



Supplier Insight: The Car key People

Avoiding un-planned Vehicle Off-Road (VOR) time



In Issue 3 of 2021, Essential Fleet Manager talked with Mark Migliaccio, founder of The Car Key People, about the impact of key loss and failure on efficient fleet operations. We're delighted that just over a year later, we've caught up with Mark once again to talk about how best to mitigate the disruption and unplanned VOR time caused by key loss and failure.

Q: What are the main developments over the last year in how The Car Key People is helping fleets?

The past twelve months have been busier than ever before for The Car Key People, with almost three times the number of fleet bookings compared to the previous period. The increased workload has required us to fine tune our internal processes to ensure all bookings are handled as effectively as possible.

We have also worked closely with the UK's largest rental companies to develop booking flow diagrams that map out all of the steps for placing bookings.

With hundreds of bookings being placed a month it is super important that processes are defined, and we have found this to be beneficial to our employees as well as our clients.

There has been some huge developments in programming software which has enabled us to offer key replacements for new manufacturers that

were previously dealer only. Many fleets have picked up on this and have been quick to jump on our services for Volvo and MG in particular.



Q: How did the demand for your services expand or change as we emerged from Covid restrictions?

Covid was an interesting time for The Car Key People. Prior to Covid, The Car Key People was largely a London-only operation, servicing both the general public and fleets. During the first lockdown general public retail bookings were halted and the time was utilised to develop our nation-wide fleet services.

Post lockdown we now have thirty technicians spanning the whole of the UK ready to assist fleets with their vehicle key requirements.

The growth has been phenomenal with more and more large fleets turning to us to support them with keys.

Q: You mentioned the last time we spoke the impact of key loss/failure on income and expenses. What are the wider impacts on the efficient operations of fleets that underpin and deliver essential services?

It seems crazy but something as simple as a broken key can prevent a vehicle from being used for days,

sometimes weeks.

If the key belongs to a technician from a utilities company that means their jobs are cancelled and the emergency they were attending is delayed.

If the key belongs to a vehicle from a leasing company, that means the vehicle cannot be rented and revenue is lost.

Q: Key loss and failure can have a significant impact on operations as breakdowns, on-road incidents and other situations. Fleet Managers plan for by adopting a wide range of solutions and services, but do they plan for key loss and failure. Is there enough awareness of this in fleets?

I would love to say that every fleet manager applies the required due diligence to militate against all lost key situations, but sadly that just isn't true.

Only a real small handful of the leasing companies we work with ensure they have 2 keys for each vehicle. The smartest companies we work with ensure if there is only one key that becomes lost we are booked to supply two replacement keys.

Some fleet managers keep costs low by only replacing a lost key with one new key, but it really is a case of "a stitch in time saves nine" when it comes to replacing keys...or quite literally "two replacement keys now saves nine days VOR time in the future".

Utilities companies clearly understand the importance of a spare vehicle key, as some hold as many as four spares keys for each vehicle.

Q: Could you compare the disruption to, and expense incurred by fleets when going down the traditional route – key replacement through a main dealer – with adoption of your solution?

The dealer route is often unnecessarily time consuming and expensive, with some keys taking several weeks to be replaced. The main dealers require the vehicle to be at their workshop, so there is an added level of expense and VOR time whilst the vehicle is recovered in.

Our solution ensures downtime is kept to an absolute minimum, with more than

90% of our bookings completed in just 1-3 days.

Q: As a reminder to our readers, what is the full range of services that make up The Car Key People solution for fleets?

The Car Key People provide a completely mobile nation-wide solution for replacing lost, stolen and broken vehicle keys. Our services cover:

- Spare vehicle keys - for the savviest of fleet managers .
- Lost key replacement, when all keys have been lost.
- Vehicle entry, when keys have been locked inside.
- Lock repair and replacement.
- Vehicle investigation, when there is concern a non authorised key may have been coded to the vehicle.
- Key erasing and reprogramming, providing security by ensuring only the keys onsite can be used for the vehicle.
- Temporary key storage and secure postage of spare keys.

Q: Do you have any current examples that best demonstrate how your solution has worked to minimise fleet operational disruption and VOR time?

The case study we covered when we last featured in your magazine probably still stands out as the best example of VOR time reduction.

Siemens approached us to supply spare keys for their whole fleet of engineer vehicles.

We managed the whole process to ensure the engineers were met either at their home address before they left for work, or whilst out on a booking. This ensured there was zero downtime for the Siemens engineers, and also protects them against potential future downtime when a key should become lost.

Another great example would be the work we recently completed for Enterprise Flex E Rent who booked us to supply spare keys for 50 new vehicles

going out to a customer.

We attended their branch over the course of 2 days to supply the new spare keys onsite, all ready for when the customer received the vehicles.

Q: How do you see your business developing over the short and medium term?

We are currently expanding our London team and have vacancies for a trainee auto locksmith and part time bookings manager at our North London office. Our 30 strong nationwide team are the first choice for a large number of the UK's leading fleets, we look forward to working with even more new fleets over the coming months.

The biggest hurdle we have faced is moving fleet managers away from main the dealers solution and other household named vendors. Almost all of the fleets we support today previously utilised an alternative solution, but have since moved over to The Car Key People, and cite speed of response and reduction in downtime as the primary reason.



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