Colleagues,

This month's article by Peter should get us asking the question, are we working from intuition or hard data. It is an important distinction and one which I am concerned that we tend to forget all too often.

With the on-going development of cars+ir and the next generation of cars+, it is something we are trying hard to do.

Of course we did it very well with cars+, but we have to re-visit business rules and processes to ensure we have it right.

It will be interesting to see if Virgin moves into the car rental game with the purchase of Advantage's business. Or is it merely a spoiling tactic?
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"Genchi Genbutsu – Go and See"
by Peter Lunn, Customer Service Director - APAC

Recently, I was discussing some really exciting cars+ enhancements with some of our programmers. As part of that discussion we were talking about the process of turning a returning dirty vehicle into a clean vehicle ready for the next rental.

I was reminded of possibly the most enlightening period of my career (so far) when, as an administrator/manager, I was given the opportunity to spend an extended period with the vehicle preparation teams cleaning and driving vehicles at a number of busy airport locations.

From our (moderately) comfortable office chairs in our mid-city high-rise office, my management team and I formulated some great ideas about the best way to prepare a vehicle, how long it should take and how many people should be required to clean a set number of vehicles. Then we went to one of the busiest locations in the country and spent a week working and watching, testing ideas and evaluating outcomes. The first thing we found was how little we really knew about preparing vehicles.

Taiichi Ohno, one of the leaders who shaped Toyota in the 1950's and the father of the Lean manufacturing process famously stated "Data is of course important, but I place the greatest emphasis on facts".[1]

Data (especially relevant, well defined data) is important, but at best it is a representation of what work is occurring on the ground. Whether the focus of your role is management, finance, administration or IT, your own productivity and effectiveness is greatly enhanced when you have a thorough, first hand understanding of the work processes of those staff who face your customers and maintain your vehicles.

As we develop our next generation cars+ product, we are striving to change the current data-entry paradigm. Rather than taking paperwork to the computer to enter information, our greatest focus is being able to let you access cars+ wherever the work is performed. At the counter, in the car-park, at the wash, even at the petrol station. We want you to have the most relevant and accurate data possible to help you make those important business decisions – and soon you will be able to get that data *whilst* you are observing your work processes first-hand.

[1]Jeffrey Liker. *The Toyota Way.* McGraw Hill, 2003.

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cars+ Tips & Hints
Did you know...that within the Edit Vehicle Inventory program you can both page forward (F2) and page back (F4) through vehicle records.
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New in cars+...

All Release Notices can be found at the online cars+ Manual

New Features

- Updated RAs can now be emailed to the renter when extended over the phone.
- On tiered rates, the tier used can be fixed at open and not changed due to rental extensions.
- An Inflation rate can be built into lease rentals.
- Delivery/Collection addresses interface with Google maps.

Staff Pick

Our favourite change to cars+ this month is…

Any option can now be sold in a bundled package at a discounted rate

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