

Getting Fleet, Leasing and  
Mobility **Back to Business**



# Contents

Post-pandemic Lockdown	3
Returning to a new normal for vehicle fleet and mobility operators	3
Introduction	4
<i>What this dossier covers</i>	4
Vehicle Leasing and Finance Providers	5
Fleet-Management-as-a-Service (FMaaS)	5
Fleet Operators	5
Short-term Vehicle Rental Companies	6
MaaS Operators	6
Passenger Transport	7
Respond, Recover, Thrive	8
Respond	8
Recover	9
Thrive	9
Looking After the Workforce	10
Protecting Cash-flow and Performance	10
Driving Efficiency and Cost-savings	11
<i>Renegotiating or extending contracts</i>	11
<i>Vehicle procurement</i>	11
<i>Vehicle funding review - consider multi-bid vehicle funding</i>	11
Driving Revenues – Sales and Marketing	12
Risk Management Review	13
Vehicle Checking and Fleet Maintenance Driver	14
Checking, Monitoring and Training Review of	15
Mobility Options and Fleet Rightsizing	16
<i>Fleet innovation</i>	16
<i>Align IT system and support to evolving working requirements</i>	17
<i>Fleet outsourcing</i>	17
Operational Fleet Management	18
Policy Compliance and Management Reporting	19
<i>Management Reporting</i>	20
Conclusions	21
References	21

# BACK TO BUSINESS

## Post-pandemic Lockdown

### **Returning to a new normal for vehicle fleet and mobility operators**

We've brought together information, expert views and strategies that will help prepare your fleet, vehicle leasing and mobility business for a new future. The purpose is to help you navigate the uncertain journey that lies ahead as the world begins to ease pandemic lockdown. We've also included details about technology and fleet innovations that can support your transition as the demands and requirements of your business will undoubtedly change in the new world.



## Introduction

Alongside social distancing, not traveling to work and home schooling children, we should all have been taking advantage of lockdown to plan the transition into some sort of new normality once it's over. However, if you haven't there's still time.

Governments around the world are beginning to ease lockdown measures in stages and businesses are gradually being given the green light to resume. It's important to think of this as a new beginning as it's unlikely anything approaching normal will be with us anytime soon.

No one can predict the future, but we have stark confirmation that the impact of this pandemic on the automotive industry has been unprecedented. In addition, people are getting used to the benefits of working from home and will perhaps take this forward into the new future - a future that appears very different to how it looked before the coronavirus pandemic.

Most businesses have been thrust into a rapid 'belt-tightening' strategy (see the bottom of page 10) over the last few months, furloughing staff, withdrawing services, de-fleeting, or extending contracts and dealing with massively diminished customer bases. Some have been able to transition into offering new types of services, such as food delivery or supporting the emergency services, but for many, the options have been limited.

### *What this dossier covers*

We'll cover many of the basic principles, because they still apply, such as protecting cashflow (the lifeblood of every organisation), driving revenues, reviewing risk management (and why it matters more than ever), re-examining mobility options and fleet right-sizing, re-evaluating fleet policy, systems and innovation, operational fleet management, outsourcing, plus policy compliance and management reporting.

First of all, let's establish how pandemic lockdown may have affected the various fleet and mobility market sectors, plus the threats and opportunities that lie ahead:



## Vehicle Leasing and Finance Providers

In terms of revenue, vehicle leasing and finance businesses operate at an advantage. Most of their income is generated through contracted regular monthly payments. Those that operate in private leasing may be having to deal with an increase in defaults as customers themselves deal with layoffs and redundancies. They may also be having to handle a reduction in vehicle returns and new vehicle deliveries, plus a decrease in activity in terms of managing in-life costs and processes. On the whole, leasing and finance companies won't have had to rationalise their businesses as much as other market sectors but they will have to adapt.

Many leasing companies have been actively helping customers through the downturn by offering payment holidays, which is essentially deferring cashflow and not reducing the lease obligation.

The lease broker market, which depends on commissions from leasing deals, has been impacted to the same extent as franchise dealers with the drop in car sales during the lockdown.

**Opportunities:** extending contracts may be one way of maintaining revenues, reducing any hit on residual values and cutting or negating the cost and challenge of having to dispose of vehicles when opportunities to sell them on are negligible. Another opportunity could be supplying delivery and last-mile fleet operators who are expanding their businesses due to the increased volume of online shopping deliveries.

