

Case Study: Kiwi Coaches

Kiwi Coaches 🐲

Kiwi Coaches is a long-established bus company in Auckland that has been experiencing continued growth and as a result is regularly upgrading its fleet. Driveline is the fleet provider of choice for Kiwi Coaches, enabling it to deliver on its premium service while staying cost competitive.

History

Kiwi Coaches was founded by Rob Harris in 1995. Back then, there was just one coach in operation, before the company expanded to cater for school bus runs in 1999. Some of the first schools to use Kiwi Coaches were Mount Albert Grammar and Marist, followed by Waikowhai Intermediate, Elim Christian College, Sacred Heart, Lynfield College, Blockhouse Bay Intermediate, St Peters, St Mary's and most recently, Kings School Prep.

Today, Kiwi Coaches has a fleet of 20 school buses and 18 coaches in operation – vast growth from those early days.

In 2010, Kiwi Coaches was bought by Calvin West, who heads up the company as its CEO.

Kiwi Coaches is strong on family values and with a passionate team of 27 it is committed to remaining true to those values while providing a friendly and professional bus service.

Challenge

Kiwi Coaches was looking to update its fleet to ensure that vehicles used were modern and safe to cater for the growing number of services it offers. It turned to Driveline for a solution. CEO Calvin West had worked with Driveline's Paul Tobin on business dealings previously, so reached out to Tobin again.

Kiwi Coaches vehicles were dated, and the challenge was finding a leasing and finance company that could provide finance for vehicles of that era. Main lending companies and banks were reluctant to lend on assets older than ten years. Instead of buying new vehicles outright, which is expensive to any business, Driveline was able to provide a cost-competitive Hire Purchase System, ensuring that Kiwi Coaches could pay off a new fleet while at the same time using the vehicles.



Approach

Kiwi Coaches could update its fleet of school buses, hoists and bus wash through a hire purchase agreement with Driveline. The company's management vehicles went on a lease system, an arrangement that has been welcomed by the Kiwi Coaches team.

"It's pure and simple - no deposit with 45 months of regular payments. At the end of that period, we just buy the lease out and keep the vehicles," says CEO Calvin West.

"I enjoy the personable approach of Paul and the team at Driveline. I would rather deal with just one person who I can talk to whenever I need to and know that this person will arrange everything in an effortless and efficient manner."

"The collaboration with Driveline has produced superb results. Leasing plant equipment has increased our productivity. Using the equipment, we've been able to improve our in-house service of the coaches and buses. Our overall turnover has increased and I've been able to purchase vehicles a lot quicker than if I was to go down another finance or lease route."

Moving Forward

We are also looking at upgrading the school bus fleet in the coming year. We've received our brand-new tour coach; a 37-seater in January 2017, which has been financed through Driveline Fleet.

A word from Paul Tobin (Director at Driveline)

"I have been friends with Calvin for more than fifteen years. When he bought Kiwi Coaches in 2010, we met up and discussed how Driveline could assist him with his two key goals:

- 1. Upgrade to a more modern bus fleet
- 2. Develop a more cost-effective business

It's fair to say that both goals have been achieved. We've had a good working relationship with Kiwi Coaches and have helped finance a range of vehicles for them. Everything from Toyota Hiace minibuses to 53 seat urban school buses, 51 seat tour coaches, Suzuki Swifts and Nissan Navaras, as part of the management fleet. They've also benefited from the bus wash and plant equipment which we also financed for them.

Calvin and the team at Kiwi Coaches have been a pleasure to work with and we look forward to a continued working relationship moving forward.

