have to pay for it.

The results, which were revealed at the BVRLA Fleet Technology Congress, come in the wake of draft proposals for manufacturers to collect and store data from connected vehicles in their servers and release it only to third parties if there is an agreement (see *Fleet News*, June 8).

The majority (57%) of fleet managers felt they should control access to vehicle data, while 62% of leasing companies saw it as their responsibility. Fleet managers felt they had a shared responsibility with leasing companies to remove data at the end of the lease.

However, exactly how that works in practice is causing difficulties (see panel opposite).

The survey showed that leasing companies and fleet managers want the freedom to use their

own telematics provider to monitor driver behaviour rather than being reliant on the car manufacturers.

The vast majority (79%) said they were concerned that vehicle manufacturers would restrict access to telematics data, while 89% said vehicle manufacturers should allow them to install third party telematics devices provided they met the agreed security standards.

Gerry Keaney, chief executive of the BVRLA, said: "Our sector had a very clear message that we wish to build on the telematics offer that leasing, rental and fleets are utilising today, and we perceive there being a real risk with this restriction of data by the OEMs (original equipment manufacturers) in terms of being able to do that and be competitive in the market."

He suggested that documents produced by automotive industry bodies, including the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), ignore the current use of telematics in the fleet sector, which "creates a significant work stream" in terms of the BVRLA's negotiations with manufacturers to "ensure equal access".

The SMMT's Connected and Autonomous Vehicles Position Paper states that unless vehicle manufacturers have entered into a specific legal



Gerry Keaney addresses BVRLA members at the fleet technology conference

agreement with each of the registered keepers and/or have a contractual obligation to do so, the vehicle user data (i.e. personal data) is only ever used or shared with the express and prior consent of the vehicle user, not the registered keeper. It says manufacturers do not, by default, have an obligation to provide vehicle data to registered keepers.

It believes that the company car driver registering for the connected vehicle services, and agreeing to the terms and conditions associated with these, "must be put at the heart of any data consent process".

The BVRLA Fleet Technology survey found that

ONSTAR PORTAL OFFERS THE CHOICE TO OPT IN OR OUT

Vauxhall has updated its OnStar portal to give fleet managers and leasing companies greater control.

They now have a choice to opt in or out of OnStar vehicle diagnostics, dealer maintenance notifications and roadside assistance services, and can control whether drivers are able to activate the Wi-Fi data trial, change Wi-Fi settings or buy OnStar packages.

New functionality makes the distinction between an owner (i.e. leasing company) and an operator (i.e. fleet manager), with the leasing company able to grant permissions to the fleet manager.

By activating OnStar, fleet managers and leasing companies are able to see the mileage and fuel consumption of each vehicle and receive diagnostic alerts, as well as create and export reports.

They can choose for data not to be shared

with Vauxhall by de-selecting dealer maintenance notifications. Vehicle location is not provided unless the driver opts in.

Mileage and fuel consumption is updated every 30 days but there are plans for this to be changed to daily.

Vehicles come with a one-year free trial of OnStar services (five years for diagnostic data), after which the services are £8.95 for a month or £89.50 for a year.

Richard Hansard, business operations leader for OnStar Europe, said changing the permissions settings had given Vauxhall "a more attractive fleet proposition".

"Ultimately it has improved sign up of OnStar because fleet managers now have more control over their vehicles. So it's been well received. We're always looking at system enhancements and we have roadmaps for the next two years and further into the future," he said.



Kenneth Malmberg of OnStar is giving fleets more control



drivers were happy to share data if it helped to diagnose or prevent faults (95%), automatically alert a breakdown company (93%) or help a manufacturer identify safety and warranty issues with its parts (82%).

They were less content with sharing data about driving behaviour and performance (44% 'not comfortable') or selling data about their location, weather conditions or vehicle performance (36% 'not comfortable').

Leasing companies and fleet managers appear unsure about what data car manufacturers are collecting, with 53% unclear. Less than half (47%) said that most manufacturers were willing and able to tell them what data they were collecting.

Vauxhall is one manufacturer which is willing to share data with its leasing and fleet manager customers through its fleet manager portal (see panel opposite).

Kenneth Malmberg, business development lead in Europe for infotainment and telematics at General Motors, said the manufacturer does not "sit and retrieve hoards and hoards of data".

"The only data we take from the vehicle is shown on the OnStar fleet manager page," he said.

"There is probably about 600 elements you could take off a vehicle and I don't think any one company needs the 600 elements so we have set packages."

Any data beyond the set packages would be discussed on a "case by case basis".

Keaney added that the BVRLA's experience of dealing with a number of OEMs had been "far more constructive and open" to finding solutions than the SMMT's Connected and Autonomous Vehicles Position Paper suggests.

"So we remain very confident to be able to find our way through this," Keaney said.

AUTONOMOUS DRIVING DATA NEEDS STANDARDISATION

The development of autonomous vehicles might force car manufacturers to share data in a standardised way.

Jay Parmar, director of policy and membership at the BVRLA, said access to data is seen as essential for autonomous driving in the UK and that "it needs to be carried out in a standardised way".

"I think Government may push OEMs to work together. If we are to have autonomous driving we need to make sure the infrastructure is able to communicate with the car and the cars are able to talk to each other in a standardised way," he said.

NO 'MAGIC BUTTON' TO CLEAR INTEL AT END OF CONTRACT

Deletion of data at the end of a lease or rental will be a "real challenge" for the sector, according to Jay Parmar, director of policy and membership at the BVRLA.

"There is not a magic delete button in the vehicle members can use," he said.

"You often have to ask the manufacturer for certain pieces of data to be deleted. The manufacturer may say, 'sorry, can't delete the data, you're not the data subscriber, it's your customer'. By then the customer is long gone. So what can we do to protect ourselves?"

FLEET FACTS AND FIGURES

OPINION POLL

Should rules be introduced to regulate the sharing of dashcam footage on social media platforms?



FleetNews view:

The AA says it will lobby Government to look at privacy laws surrounding dashcams, after it raised concerns at the growing number of people sharing footage online. Our poll suggests there is an appetite for some sort of restrictions on the unregulated sharing of dashcam footage. However, our view is that any new rules should not restrict the benefits many fleets now enjoy through the use of this technology.

This week's poll: Do you consider the Euro NCAP safety rating when choosing a vehicle?
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Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors. 2017/18 tax year. General Motors UK Limited, trading as Vauxhall Motors, does not offer tax advice and recommends that all Company Car Drivers consult their own accountant with regards to their own tax position. New Insignia Elite Nav 2.0 (260PS) Turbo 4X4 auto model illustrated (P11D of £27,155) features Darkmoon Blue two-coat metallic paint (£555), VXR Styling Pack (£850) and Driving Assistance Pack Four (£595), optional at extra cost. 3 Day Test Drive terms and conditions apply and vehicles are subject to availability. Please call 0330 587 8221 for full details. Includes 12 months of OnStar services from date of first registration and a 3 month/3 GB Wi-Fi free trial period (whichever comes first) effective from the date the customer accepts the nominated network operator Wi-Fi Ts&Cs. OnStar services and 4G Wi-Fi Hotspot are subject to mobile network coverage and availability. OnStar services require activation and account with OnStar Europe Ltd. Wi-Fi Hotspot service requires account with OnStar Europe Ltd. and nominated network operator. Charges apply after free trial period. The OnStar subscription packages could be different from the services included in the free trial package. Terms and conditions apply. Check vauxhall.co.uk/OnStar for details of availability, coverage and charges. Vehicles purchased without OnStar cannot have the required technology retro-fitted. Destination download only available on vehicles with factory installed navigation systems. All figures quoted correct at time of going to press (July 2017).

Fleets need a data audit trail to comply with GDPR regulations

Threat of class action is 'biggest risk' posed by new rules; take action now

By Sarah Tooze

Businesses could face the threat of class action lawsuits if they fail to comply with the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which could include fleets with telematics.

That was the warning from Ashley Winton, partner at Paul Hastings (Europe), who pointed out that "the risk is in the small print" as GDPR grants data subjects the right to be collectively represented by not-for-profit bodies.

"There is no longer a requirement for monetary loss before you can bring a claim so if you suffer distress you can bring a claim," he told delegates at the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) Fleet Technology Congress. "Imagine you have a couple of hundred thousand fleet drivers. Suddenly they're all very distressed about being tracked or the information about where they have been being disclosed to a third party. That would be quite an interesting case for a union."

He suggested this was the "biggest risk" from GDPR, which comes into effect in May 2018 – greater even than the penalty of 4% of annual worldwide turnover for failing to comply.

He advised companies to start by making sure "the bits visible to the regulators and users are compliant". This includes giving detailed notices to the individuals in the vehicle about what you do with telematics data, where it goes to, the data being processed and the security that is used.

"If someone makes a claim against you, you will lose unless you can show you have processed the data correctly," he said.

"What you need is an audit trail around the



notices and consent that you might be asking for so, if someone is going to complain, you can say 'well, on this day you stepped in the vehicle, you pressed accept, that was version 1.21 of our privacy notice that says we can track you'.

"You need that audit trail otherwise people's claims against you will be difficult. That audit trail is really important, that functionality you really do need in online systems."

He also advised companies to be prepared for drivers requesting to see their data and to have systems in place enabling them to automate this.

However, Jay Parmar, director of policy and

membership at the BVRLA, suggested that businesses were "nervous" about carrying out investments in light of Brexit negotiations.

"When this was being debated at the European parliament the UK Government put forward 50 amendments against the current GDPR; they disagreed with 50 areas," he said. "The law is going to be implemented but it could be that UK Government, as we get into the Brexit negotiations, might come to a different position of what the final regulatory environment will look like."

However, businesses should not delay their preparations for GDPR.

Around half (54%) of the 300 BVRLA members and fleet managers that responded to its Fleet Technology survey said their company understood its responsibilities under GDPR, while 52% have a "clear strategy" regarding collection and use of driver and vehicle data.

"Members are telling us they've got a strategy but actually having a strategy and then deploying something to work within your business will be challenging," Parmar said.

Businesses need to think about their supply chain and what data suppliers are capturing on their behalf as GDPR extends responsibility to data processors not just data controllers.

"Because processors now have legal responsibility, all your existing network of contracts need to be looked at," Winton said. "Even if you sign a contract tomorrow that is going to extend past May 2018, you should do that analysis before you sign."

Parmar added: "When you start to unravel the challenge ahead, the timing we've got is very limited."





Official fuel consumption figures for the all-new Audi A5 range (Excluding S and RS models) in mpg (l/100km) from: Urban 34.4 (8.2) – 60.1 (4.7), Extra Urban (Directive 93/116/EEC). This allows a direct comparison between different manufacturer models but may not represent the actual fuel consumption achieved in 'real world' driving conditions. Optional wheels may Audi website at www.audi.co.uk and at www.dft.gov.uk/vca



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Aston Barclay is set to double sales under new management

Bigger facilities and advances in its digital offering are central to the plan



By Matt de Prez

Aston Barclay's new owners plan to double sales over the next five years to 160,000 vehicles per year by increasing its fleet business and digitising the customer buying experience.

Neil Hodson, former Manheim, HPI and Experian executive, led a management buyout of the auction group at the beginning of June after securing a multi-million pound investment from Rutland Partners.

Fleet business has been key to the group's success and Hodson, now CEO of Aston Barclay, told *Fleet News* he has big plans to extend his relationships with fleet and leasing companies as the business grows.

His vision for growth is based on investment in people, site infrastructure and digital technology. He says Aston Barclay's digital strategy will be at the heart of every auction centre.

"Where we add value to fleet customers is

connecting up the buyers in the digital world and reducing days to sell," said Hodson.

"If we can help them inspect and photograph a car at the point of return we have the opportunity to take that data and those images and bring them into our real estate. We can technically be presenting cars that will be available to buy much quicker."

Hodson believes Aston Barclay can do a lot more to support fleets.

He said: "With fleet customers today it's about presenting the cars to the right buyers. If we can present that in a digital platform then we are creating more opportunity for that car to sell much quicker."

The business has already approached a number of its fleet clients about helping them with inspections, collections and imagery.

"If they use our platform and our data at the end of contract and give it to us early, the mobile platform can offer all the fleet vehicles coming soon. The buyer can declare an interest, put in a pre-bid or even pre-purchase the vehicle," Hodson explained.

He told *Fleet News* it can take between 15 and 35 days from first notification of a car coming back to it being physically sold.

"We think we can take chunks of that out," said Hodson.

He has already presented the concept to one of the company's major fleet customers, offering a de-fleet inspection service using an app which is linked to Aston Barclay's inventory. The car details can then be made available to buyers at the click of a button.

"Why not let the buyers view that car?" said

Hodson. "I think we've got a big role to play in helping them understand how they can leverage our digital strategy."

The company's first Buyer App is currently waiting for sign off in the App Store, which Hodson says will provide a real point of differentiation when it launches over the next few weeks.

He explained: "Buyers search for stock all the time. If they have a smartphone in their pocket they can connect to stock wherever they are."

"It's really important that we explain a lot more about our stock and how it matches our buyer's profiles."

"In this world no one has really connected the buyer and the vendor together before. We just want to make the journey much easier for them by going into the digital world."

Further investment by the group has been made in a new facility at Donington which will become the group's biggest site when it opens later this year.

Two glazed auction lanes will offer dealer, fleet and OEM sales with storage for 400 vehicles under cover. It also provides space to further grow its light commercial sales proposition.

Currently, the 12-acre site in Chelmsford, which sells 34,000 vehicles annually, is the largest in the Aston Barclay Group. Hodson wants to increase the number of vans sold at this site, too.

Next year the group plans to expand its Prees Heath site following the acquisition of a further 6.5 acres of land next to the current plot.

Former owners Glenn and David Scarborough, whose father founded Aston Barclay in 1984, have remained within the business as non-executive directors and investors.