**Threats:** however, the long-term effects could be a downturn in demand for company or 'perk' cars as more people take to working from home. This may lead business owners to wonder if they need to offer leased company cars or better utilise mobility. The recent trend towards private contract hire, combined with the downturn in demand for company cars, could accelerate as businesses look at increasing flexible working and compensation packages to adjust to the new ways of working. The trend in homeworking will likely continue, especially with plans for children to return to school postponed in many countries.

## Fleet-Management-as-a-Service (FMaaS)

Fleet management companies may have furloughed staff as in-life activity will be significantly down, which will have had a biting impact on revenues.

**Opportunities:** the move to privately owned and use-based vehicles increases the need for grey fleet management. Now, more than ever, businesses will be looking to cut costs and increase efficiency, which could create a demand for fleet outsourcing (see page 11 for more detail). Fleet management companies should be positioning themselves to provide this and aggressively market such services.

**Threats:** increased competition in the marketplace. With many fleet management companies in the same position, competition for business will be high. The ones that win out will be those that offer services underpinned by [leading-edge technology](#) that can help them stand out and provide tangible value for customers. Managing cost-to-serve is critical in this sector and businesses that embrace technology will take advantage of the likely future consolidation.

## Fleet Operators

Depending on business sector, some fleet operators may be suffering more than others and some may be enjoying an upswing in business. The hospitality, leisure and travel sectors have suffered the most in terms of downturn. Many may have no current business at all. Logistics and delivery companies, on the other hand, may be experiencing an upturn – with the added complexity of implementing social distancing measures.

**Opportunities:** lockdown has accelerated the shift to online shopping, which creates opportunity for delivery companies, many of which may be expanding their fleets. Some fleet operators will have been enjoying the commercial viability of broadening their services or offering new ones and this can be taken forward into the future if it continues to be viable. Some will be keen to revert to business as usual, which may well be the more profitable option. Although not strictly a business opportunity, a cost-cutting option to consider is whether you need to continue owning a fleet or if the outsourcing option (page 11) may work well for your business.

**Threats:** the shift to privately owned and use based vehicles means fleet operators are exposed to issues associated with grey fleet control. Social distancing rules and the impact they'll continue to have on your day-to-day operations. They may increase costs and compromise your ability to deliver high-volume services (particularly true for the last-mile delivery sector).

## Short-term Vehicle Rental Companies

The 102-year-old car rental company Hertz filed for bankruptcy protection in May after its business all but vanished during the coronavirus pandemic. A large proportion of its revenues came from car rentals at airports, which all but dried up. With the bulk of profit (and cash) in this sector coming in between April and October, car rental companies have suffered greatly as a result of the Coronavirus lockdown. While some have narrowly avoided bankruptcy by deferring payments to lenders, others have reported huge financial losses in the first quarter of 2020. Still others are having to rely on business survival loans (guaranteed by governments) for the liquidity they need to power through the crisis.

**Opportunities:** despite Hertz's downfall, predictions and forecasts about the future of car rental are strong. Monitoring the car rental market, research company Technavio predicts a \$103.75 bn growth in the next four years at a GAGR of over 17%. Allied Market Research looks further ahead and puts the growth figure at \$214.04 bn by 2027 with a GAGR of 10.7%. The commercial segment is anticipated to manifest the highest CAGR of 11.5%. What's driving these opportunities is the increasing trend for on-demand transport combined with a decreasing interest in car ownership, particularly among millennials. While the short-to-medium term will prove a struggle, and returning to business levels as they were prior to COVID-19 may be slow, in the long-term the trends as mentioned will continue to advance. In addition, the adoption of car [rental management software](#) will open up new opportunities in the coming years.

**Threats:** airport business has been decimated and with airlines cutting capacity by 30% or more, it will be a while (possibly three years or more) before it returns to 2019 levels. Passengers' increased reliance on ride-hailing services such as Uber will remain a threat. A low rate of Internet penetration in developing countries will hamper market growth in those markets.

## MaaS Operators

MaaS (Mobility-as-a-Service) is categorised as: ride-sharing, ride-hailing, self-driving services, carpooling, shared and micro-mobility. [MaaS operators](#) have also suffered greatly with demand for services virtually disappearing.

Some providers, particularly those in large cities, have been able to re-purpose services to help in the pandemic effort, such as providing priority services for frontline workers. Ride-hailing drivers, such as Uber, have turned their hand to delivering groceries and medicines to self-isolating citizens. Although keeping drivers occupied, such measures have not been profitable or maintained normal revenues.

