

Channel Shift Case Study

Guidance Area #6	Overcoming Legislative & Other Barriers
Provided By:	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
Sector:	Central Government
Service:	Electronic Vehicle Licensing

Vehicle owners can renew their vehicle license (car-tax) or make a declaration that the vehicle is off the road (Statutory Off Road Notification or SORN) using either the online or automated telephony services. There are about 2.1m transactions per month - the vast majority, about 1.8m, being car-tax renewals. Currently 55% of users use the online service, 2.6% use the telephony service, and 42% use the face-to-face service by visiting the Post Office.

What DVLA Did:

DVLA regularly monitor service usage, including inviting users to provide feedback of their customer experience using focus groups and surveys. Focus groups are arranged through an external agency and every effort is made to match participants to user demographics such as gender, age, race. They are also held in a number of locations to help match geographic demographics and reflect the fact that DVLA offers services across the UK. Independent user research is also commissioned through DfT using external agencies such as MORI.

The outcomes from all this user research is used to inform the design of online services and to ensure that future development reflects user requirements.

Example 1

Market Research commissioned by DfT and undertaken by MORI, identified a preference for paying by credit card. However, when the online service was launched it was not possible for legal reasons to accept credit card payments. Having *identified this legal barrier to using the online service* a legislative change was made. DVLA are now able to accept credit card payments and about 20% of payments are now made using credit cards.

Example 2

One of the bureaucratic barriers to using online services was the need for applicants to provide evidence to prove that certain conditions are met before issuing the tax-disc. DVLA forged partnerships with other organisations (public and private sector) - VOSA for MOT checking, DWP for exemption checking, insurance companies (validation of insurance against the Motor Insurance Database).

DVLA have used the principle of informed consent (i.e. the person making the application consents to the checks being made) in order to be compliant with the Data Protection Act. By

removing the need for applicants to provide paper based evidence to support an application for car-tax DVLA created a *non-bureaucratic solution to identified barrier*.

Example 3

Also based on the principle of informed consent; DVLA worked with HM Passport Office to enable the reuse of digital images, supplied for passport applications, to be used on photo driving licences.

Lessons Learnt:

When developing a new online service it is important to review the product offered rather than replicate the offline service. For example; reviewing the need for a physical tax disc would make the transaction more about 'pay and go' rather than the current 'order and wait' service offered.

Although it is possible to reuse Passport photographs, some people are reluctant to do so and would still prefer to supply a more up to date digital image - wherever possible the customer should be allowed to choose the option that suits their needs. There is currently a project in place to enable more people to use their passport photos by relaxing the rule that a picture needs to be less than 5 years old.

DVLA believe that it will become necessary to remove the face-to-face channel in favour of digital self-service or assisted digital self-service channels. Whilst acknowledging that there are some risks and it will require careful planning, DVLA think that making digital services mandatory should be considered to increase take-up rates and provide a better, more cost effective, service to customers.