"We just want to make the journey much easier"

Neil Hodson,
Aston Barclay

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Autonomous car tests show time lag for drivers to retake control

Further studies needed to understand what reaction time is reasonable or safe

By Tom Seymour

An early average benchmark of 3.4 seconds has been established for the time it will take a driver to take back control of an autonomous vehicle. The study found that a combination of alerts, rather than just visual, audio or vibration, gave the best results.

Liability around autonomous vehicles is being looked at closely by legislators, with the ability of a driver to take back control a key element in rolling out the technology on public roads.

Nuance Communications, a global technology company that specialises in voice control, and artificial intelligence specialist DFKI ran a simulation to find out how quickly humans are able to resume control after being engaged with other activities like reading, answering work emails or watching videos.

Both Nuance and DFKI work with a variety of car manufacturers on computational linguistics

"It may be that if someone is answering work emails, that would aid their concentration more than just sitting there and doing nothing at all"

Nils Lenke, Nuance



and how humans interact with technology.

The simulation involved 30 drivers in a level 4 automated vehicle for one hour at a time and they knew they would have to take back control of the vehicle at a random point in the test.

While falling asleep at the wheel for 3.4 seconds could prove fatal, a level 4 vehicle is one which is sophisticated enough to not need driver attention for safety, with the driver even able to go to sleep or leave the driver's seat.

Self-driving is only supported in specific situations. The car must be able to safely stop a trip on its own and park the car in a safe place if a driver does not retake control.

The House of Lords Science and Technology Committee heard in March that Level 4 vehicles are not expected to be widely available on UK roads for at least another five years.

While participants were engaged in activities during the test, the autonomous system would alert them through vibration (on a smartwatch),

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with visual and auditory cues to see which of the senses responded the fastest to take the wheel.

The study included a variety of scenarios including inclement weather conditions, system diagnostic warnings, sensor defects, traffic jams and general rules of the road.

A combination of voice, touch and visual cues were preferred by the majority of participants.

Drivers weren't as responsive when using the same type of alert that matched their current activity. For example, if a visual display was given while someone was reading a book, a combination of alerts was needed.

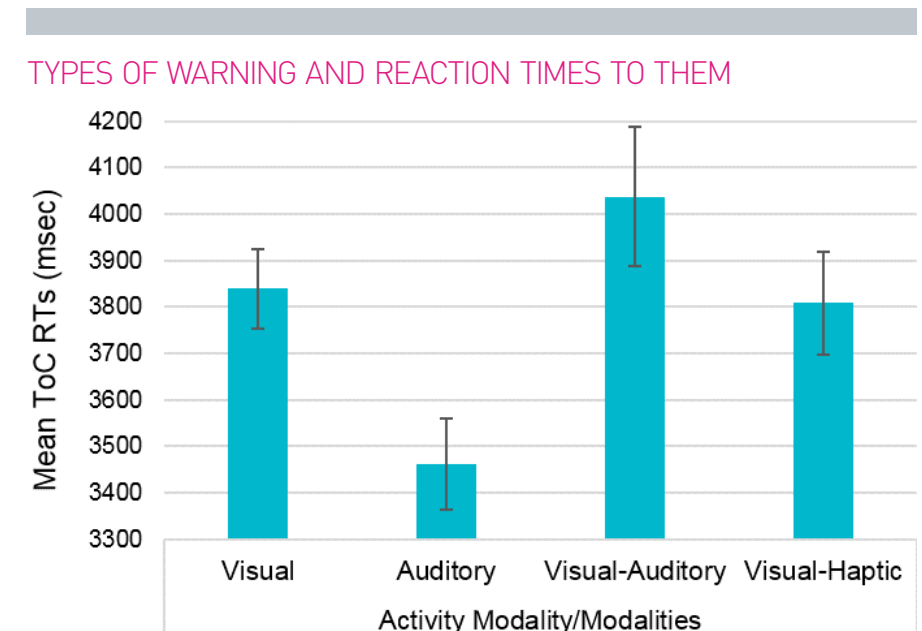
A key finding from the study concludes that future autonomous vehicle systems will need to have contextual data and information from the car to provide the most appropriate alert.

Independent of the current driver activity, sound was considered as more pleasant and effective than visual cues, leading to faster reactions than simply vibration alerts.

Interestingly, Nils Lenke, Nuance communications senior director of corporate research, told *Fleet News* that the reaction time was the lowest when the driver was engaged in an audio activity, such as listening to a book or music, something drivers can already do legally at the wheel today.

While having a benchmark on a reaction time is useful, Lenke said it was too early to say definitively what reaction time is reasonable or safe.

He said: "It would have to be decided what is a reasonable handover time for drivers and I think we're only really going to get to that point with practical testing. Governments and vehicle



manufacturers want more information and I think there is still a lot more work to be done."

He said further research is also needed around cognitive load. This involves monitoring the optimal amount of stimulation humans can handle and still remain concentrated or alert.

Lenke said: "You can overload cognitive capacity, but there's also the other end of that where if you're not giving enough stimulation to

the passenger to engage with, they can become sleepy or drowsy.

"It could be that in the future the car will look at the road conditions and situation and may either block certain activities or promote certain activities dependent on the status of the driver.

"It may be that if someone is answering work emails, that would aid concentration more than just sitting there and doing nothing at all."



in a standardised test cycle using a combination of battery power and petrol fuel after the battery has been fully charged. They are intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not be



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Charge now, repair later policies called into question

Car hire firms' pro-forma
invoicing is under scrutiny

By Tom Seymour

Trading Standards' ongoing investigation into Europcar has brought the issue of vehicle rental damage and pro-forma invoicing for fleets into focus.

While Europcar has said it is taking the investigation "very seriously and is conducting a thorough internal investigation", it has refused to comment further on what prompted the visit by Trading Standards (fleetnews.co.uk, June 27).

Reports suggest there is an issue around how Europcar charges customers for repairs.

Hire companies that use pro-forma invoicing issue a document that states the terms and conditions of the hire. Although an informal request for payment, it ensures any damage to a vehicle can be invoiced before the repair is carried out, which helps the rental company to better manage its cashflow, particularly in relation to the payment of VAT upon raising a full invoice.

Paul Tate, Siemens commodity manager, told *Fleet News*: "It's possible the investigation will bring a spotlight back to this rental damage issue, which has always been a hot topic for fleets. I don't think pro-forma invoicing has been challenged in a court of law, [but] I think it's right that the topic is discussed. Rental companies are using this to sell additional services, too, like damage waivers and zero excess."

Siemens moved away from pro-forma invoicing in 2014 and requires an alternative approach for its rental vehicles (*Fleet News*, September 5 2014).

He said: "Some rental companies will charge for damage they don't put right at the time."

"What we say is, if you don't repair it, you forgo your right to charge for the vehicle repairs. We spend £2.5 million a year on 2,000 rental cars and so the charges that were coming through were substantial."

A spokesman for the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) said it maintains its

position that it is supportive of pro-forma invoicing.

"BVRLA members are required to provide justification for all charges raised and demonstrate a method of calculation for such charges," said the spokesman. "They are not required to repair the damage and may refer to a damage charge matrix."

The BVRLA refused to comment further on whether the rental industry should move away from pro-forma invoicing as a result of the Trading Standards investigation.

Tate said: "If one of our drivers put a small dent in a door, Siemens would be sent a fee, but the rental company won't repair the dent there and then. Then when a different customer has the vehicle and puts another dent in the door they'll be charged a fee too."

"When the rental car comes to the end of its time on the rental fleet, let's say six months, it will then be repaired before the vehicle is de-fleeted. The cumulative damage is then banked up pro-rata."

Tate suggests rental companies should calculate correct repair damages after the car has been repaired and split the bill appropriately between those that have caused the damage.

He admitted that many rental companies see this way of working as too complex to administer. Rental companies also don't want to repair cars as and when if the damage is small enough not to affect the vehicle operationally, because they want to reduce downtime and "sweat the asset" during its short window of operation, he said.

Jason Moseley, National Body Repair Association (NBRA) director, said the investigation will also highlight what he believes is the building pressure from big corporates forcing bodyshops to work with "opaque practices and poor commercial terms".

The BVRLA declined to comment on Moseley's remarks.

Moseley said: "Terms are agreed with bodyshops like labour rates, discounts on parts,



discounts on paint and another 10% discount on everything they do.

"It's bargain basement for the bodyshop, the middle man gets a discount and the consumer doesn't get passed on the benefit of that discounted work. That's the main problem with this; the consumer isn't seeing what's happening behind these deals."

Tate's advice for fleets was to make sure all drivers carefully inspect rental cars before moving them.

He said: "Make sure you pick up on any damage and report it immediately with photo evidence and an image of the odometer to prove the car hasn't been driven."

"If you don't do this, as soon as you drive off in the car and miss any damage, you will be invoiced for it."



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THE BIG PICTURE

By Stephen Briers, editor, *Fleet News*



It's a brave move. Volvo has become the first mainstream manufacturer to announce that all future models (from 2019) will be powered by some form of electric, as full electric, plug-in electric or hybrid, with no petrol- or diesel-only option.

Analysts predict more manufacturers will follow suit. If they are, they are keeping it quiet because most talk, publicly at least, is about continued investment in petrol and diesel, alongside the greener alternatives.

It is also a bit of a U-turn for Volvo, which has previously been sceptical about electric. It says reduced battery costs, improved charging infrastructure and anticipated higher development costs of future diesels to meet ever-more stringent legislation were behind its change of mind.

"The infrastructure is improving and battery range is increasing"

So, is the dawn of the electric vehicle finally here after several false starts and a painfully slow build-up?

The infrastructure is improving and battery range is increasing – two significant hurdles to overcome. The third is cost. Look at Volvo's XC90 T8 plug-in hybrid versus a diesel XC90 and there is roughly a £10k premium.

The price differential will narrow as volumes rise, but will that be soon enough for Volvo's 2019 commitment? It believes so, but the decision is a risk, particularly in the corporate market where fleet operators focus on minimising cost of ownership.

Others have started to shift towards electric. Hyundai UK boss Tony Whitehorn told us that, with it due to launch 14 alternative fuel derivatives over the next four years, all cars would eventually offer every powertrain option on the same platform.

However, he was quick to add that diesel is not dead, especially for higher mileage fleets.

One look at the letter opposite shows that others agree with him: diesel will remain the primary fuel choice for many fleets for years to come.

YOUR LETTERS

DIESEL DEBATE

Tackle all sources of NOx – not just diesel vehicles

EDITOR'S PICK

David Banner wrote:

Having read 'Time to put an end to the 'diatribe' of misinformation about diesel' (fleetnews.co.uk, July 10), Jeremy Hicks is right.

Nobody is arguing that diesel isn't impacting the air we breathe but to suggest it is the cause of ills, while ignoring advancements in engine technology and emissions from other sources, is disingenuous.

Gas central heating systems in the capital were responsible for 16% of all NOx emissions compared to 11% from diesel cars, but are we calling for them to be banned?

No, we are not and nor should we, but we should tackle all sources of NOx if we really want to improve air quality.

It is also vitally important that people like the mayor of London Sadiq Khan make sure they don't lump all diesel vehicles together when he blames them for the capital's "killer toxic air".

Policies around London's ultra-low emission zone acknowledge the advancements Euro 6 technology has brought by excusing these vehicles from the forthcoming charge. Yet, lazy reporting in some parts of the



national media doesn't differentiate between engine technologies and leaves the public thinking all diesels are bad. They are not. Since 2000, NOx emissions from cars have fallen by 62.8% and harmful particulates by 52.7%.

More can and needs to be done, but blaming all diesel cars is just plain lazy. Hybrid and pure EVs have their place but, even with more EV charge points at fuel stations, diesel remains the only realistic fuel choice for many fleets.

■ The editor's pick in each issue wins a £20 John Lewis voucher.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

P11D adjustment needed

Jonathan Davies wrote:

Having read 'Drivers would switch to an EV if charge points mandated at fuel stations' (fleetnews.co.uk, July 11), increasing the availability and accessibility of charge points can only be good news for the adoption rates of plug-in vehicles.

Range anxiety has been the biggest barrier to more company car drivers making the switch to electric vehicles

and the Government's desire to mandate them at service stations will help.

However, the P11D price for plug-ins remains high when compared to internal combustion engine alternatives.

If the Government really wants to increase adoption rates perhaps it's about time that the P11D price reflected the plug-in grant, bringing down further the amount employees and employers would pay in tax.

DASHCAMS

Privacy is not a given in this day and age

Andrew wrote:

Having read 'Call for privacy charter over dashcam footage 'voyeurism'' (fleetnews.co.uk, June 27), in an age where Snapchat is releasing camera glasses to all and sundry, I don't think privacy is something that anyone can assume anymore.

The lack of regulation in this area is obvious. If it helps the police do more with less resource then the Government saves money.

Dashcams are no different.

Nigel Boyle added:

There were, and a few remain, those who called for CCTV in the high street to be banned for the same reason. On the whole they have now seen sense; it is only time until dashcams disappear into the back-ground. To me it is simple; the only people who need to fear these are those breaking the law.

IanM added:

This is not being helped by the many TV programmes that are appearing which are dedicated to showing footage from dashcams which then gives the impression that it's ok to share the information wherever people feel like.



EMPLOYMENT LAW

An end to employees on the cheap?



Key wrote:

Having read 'GMB launches legal challenge against Addison Lee' (fleetnews.co.uk, July 4), how are these drivers classed as self-employed?

It used to be the case that if anyone derived all or even the vast majority of their income from one source HMRC would class them as being employed.

Being classed as self-employed has tax advantages for the 'employee' (hence the interest from HMRC) and a cost-saving for employers, hence the temptation to class employees as 'self-employed' when in fact they are employees on the cheap.

John Wilson added:

The danger here for the drivers is that Addison Lee will not give them work as 'employees' and they will effectively become 'self-employed' in all senses of the term.