**Opportunities:** Research and Markets released a report in February 2020 predicting the MaaS market to grow to \$347.6 bn by 2024 at a CAGR of 11.9%. A major trend has been the adoption of electric vehicles for sharing purposes. Government supported initiatives to address high pollution levels and urban traffic congestion, such as dedicated parking facilities for shared vehicles and e-wallets for cashless payments, will continue to drive opportunity in the MaaS sector. Adroit Market Research predicts that MaaS market growth will be at 23% and hit \$248.56 bn by 2025 and cites the rising adoption of connected devices and mobile payments as a key growth driver. This will continue with the rising popularity of 4G technology and imminent launch of 5G. It's important to say that both of these reports were issued in February 2020, before the global lockdown took effect. The increase in popularity for micro-mobility solutions (light vehicles such as scooters and eBikes) for short city journeys is expected to create lucrative growth.

**Threats:** a short-to-midterm threat, post-COVID-19 lockdown, will be people's reluctance to "share" vehicles with strangers because of social distancing and health concerns. There is also a lack of awareness among the general population about the benefits of shared mobility services. A lack of availability of electric vehicles for MaaS applications could be perceived as a threat in this period. Additionally, with more people potentially transitioning to home working and utilising video conferencing services, it is difficult to predict whether demand for these services will grow at the levels projected pre-pandemic.

## Passenger Transport

Passenger transport companies have seen a massive downturn in business since the implementation of nationwide and global transport bans. The majority of people who would normally travel to work using public transport have been sheltering at home. Many of those who have continued to go to work have turned to private car travel as a safer alternative and because passenger transport services have been stopped on normal routes. Social distancing will continue to have an effect on the industry forcing some providers to carry fewer passengers per trip, making each one less profitable, plus increasing the frequency of cleaning and sanitisation.

**Opportunities:** public transport is seen by governments across the world as a way of controlling urbanisation, traffic congestion and its environmental impacts. This will continue and will carry on serving up opportunities for private sector providers that can meet stringent new health and efficiency measures post-COVID-19. There is also an opportunity for smaller, more agile passenger transport providers.

**Threats:** falling passenger numbers mean bus planners will need to give more consideration to demographics, journey pattern and route catchment areas alongside scheduling and driver efficiencies. It is also likely that large elements of our public transport infrastructure will move back into public ownership on a permanent basis.



# Respond, Recover, Thrive

[Deloitte](#) has issued guidance on workforce strategies for post-COVID recovery, citing the three time frames - respond, recover and thrive. These strategies are just as relevant for general business recovery so we've adapted them for the fleet, leasing and mobility industries.

## Respond

Different from 'reacting', which we commonly do in a panic in the moment disaster occurs, responding is where we deal with the present situation in a calm and rational manner. Deloitte points out that this requires five fundamental qualities of resilience leadership, which we've interpreted as:

1. **Empathy plus rationality**
2. **Mission**
3. **Speed over elegance**
4. **Transparency**
5. **Vision**

### ***Empathy plus rationality***

Resilient leadership requires sincere empathy and compassion towards employees, customers and the broader ecosystems, while simultaneously taking a hard, rational stance about protecting financial performance.

### ***Mission***

Resilient leaders must stabilise their organisations to meet the crisis while finding new opportunities amid difficulties.

### ***Speed over elegance***

Courageous, decisive action is required and it may have to be based on imperfect information. Expediency is essential as is understanding when it's okay and not okay.

### ***Transparency***

Be transparent about current realities, including what you don't know, while also painting a compelling picture of the future that will inspire others to support it.

### ***Vision***

Stay focused on the horizon, while anticipating new business models that are likely to emerge. Be innovative, inspire and define tomorrow.

## Recover

Recovery is a journey for the organisation, teams and stakeholders. It is, in effect, the bridge between responding and thriving. Resilient recovery requires a mindset shift; business is unlikely to be the same as it was and companies must learn to navigate the uncertainties and implications. It's hard to instil trust in uncertain times but trust is the catalyst to recovery. Demonstrating leadership with transparent communication will help restore trust. Finally, it's imperative to learn from others' successes.

