



Testimonial

Exan Accident Repair Centre



introduction

There are many factors to be taken into account when it comes to choosing your courtesy car supplier. Monthly rental costs, administrative support, ease of ordering and keeping delivery promises are just some areas for consideration and comparison.

We spoke to one of our top customers and asked her to give a truthful appraisal of Circle Leasing, and why our courtesy car arrangements have proved the best solution for her.

the client

Exan Accident Repair Centre is a successful independent organisation operating on a 25,000 square foot site just two miles north of central London. Head of Finance Angela Smagados oversees an administration department of six people, who are part of a workforce that serves the needs of motorists across an area bordered by the M25 motorway.

Supporting the operation is a fleet of 21 courtesy cars.

Background:

Before deciding to source cars from Circle, Exan frequently experienced problems, especially in the area of administration. Parking fines, fixed penalty tickets and the London Congestion Charge all played their part in an administrative burden. Moreover the extra charges typically levied by leasing companies for dealing with penalties were quickly adding up. They felt they were treating their central London location as an opportunity to pile on charges, and thought there must be a fairer way of leasing courtesy cars.

When they began ordering cars from Circle more than 3 years ago, administrative competence was a key factor - as was a guarantee of not levying charges for penalty ticket administration.

The ordering process:

Ordering new courtesy cars could not be simpler. The process consists of agreeing the quote, then completing a simple order form, prepared by Circle. Even at the outset, credit checking was uncomplicated. Today, nearly four years later, there is no need for any lengthy credit hire agreements - just the one form.

Delivery efficiency:

Circle have been good at specifying delivery dates. On the rare occasions there's been a delay, they have always kept us informed as to the reason (inevitably a factor beyond Circle's control). Bear in mind, though, that this delay has never been more than one or two days. They also offer the flexibility to ensure such a delay has a zero impact on our operation. If cars come in late, then Circle arrange for us to keep our existing vehicles until the new cars arrive. We believe it's part of Circle's determination to ensure a customer is never left "high and dry".

In-life issues:

Circle respond quickly to anything we need. The relationship I enjoy with them during the life of a courtesy car is excellent. They don't bother me unnecessarily. They are in touch with useful information and advice relating to care of my fleet. The important thing is that they are always available when needed. Contacting them is easy. Circle representatives are helpful, prompt and friendly. Their customer service skills are second to none. If someone is not available when I call, they always call back quickly and are highly skilled in understanding issues and bringing them to a speedy and satisfactory conclusion.

Administration:

This is where Circle really have made a huge difference to the efficient operation of my business. Day-to-day matters - such as sending new tax discs - are always handled well, but it's in the area of parking/traffic offences that Circle have shown themselves to be way ahead of any competitor.

Circle's policy of making no administration charges in this area is unusual but it's fantastic

I have to admit I was dreading the introduction of the London Congestion Charge. From a day-to-day administration point of view, Circle ensured my burden has been as light as possible. They immediately process and pay any fine incurred by our customers driving a Circle courtesy car, then pass it to us instantly. Nine times out of ten we receive the fine before the customer has brought back the car. So we insist that the customer pays the charge before we release their own vehicle.

Circle's policy of making no administration charges in this area is unusual but it's fantastic. It's also saving us a lot of money. After all, a £60 charge suddenly becomes nearer £90, as the usual £25

administration fee levied by most providers attracts VAT. It's refreshing to see that Circle are not simply trying to make money from charging us for offences we haven't even committed! This has proved a particular strong point in our relationship with them.

Exactly how many penalties we deal with is hard to say, but supposing each of our cars collects five tickets per year. That's more than 100 opportunities to impose a charge - and a saving to us of nearly £3,000!

We are as scrupulous as possible with penalty charge rules on customers. Sometimes I think the only way we could be 100 per cent watertight would be to have an Exan representative with every customer all the time to ensure we can point the finger when needed! However, Circle's efficiency in the whole process certainly makes our lives easier - and saves us money.

End-of-life issues:

When it comes to returning cars, we have never had to complain about a charge from Circle for damage. They are firm - they need to be - but fair. We make time to put right damage to a courtesy car

ourselves, but sometimes we run out of time and accept that there are costs which we have to pay. We are happy with this as there is never any element of surprise.

Costs:

We have researched the market well and believe Circle to be competitive, taking into consideration not just the visible monthly rental but the administrative backup we need and for which we would otherwise be forced to pay.

It's hard to put an exact figure on it, but with other courtesy car providers a problem could easily swallow up an average of two or three hours of our time simply trying to contact the right person, finding ourselves transferred from office to office, waiting for them to call back and agree a solution.

Let's say we might have had two of these problems per car per year, with an hourly management rate of £100.

From there it's easy to see how this could be costing us thousands of pounds in lost productive time and how essential it is to see beyond that up-front monthly cost.

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conclusion

We are very happy with Circle. Every aspect of their service is good, but we particularly appreciate their efforts helping us minimise problems and costs where traffic fine administration is concerned. All credit to them, because they have made the effort to understand that it's such a big issue for us. They probably save at least two hours a week in our administration time, freeing us to do the job we want to be doing!

Problems never linger, everything is dealt with promptly. I can say truthfully that if my managing director ever tried to steer me away from Circle as my courtesy car provider, I would fight very hard indeed because I understand the great value of the service they provide.



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