Andrew Kirby added:

This is the thin end of the wedge; there are so many 'self-employed' who will be able to jump on this, if successful.

HAVE YOUR SAY Email: fleetnews@bauermedia.co.uk Comment online: fleetnews.co.uk
LinkedIn: UK fleet managers group Twitter: twitter.com/_FleetNews

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Burning question:

What is your favourite board game and why?

Editorial

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Draughts - I can still beat my children at it

Deputy editor

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Monopoly - it's the closest I'll get to having a property on Park Lane

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Backgammon, you can play for real money

Features editor

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Not strictly a board game but I was a big fan of Connect 4 and spent many hours playing it against my brothers

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Out of office

Web producer

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Rapidough because timed, competitive Play-Doh crafting is a white knuckle thrill ride

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Hungry Hippos - strategic fun for all ages and abilities

Photos Chris Lowndes

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Monopoly. I used to play it every Christmas with my grandparents

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Monopoly for me, too. Raised down the Old Kent Road and got frustrated if anyone else bought the property

Finbarr O'Reilly 01733 468267

Backgammon - because it is cruel

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Operation. I didn't mind losing as I liked to set the buzzer off

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FLEET OPINION

COMPANY CARS

Tax strategy puts benefit at risk

By Martin Evans

“The Government’s current company car benefit-in-kind (BIK) taxation strategy is in direct conflict with its ambitions to ‘clean up’ the UK.

Data suggests that in 2017 the corporate share of the UK new car market is running at 54%. It can also be assumed that for many marques, particularly the prestige brands, fleet and business car registrations account for a significantly greater market share.

Yet, the Government continues to increase BIK rates, while pumping hundreds of millions of pounds into trying to encourage demand for plug-in vehicles. Even more bizarrely, the Government then wants to slash the tax burden on electric vehicles in 2020/21.

Consequently, I find it incomprehensible that many employees are likely to choose plug-in vehicles as company cars in the near future, with many question marks remaining over the technology and the recharging infrastructure.

Therefore, as employees’ tax liability increases, I fear that many will decide a company car no longer delivers value and will give them up.

They will buy or lease their own car and move into the murky world of grey fleet. These are typically, older and more polluting cars that are alien to air quality objectives, allied to a greater requirement for employers to manage all the well-documented health and safety risks that such a move triggers and the potential to clock up unnecessary mileage in pursuit of reimbursement claims to supplement salary.

History tells us company cars are a vital employee recruitment and retention tool. They also put employers in control of the make, model and age of vehicles operated as well as the safety risk posed, while contributing to a company’s image and reputation when compared to a polluting old car.

I believe the Government’s tax strategy is putting the future of the company car at risk and that will have a dramatic impact on UK new car registrations and the entire automotive industry, not to say businesses as a whole.

A wholesale review of company car tax is required recognising the key role those vehicles play in terms

“I fear that many will decide a company car no longer delivers value and will give them up”



Martin Evans,
managing director
of Jaama



John Pryor,
chairman of ACFO



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opinion](http://fleetnews.co.uk/opinion)

FLEET MANAGEMENT

Connected car clarity needed

By John Pryor

“The introduction of the connected car and so-called ‘big data’ is set to change the long-established fleet management model.

That change will have to be managed, while fleet decision-makers grapple with the impact of numerous other issues.

They include: the viability of diesel as a fleet fuel amid air quality concerns; the impact of Brexit; Government consultations on issues including currently on business expenses – which could see changes to long-established employee mileage allowances; and September’s introduction of the Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicles Test Procedure (WLTP).

What’s more, the recent hacking of NHS computer systems in the UK and other organisations’ systems worldwide has raised security fears around vehicles and the data collected.

We are on the tip of an iceberg. The arrival of ‘big data’ will have a major impact on fleet operations and company car drivers, as ACFO members heard recently at its spring ‘Big Data – Big Seminar’ event.

Today’s connectivity is the start of the journey towards the autonomous car and while the secure exchange of data builds the foundations for new business activities and applications, there are significant risks and challenges regarding safety, security and privacy that need to be addressed.

Supporters of ‘big data’ point to benefits that include reduced fleet vehicle downtime, safety and duty of care improvements and the early detection of faults and wear and tear before components ‘break’, thus reducing fleet service, maintenance and repair costs so aiding improved budgeting.

Furthermore, it will change the relationship between motor manufacturers, the vehicle leasing and fleet management industry, fleet decision-makers and company car drivers.

It is critical that motor manufacturers and the contract hire and leasing industry work together – and involve ACFO – as ultimately fleet managers are their customers.

Fleet managers want clarity; they want to understand how suppliers – vehicle manufacturers and contract hire and leasing companies – will access and use ‘big data’. Critically, they want to know who owns the information sourced from ‘intelligent’ vehicles.

“Arrival of ‘big data’ will have a major impact on fleet operations and company car drivers”



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La meccanica delle emozioni



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LEASYS

'WE TELL STAFF: HAVE THE CAR YOU YOU WANT'

In an industry beset with skills shortages, Countryside sees company cars as powerful weapons in gaining and retaining top people. *Sarah Tooze* reports

Company car drivers should be able to have the car they want. That's the approach housebuilder Countryside takes with its company car scheme. It went from a restricted car list (mainly Ford at the lower grades, with slightly more choice at director level) to a user-chooser policy, with the cars provided through salary sacrifice as part of a new employee benefits package, which launched in 2015.

The scheme is open to those who qualify for a company car (two-thirds of employees) and has an important part to play in the recruitment and retention of staff.

"We're a housebuilder so recruitment and retaining staff is key and a challenge, particularly in the site-based roles where there is a skills shortage," says facilities and fleet manager Chris Connors. "So we need to make sure the car is an enabler, not a deterrent for people to join us or stay with us."

"People come to an interview and they'll ask what car they are getting. They don't ask

about what pension they are getting or what other benefits they're getting. It's the car. So it was key and we wanted to be competitive in that market so it [the company car scheme] needed to raise its profile.

"We needed to deliver a car choice that was fitting. That was nothing against Ford because they'd done a great job but they are a volume manufacturer and it wasn't seen as giving people choice [at the lower grades] because if you didn't want a Ford, what was your option? People do have preferences."

Countryside has 11 car grades with a choice of 1,500 cars at the lowest grade and more than 5,000 at the highest.

The list is based on wholelife costs and employees are able to trade up or down. CO₂ caps of 130g/km below director level and 160g/km at director level have been set but Connors has found drivers naturally choose lower emission cars because of benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax.

Average CO₂ emissions across all new car orders is 110g/km.

Around 400 employees have opted for a company car through salary sacrifice with 350 taking the cash allowance instead.

Mercedes-Benz is currently the most popular car brand, making up around a quarter of the fleet. The Nissan Qashqai has also proved popular, particularly at the lower grades as "it's a good size family car, with a lot of kit, and it's good value for drivers", Connors says.

Giving employees a wide choice of cars is not without its downsides, however.

"If we selected two or three manufacturers we'd probably get bigger discounts from them with the size of fleet we've got rather than it being mixed across the brands. But it is just the way the company culture now is to provide choice," Connors says.

Reallocation is also a potential issue.

"You can't just say, 'right, that's the car for your grade' because you're getting different cars back," Connors says.

"You've also got to maintain a relationship with more manufacturers, understand more about how each manufacturer works, deal with different lead times, so there is more stakeholder management. But the good side is that you've got staff that appreciate the extra choice and you can explain to a





Chris Connors joined Countryside a little more than two years ago. His time is split between fleet and facilities

FACTFILE

Organisation: Countryside
Facilities and fleet manager: Chris Connors
Fleet size: 400 company cars, 30 vans
Cash-takers: 350
Funding method: salary sacrifice/contract hire
Replacement cycle: cars – three years, 60,000 miles or four years, 80,000 miles;
 vans – four years



new starter 'you're going to have at least 1,500 cars to choose from.'

Countryside's fleet management provider Activa is responsible for applying the fleet policy, looking at reallocations and ensuring new starters who have selected a company car have a car on their first day – either a daily rental car or a reallocation.

Countryside made Activa its sole supplier in 2015, having previously had four leasing providers.

The first car to be delivered under the new scheme coincided with Connors' appointment in April that year.

He joined an in-house fleet team of five including him, which shrank to three last year as part of Countryside's move to an outsourced arrangement with Activa.

The team sits within the Human Resources department and Connors reports to the group HR director. Fleet had previously reported into the chief executive's PA and the switch to HR coincided with the new company car scheme.

Connors' time is split evenly between fleet and facilities.

'Facilities can be about the silliest little thing, but no two days are the same in either role, so it's quite good,' he says. 'It's nice to have the balance.'

Activa is now responsible for services such as driving licence checking, accident management, breakdown support and daily rental.

Outsourcing was seen as a way to reduce administration, time and cost, and to ensure compliance.

It was part of an overall company strategy to 'get specialists in to do specialist work

rather than trying to retain everything in-house', Connors explains.

It was implemented across a number of services in the business, not just fleet.

Opting for a sole supplier has resulted in savings on end of contract charges and daily rental.

Activa takes a 'common sense approach' to returning cars, in Connors' view, rather than 'going around trying to find every single scratch'.

This has resulted in a 50% saving in Countryside's annual expenditure for end of contract costs, while last year, 40% of the cars Countryside returned had no additional charges.

Countryside also has a number of early terminations free of charge, which has proved useful when cars are difficult to reallocate.

Activa has helped reduce Countryside's daily rental costs for new starters by offering 24-month contracts. This has resulted in

savings of between £40 and £117 per month, per vehicle, dependent on model.

Connors admits outsourcing has not always been plain sailing but he views the relationship as a 'partnership'.

'We do get problems because it's people, it's cars, and things do go wrong, but the thing I like about Activa is the way we can work together to get a resolution,' Connors says. 'If it's possible they will do it and there's nothing we could do internally that they can't do for us.'

He adds: 'We had a situation at one stage about how do our drivers contact Activa? So we've got a Countryside-dedicated email address which then goes through to a pool of people within Activa that can answer the email but the driver sees that it's countryside@activacontracts and that's a bit of ownership and branding that makes it easier.'

Connors believes it is important not to overlook the drivers when moving to an outsourced fleet arrangement.

'The thing I learnt is that there are four key stakeholders. You've got the provider; whoever that is going to be; the fleet department, however that is going to operate; then you've got your business; and then you've got your employees, your end-user drivers. It's too easy to forget the employees when you're doing this exercise,' he says.

'It's all about cost and benefits, and what is a benefit to the business is not necessarily going to be a benefit to the employee. But if you make sure they're involved early on in stakeholder meetings and get their input you can overcome a lot of hurdles.'

Connors acknowledges there were 'teething problems' when the scheme went live as existing company car drivers didn't fully understand they would need to stay in their current car until the end of the lease, while new employees would enjoy the benefit of joining the new scheme.

'Had we involved them more in the reasons why, it would have made that part of the journey a little bit smoother,' Connors says.

Driver feedback is one way which Countryside measures Activa's performance.

'We have general service level agreements, like making sure a driver has a vehicle within eight working hours if something goes wrong with their car. We get monthly reports and stats of what is going on, plus we manage them on word of mouth,' he says.

'We'll regularly go round to the offices,

"Interviewees ask what car they are getting. They don't ask what pension they are getting or what other benefits they're getting. It's the car"

Chris Connors, Countryside

ENSURING VANS ARE FIT FOR PURPOSE

Countryside is currently reviewing its van fleet with Activa's commercial vehicle department and vehicle converter Bott to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

'We have a habit of ordering the same van over and over again because that's all we know,' Chris Connors says. 'It might be that it's right, we just need to demonstrate that.'

He believes there could be opportunities to downsize.

'We are getting larger vans sometimes for occasional use, when actually we could do something different. And then do we need to mix our fleet up? Does everybody need the same size van or can we have some smaller ones? But it's making sure they can carry the right number of tools.'



For Chris Connors the fleet job is a constant process of re-evaluation and assessment

sometimes with, sometimes without, Activa, and just hold open workshops. We encourage staff to tell us any problems because we want to know about them."

Connors also does informal benchmarking with other leasing companies, although he finds that, while it is easy to compare the cost of a car, it can be difficult to "compare the service as a whole because there are so many elements".

"We want to work in partnership yet we need to make sure we're remaining competitive and getting the best deal and being aware of what the market is doing, which is why events like Fleet Management Live (see page 38 for more details) can come in good because we can see what other contract hire companies are doing, what other options there are," Connors says.

Next on the agenda is working with Countryside's insurance provider Allianz to see if more could be done to manage risk.

Telematics might be an option, following a recent trial with commercial fleet specialists Lightfoot in five vans which achieved "good results from a driver safety perspective".

Countryside has already updated its risk assessment and guidance, and has an online driver training course which is available to all employees, not just company car drivers.

"We've got an exercise at the moment into what more could we do? Because we know we could do more," Connors says.

"It's getting that balance as to what is going to help, what is going to be achievable, what do we need to do? Do we need to target high risk drivers? Do we need to target the ones that have had accidents or the ones that drive high business mileage or do we need to go across the board?"

Connors is also keeping an eye on electric vehicles. Charging infrastructure and business mileages means the business case doesn't yet stack up for Countryside "but as soon as we can be comfortable that we can do it [have electric vehicles], and do it well, they will absolutely be included", he says.

He adds: "We continually look at what we're doing, how we're doing it, could we do it better? It's never going to stand still."



For more fleet profiles, visit:
fleetnews.co.uk/fleet-profiles

'WE'RE NOW MUCH MORE FLEET OF FOOT'

New products and a new approach at DriveTech as a new management team seeks a "step change" in performance. *Gareth Roberts* reports

Driver training is entering the world of virtual reality as one of the country's biggest risk management companies plots a course for future success.

DriveTech, part of The AA, has a new senior management team, new products under development and a new sector-based approach, after a root and branch review of the business during the past 12 months.

