



Gefco and Citroën UK

Cradle-to-grave fleet and logistics management

"PROIV gave us cradle-to-grave fleet-management software. For example, a request for a new car instantly raises an order at the Citroën factory, while vehicles that have reached the end of their fleet life transfer directly to our Vehicle Remarketing Operations, such as our online auction site."

Emlyn Witchell
Divisional Support Controller
Citroën UK

Gefco UK Ltd, the UK logistics arm of PSA Peugeot Citroën, prepares and maintains a 4,500-strong fleet of demonstration cars, leased cars, and in-house company cars for Citroën UK Ltd. Virtually every aspect of fleet management is controlled by a suite of software built, managed, and hosted by PROIV. This class-leading logistics application maximises vehicle utilisation, while keeping the fleet clean, serviced, safe, and legal 24 hours a day. Most important of all, it helps Citroën UK deliver service levels that meet the demands of influential fleet-buying customers.

Keeping Citroën's demonstration fleet on the move

When you're buying cars by the hundred, you expect a service to match your purchasing power. But that's never been a problem for Gefco, the logistics arm of Citroën UK. Gefco uses automation to meet the service demands of Citroën and its fleet customers. Thanks to Gefco Fleet Management, a suite of applications built, managed, and hosted by PROIV, Gefco can deliver a chauffeur-driven demonstration model to a buyer's doorstep on the day and time of the buyer's choice.

Gefco Fleet Management gives Citroën a double edge to its competitive offer. The software puts freshly-valeted cars in the hands of potential buyers, while maximising the utilisation of Citroën's demonstrator fleet.

"A car that's sitting idle isn't pulling its weight," says Martin Chittenden, Company Fleet Logistics Manager for Citroën UK. "We aim for a 66% utilisation rate, but with Gefco Fleet Management we regularly achieve 70–75%."

Meeting the brief for a class-beating logistics application

The effectiveness of Gefco Fleet Management was the result of an 18-month collaboration between Citroën, Gefco, and PROIV. The starting point was Citroën's and Gefco's broad-ranging wish-list – a set of flow charts covering all the internal processes and external interactions that define a class-leading logistics application.

The brief also covered Citroën's leased and in-house company-car fleets, as well as a requirement for linking the software to around a dozen independent and interlinked Citroën, Gefco and PSA Group applications.



"Northgate's hosting performance is excellent. I've not lost a single night's sleep worrying about application availability; I know we're online day and night."

Emlyn Witchell
Divisional Support Controller
Citroën UK

"PROIV gave us cradle-to-grave fleet-management software," says Emlyn Witchell, Divisional Support Controller for Citroën UK. "For example, a request for a new car instantly raises an order at the Citroën factory, while vehicles that have reached the end of their fleet life transfer directly to our Vehicle Remarketing Operations, such as our online auction site."

Simon Fowke, Citroën UK Company Secretary, explains how the application helps his company meet its legal obligations: "A fleet insurance policy doesn't identify individual vehicles, so we have to feed that information into a database that the police can verify the genuine vehicle user, from the roadside. Gefco Fleet Management handles it all, and it is the same for the vehicles' road fund licence and MOT requirements: the software reminds us to stay taxed and legal."

Round-the-clock hosting guarantees a good night's sleep

Managing a 4,500-car fleet is a 24-hour-a-day business. So too is hosting the fleet-management software. That happens at the mission-critical nerve centre of Northgate Information Solutions.

"Northgate's hosting performance is excellent," says Emlyn Witchell. "I've not lost a single night's sleep worrying about application availability; I know we're online day and night."

Lifelong viability

In a fast-moving market, adaptability is crucial to the long-term viability of a suite of business applications. Opportunity was written into Gefco Fleet Management from the outset. The software is capable of going Europe-wide with multi-country, multi-currency issues already taken care of. So too are all the attendant issues of scalability.

Nevertheless, Citroën, Gefco, and NorthgateArinso continue to review operational and developmental issues once a quarter. They use those meetings to look to the future, to ensure that their fleet-management operations continue to support Citroën's leading position in the highly-competitive automobile market.

links: www.citroen.co.uk