



Significant Automotive Industry News of Particular Interest to Fleet Management Executives



## The Fleet Spot

*This Week: William Salter*



**William Salter**  
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 William Salter is the Southeast Regional Sales Manager for

Merchants Leasing, covering a five state territory. William has over twenty years of experience in the fleet management industry and provides total fleet leasing solutions, exceptional service and support to his clients. Previously, William held the Director of Leasing position in the South Florida market for Merchants Leasing. Prior to that, he represented Enterprise Fleet Services as a Regional Sales Manager after working his way up from starting as an Account Executive.

### 1. What is Merchants Leasing's focus in 2007 and what challenges and opportunities do you foresee?

Our challenges and opportunities are really one in the same. Fleet managers are faced with meeting a widening range of criteria when determining the best vehicle(s) for their fleet. And, with a vast vehicle selection to choose from, fuel efficiency issues and continuous enhancements, vehicle decisions can be difficult to make. It may be seen as a challenge to find the right vehicles for our clients, but this also provides an opportunity

for us because we can source any vehicle, and our team has the experience to help our clients make informed decisions. Additionally, a custom approach to leasing programs has become a necessity, and with our experience providing tailored fleet management solutions, we can meet this challenge.

Our focus, as always, is to provide fleet management solutions, customized to meet our clients' needs. Other areas that we are focusing on are expanding our communication channels with fleet managers nationwide. Our new website, (<http://www.merchantsleasing.com>), provides more information, analytical tools and services for fleet managers, to better assist them with their fleet decisions. We are fleet management consultants and as such, need to provide the most useful, up-to-date industry information to our clients.

### 2. What is your assessment of where things are going in the industry right now?

I don't think that there is much of a change from where the fleet industry has been over the last decade or so. Fleet managers have always focused on reducing overall operating costs of their fleets from acquisition to disposal. Certainly with all of the information technology the fleet managers have access to, they now have the ability to

focus and analyze every aspect of managing a fleet of vehicles irrespective of size or vehicle type. The other area of fleet management that is now top of mind is the escalating cost of fuel and how best to squeeze every mile out of a gallon of gas. To that end, we are beginning to see both the foreign and domestic manufactures respond to the demands from the industry to increase their effort towards significant improvement in this area.

### 3. What are you reading and monitoring that is giving you an edge?

In an attempt to stay current and ahead of the curve, I subscribe to all of the industry publications like Automotive Fleet, Fleet Financials, etc. as well as relevant business publications, such as The Wall Street Journal. Additionally, in terms of monitoring, Merchants does an excellent job of conducting ongoing primary and secondary research on the industry and the specific management roles that influence it. We have an ongoing survey process that has proven invaluable in telling us what our customers concerns, challenges and requirements are. This has been very effective and provides, excellent insight for me when I sit down with a fleet management professional. As an organization, Merchants prides itself on being very proactive in this respect.