"There's been quite a lot of change," admits DriveTech managing director David Wilson.

He's not wrong. Wilson was brought in to conduct a review of the business in April 2016, having worked on other projects within The AA for the previous two years.

He found a risk management company offering everything from licence checking to CPC driver training. A far cry from its humble beginnings, when former traffic cop Chris Howell launched the business in 1990.

Bought by The AA in 2009, the business quickly grew with a series of acquisitions, including Peak Performance and Intelligent Data Systems (IDS) in 2011, and Dutch-based road risk company VVCR in 2014.

However, the legacy of this rapid growth was a business that had failed to fully integrate. Wilson says: "From a physical footprint, we've consolidated into one operation in Basingstoke and one management team."

Its licence checking business IDS and contact centre can now be found under one roof, while a complete new sales structure gives a sector-led approach.

Chris Thornton, DriveTech sales director, says: "When I came on board, we had a team that was a little bit fragmented."

A fleet may have had several different contacts within the business, dependent on what service was being offered. "I think we had become a little bit product-focused," says Thornton. "Now we're very customer and market-focused."

Thornton, who has spent his career in the automotive aftermarket, most recently as managing director of Auto Windscreens, also joined the business just over a year ago.

He had first come into contact with Wilson when Auto Windscreens bought The AA's

automotive glazing business, AA AutoWindshields, in August 2015.

"My job at DriveTech is to bring a perspective for the future, taking what is already a good business and turning it into a great one," he says.

Thornton is spearheading the company's new, sector-based approach. It recognises the different requirements demonstrated by fleets operating from one sector to another, with a manager specialising in a particular area, such as bluelight, bus and coach or the supermarket sector.

He explains: "Somebody that understands what drives that sector – the customer, their challenges and needs – is better-placed to offer them the best solution."

It is also increasingly engaging with different parts of a business as well, with driver risk management not always being part of the fleet manager's remit.

Thornton says: "Today, we're seeing procurement, HR, health and safety, and finance increasingly involved; we need to talk in terms that are understood by those different camps."

The new sales strategy and senior management changes have been built around a more independently-minded business. Still part of The AA, as is underlined in its logo, DriveTech has stopped using the roadside recovery business as a prefix in its name and separated some back office functions to reflect its new outlook and structure. What was a shared IT resource, for example, is now a dedicated DriveTech team.

"It means we can get on with our priorities," says Wilson. "We tap into The AA in terms of central functions and support services when we need them. Using that strength when it's appropriate, but recognising our strategy and our customers are very different from roadside."

The review understood the need for DriveTech to be able to adapt to a rapidly changing market. "We've been able to drive the business forward a lot faster," says Wilson. "It's a very different dynamic to what was here before. We're now much more fleet of foot and very focused on 'our' strategy."

Thornton adds: "It also means we can drive our own product development without being part of a bigger prioritisation picture."

"Somebody that understands what drives that sector is better-placed to offer them the best solution"

Chris Thornton, DriveTech

Significant changes to the business have been backed with a £3 million infrastructure investment programme and an ambitious plan for organic growth.

Wilson says he will be "quite happy" if they have doubled revenue in the next three years.

"We're not looking for 5% or 10%, we're looking for a step change in the business," he says. "But we also recognise we've got to put the building blocks in place to achieve that. We need to develop product."

"It's not as easy as just flicking the switch, but The AA is committed to the business and we all want it to be successful."

Going forward, DriveTech says its focus will be around customers, growth and product. It has a tried and tested suite of products catering for the two principal components of road risk management – identification and mitigation.

It is one of the country's largest licence checking companies, for example, checking up to 600,000 licences each year, more than 10,000 per week on average.

It also has its well-established online risk assessment product, with drivers determining potential hazards from video clips, and e-learning modules tailored to different risk issues.

Furthermore, with a driver trainer pool of some 400 experts, it has a significant capability for providing in-car one-to-one tuition.

But there are new risk indicators, such as telematics data, which DriveTech is beginning to tap into to help companies identify potential issues.

"We're able to provide insight and advice by bringing analysis to that huge amount of



FACTFILE

Company DriveTech

Parent company The AA

Head office Basingstoke

Managing director David Wilson

Sales director Chris Thornton

Services risk identification and mitigation

Global reach 95 countries

data," says Thornton. "What happened in the past was you identified a driver that was high risk and you stuck them on a course – a sheep dip approach."

However, he says: "You'll get a better outcome if you first understand what the issues are particular to that individual, you give them something that is tailored and specific, and you keep an eye on them going forward. We've moved on from saying 'we'll sell you a bit of training:'"

Wilson adds: "It's also about getting stronger at being able to articulate the benefits to customers. We want to be very clear [with customers] that these are the interventions we can do, these will be the outcomes and these will be the benefits."

He admits that in the past "it's not been that refined", but says it's now imperative that DriveTech is "crystal clear" about what it can deliver.

The company has carried out its own cost benefit analysis of training, with additional savings identified around insurance, SMR and fuel.

"It's about getting stronger at being able to articulate the benefits to customers"

David Wilson, DriveTech

Thornton explains: "These three things are influenced by driver behaviour and typically people have focused more on what rate they're buying those products at, rather than the volume they're consuming them at, and what can they do to reduce that."

While fleets will have enjoyed good payback thanks to a reduction in accident costs, he says: "There's also a significant opportunity to reduce fuel costs, and service and maintenance as well."

"We've seen it in The AA fleet where we've

done a lot of work around driver behaviour from telematics information and service and maintenance costs."

Wilson calls it the "value-add" element – the insight DriveTech can provide. "We want to be seen as the industry leader," he says.

To achieve that, DriveTech also recognises it needs to deliver its risk interventions in a more engaging and dynamic way.

Its hazard awareness videos have been shot in a 360-degree format where a view in every direction is recorded at the same time, shot using an omnidirectional camera or a collection of cameras. It allows the user to drag left or right to view the road, and potential hazards, around them.

"Once you've captured the scenario in that [360] form it can be used on different devices very easily," says Thornton.

DriveTech developers are exploring how far they can go, but virtual reality training sessions are already being developed, bringing driver training into a truly digital age.

"The skilful bit is then calibrating that to risk," says Wilson.

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FLEET TRAINING



Never stop learning: a guide to the organisations that can deepen your fleet knowledge

INSIDE

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Even experienced fleet managers can benefit from training to keep pace with industry developments

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Key industry bodies can offer guidance and support to help fleets improve their operational effectiveness

'NONE OF US ARE BEYOND GETTING EDUCATED'

Even experienced fleet managers can benefit from training to keep pace with industry developments.

Andrew Ryan reports

Mobility, technology, legislation... the pace of change in fleet is so rapid that any decision-maker who is unwilling (or unable) to stay on top of developments will soon be left behind.

This can seriously affect a company. For example, if policies are not continually updated to reflect changes in legislation, then a fleet could unknowingly be breaking the law.

Similarly, if fleets do not learn how to take advantage of technologies such as telematics or vehicle safety systems, then they risk missing out on significant savings as well as neglecting their duty of care responsibilities.

"We are all guilty at times of sitting back and saying 'I know what goes on, I've been in the industry a long time', but none of us are beyond getting educated in the modern way," says Peter Eldridge, director of training body ICFM.

"If you think about technology, autonomous vehicles, connected vehicles and big data, the pace of development of all those is doubling every two years, so how could any of us sit back and say 'we don't do training, we know what we're doing'? It's wrong, it's completely flawed."

Fortunately for fleet decision-makers, plenty of training opportunities and sources of information are available.

These include the trade press, such as *Fleet News*, networking events, conferences, membership and accreditation to organisations and initiatives such as fleet operators association ACFO and the Freight Transport Association (FTA) Van Excellence, as well as formal training and qualifications through ICFM.

The ICFM programmes have many benefits for fleet decision-makers, says Eldridge. It is the UK's only independent not-for-profit organisation dedicated to furthering the education and advancing the profession of car and light commercial fleet management.

It also offers externally accredited vocational qualifications: Introductory Certificate in Fleet Management, Certificate in Fleet Management and the Diploma in Fleet Management.

"The fleet industry has gone through a significant change in that it isn't just about fleet managers any more, you've now got a very different set of employees with fleet responsibility and that includes people from finance, HR procurement and travel," Eldridge says.

"We don't get a room full of fleet managers on our courses any more, we are getting equal splits of delegates from those specialisms so we've had to adapt our training to suit that.

"There has been a dilution of fleet management responsibility, and there has been a dilution in knowledge,



expertise and skills, and that is why training is so important."

Eldridge says another important part of ICFM membership is the networking opportunities it gives fleet decision-makers, allowing them to share experiences and learn from their peers.

"There is no better education than a life lesson. People sharing good and bad experiences is vital for this," he says.

Georgina Smith, fleet manager of Healthcare at Home, earlier this year gained her ICFM Diploma in Fleet Management and believes networking is an important part of the learning process.

"You can share experiences and you can ask questions of people if you're not sure about something because not all fleets are the same and they do things differently," she says. "On the ICFM course I was working with a lot of bluelight fleets which gives you a real insight into fleets of different sizes and shapes. How do they deal with fuel? How do they deal with risk, insurance and finance? How do they put





"There is no better education than a life lesson. People sharing good and bad experiences is vital for this"

Peter Eldridge, ICFM

ON COURSE FOR IMPROVED CAREER PROSPECTS AND GREATER CONFIDENCE

Formal training can help fleet managers improve the operation of their fleet, but it can also improve their career prospects.

"We know for a fact that there are many organisations who use ICFM qualifications as their de facto standard of approval to appoint people," says Peter Eldridge, director of the ICFM.

"We have seen a fair slice of that in the public sector and we know that if an applicant has the ICFM accreditation next to their name that does carry weight."

This was certainly the case for

Georgina Smith, fleet manager of Healthcare at Home. "When my then fleet manager moved on (in 2014) I was promoted to fleet manager. But without completing the ICFM fast-track course that wouldn't have been the case – they would have sourced somebody who had a similar qualification," she says.

Smith started with Healthcare at Home in 2002 and became its fleet administrator in 2008.

"I was looking to improve myself. I didn't know much about fleet but really wanted to become

more professional in what I did because there were a lot of drivers relying on me," she says.

This led Smith to take the ICFM's introductory course, then the fast-track fleet management course.

Her studies culminated with her becoming a fellow of the ICFM earlier this year when she passed the diploma course with distinction.

"Training is very important to us here," says Smith. "Having a qualification allows you to go to your employer and say 'you know, I do know what I'm talking about' and it helps the drivers to have a

bit of trust in what I'm telling them to do."

Smith's employer fully supported her desire to undergo formal training, and it is an approach she has embraced, stipulating that staff in her fleet department complete the ICFM's introductory course.

Fleet coordinator Lorien Conti last year gained her certificate, and fleet administrator Laura Rankin-Smith is currently taking the course. "Doing the course has helped Lorien become a confident and capable fleet coordinator," says Smith.



all their information together?

"It's great to know how people do that because otherwise we are all off in our own offices doing it on our own. There's nothing like learning from first-hand real experiences."

There are many opportunities for fleet decision-makers to network, whether it is by attending roundtables, conferences or seminars such as those operated by ACFO and road safety charity Brake.

Some fleet managers working for large companies may also be able to benefit from networking internally as well as externally.

Ann-Marie Dunbar, fleet manager at Vodafone, is able to communicate with contacts abroad to seek best practice. For example, on mobility she works with her contacts in the Netherlands to understand solutions which may work for UK employees. The Dutch are viewed as being ahead of the UK on mobility.

She says: "I link into my Vodafone group counterparts, representing the UK at a global level and I am also out in the industry understanding the direction we are heading and the legislation coming our way," she says.

"I try to network as much as possible with other fleet operators via our fleet provider and our other suppliers."

Joining a leasing company's user group meetings is a useful way to network with other fleet decision-makers, says John Pryor, chairman of ACFO, while suppliers can also be a source of information.

"If you've got a good leasing company which is responsive and proactive it will keep you informed of what is happening, but so much is finding out what other companies do as well," he says.

However, with that "there's always a certain amount of 'am I being sold to here?'," and that's fine, it's okay to be a bit suspicious, but we've got to be certain that they are doing it for our benefit", adds Smith.

"It's great that our lease companies send us updates, but we need to make decisions for ourselves so we need to be properly informed and that's where training comes in."

As well as providing networking opportunities, there are a number of organisations which can provide fleet decision-makers with advice and guidance, all of which offer something different.

ACFO, for example, provides fleet management information and advice on a wide range of issues, while Brake focuses on road safety.

Its established Pledge initiative has become well used throughout the sector as it provides training and resources to help fleet managers educate drivers in journey planning and eco-driving, driver impairment through drink and/or drugs, passenger security, driver distraction, fitness to drive and speed.

Fleet managers who attend one of the regular Pledge training sessions are told how they can communicate these messages to drivers through methods such as interactive group workshops, one-to-one sessions with indi-



"I try to network as much as possible with other fleet operators via our fleet provider and our other suppliers"

Ann-Marie Dunbar, Vodafone

vidual drivers, full day training, or in shorter sessions throughout the year.

Brake's annual Road Safety week also provides information and a focus for fleet managers to raise awareness of relevant issues in their organisations.

Environmental advice is available from Energy Saving Trust which offers online self-service tools, best practice guides and case studies.

The Fleet Industry Advisory Group (FIAG) takes a different approach. It was founded in 2014 by a group of fleet managers with around 200 years' experience between them with the aim of sharing advice with more inexperienced decision-makers.

"You can't put an old head on young shoulders, but if you are approaching managing a fleet from a young perspective, most of the experiences you are going to come up against have been experienced before," says Geoffrey Bray, chairman of FIAG.