## Thrive

Is where you prepare for the next normal. This is an opportunity to become a market shaper. According to Deloitte, those who can shape the future of the industry, rather than adapt to it, will emerge stronger. Companies emerging from the crisis and shifting into the "thrive" time frame will take part in this reinvention, either by identifying and solving new opportunities, aligning themselves with the future-shapers of their industry, or becoming the next ecosystem while their competitors focus on the crisis.



## Looking After the Workforce

One of the first priorities is to safeguard workers, customers and suppliers. Firstly, in practical ways by implementing social distancing measures for those who cannot work from home, stringent cleaning, disinfecting, sanitizing, anti-contamination measures and providing screens and PPE. After that, the priority is to safeguard their economic wellbeing.

## Protecting Cash-flow and Performance

Deloitte turned to China to uncover some key post-COVID learnings from Chinese businesses and saw that companies immediately began to update or develop business continuity plans to understand contractual obligations, evaluate financial impacts and liquidity requirements. They also did this to formulate debt restructuring plans, and optimise assets to help restore financial viability. They sought to understand financial impacts across the entire value chain.

In almost every financial crisis, preserving of cash and liquidity is a top priority.

### ***Review and revise forecasts***

Every organisation, no matter what sector, should be (if they haven't already) revising cashflow forecasts by modelling a number of different scenarios to test the company's resilience.

### ***Review financial procedures and processes***

Are your financial procedures and processes organised to best effect? Do you issue invoices in a timely manner? Delays can be costly. Investigate where you can revise payment terms. Do you have customers that could pay more quickly? Do you chase payments as soon as they become overdue? Move to electronic payments wherever possible to get money in the bank more quickly. Cash is expensive to manage (and the use of it is being discouraged currently) and cheque clearance delays cash in the bank.

### ***Segment customers***

Into those who pay early, those who pay on time and persistent late payers. Reward the former and consider options as to how you want to deal with the latter.

### ***Manage growth carefully***

This is not a time to drive headlong into a steep growth trajectory, slow and steady is a better option. To get an accurate picture, make sure forecasts include the impact of sales growth. If necessary, talk to your lenders about extending facilities but be wary of paying for additional funding you might not need.

### ***Centralise decision-making***

Now is the time for consistency, speed and decisiveness, not protracted decision-making. Centralising decision-making will help speed things up.

### ***Re-evaluate sources of cash***

Look at unused credit lines, revolving credit facilities, new sources of credit, such as fixed credit facilities; excess working capital (via inventory reductions, extended payment terms) and equity infusion.

### ***Define the non-negotiables***

Which products, services, customer segments, business lines, employee segments are most critical to ongoing and future cashflow? Preserve those but consider how they may be impacted if there's a second wave pandemic or worse recession.

### ***Belt tightening***

Within the boundaries of non-negotiables, are there other courses of action you can take that will positively impact financial performance, such as discretionary expenses reduction, a freeze on new hires, temporary plant or facility closures?

## Driving Efficiency and Cost-savings

All businesses will be looking at streamlining and for better ways to do things, implementing working from home policies and flexible working.

In an article: *The heart of resilient leadership – responding to COVID-19*, Deloitte cites a *Harvard Business Review* assessment of corporate performance during the past three recessions. It found that, of the 4,700 firms studied, those that cut costs fastest and deepest had the lowest probability of outperforming competitors after the economy recovered. Those that emerged from recession as winners were those that struck the right balance between short and long-term strategies by investing in the future while selectively reducing costs to survive.

Building business efficiency usually entails upgrading [technology](#), improving business processes and developing employee morale - and that still holds true.

Also, ask yourself: are there cost savings you can achieve by shrinking your organisation's physical footprint?

### **Renegotiating or extending contracts**

It's a good idea to actively invite existing lease customers, nearing the end of their original contract period, to renegotiate or extend it, either formally or informally on a rolling agreement. An offer of reduced monthly payment or value add, such as extended insurance or maintenance, can be used to incentivise the customer. They get the benefit of keeping the vehicle for longer and you benefit from continued revenues, plus not having to deal with the hassle of taking the car back and remarketing it.

### **Vehicle procurement**

Vehicle procurement in fleet management directly impacts fleet costs, profitability, efficiency and customer service. So by improving the procurement process, you can quickly improve margins and save costs. Doing so gives customers complete control and visibility of the buying process so that nothing is left to chance.

The right technology platform, with a dedicated tool for managing the vehicle procurement process, will help you secure the right vehicle, in the right location at the best price and have it delivered on time. This means contract profit margins are increased and client satisfaction improved.

