



CLIENT CASE STUDY

DRING AIR CONDITIONING & HEATING

INDUSTRY: Home services

EMPLOYEES: 35

REGION: Dallas, TX

FLEET: 20

GOALS:

- Grow business as quickly as possible with reliable vehicles.
- Have the opportunity to lease reliable vehicles on short notice.
- Ensure all new vehicles are properly upfitted.
- Avoid major breakdowns to keep cash flow consistent.
- Have a plan for cycling out vehicles at the appropriate time.



LEASING UPFITTED VEHICLES QUICKLY & PAINLESSLY

At Mike Albert, we pride ourselves on our long-standing partnerships — and the longer we know our clients, the more attuned we become to their needs. That is especially true for our client Dennis Chaisson, owner of Dring Air Conditioning & Heating, who we've worked with in different capacities for over 10 years.

When Chaisson told us that his business was rapidly expanding and he needed a partner to lease him high-quality vehicles quickly, we knew we could make it happen — even in the midst of nation-wide vehicle supply chain issues.

Chaisson knows how important it is to lease new or slightly used vehicles. A vehicle industry veteran himself, he used to create cost comparisons of his vehicles. For example, he analyzed the cost of purchasing vehicles and running them until their mileage was high and they broke down — versus leasing newer vehicles and cycling the older ones out every few years.

Recognizing that older vehicles with more mileage are typically the cause of more breakdowns, Chaisson understands the importance of his fleet strategy with Mike Albert, ensuring his monthly payments are always predictable.

“These vehicles are revenue-producers for us. If they're not on the road, that becomes a really big deal,” he says. “That's why we do the lease program. As they get close to being ready for cycling out, the Mike Albert team takes it back and has another vehicle ready for me.”



THE PROCESS: HOW DRING LEASED VEHICLES WITH MIKE ALBERT

Chaisson worked with Steve Johnson, Business Development Manager at Mike Albert, to lease vehicles for his fleet. This is what the streamlined process for acquiring Dring's fleet vehicles looks like:

- 1. Consultation** - Chaisson calls Johnson to alert him when his business needs new assets.
- 2. Acquisition** - Johnson connects with his network (including dealerships, OEMs and other trusted sources) to find the perfect vehicles for Chaisson.
- 3. Upfitting** - After securing the right vehicles, Johnson organizes any necessary upfit or wrapping. Then, he gets the Dring Air Conditioning & Heating branded wrap placed on the vehicles.
- 4. Delivery** - Johnson ensures smooth delivery of vehicles to Chaisson.
- 5. Data-driven vehicle life cycle** - Johnson keeps track of all newly-leased vehicles and ensures Chaisson will have a new vehicle ready to go when it's time to cycle the vehicles out.

“The coordinating and facilitating of administrative tasks takes away time from focusing on the most important thing, which is running my business. Taking away that pain and hassle is worth every penny.”



WITH PERSISTING SUPPLY CHAIN PROBLEMS, A FLEXIBLE FLEET PARTNER IS A NECESSITY

While leasing sounds great in theory, many fleet managers have hit bumps in the road, including Chaisson. This year, the global auto industry will make 1.5 to five million fewer vehicles than originally expected due to a microchip shortage.

In short, automakers expected a lower demand for new cars and decreased their microchip orders, which are a necessity in new vehicles. But vehicle demand increased beyond expectations. In addition, consumers bought up these microchips for electronics, the auto industry was left with a major shortage of new cars. As a result, fleet managers like Chaisson are experiencing roadblocks to getting the vehicles they need in a timely manner.

“Our competition will not lease slightly used vehicles,” said Johnson, Director of Sales/Strategic Alliances at Mike Albert. “In these unusual times, you go with what you can find, regardless of make or model. Then you upfit the vehicle to make it work.”

Chaisson can attest that during this supply chain shortage, having a fleet partner that already has problems solved is a major asset.

“I usually like to lease the same type of vehicle to keep my whole fleet similar, but beggars can’t be choosers,” says Chaisson. “When I call Steve [Johnson] at Mike Albert, he’ll say ‘We can’t get the exact vehicle you want right now. But we have a similar one we can upfit and make it work.’”

Just recently, Chaisson agreed to lease a vehicle that Johnson later found out had damage on the roof. Knowing that Chaisson prefers to have his vehicles be as pristine-looking as possible, Johnson got to work to fix it.

“Whenever Steve (Johnson) brings a problem or challenge to me, he always comes with a solution,” Chaisson says. “He already knows my reaction and he knows I don’t want a negotiation. He said, ‘Here’s what we’re proposing as far as fixing it, and we’re giving you a discount to make up for it.’”



UPDATED VEHICLES MAKE A BIG IMPRESSION

This ability to address vehicle wear and tear is particularly important to Chaisson, as he prefers his vehicles to be in tip-top condition.

“I run these trucks all over town. They’re rolling advertisements,” Chaisson says. “People will spend a ton of money on advertising with billboards. But having a really nice-looking professional fleet really stands out.”

Owning sleek, professional vehicles doesn’t only bring in new business. It also helps retain drivers, giving his company a competitive advantage.

“The home service industry is booming and competitive with hiring top talent,” Chaisson says. “From a recruiting point of view, it makes a difference when new hires are driving new vehicles, not vehicles that are old and outdated.”

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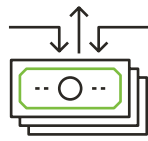


INSTANT CASH INFUSION THROUGH PURCHASE LEASE-BACK PROGRAM

Chaisson also took advantage of Mike Albert's purchase lease-back program, and hasn't looked back since. This is how it works:



Mike Albert buys the vehicles in Chaisson's fleet, infusing cash directly into his bottom line.



He can use this extra money to invest in technology or marketing, lease additional vehicles or hire additional employees.



Chaisson gets the vehicles leased back to him at a lower monthly rate.



His expenses, such as upfitting, wraps or decals, are consolidated into that same monthly invoice.



WHEN YOU WORK WITH MIKE ALBERT, YOU'RE NEVER IN THE DARK

Chaisson tells every fleet manager he knows that working with an experienced fleet manager like Mike Albert is key to running a successful business.

"The coordinating and facilitating of administrative tasks takes away time from focusing on the most important thing, which is running my business," Chaisson says. "Taking away that pain and hassle is worth every penny."

Having worked with other big-name fleet management companies without success, Chaisson says Mike Albert has always been the easiest to work with, thanks to their great communication skills and ability to come with solutions.

"Admittedly, I can be pretty demanding with my needs. I call Steve [Johnson] and say 'Steve, I need a vehicle and I need it yesterday,'" Chaisson says. "Steve is calm and gets it done. The whole team is really good at jumping into action."

Thanks to the Mike Albert team's flexibility, connections and solution-focused approach, Chaisson has maintained business for more than a decade and will continue to be a valued partner.

"No matter how much you plan, your business will take on a life of its own," Chaisson says. "Working with Mike Albert feels like doing business with a friend. I tell everyone: 'You have got to talk to Mike Albert.'"



ARE YOU READY TO UPDATE YOUR FLEET?

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