"There are different ways of learning: there is no one-size-fits-all solution which works for everybody, but we feel that experienced fleet managers can become a source to learn from because they can pass their knowledge on to

EVEN THE MOST EXPERIENCED CAN BENEFIT FROM FORMAL TRAINING

Formal training is not just for inexperienced fleet decision-makers: it can hugely benefit experienced professionals as well.

Commodity manager Paul Tate has been responsible for the Siemens fleet for the past 10 years, but had not received any formal training until two years ago. He now holds the ICFM Diploma in Fleet Management.

"I've worked in vehicle rental, accident management and breakdown recovery and my previous role was at a mini-lease organisation which did internal funding and leased out to external parties," he says.

"I've touched all the areas of operation which a fleet manager would get involved in, so my learning was self-taught."

It is an approach which had served him well, with his many successes including Siemens being named the fleet of the

year – business services at the Commercial Fleet Awards 2015.

So, after being so successful for so long without any formal training, why did he sign up to the ICFM?

"For me it was basically to sense check," says Tate. "Am I doing things right, or what are the ways of doing it differently?"

"I also wanted that piece of paper to say that I can do what my job description says I can do.

"Within many organisations, people who are in professional roles tend to have a qualification: if you are in procurement you have CIPS or MCIPS, if you are in engineering then there are plenty of professional qualifications.

"I think it is becoming more imperative that someone with responsibility for the fleet should have some form of official recognition or qualification to ensure best practice is being delivered."

Tate started the ICFM training programme two years ago.

"You always have to ensure you refresh the way you approach things," he adds. "You can get into a silo mentality so you carry on delivering things the same way as you always have, and the effect of that could cost you more money than it should."

Tate says doing the course has improved the way he works. "It is a full cradle to grave process and it alters your train of thought when you're doing things," he adds.

"It gives you enough material to refer back to as well. I find myself dealing with various departments within Siemens and each of them has a different approach or are interested in different things, so it allows me to structure my presentations to them at a level which they would understand and add value to the conversations."

someone else. I do believe in the philosophy that in our industry everyone is serving an apprenticeship and it never ends. It is constant, we can all benefit from someone else's experience."

Organisations can also receive access to information and advice on best practice through accreditation schemes such as FTA Van Excellence or the Fleet Operators Recognition Scheme (FORS).

Achieving either of these means fleets have to operate to a required standard, looking at areas such as vehicle road-worthiness, safety, training and compliance.

It also has other benefits to a company. For example, an increasing number of companies are taking accreditations into account when awarding contracts.

"One of our biggest customers started asking us for FORS and others were following suit," says Derek Golding, director of fleet operations at Ajax Couriers, which has achieved both FORS Bronze and Van Excellence accreditation.

"We decided these accreditations were best for the company, worked out what we needed to do to get them and put it into action.

"Accreditations are good because people see them on our vehicles and it makes us look more professional. It shows we are there for the customers.

"We're not the cheapest company around, but they know they are going to get a quality service from us.

"Seeing accreditations reinforces that. They show we are serious about our work."

It took Golding eight months to get the fleet FORS accredited, and then another six months for Van Excellence. He says renewing both will be simpler: for example, FORS took only a couple of weeks.

"My life is a lot easier now, everything is automated or has a set process," he adds.

However, although there are plenty of opportunities for fleet decision-makers to learn, Bray says they need to take responsibility and make the most of them.

He adds: "It is important that fleet managers are not afraid to ask questions of other people or talk to other companies.

"You'd be amazed how people are willing to share that knowledge and that, for me, is an excellent way of developing a skill and a knowledge."

HOW CAN WE HELP? THERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF ADVICE TO TAP INTO

Key industry bodies tell **Andrew Ryan** about the guidance and support they can offer to help fleet decision-makers improve their operations

ACFO

What is it and who is it for? ACFO is the largest UK body representing the interests of businesses which operate cars and vans as part of their commercial activities. ACFO is not just for full-time professional fleet managers. It is for everyone who has a fleet management role whether in HR, finance, procurement, travel or any other company department.

How can it help a fleet manager? ACFO provides both a national representation platform and regional networking opportunities to support its key objective of improving the discipline and craft of fleet management, and its status. A vast wealth of expert knowledge, information and advice is accessible on every aspect of fleet operations including best practice techniques and other aspects of management.

Who should a fleet manager contact for more information? Members' Services Organisation on 01865 342102, via email info@acfo.org or through the ACFO website www.acfo.org

BRAKE PROFESSIONAL

What is it and who is it for? Brake Professional is a not-for-profit membership service for fleet operators and suppliers founded by Brake, the road safety charity in 1996. It provides members with tools to manage occupational road risk regardless of budget, fleet size, or vehicle type.

How can it help a fleet manager? Brake Professional shares training, tools, and guidance on global fleet safety best practice with its members, as well as networking and development opportunities. It runs a full calendar of training events, alongside its annual Fleet Safety Conference and Fleet Safety Awards.

Who should a fleet manager contact for more information? To find out more, contact the team on 01484 550055, or email professional@brake.org.uk

CIPS (CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY)

What is it and who is it for? CIPS is the world's largest organisation dedicated to the procurement and supply management profession. It is the voice of procurement and supply across the globe. CIPS champions the raising of standards through professional qualifications.

How can it help a fleet manager? Procurement principles and best practice can support every sector, but for fleet the drive for efficiencies is uppermost. Many businesses now want end-to-end travel plans, while Government changes to taxation of vehicles could alter the whole fleet market. Big data will also impact. As most fleet managers plan ahead three or five years this is challenging but procurement can help, with future planning and wholelife costing.

Who should a fleet manager contact for more information? Visit www.cips.org or contact Phil Broughton, head of development and engagement on 01780 761465 or 07557 263991.



DRIVING FOR BETTER BUSINESS

What is it and who is it for? Driving for Better Business is a campaign to raise awareness of the importance of work-related road safety in the business community and public sector by using advocates drawn from these communities to promote the business benefits of managing it effectively.

How can it help a fleet manager? Driving for Better Business provides a free-of-charge information resource to help fleet decision-makers, irrespective of their current level of risk management. Resources include free-to-attend events, webinars, case studies, networking opportunities, learning from peers, plus a range of risk management guides and templates.

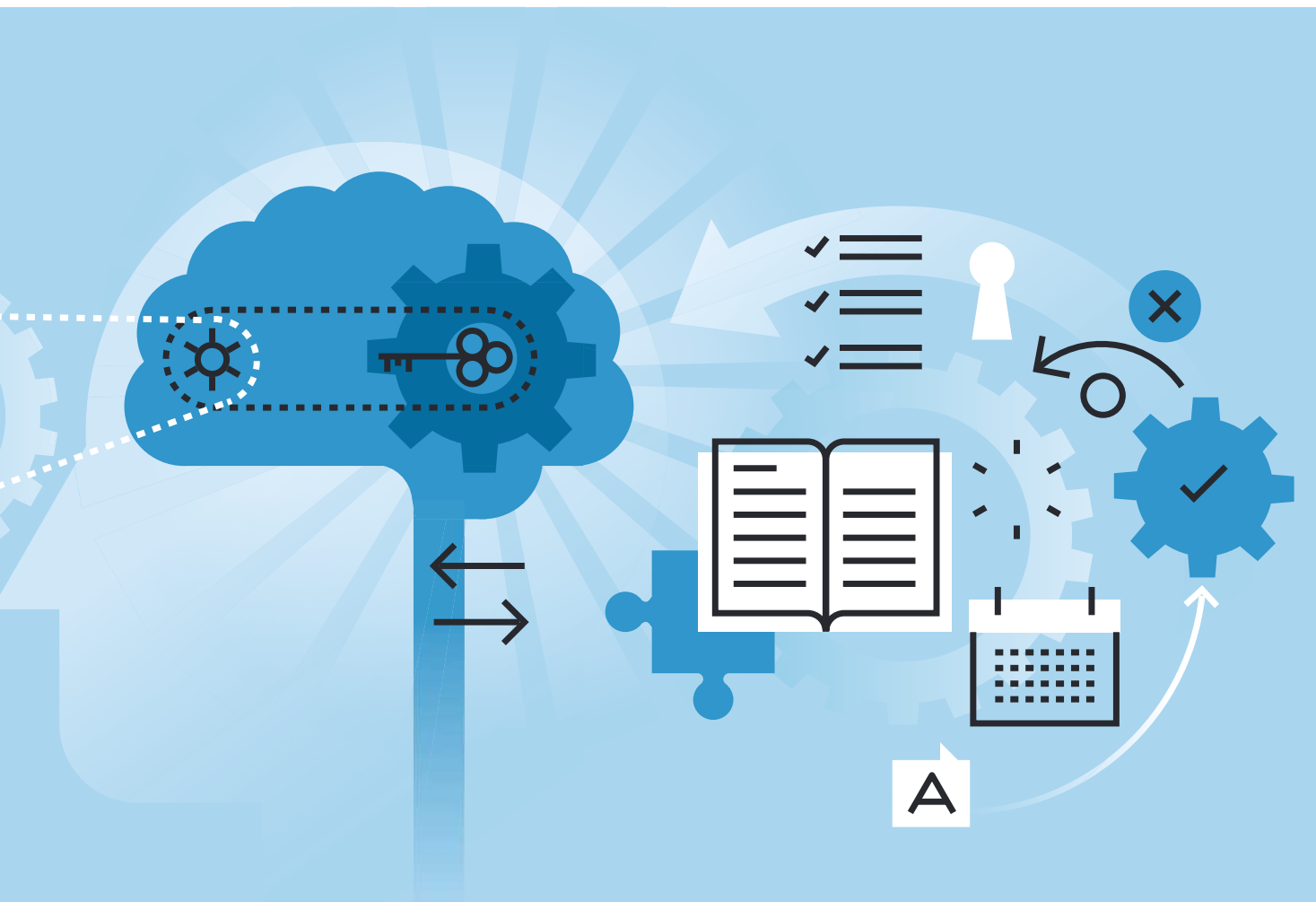
Who should a fleet manager contact for more information? Simon Turner, campaign director – simon@drivingforbetterbusiness.com

FLEET INDUSTRY ADVISORY GROUP (FIAG)

What is it and who is it for? FIAG was launched to develop and share best practice among fleet decision-makers. It was founded in 2014 by a team of professional fleet managers who collectively have around 200 years' experience in running vehicle operations. Utilising the wealth of knowledge and experience of the founders – as well as other decision-makers when they join – FIAG provides fleet advice, consultancy and support through the mentoring of newcomers to the role of fleet manager and less experienced employees with car, van and HGV responsibility.

How can it help a fleet manager? The goal for every professional fleet manager should be to implement a sustainable performance programme in all areas of managing the driver, vehicle and journey. FIAG delivers access to expert fleet managers as well as white papers on key issues and holds seminars.

Who should a fleet manager contact for more information? Phone 01454 318 287; email enquiries@fiag.co.uk; website www.fiag.co.uk.



FREIGHT TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION (FTA) VAN EXCELLENCE SCHEME

What is it and who is it for? Unlike HGVs, the van sector is not regulated by Operator Licencing and many firms running van fleets don't consider their vehicles and drivers as a key business focus. FTA's Van Excellence scheme aims to help the sector shake off its 'white van man' image by creating professional standards for van operators and sharing best practice. It is for anyone running vans, no matter how big or small the operation.

How can it help a fleet manager? Members of the scheme are audited and sign up to a code of practice that includes vehicle and driver undertakings that must be met. Running a fleet in line with the code helps a fleet manager ensure their operations are robust and compliant.

Who should a fleet manager contact for information? Visit www.vanexcellence.co.uk or call 03717 11 22 22.

RoSPA

What is it and who is it for? RoSPA is a leading safety organisation working in five key areas: road safety, workplace safety, leisure safety, home safety and education safety. RoSPA's roots are in road safety, influencing decisions such as the implementation of seatbelts, mobile phone legislation and the Tufty Club.

How can it help a fleet manager? RoSPA has a suite of products to help the fleet manager reduce risk and costs, ranging from driver profiling, driver and line manager behaviour training, and managing occupational road risk reviews. The training is based around changing behaviours and improving skills of drivers and managers within the business.

Who should a fleet manager contact for more information? The dedicated team at RoSPA Fleet Safety on 0121 248 2233 or enquiries@rospa.com.

FORS (FLEET OPERATOR RECOGNITION SCHEME)

What is it and who is it for? FORS is a voluntary accreditation scheme that promotes best practice for commercial vehicle operators. It encompasses all aspects of safety, efficiency and environmental protection by encouraging and training fleet operators to measure, monitor and improve performance. FORS provides accreditation pathways for operators of any type, and for those organisations that award contracts and specify transport requirements.

How can it help a fleet manager? FORS members work to standards above the legal minimum and have access to a wide range of exclusive benefits that provide a real competitive advantage. Fleet managers have access to funded training and toolkits on everything from best practice to efficient fleet management and monitoring and measuring performance.

Who should a fleet manager contact for more information? Helpline 08448 09 09 44, enquiries@fors-online.org.uk or www.fors-online.org.uk

ICFM

What is it and who is it for? ICFM is the only organisation dedicated to advancing the profession of car and light commercial fleet management through a range of externally endorsed qualifications. Irrespective of whether employees have some fleet management experience, are newcomers to the role in a full-time or part-time capacity or have a career background in HR, finance, travel or procurement, training courses provide them with a clearly signposted development programme that is recognised across the profession.

How can it help a fleet manager? ICFM qualifications are viewed as the de facto stamp of approval for employees with fleet responsibility. ICFM is all about putting fleet decision-makers on the road to fleet management success.

Who should a fleet manager contact for more information? The ICFM hub on 01462 744914, via email administration@icfm.com or through the ICFM website at www.icfm.com

Insights on fleet technology at Fleet Management LIVE

Experts from major suppliers will be on hand to offer software advice

Technology plays a critical role in modern business and the latest software enables firms to run safer and more efficient fleets.

Systems range from all-encompassing fleet management software to more specialist services, such as private mileage capture, licence checking and fuel management.