With **Bynx**, for example, all relevant information, reference codes and detail from the client (such as approved quote and vehicle configuration) is automatically brought into the process to be included in POs (purchase orders) and associated documentation. This is achieved without the need for re-keying, which makes the whole process slicker and more accurate.

Additionally, **Bynx** enables operators to identify preferred vehicle suppliers and taking procurement online enables suppliers of new vehicles to login and update order statuses. They can also (with the required permissions) obtain electronic POs, giving the whole process the potential to be totally paperless.

### **Vehicle funding review - consider multi-bid vehicle funding**

Multi-bid vehicle funding could deliver advantages for businesses that are procuring business contract hire funding for vehicles. Although Private Contract Hire (PCH) is on the rise, Business Contract Hire (BCH) is still the most popular funding method for company vehicles, particularly for essential drivers and LCVs (Light Commercial Vehicles).

Through multi-bid funding, a company looking at contract hire will invite quotes from one fleet management company or broker with a panel of lease companies involved. This provides the option to bundle services and have just one contract to administer. Invoices from the multiple lease companies are handled by the fleet management provider or broker, so there's a single point of contact in the relationship. It also offers a continuous pricing benchmark, cost optimisation on each new vehicle order and a more consistent TCO (no rate creep).

As with everything, there are disadvantages, such as limiting access to the full lease market and splitting the leverage over selected vendors. It's also worth bearing in mind that some lease companies won't participate in multi-bid funding schemes, so it may not be the answer for every business.

## Driving Revenues – Sales and Marketing

This is a time to be authentic and have a strong sense of purpose. When you do this, employees feel that their work is meaningful. According to Deloitte, 8 out of 10 customers are more loyal to purpose-driven brands, which will help sustain customer relationships during the downturn and beyond. When purpose is put first, profits usually follow; the other way around the results are less certain.

It's hugely important at this time to carefully consider how sales efforts will be perceived. It's all too easy to get carried away by the need for quick revenues but any attempt to offer price cuts and marketing promotions may come across as greedy or an attempt to capitalise on a crisis when everyone else is having to belt-tighten and suffer through it.

In order to sustain customer relationships, focus instead on the benefits you can offer customers right now and how you can help them solve their post-COVID problems.



## Risk Management Review

It's always a good idea to stay on top of risk assessment as things change on a regular basis but the COVID-19 pandemic has introduced a whole new line of risk associated with operating a fleet of vehicles and drivers. Activities previously assessed as low risk, such as deliveries, are now much higher up the scale and must be reviewed in line with current government rules.

Existing policies will have to be revised to include how people interact and the challenges that may be presented when business as usual resumes.



## Vehicle Checking and Fleet Maintenance

Additional time for vehicle checking must be allowed, particularly for vehicles that have been “parked” during the lockdown. But most importantly, checks must be adequately recorded and defects reported. Extra time needs to be allowed for vehicle cleaning and sanitising at driver changeover or when carrying passengers. It may be necessary for drivers to be issued with PPE (Personal Protective Equipment).

You may also need to continue using vehicles that were scheduled to be replaced as new vehicles are taking longer to procure. As older vehicles are more prone to breakdown, this too is a risk to monitor.

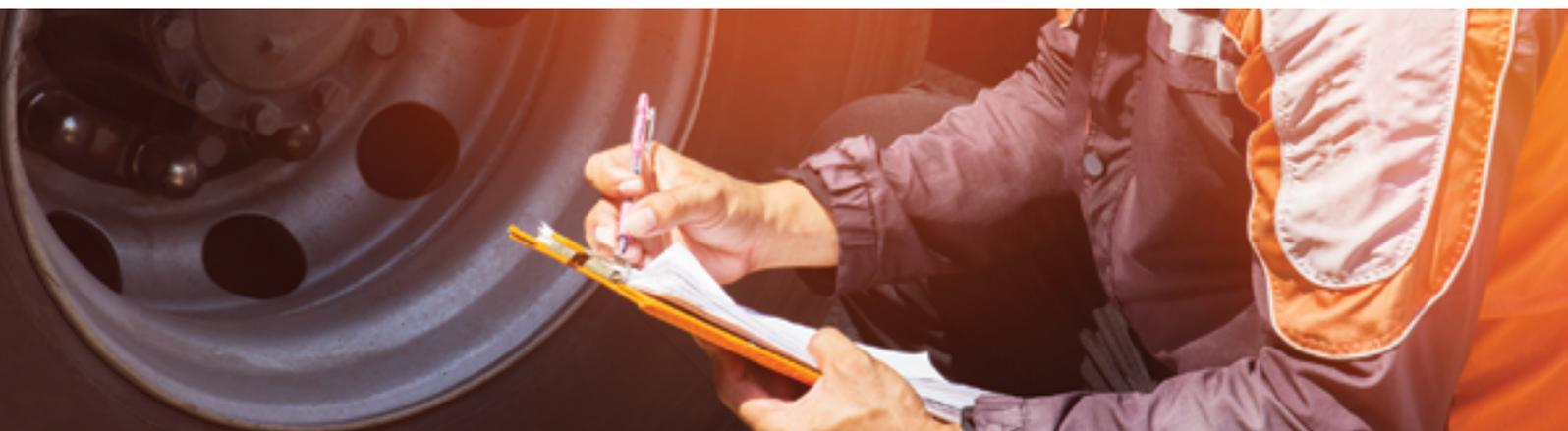
Check parked vehicles for:

