



Turn a new leaf in personal transport today

Ian Robinson
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Dear Ian

Further to our conversation regarding the change in the current Peterborough conditions of private hire cars needing to have four doors.

I would like to bring the smart car to Peterborough this has now been implemented by some other local authorities across the country after seeing how impressive this little car can be with regards to space and its impact on the environment. I have enclosed some press and background information into the smart for your information.

Changing the private hire conditions and introducing the Smart car to my fleet would enable me to compliment the Toyota Prius with its great environmental qualities that I am already running likewise the Smart for two has some impressive Co2 and mileage figures for instance 87 co2 and 85.6mpg and with around 60% of taxi and private hire journeys being a single person this would further help to reduce the amount of co2 that is released into the atmosphere.

Luggage space is a minimum of 220litres and can accommodate passengers in extreme comfort and safety with a four star NCAP rating.

If at any time you would like to see the smart car or can assist me in what I need to do to progress with this further then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Tod Howard

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During a mundane car journey one day, former foreign exchange trader Justin Ott had a 'eureka moment' – why are so many big taxis cruising around nearly empty? So Cab4one was born, with Justin asking Business Link for help to get started.

One smart route to driving down cab firm's carbon footprint and costs

Justin Ott and his father, Martin, launched Cab4one to offer a lower cost, better value and more environmentally friendly alternative to mainstream taxicabs. By using low emission, high fuel economy Smart cars, the father and son team say they can cut passenger journey costs by as much as 30% and CO₂ emissions to as little as 89 grammes per kilometre. From the start, they benefitted from Business Link's advice. And, when seeking financing to expand the business into London, Business Link helped the duo create a credible business plan to present to potential lenders and investors.

"I spent a year as a foreign exchange trader in the City after leaving school, but decided to return to university," says Justin. "Then, shortly after graduating last year, I was in the car with my dad on the way to the local DIY store when we had a 'lightbulb moment'!"



Justin (left) and Martin – Smart marketers

The flash of inspiration came when stuck in traffic, as Justin recalls: "At one point in the journey we were sat in a queue with an MPV taxi in front and a large saloon taxi behind, and a single passenger in each. We got chatting about what a waste this was, having these huge, fuel-hungry vehicles cruising around mostly empty all day, pumping out exhaust fumes and consuming needless amounts of fuel when stuck in daytime traffic. Then we both came out with, 'Why don't single passengers book smaller cabs and save money, fuel and CO₂ emissions?'"

Over 80% of daytime taxi journeys are for just one passenger

Armed with his university research skills and the business savvy learned on the trading floor, Justin started to investigate the taxicab and private hire market in greater depth. What he discovered amazed him: "A whopping 82% of daytime taxi journeys are completed with only one passenger. Based on this statistic from the Department of Transport, I thought someone else must have decided this presented a good business opportunity and looked for any firms that specialised in using smaller, low-emission vehicles. But apart from a couple of small operations, the market seemed wide open."

In addition to the lower environmental impact of using smaller, low-emission vehicles, Justin also discovered that they cost a lot less to run. "We opted for Smart cars as they have the right combination of features," he says. "Those included high fuel efficiency, low emissions and a high safety rating. With emissions of only 89 grammes of CO₂ per kilometre, the vehicle doesn't even have to pay road tax. And, when combined with the fuel efficiency, running costs are significantly lower than many models used as taxis. They're also big on the inside and small on the outside!"

But how best could Justin and Martin turn their lightbulb moment into a profitable business? Justin knew that Business Link offered support for start-ups, so he called its information team to find out what help might be available.



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