Software also makes sense of the wealth of data provided by hardware devices, such as telematics and tracking systems.

The question for fleet operators is where to start when choosing products and finding the best provider.

Fleet Management LIVE offers the

perfect opportunity to speak to experts from many of the major suppliers under one roof.

The show takes place on October 3-4 at the NEC in Birmingham and features more than 100 exhibitors who provide advice on every aspect of fleet management for car, van and truck fleets.

Experts will be able to provide guidance on the questions that need to be answered when choosing a supplier. These include establishing the fleet's software requirements, such as the common tasks the system would have to complete and whether an off-the-shelf package is suitable.

It is also important to check if a

more bespoke system is needed and whether software is modular so fleet managers can choose the most relevant parts for their business.

Most systems today are web-enabled or web-based, but it is important to understand how and where data will be stored.

The majority of fleet management software is web-enabled, meaning some of the software resides on a server while the other portion sits on the user's computer. Software changes need to be made on both.

In contrast, web-based means that the software was written to run on the internet, which allows users to access it via a browser without the

need for software to be installed on each computer.

Users access the same data-centre regardless of where they are in the world and it's far quicker to add more users, while software updates can be made centrally by the provider.

Price is clearly critical in any buying decision, but it is important to establish whether a supplier provides value for money.

Software companies exhibiting at Fleet Management LIVE include Allstar Business Solutions, Asset Works, Chevin, Drive Software Solutions, Fleet Check, Interactive Fleet Management, Jaama and Telogis.

Who should attend?

Fleet managers
HR professionals
Finance
Procurement managers
Risk management
Transport managers
Corporate mobility managers
SMEs

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FLEET MANAGEMENT LIVE

OCTOBER 3-4, 2017 NEC BIRMINGHAM

Fleets must adapt to changing business needs

In the next few years, fleets will have to adapt to a number of trends that are reshaping the automotive industry and changing the way businesses operate.

For Enterprise Flex-E-Rent sales director John Collins, the core market issues are uncertainty, the impact of technology and the demands of compliance.

He says: "Uncertainty is key. The UK is facing considerable flux and more is likely dependent on the outcome of Brexit negotiations.

"This is shaping buying patterns and encouraging customers to build-in options. Many end customers are unsure of demand and keeping plans short-term, which may affect their suppliers' decision-making when it comes to how they invest in vehicle assets."

At the same time, fleets have to ensure they can keep pace with technological change, he says, as it is driving efficiencies, sustainability and safety, with technology such as autonomous vehicles having the

potential to change the nature of business travel.

But a key underlying trend sits at the foundation of effective fleet management – compliance.

Collins says: "Compliance with legislation will become more complex as organisations operate within a global economy involving different legislative systems."

To find out more, visit the Fleet Management LIVE site at www.fleetmanagementlive.co.uk or call 01733 468325.



Expert advice from industry associations

Representatives from several major fleet sector associations will be on hand to give advice to Fleet Management LIVE visitors.

These include associations representing every element of fleet.

ACFO, the industry association for fleet operators, will be joined by the Institute of Car Fleet Management, the industry's training body and the Freight Transport Association (FTA), one

of the UK's largest trade associations whose members operate hundreds of thousands of commercial vehicles.

The FTA will tell visitors about its Van Excellence programme, a ground-breaking scheme designed by some of the best van operators in the UK to promote excellence in the sector and improve operational standards.

Bluelight fleets will be able to

discuss their key issues with the National Association of Police Fleet Managers, which is also backing the new Bluelight and Public Sector Fleet Zone that meets the unique demands of the sector.

Broader business needs will be catered for by Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce, one of the UK's biggest and most influential industry associations.

Exhibitor listing so far

BMW
Honda
Jaguar
Land Rover
Lexus
Mini
Seat
Toyota
Vauxhall
Volvo
Agility Fleet
AID Fuel Oils Group
ALD Automotive
Alphabet
Appy Fleet
Arnold Clark Vehicle Management
Arval
AssetWorks
Autoglass
Autoserve
Bott
BP Oil
BT Fleet
Carbaya
CC Keys
Chevin Fleet Solutions
CVM Fleet Management Solutions
Daimler Fleet Management
Dash Witness
Drive Software Solutions
DriveTech, part of The AA
Enterprise Flex-E-Rent
FleetCheck
Fleetcor
Fleet Evolution
Free2Move Lease
FORS
Fourways Vehicle Solutions
Fuelmate
GEFCO
Halfords Autocentre
Inchcape Fleet Solutions
Interactive Fleet Management
Jaama
Keytracker
Lex Autolease
Licence Bureau
Licence Check
Lookers Leasing
Marshall Leasing
Nexus Vehicle Rental
Nimmos Insurance Brokers
O2
Parksafe Automotive
PDC
Probuild Transport Systems
Reflex Vans
RingGo Corporate
Road Safety Designs
Scorpion Automotive
Selsia Vehicle Accident Centres
Shell UK
Sortimo
TCH Leasing
Telogis
The AA
The Cotswold Group
Total Motion Vehicle Management
Unique Car Mats
Venson Automotive Solutions
vGroup International
Vindis Group Fleet
Volkswagen Financial Services | Fleet
Wex Corporate Pay
Zenith



"Only one third of what we do today is about managing assets, the rest is managing individuals"

Tim Buchan, Zenith

70,000

estimated number of cars funded by salary sacrifice

WINNER: ZENITH

'Every transaction has had something that is transformational'

Zenith's chief executive explains how changing hands five times in a decade has helped to spur company progress

By Stephen Briers

In January, Zenith announced a new majority shareholder, private equity firm Bridgepoint. It was the fifth time the leasing company had changed hands in the past decade, part of a growth strategy which involves a never-ending search for fresh injection of funds and management knowledge.

The strategy has taken the company beyond simply funding assets. Like some of its peers, Zenith now prefers to think of itself as a business service and mobility provider. So what does that mean for customers?

Chief executive officer Tim Buchan explains: "It's simply how much money do you want to pay and how much commitment do you want to give. Is it one day or seven years? That's it in automotive terms: for less than £30 you can have a one-day hire that I will deliver within two hours. But for less money you can commit to a longer lease."

"We are only missing the one-hour choice but we are not seeing any demand from the corporate market for that."

He adds: "I'm not buying into the autonomous car at the moment – it's too far away to understand what it means. Even if it does change the landscape, organisations will still require companies like us to fund and manage them anyway. It's just another business services asset, and only one-third of what we do today is about managing assets, the rest is managing individuals."

Fleet News: You seem to be constantly on the lookout for new shareholders – why is this important to the company?

Tim Buchan: Zenith sees new investors as a way to secure investment for long-term growth and development.

Every transaction has had something that is transformational within the business. For example, Equistone took us into the salary sacrifice market in 2008; Morgan Stanley in 2010 helped to grow salary sacrifice and all of our products and services. It also helped us to invest in securitisation, which means we have broader, unlimited funding for vehicle assets, from trucks to cars. HG's focus was

consolidation – Leasedrive and Zenith – and IT investment. We need digital because as we open up to consumers [the company car driver], they want choices, to do everything online, and we want to track transactions. We wanted an IT solution to grow our business without any constraints on volume.

FN: So what are you looking for now, with this latest investment by Bridgepoint?

TB: The next stage is to look at what else a business service provider needs going forward, what our customers need and the trading environment.

Through 2016, it became more apparent that with Brexit there would be more investment in infrastructure, growth in light commercial vehicles (LCVs) and company car salary sacrifice would continue as a core market.

So there was a need to be a one-stop shop where we can provide a truck for seven years to a one-day rental on a car. We are out there now talking to customers [about this offering].

FN: The first announcement, which came soon after the investment, was the acquisition of truck funder CVL. How does this fit into your strategy?

TB: We think over time there will have to be more regulation on heavy LCVs, such as an O-licence requirement at that weight. We invested in CVL so we could build a proposition for large service companies from end-to-end with our reporting platform – trucks, cranes, forklift trucks, vans, cars and salary sacrifice. We have chosen to focus on large corporates and sole supply with fleets with more than 100 assets or employee bases of more than 1,000 eligible individuals where we can have more in-depth relationships.

But we will also continue to evolve our white-label business in the SME sector so those brands can supply funding to their own customers. That area is growing significantly because manufacturers are thinking differently about risk on their own balance sheets.

Now we have the ability to run multiple asset types on one platform with multiple funding options – trucks, vans, cars, salary sacrifice, funding, accident management, fleet management, rental. We can provide scale across the whole fleet community.



Jaguar Land Rover fleet and business general manager Jon Wackett (left) presents the trophy to Zenith chief executive officer Tim Buchan

FN: Where do you see future growing coming from and how much of an impact will Brexit have on your plans?

TB: We expect to see a deferral of demand over the next two or three years. Brexit will breed caution and that affects hires which affects the number of cars people operate. But no one really knows. All the markets have organic growth opportunities; company cars will grow, dependent on the market, salary sacrifice has seen a significant resurgence – it's become less about savings and more about employee benefits. Vans are growing fast because of the home delivery and courier markets and trucks have a huge growth opportunity because leasing and outsourcing is relatively immature. There are also opportunities in adjacent markets such as retail, but with an FCA review coming and the diesel debate, we want to see what happens before we do anything.

Our ownership structure enables us to be more agile and also allows us to make acquisitions rather than build ourselves. This has been a real benefit, especially in trucks where there is complex regulation and we need scale quickly.

FN: So salary sacrifice is very much alive and kicking?

TB: There was misinformation about what happened and there are still a lot of prospects who think it's all over – that's where our consultancy team comes in. Our industry has not done a good job of communicating, but we are seeing a strong pipeline of companies without a scheme and they are seeing it as added benefits for staff, not about tax savings. We anticipate growth at the same level as we expected previously, especially in the private sector. The market is around 70,000; by 2019/20 we expect it to be

125,000 vehicles and there is exponential growth above that as well depending on the market.

FN: Are there cross-sell opportunities and learnings from your new truck business?

TB: Yes, the benefits work both ways, especially for LCV operators now that we have a turnkey solution on down-time management. The cross-sell opportunity is significant with existing customers and CVL's customers and there are lots of organisations in the UK that are running different assets. There are many synergies and we will train our staff across the whole proposition.

Zenith remains a UK-focused business although it works with partners, including Sixt Leasing and Business Lease, in 11 countries across mainland Europe to cater for customers with pan-European reach.

"We have secured a significant European fleet because of this flexibility and our ability to offer best in class in each market," Buchan says. "That approach works best for us in the Brexit environment – certainly for the next three-to-five years we are a UK solution."

The company moves into new premises in Leeds in October which it says will create a "village environment" with more car share and electric vehicle solutions for a low emission community. Coinciding with this are plans to launch a new share scheme for employees, enabling them to have ownership of part of the business.

Buchan says: "That will drive a different approach to the business."

FACTFILE

Company Zenith
CEO Tim Buchan
Time in role seven years
Funded fleet cars 45,465;
 vans 12,927; trucks 5,000
Salary sacrifice circa 14,000

JUDGES' COMMENTS

Zenith's approach to innovation sees it work with fleets of all sizes to develop products and services. Its new customer service platform, Accelerate, has boosted query resolution and helped Zenith identify areas for improvement. It is trialling weekend and evening working to meet the needs of different drivers.

VOLKSWAGEN POLO

Sixth-generation Polo's bolder look may attract new fans

By Simon Harris

The current Volkswagen Polo has had a long run. Introduced in 2009 in its fifth incarnation, the Polo remains the second best-selling car for the Volkswagen brand in Europe.

Often seen as a conventional and rational choice rather than emotional one, the sixth-generation Polo is likely to continue to appeal to those customers, although a rather bolder look is also expected to gain

fresh attention – perhaps from downsizers and user-choosers – thanks to new technology and extra space.

Volkswagen claims the new Polo will offer customers features associated with the class above.

Volkswagen chief executive Herbert Diess said: "We have developed the most advanced small car ever. It includes the same technology as the Golf. It now plays in a higher league, and we think it will set new standards."



EXTERIOR

The Polo is larger than its predecessor. In fact it is larger in every dimension apart from length than the fourth-generation Golf. Its length of 4,053mm puts it at the larger end of the small car sector, alongside the Vauxhall Corsa, Renault Clio and Ford Fiesta. The width is emphasised by a broad grille and wide headlamp units. The five-door-only model also has a more sophisticated appearance than previous versions of the car.

LED daytime running lights are standard from the entry-level version, and there are 14 exterior colours offered from launch, with 12 wheel designs ranging from 14 to 18 inches in diameter.

Where the previous Polo might have offered xenon headlamps, the new model has LED headlamps, with LED rear light units also available.



INTERIOR

A wheelbase 94mm longer than its predecessor results in a great deal more interior space for occupants, with noticeably more spacious seating front and rear. Minimum luggage capacity has also risen from 280 to 351 litres, making the boot larger than in the fifth-generation Golf.

The new dashboard displays and controls are focused toward the driver, and the Polo will also be offered with an optional 'digital cockpit' in the new Active Info Display – a configurable high-definition instrument panel that can also include the navigation map where specified.

Equipment grades will most likely reflect those in the current Polo, with S, SE or Match, R Line and a Beats special edition with upgraded audio, as well as the stand-alone GTI.

There is a choice of 13 'dashpad' interior colour choices, which match the car's exterior colour, as well as a dozen seat cover choices.

SAFETY AND TECHNOLOGY

Even the base version of the Polo will come with autonomous emergency braking (including pedestrian detection) as standard, called Front Assist.

The next grade up will offer a driver alert system.

Adaptive cruise control is offered and, where fitted with the optional DSG automatic, can match the speed of the vehicle in front down to a stop, and move off again once traffic in front has restarted.

Optional blindspot detection is

available, helping to avoid inadvertently moving into the path of unsighted overtaking traffic, as well as rear traffic alert, which warns of approaching vehicles when reversing out of a parking space.