- Battery system failures.
- Vehicle wiring.
- Fuel system issues (contaminated fuel).
- The cleaning and sterilisation of air conditioning systems.

In terms of fleet maintenance, fleet managers need to be mindful of the fact that workshops will likely be busier than usual post-lockdown, at least for a while as people bring vehicles that have been standing into use again. This also means parts may be harder to get or take longer to acquire.

Any workshop staff who have been furloughed need to be brought back as soon as possible.

Businesses without dedicated workshops should perhaps establish (or re-establish) mid-to-long-term contracts with workshop and vehicle maintenance providers as soon as possible. It may increase costs short-term but will pay off, long-term, as vehicles are maintained in good condition, comply with regulations and stay in operation.



## Driver Checking, Monitoring and Training

Driver well-being is vitally important in these uncertain times. They are providing a vital service and many have stepped up to the plate when it comes to providing crucial services beyond the call of duty. The process of reporting for work may require reconfiguration – even the smallest detail (such as communal use of a signing-in pen) must be thought through. Staggered start times may also be appropriate to minimise people density in workplaces. Fleet managers should consider how to allocate as few different drivers to one vehicles, thus minimising the need for cleaning in between.

No contact deliveries are being implemented to accommodate social distancing and while roads are quieter, journey times may be reduced. However, that advantage may be offset by longer delivery processes.

As business starts to get back to normal, driver behaviour monitoring through telematics will be crucial. Drivers who have continued to work through the lockdown have got used to empty roads and streamlined schedules and the opportunity to speed and park anywhere may have had a detrimental effect on good driving behaviour. Driver monitoring will provide valuable planning data amid the gradual increase in journey times as traffic levels return to normal.

Whether they've been driving or not through the lockdown, driver training that is focused on safety and well-being, offered as a refresher or for new drivers, could help reduce risk and thus save money – and lives!



## Review of Mobility Options and Fleet Rightsizing

Arguably, mobility was only just cutting its teeth when Coronavirus hit. The fleet industry was excitedly embracing alternative corporate travel methods such as carpooling, car-sharing, ride-hailing, micro-mobility, public transport, designed to get more out of existing transport assets but since the pandemic these options have become problematic. In the short-term, we will probably see a return to one-driver/one-vehicle. Reliance on grey fleet may also increase. For shorter journeys, people may consider single-user transport solutions, such as eScooters, mopeds and eBikes.

What's likely is that customers will shy away from shared transport options until a COVID-19 vaccine is widely available.

Many businesses across the board have discovered that working from home brings more benefits than problems, benefits that include: less wasted commuting time, increased productivity, happier employees, reduced need for office space, fewer meetings and so on. What this may mean for the future of fleet is that fewer company or perk cars will be required so fleet size can be reduced. It could also be an antidote to the recent downturn in car-sharing and carpooling options (as mentioned in the previous paragraph). As users become more confident in the safety of sharing and find they need to use a car less frequently, they may be willing to use sharing or pooling options.

As mentioned, working from home may increase reliance on grey fleet. As businesses rationalise company car fleets (which is likely to happen) the grey fleet population may grow. Managing grey fleet vehicles and drivers effectively is a critical part of a business's duty of care. Ensuring grey fleet drivers are fit and legally eligible to drive and that their vehicles are safe, roadworthy, insured and legal. Technology is already playing a key role in the effective and efficient management of grey fleet. Driver apps make it easier to capture and store essential information, such as insurance documents, licences and roadworthiness certificates and this also helps companies manage risk.