The Polo will be the first Volkswagen and Volkswagen Group model to launch with the second-generation of what the company calls 'Active Info Display'.

Important information is contained within the same high axis, with improved functionality

for digital instruments and clearer graphics. One button on the steering wheel is used to switch between the basic views menus, while the Polo will also receive the latest generation of dashboard screens, with sizes ranging from 6.5 to 8.0 inches.

There is also compatibility with MirrorLink, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto smartphone integration systems.

The Polo will also offer the option of wireless smartphone charging, and online services.

PRICES

Orders for the new Polo will be taken from October, with deliveries beginning in January 2018. Prices will be confirmed nearer the time, but are expected to represent better value than the outgoing model when comparing equivalent specification. The best selling model is expected to be a mid-range petrol variant in SE specification.

ENGINES AND TRANSMISSION

The Polo will launch with a choice of four petrol and two diesel engines, starting with a 65PS normally aspirated 1.0-litre, as well as a 75PS version. There will also be a 95PS 1.0 TSI and a 115PS variant, with a new 1.5 TSI producing 150PS that comes with cylinder deactivation technology to save fuel. Diesel variants include 80PS and 95PS versions of Volkswagen's 1.6 TDI. All TSI and the 95PS TDI

versions will be available with DSG automatic options, with five-speed or six-speed manual as the default choice, dependent on engine. Volkswagen will also launch a Polo GTI at the start of the model's lifecycle, using a 200PS 2.0-litre TSI engine. The tide might well have now turned against engine downsizing as we enter the new worldwide harmonized light vehicles test procedure (WLTP) real world emissions era.

"We have developed the most advanced small car ever. It now plays in a higher league, and we think it will set new standards"

Herbert Diess, Volkswagen



FORD FIESTA

UK bestseller aims to keep its crown with better build quality and more tech



By Andrew Ryan

The new Ford Fiesta has some big tyres to fill. Since its launch in 2008, the outgoing model has sold around one million units, helping it become the UK's best-selling car for the past eight years.

While the majority of registrations go into the retail market – last year it accounted for 61% of Fiesta's 121,000 registrations – in 2016 it was also the top seller in the fleet sector with 47,000 sales – 17,000 more than its nearest supermini rival, Vauxhall's Corsa.

This success has largely been based on its low running costs, wide model range, practicality and dynamic driving characteristics. However, the launch of new competitors, such as the excellent new Seat Ibiza, has seen the Fiesta fall behind in terms of quality and technology: two areas Ford has targeted with its new model.

The manufacturer says it has moved the Fiesta

47,000
sales make the Fiesta the
top seller in fleet last year



For full running costs,
visit [fleetnews.co.uk/](http://fleetnews.co.uk/running-costs)
running-costs

upmarket into a 'new category of premium B-sector car', through the improved quality of build and materials, as well as refinement, while it also claims it is the most technologically advanced small car on sale in Europe with 15 driver-assist technologies available.

For example, it is the first Ford to be available with Pedestrian Detection that can help prevent collisions at night, as well as an Active Park Assist System which can brake while parking hands-free.

So does the new Fiesta have the appeal and qualities to maintain its market leadership? Early impressions from the car's launch event suggest it has.

Slightly larger than before, the new model's styling is a subtle evolution of the outgoing car. It looks more modern and less wedge-shaped, but is unmistakably a Fiesta.

The changes made to the interior are more obvious. Perhaps the biggest criticism of the current Fiesta is its cabin, with the button-laden centre console and small infotainment screen looking dated alongside the interiors of newer superminis.

The Fiesta addresses this with a completely redesigned cabin. Significant changes include the number of buttons in the centre console reducing by almost 50% and an eight-inch touchscreen added in some trim levels.

In the main, materials used are much improved, although the hard plastic used in some areas, notably on the door trims, detracts slightly from the premium feel.

The cheapest Fiesta is the 1.1-litre petrol, producing 70PS, with P11D prices starting from £13,170. This engine is also available with 85PS, while other engines available are a 1.0 EcoBoost petrol with 100PS, 125PS or 140PS and a 1.5 TDCi diesel with 85PS or 120PS.

The diesels are the most efficient models, with the 85PS models offering CO₂ emissions from 82g/km and official combined fuel economy from 88.3mpg and the 120PS producing 89g/km and 80.7mpg respectively.



Subtle exterior changes have been made on the new Fiesta model



Ford has almost halved the number of buttons in the centre console

"Fiesta has retained all the endearing qualities of its predecessor while addressing all of its weak points"

However, 90% of UK Fiesta buyers currently opt for petrol models, with 60% choosing 1.0 Ecoboost engines: Ford expects this to continue, with the most efficient model being the 100PS variant with 97g/km and 65.7mpg. New Fiesta is initially available in five trim levels: Style, Zetec, Titanium, sporty ST-Line and plush Vignale. They go on sale this month.

An Active crossover model, with a 17.5mm raised ride height and styling accessories such as roof rails and black plastic wheelarches, and the hot ST will follow in April.

Zetec is expected to be the biggest seller and standard equipment includes 15-inch alloy wheels, LED daytime running lights, front fog lamps with cornering lights, heated windscreen, digital radio with 6.5-inch touchscreen and Apple CarPlay and Android Auto connectivity.

Titanium will be the next most popular trim level and adds 16-inch alloy wheels, rear privacy glass, a 4.2-inch TFT screen on the instrument panel, traffic sign recognition, Ford Sync navigation with eight-inch touchscreen, climate control, keyless start, cruise control and rain-sensing wipers.

We drove the 1.0 Ecoboost 140PS Titanium model. Its seat and wheel adjustment made it easy to find a comfortable driving position, with all-round visibility also good.

On the move, the Fiesta has lost none of its appeal. The ride was both supple and composed over the sometimes broken road surfaces, while the handling felt just as agile and engaging as ever, with the well-weighted steering and precise shifts offered by its six-speed gearbox making it a very easy car to drive smoothly.

Refinement levels were also good, with engine and road noise impressively subdued.

Overall, the new Fiesta is an impressive package. It has retained all of the endearing qualities of its predecessor while addressing all of its weak points. In short, it is well placed to continue its dominance in the supermini sector.

COSTS

P11D price	£16,620
BIK tax band (2016/17)	18%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£598
Class 1A NIC	£413
Annual VED	£120 then £140
RV (4yr/80k)	£4,300/26%
Fuel cost (ppm)	8.06
AFR (ppm)	11
Running cost (4yr/80k)	26.89ppm

SPEC

Power (PS/torque (Nm))	100/170
CO₂ emissions (g/km)	97
Top speed (mph)	114
0-62mph (sec)	10.5
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	65.7

KEY RIVAL

Nissan Micra 0.9 IG-T 90	
N-Connecta Vision+	
P11D price:	£16,490
BIK tax band (2016/17)	18%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£514
Class 1A NIC	£410
Annual VED	£120 then £140
RV (4yr/80k)	£3,925/24%
Fuel cost (ppm)	8.25
AFR (ppm)	11
Running cost (4yr/80k)	26.80ppm

Running cost data supplied by KeeResources (4yr/80k)

THINKING CAP



By Martin Ward, manufacturer relationships manager

cap hpi



Monday/Tuesday

Another trip to Turin to drive the all-new Jeep Compass. It is 4,394mm long, 16cm

more than the popular Renegade and 20cm shorter than the Cherokee, so it fits well in the range. Main competitors will be the Nissan Qashqai, Ford Kuga, Hyundai Tucson, Kia Sportage, Volkswagen Tiguan and Audi Q3, to name just a few. We drove the Compass on a variety of surfaces, including a bit of off-roading in what looked like a local farmer's field. I'm sure he didn't mind. The Compass has classy looks, a nice front end with a typical Jeep grille, and it has a 'floating roof' – a piece of chrome runs around the top of the windows, and then below the rear window, and it looks great. The Compass is due in the UK early 2018, and will be a good fleet choice.

"We included a bit of off-roading in what looked like a local farmer's field"

Wednesday Down to Southampton for Suzuki's first 'Fleet Experience Day' where fleet customers were invited to meet the new team and drive some of its cars. Many were unaware of Suzuki's model range and most said it was a bit of a mystery. But all were impressed by the company, the offerings and the cars. Suzuki has previously focused on retail/private buyer sales, but it is determined to break into fleet. With the current range of value-for-money cars, it should make in-roads. For my full view about the day, visit fleetnews.co.uk/blog

Thursday/Friday To Barcelona for the preview of the all-new Seat Arona, a Ibiza-based SUV. It is due in the UK in October and should have plenty of standard specification. There were fleet people there from around 20 countries, which proves Seat really is taking the fleet market seriously and has the right cars to offer, including the Ateca which is proving such a success that waiting times are creeping up.

Entries now open



Thursday 30 November 2017
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VAUXHALL INSIGNIA SPORTS TOURER

Lighter in weight and not too heavy on price, Insignia strikes an acceptable balance



The size of the new Insignia has increased in just about every direction

By Matt de Prez

It's only been a few months since we first drove the all-new Vauxhall Insignia in Grand Sport guise and now we've had an opportunity to try its load-lugging counterpart, the Sports Tourer.

Vauxhall has increased the size of the new Insignia in pretty much every direction and the new Sports Tourer gains 135 litres of boot space compared to the outgoing version.

Fold down the seats and a vast 1,665 litres of space is made available. A 40:20:40 folding seat arrangement allows the balance of passengers and 'stuff' to be adjusted as necessary.

Despite the extra space, the new Sports Tourer has shed around 200kgs which should pay dividends when it comes to fuel consumption and handling.

Powertrains include a 1.5-litre turbo petrol, the 1.6-litre diesel unit that we tried in the hatch and a 170PS 2.0-litre diesel that is fitted to our test car.

Although the 1.6 is the economy champion, with CO₂ emissions starting at 112g/km, we found it a little lacking in urgency and in the heavier estate this is likely to be amplified.

The larger engine is much more suited to the car. There is plenty of torque – 400Nm to be specific – and a decent level of refinement.

It emits 139g/km, which is quite high, although when we questioned Vauxhall it said the engines have been developed to perform better in real-world testing.

During our three-day test the car returned an indicated average fuel consumption of 52mpg which very close to the official figure of 53.3.

Nonetheless, under current emissions testing the Insignia Sports Tourer – in fleet-focused Tech Line trim – will cost drivers £115 per month (20% taxpayer). That's around £200 a year more than a 2.0 TDI Škoda Superb estate. Running costs are £2,000 lower for the Škoda over a four-year cycle despite its higher list price and it also offers more load space.

The new Insignia has a more premium feel to its interior. The dash is simpler in its layout and is shaped around the driver. Digital instruments and a head-up display add to the

COSTS

P11D price	£23,825
BIK tax band (2017/18)	29%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£1382
Class 1A NIC	£953
Annual VED	£200 then £140
RV (4yr/80k)	£5,875
Fuel cost (ppm)	10.03
AFR (ppm)	11
Running cost (4yr/80k)	36.19ppm

SPEC

Power (PS)/torque (Nm)	170/400
CO₂ emissions (g/km)	139
Top speed (mph)	139
0-62mph (sec)	8.4
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	53.3
Real world mpg	n/a

KEY RIVAL

Škoda Superb 2.0TDI 150 SE Technology	
P11D price:	£24,585
BIK tax band (2016/17)	24%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£1,180
Class 1A NIC	£814
Annual VED	£160 then £140
RV (4yr/80k)	£7,575
Fuel cost (ppm)	8.33
AFR (ppm)	11
Running cost (4yr/80k)	33.69ppm
<i>Running cost data supplied by KeeResources (4yr/80k)</i>	



Dash layout is simpler and shaped around the driver

upmarket experience. The driving position is lower and more engaging, which works well with improvements to the car's handling characteristics.

Two driving modes are available: Tour or Sport. Both offer distinct differences. In Tour the Insignia is cushioned with light steering. Switch to Sport and it takes on a different demeanour, throttle response is crisper, the steering weight is up and the dampers stiffen giving a harder, but more dynamic, ride.

The range consists of four trim levels, priced from £18,685: Design, Sri, Tech Line and Elite. All models get touchscreen infotainment systems with OnStar, alloy wheels and keyless entry and start.

Tech Line versions benefit from an eight-inch sat-nav screen and front and rear parking sensors.

An optional driving assistance pack (£480) adds adaptive cruise control and autonomous braking.

The Insignia Sports Tourer offers fleet customers a premium quality vehicle at a competitive price. Many will be better suited to the 1.6-litre models but the larger engine does handle the bulk of the Sports Tourer better, with a small fuel consumption penalty in the real world.

HONDA CIVIC 1.0 VTEC TURBO SR



The rear end of our Honda Civic is nearly proving as controversial as that of the second generation Renault Megane, which was famed for its 'I See You Baby (Shakin' That Ass)' advert.

One colleague vehemently dislikes the Civic's rear design while I think it makes it stand out and is a big improvement on previous versions.

Admittedly, it does look a little more 'boy racer' than 'company car driver' but not compared to the Type R, which we've declined to test because it's hard to imagine businesses allowing it on their fleet list.

Our Civic SR, however, is a sensible choice for fleets, with emissions of 117g/km (owing to its 17-inch wheels), and fuel economy of 55.4mpg. The 16-inch wheels in SE trim drops emissions further to 110g/km.

The other talking points have been the Civic's 1.0-litre turbo petrol engine – Honda's new three cylinder unit – and its colour.

Colleagues on sister website Parkers are running a Civic in White Orchid Pearl, while Car has one in Sonic Grey Pearl. Neither, in our opinion, do the Civic justice, compared to our Rallye Red.

We've clocked up 3,000 miles in the Civic now and it is averaging 47mpg, although resetting the trip computer for a 136-mile journey saw this rise to 52.6mpg.

The spoiler does restrict rear visibility but not enough to cause a problem, particularly as a rear parking camera is standard in SR trim.