What all this means for fleet managers is the development of new vehicle and mobility policies.

### **Fleet innovation**

Innovation means introducing something new to the business to make it better. It's also key to continually attract new customers, retain existing ones and build a strong brand in the marketplace. So, post COVID-19, fleet innovation is critical.

Technology is a key aspect of fleet innovation. It kind of does it for you. Gone are the days when fleet managers or entrepreneurs had to do everything from scratch. Technology companies have innovated in designing systems to make life easier for everyone. Such systems are based on best-practice, efficiency, streamlining, automation, workflow, usability, productivity and communication. Fleet innovation is about using and adapting the latest apps and software to improve the performance and efficacy of the fleet. Fleet management software, such as [Bynx](#), allows businesses to provide better products and services while minimising risk.

Fleet innovation is not a one-time thing, it's a long-term strategy that needs to be embedded in the business culture by encouraging all employees to embrace innovation and invite ideas from them.

“What we need, more than anything is digitization”.

Geotab: [Is this the time for the “digital push”?](#)

Alongside installing and implementing technology and systems enabling employees to work from home, the above mentioned article also advises that companies that use the latest telematics solutions for route optimisation and order management, are in a more advantageous position, as orders can be processed more efficiently and contract points avoided during deliveries. In the article, Bitkom president Achim Berg suggests that now is the time to build digital infrastructure, extensively digitalise business processes and develop new digital business models.

### ***Align IT system and support to evolving work requirements***

If preparing for increased remote working, ensure you have the technological capacity to support it. Bandwidth, VPN infrastructure, authentication and access control mechanisms, plus security tools. These must all be able to support peak traffic demand. You may also need to consider providing VPN/remote access to contractors and third parties who are supporting critical services, and purchase additional licences for collaboration tools.

The sudden increase in online activity can have implications for system stability, network robustness, and data security, especially in areas of the world where telecom and system infrastructure are not as well developed. Companies will need to act quickly in this respect to ensure they have the systems and support staff in place to ensure a smooth evolution of the workplace and workforce.

Consider innovating from the outside (see Fleet Outsourcing below). In the meantime, stay curious. Solely focusing on your own business may make you blinkered to what's out there. Don't limit curiosity to only the fleet industry, step outside to see what innovations are happening in other industries.

### ***Fleet outsourcing***

Fleet outsourcing is a way for fleets to reduce costs and remain innovative. Doing so puts you in the hands of fleet professionals with years of experience in specific aspects of the business. You can utilise this expertise to your advantage.

Some of the benefits to fleet outsourcing include:

- Measurable efficiencies – enhanced cashflow, fleet safety, fleet availability and reliability.
- Improved productivity.
- Ability to focus on core business – with fleet administration controlled by the outsourcer, your resources are freed up.
- Reduction in operating costs – leads to fleet maintenance economies of scale.
- Ability to reduce headcount or repurpose human resources.
- No need to invest in capital assets, plus the ability to continually have a 'right-sized' fleet.
- Reduced operating costs, which leads to enhanced cashflow.

## Operational Fleet Management

Operational fleet management will be a little different from now on. Aside from the usual day-to-day running of fleet vehicles, there are extra measures that need to be implemented and these are to do with sanitisation, hygiene and social distancing. It's easy to get complacent over time and any drivers who have continued to work throughout lockdown may be used to the additional cleaning and sanitisation measures that go with it. This is not an excuse to let standards slip. In many ways, the easing of lockdown will only serve to increase risk. So, more than ever, fleet managers need to be proactive, consistent and diligent.

Widespread implementation of hygiene best practices for fleets, drivers, customers, passengers and partners is an elemental step in terms of avoiding a second wave of the pandemic.

It's imperative that fleet managers communicate best practices to personnel and drivers, plus recognise and share shelter-in-place mandates to detect and isolate anyone who shows symptoms. Every fleet manager should be aware of current government guidelines in their locality and stay up-to-date as they evolve. And it isn't just about moving forward, there could come a point when we have to move back a step or two if Coronavirus cases start to increase again. Every fleet should be prepared for that.

Here are the safety measure to take:

- Sanitise touched surfaces frequently within and outside the vehicle on a regular basis. These include: door handles (inside and out), gear knob, steering wheel, passenger seats, drivers' seats, dashboard, handbrake, fobs, starting switches, boot latches and handles, windows, electric window switches, indicator levers, light switches, seat pockets etc.
- Wear gloves when outside of the vehicle, particularly when fuelling.
- Use contactless payment methods where possible.
- Drivers should wear face masks when in close proximity to others.
- Drivers should also use an alcohol-based (at least 60% alcohol) hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day and carry some in the vehicle for passengers.
- Wipe down vehicles at the end of every shift.
- Drivers should change clothes immediately they get home and wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Fleet managers should implement one-driver/one-vehicle policies where possible. If not possible, cleaning and sanitising vehicles in between drivers should be a mandated policy.
- Keep all channels of communication with drivers open at all times.



### ***Policy Compliance and Management Reporting***

Running a compliant business is a legal requirement and essential for fleets but fleet management is complex, especially in terms of compliance. There are many different sources of information about every aspect of the fleet (not just vehicles but drivers and contracts), that must be integrated into one coherent system. This is why a software management platform such as **Bynx** is key to the whole operation.

Fleet management software brings everything together into a single, integrated, centralised system. It also consists of management reporting capability. In this way, the complexity and time required to evidence that checks have been carried out, standards met and licences obtained is reduced, plus there is an audit trail.

#### Areas of Compliance Within a fleet

- Vehicle and acquisition
- Specification
- Maintenance and repair
- Parts and Warranties
- Safety and Risk
- Licensing
- Registrations and Permits
- Drivers
- Remarketing

The fleet management platform is the central repository for details about drivers, vehicles repairs, insurance, maintenance, licenses and so on. These records provide visibility and help fleet managers review and report on risk management and safety programmes.

It also provides the ability to monitor and manage vendor partnerships for fleet maintenance purposes.

Fleet management software permits the secure electronic filing of relevant information such as driver licences and medical certificates, training and insurance records can be kept up-to-date, organised and easily accessible. Alerts can be set for vital upcoming, due or expired deadlines, such as licence and insurance renewals, test certificates and so on.

### **Management Reporting**

There are a great many information points within a fleet where data comes into the organisation: internal and third-party information systems, mobile devices, connected vehicles and so on. But it can only be turned into valuable information and insight with the right reporting structure, analysis, tools and dashboards. First, it needs to be put into context and analysed against pre-determined questions. Well-presented and intelligent reports can also help enlist management buy-in to schemes and initiatives designed to drive the business forward, which is what we need more of right now.

Good management reporting can help identify areas of underperformance and inefficiency through analysis of driver and vehicle information. However, there is such a thing as too much reporting. So, a good reporting tool needs to help you quickly get to key decision points. **Bynx** provides a [dedicated reporting layer](#) that delivers a set of tools and dashboards that enable users to select their own parameters and filters to process, analyse and present strategic information in meaningful, impactful and relevant reports and documents. **Bynx** supports the creation of spreadsheets, word-processed documents, PDFs and XML formats. Importantly, **Bynx** has been designed in such a way that it enables fewer more effective and to-the-point reports to be generated, which saves time and costs. **Bynx** enables users to create and configure their own unique dashboards and scaled down interfaces (which we call “dashlets”) for specific purposes such as planning rental fleet usage, for example.

Watch [this video](#) for an overview of **Bynx's** mobility platform:



## Conclusions

Most people in the fleet industry are beginning to understand that getting 'back to normal' is not going to happen anytime soon, if at all. The immediate future is about easing out of lockdown safely while collaborating in meaningful ways with staff, partners, suppliers and customers to help each other move towards a future in which we can all thrive. Some sectors have been hit more than others so for them it's a case of rebuilding using new ideas, opportunities and the foundation of experience to reach a point of sustainability. For everyone else, we set off into a future with both hope and apprehension. If this pandemic has taught us anything it's that nothing is certain anymore. But that sense is good, we can use that to ensure we future proof our businesses as much as possible.

Resilience plays a key role in leadership and vice versa and resilient business leaders are both courageous and cautious in equal measure but at different times. We must courageously drive forward, without regret or waiting for assurances, while also taking care to pace ourselves and avoid the pitfalls of misreading customer demand, missing opportunity or relying on blind assumption. The softer skills of empathy, rationality and cooperation, typically associated with corporate social responsibility, are more important at this time than drive, fervour and single-mindedness.

## References

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