Also standard in SR is the second-generation of Honda's infotainment and connectivity system, Connect, which incorporates Apple CarPlay and Android Auto integration.

The touchscreen is not as responsive as I would like, but that's a minor complaint.

On the whole, after two months in the Civic, I'm pretty impressed.

Now to convert my colleague to the Civic's appeal...

Sarah Tooze

Tipo is a spacious hatchback full of surprises



FIAT TIPO

1.6 MULTIJET LOUNGE

Mixed feelings on return to hatchback driving

By Andrew Ryan

COSTS

P11D price £18,620

BIK tax band 21%

Annual BIK tax (20%) £782

Class 1A NIC £540

Annual VED £120 then £140

RV (4yr/80k) £3,900/21%

Fuel cost (ppm) 6.88

AFR (ppm) 9

Running cost (ppm) 29.67

SPEC

Engine (cc) 1598

Power (PS) 120

Torque (Nm) 320

CO₂ emissions (g/km) 98

Max speed (mph) 124

0-62mph (sec) 9.5

Manufacturer mpg 76.3

Real-world mpg* 56.4

Test mpg 51.5

Current mileage 10,833

A slight reshuffle in our long-term fleet saw me take on our Fiat Tipo for a week, and it held a few surprises for me – some good, some less so.

Until getting into the hatchback I hadn't appreciated how spacious it was. Legroom in the rear is particularly generous, while at 440 litres its boot is significantly larger than most lower-medium cars.

Our Lounge trim model is also well specced. Standard equipment includes satellite navigation with a five-inch touchscreen, climate control, automatic lights and wipers, and a reversing camera.

The Tipo is also pretty good to drive. The 120PS engine is a real highlight, delivering plenty of performance, while the comfortable ride means motorway journeys are hassle-free.

However, other than its space, the

interior is disappointing. The design – including the typefaces used on the instrument panel – are dated, while the quality and textures only exacerbate this impression.

This could be overlooked if it was reflected in the costs but, in Lounge trim, it isn't.

Its P11D price of £18,620 is just £100 less than that of the Vauxhall Astra 1.6 CDTi 110 Tech Line Nav, which was named best lower-medium car in the 2017 Fleet News Awards.

The Astra also has better total running costs. Over a four-year/80,000-mile cycle, the Tipo will cost 29.67 pence per mile, the Astra 27.19ppm.

The Astra misses out on some equipment – for example, it has air-conditioning instead of climate control – but gains in others: for example its multimedia and satellite navigation system uses an eight-inch touchscreen.

The Vauxhall also feels far more modern and upmarket, and in a straight fight the Astra would be the clear choice.

However, the Tipo isn't without its charms and makes much more sense in the 1.6 Multijet Elite variant, which has a P11D price of £17,330.

The fleet-specific model, which loses equipment such as climate control, is fitted with an eco pack which increases efficiency to 89g/km and 83.1mpg. Its running costs are 27.23ppm.

"Legroom in the rear is particularly generous, while at 440 litres its boot is significantly larger than most"

Running cost data supplied by
KeeResources (4yr/80k)
* Data supplied by Equi Index

TEST TIMELINE

Start

End



MAZDA 6

2.2D 150PS SE-L-NAV

Engine improvements make for a quieter, smoother ride



Mazda6 offers a more positive throttle response

COSTS

P11D price	£24,100
BIK tax band	23%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£1,109
Class 1A NIC	£765
Annual VED	£140
RV (4yr/80k)	£6,025
Fuel cost (ppm)	7.62
AFR (ppm)	13
Running cost (ppm)	35.1

SPEC

Engine (cc)	2,191
Power (PS)	150
Torque (Nm)	380
CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	107
Max speed (mph)	130
0-62mph (sec)	9.1
Manufacturer mpg	68.9
Real-world mpg*	53.1
Test mpg	44.7
Current mileage	3,905

Running cost data supplied by
KeeResources (4yr/80k)
* Data supplied by Equi Index

By Gareth Roberts

The Mazda 6 saloon and tourer benefited from a host of updates last autumn, with two key improvements to the 2.2-litre Skyactiv-D engine.

Transient Control and Mazda's Natural Sound Smoother technology (NSS) aim to increase responsiveness and reduce engine noise.

By cutting turbo lag and boosting torque, Transient Control aims to provide a more positive throttle response which it certainly delivers.

The 2.2-litre engine produces 150PS at 4,500rpm, but thanks to its Skyactiv technology emissions have been kept to an impressive 107g/km, giving a claimed combined of 68.9mpg. However, our test car is achieving 44.7mpg – a 35% shortfall.

Meanwhile, the introduction of Mazda's NSS technology is designed to reduce diesel knock noise during starting and low-speed acceleration.

NSS suppresses resonance from the piston and connecting rod by using a dynamic damper inside the piston pin to suppress the three crit-

ical frequency bands in which engine components typically vibrate most loudly.

Having spent the past couple of days with the radio on mute, it definitely delivers a quieter cabin compared to some other diesels.

It is complemented by improvement in sound insulation, including the adoption of upgraded door seals, tighter tolerances between panels and sound deadening materials added to the underbody, rear console, headliner and doors, while laminated front side windows further suppress wind noise.

A further update is G-Vectoring Control (GVC) which gives you much more confidence when cornering.

By monitoring your steering and throttle position when you enter a corner under power, GVC momentarily reduces the amount of torque delivered to the front wheels, thereby transferring a fraction more weight onto the front axle which allows the front wheels to turn more precisely.

Inside, there is a new leather steering wheel that on Sport Nav models is heated.

ZAFIRA TOURER SRI NAV 1.6CDTI



I'm preparing to take the Zafira Tourer on a 1,200 mile round trip to the south-west of France.

The Vauxhall should be the ideal partner for the trip due to respectable fuel efficiency, cargo carry capacity (boot space of 710-litres with the third row folded flat) and excellent levels of comfort for rear passengers thanks to sliding rear seats including adjustable backrests.

I'll also need to get the in-car WiFi reactivated for the journey (data packages can be bought online) to keep my passengers entertained. It will be a perfect intensive test for the people carrier.

Speaking of tests, I have inadvertently tested the OnStar SOS facility (or rather my four-year-old son has). The SOS button is a 24-hour emergency call service which, once pressed, gives you a direct line to an Vauxhall OnStar service advisor.

If a medical emergency affects you or your passengers the advisor is able to send details of your location to the relevant emergency services.

Fortunately there was no medical emergency so I cancelled the call but the OnStar advisor called straight back to check all was okay.

Embarrassing, but at least I know the system works should it be needed in the future.

This service is free for 12 months then requires a subscription. Fleet manager can now control whether drivers can buy OnStar packages through the fleet manager portal which Vauxhall has recently updated.

Fleet managers can also opt in or out of OnStar vehicle diagnostics, dealer maintenance notifications and roadside assistance services, and can control the vehicles Wi-Fi facilities.

See pages 4-5 of this issue for more details.

Luke Neal

TEST TIMELINE



AT A GLANCE – THE REST OF OUR FLEET



FORD S-MAX 2.0 TDCI AWD TITANIUM

The keyless system is one of the best I've used. Unlock it by pulling the door handle, lock the car by tapping it. The key never has to leave your pocket.



RENAULT MEGANE 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE S-NAV

The R-Link 2 infotainment system has been a great travel companion but I think its TomTom-based sat-nav is due a map update. Time to consult the owner's manual.

MARC SAMUEL

FLEET SALES OPERATIONS MANAGER AT HONDA UK

Samuel is a great believer in teamwork and lists rugby high among his passions, although his ability to bounce off tackles is on the wane. People who sing the wrong lyrics is a pet hate

My first memory associated with a car was when I was three. I was belted up in the back of dad's Ford Escort listening to *Test Match Special*, when he drove into the back of my uncle's Fiat Panda as they were both looking at the same young lady walking along the road when the traffic stopped.

The book I would recommend others read is *The Long Earth* by Terry Pratchett. I have read all his books throughout my life but his later works have really struck a chord with me and are well worth a look.

If I were made Prime Minister for the day I would increase the number of bank holidays at the Christmas/New Year period as it always feels like they should be there anyway.

I would tell my 18-year-old self: You are not invincible, you don't know everything and the stuff that seems important now really doesn't matter all that much.

I want to be remembered for making a positive difference, that I was fair in my approach and as a good husband and father.

I still play rugby, although when I turn out in a side with people 10-plus years my junior who seem to bounce off tackles and keep going, I often wonder why I do.

My pet hate is people who get the lyrics to songs wrong. My wife is a prime suspect for this which makes long car journeys 'entertaining'.

My perfect three car garage would include a Honda NSX, an old, short wheelbase Land Rover Defender and a Mark II split-screen VW Camper to take the family out for days at the beach.

Getting married and the birth of my daughter were pivotal moments in my life; it will never be the same again and it's the best feeling in the world.

My favourite film is *Back to the Future*. I must have watched it and the two sequels more than 100 times. It's a pure piece of sci-fi fantasy that hasn't aged too badly.

First fleet role I joined Nissan (GB) as area fleet manager in 2003. It was quite a formative time for the brand seeing the replacement of ageing models with new small and crossover vehicles. Fleet is a constantly changing environment which needs high levels of strategic thinking and is challenging every day, which keeps it fresh and appealing.

Career goals at Honda UK I am still in my first year here and I have set a number of short-, medium- and long-term goals for the corporate department for which we have started to put the building blocks in place. My main aim is to provide a long period of consistency in the Honda fleet offering.

Biggest achievement in business Getting to where I am feels like a big achievement, but my biggest one hasn't happened yet. Come back to me in five years' time.

Biggest career influence At the start it was my dad who had an incredible work ethic and a clear idea of right and wrong, which gave me a good grounding in business.

Biggest mistake in business Early in my career I thought if I went through the same sales process with every customer I would always get a result. It took time to realise it was important to listen to the customer and provide them with the right solution.

Leadership style My style has changed over the years to be much more clear and decisive. I work with my team to agree a clear set of targets and provide a direct focus on what actions need to be taken to get results. We can then all strive to achieve joint success.

If I wasn't in fleet I would be a chef as there is something very relaxing about cooking.

Childhood ambition I always wanted to play rugby professionally having seen the transition from the amateur game.

Next issue: Oliver Waring, executive chairman, Reflex Vans

New S-MAX ST-Line has bags of sporty appeal

Sports bodystyling and rear spoiler help the new S-MAX ST-Line stand out from the crowd



The new Ford S-MAX ST-Line, which was shown for the first time at the Goodwood Festival of Speed, joins the line-up of sporty, Ford Performance-inspired ST-Line models that includes Fiesta ST-Line, Edge ST-Line, Focus ST-Line, Kuga ST-Line and Mondeo ST-Line. Ford ST-Line models are the ultimate expression of sports-inspired design in a Ford, offering bold styling and sports-tuned driving dynamics alongside powerful and efficient EcoBoost petrol and TDCi diesel engines.

ST-Line models are designed for

customers who aspire to the sporty image of Ford's ST models, and the Ford S-MAX ST-Line has the most powerful, highest performance diesel and petrol engines in the S-MAX range. The S-MAX ST-Line also delivers the benefit of seven seats.

The new S-MAX ST-Line exterior features sports bodystyling and rear spoiler, distinctive 18-inch Rock Metallic alloy wheels with black centre caps, black bezels for the front and rear lamps, and unique ST-Line badges.

The interior's sports seats, door trims, centre console, gear shifter, floor mats and perforated leather sports steering

wheel are detailed with exclusive race-red stitching. Machined aluminium sports pedals, a black headliner and ST-Line branded scuff plates also feature.

Powerful engine options include Ford's 210PS bi-turbo 2.0-litre TDCi diesel and 240PS 2.0-litre EcoBoost petrol.

Ford Intelligent All Wheel Drive – which delivers a seamless transition between front-wheel drive and all-wheel-drive performance to provide a more secure footing on the road, especially in slippery conditions – also is available in combination with Ford's 150PS and 180PS 2.0-litre TDCi diesel engines.

ALL-NEW FIESTA OFFERS MODEL TYPES TO SUIT ANY LIFESTYLE

The all-new Ford Fiesta is available in different versions to suit almost any lifestyle, including the upscale Fiesta Vignale.

The charismatic all-new Fiesta models are supported by an unprecedented range of life-enhancing features and technologies, including systems that can park hands-free, detect pedestrians in the road ahead, an openable panorama glass roof, and

a premium sound system from B&O PLAY.

The Fiesta Vignale's bespoke satin grille pattern, grille surround, foglamp surrounds, side spear and rear diffuser deco element add a luxurious appeal to the most technologically advanced small car on sale in Europe. It offers 15 sophisticated technologies that help customers manage the demands of driving, parking, and provide

additional safety and security.

The all-new Fiesta also offers advanced communications and entertainment technology. Ford's SYNC 3 communications and entertainment system is compatible with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto™, and enables drivers to control audio, navigation and connected smartphones using simple, conversational voice commands.

THE NEW FORD KUGA

Powerful, good-looking and a great communicator. With its range of economical engines, bold styling and sophisticated SYNC 3 touchscreen, the New Ford Kuga really is the whole package.

To find out how Ford can help your business go further, call the Ford Business Centre on 0345 723 2323.



NEW FORD KUGA

P11D	BIK	CO2	COMBINED MPG
£35,090-£21,640	33%-25%	173-115g/km	37.7-64.2

Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the New Ford Kuga range: urban 30.1-58.9 (9.4-4.8), extra urban 44.8-67.3 (6.3-4.2), combined 37.7-64.2 (7.5-4.4). Official CO2 emissions 173-115g/km.

The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results (EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008), are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience. Model shown is Kuga ST-Line X.

BIK values were correct at the time of printing and are based on taxation rates for 2017/18 tax year. P11D value is the sum of RRP (plus VAT) and number plate charge (£25). Options available at additional cost.



Go Further