



## The AA – Case study.

### Background

Today, the AA is in many ways the same motoring organisation that motorists have trusted since 1905. The millions of members makes the AA by far the largest motoring organisation, with more dedicated patrols than anyone else.

The principal difference these days is that the AA now provides a host of services not only to get motorists safely from A to B, but can now offer assistance with organising finance, insurance, driving lessons and even with buying a new or second-hand car.

The now familiar maps, atlases and travel guides also make the AA the UK's biggest travel publisher

The AA and The AA Motoring Trust also provide expert knowledge and advice on transport issues, which are respected by AA members, the public, safety experts and the Government.

### The decision

Attracting and retaining staff is an issue that many employers are now facing. The AA however has long been aware of the need to adopt affordable ways of helping staff and offers a range of benefits from which staff can choose. The company had the instinctive feeling that the new tax exemption on childcare vouchers that came into force in April 2005 would prove to be popular amongst their staff of 8,000.

Although the AA already had a voucher scheme in place it was only available to a small number of staff through their flex package. The company felt it important to select a childcare voucher provider they could rely on, with the systems and capacity to cope with a potentially high take up amongst staff when it decided to open the scheme to much wider audience through salary sacrifice.

Recognising the need for an efficient and timely delivery of what is essentially a part of someone's salary the AA was impressed with the fully automated processes that Sodexho Pass uses to operate its schemes. Linked to this was the high level of customer care on offer to parents and their carers to ensure a smooth provision of service to each stakeholder within the scheme.

The AA did have some genuine concerns about the scheme. Firstly whether the childcare vouchers would be of interest to all staff members and secondly how to get the message about the savings out to a staff that is located in extremely diverse locations throughout the UK – particularly the patrol forces none of whom have access to the AA's intranet.

As has often been shown – the most successful childcare voucher schemes use existing communications channels to get the news across effectively. Working together the AA and Sodexo Pass created editorials and adverts for inclusion in the staff magazine Drive as well as putting info on the bulletin board that remote staff phone in to listen to each week..

Take up amongst staff is good - with a surprisingly good response from the patrol staff – who are mainly men. Childcare has obviously now become an issue for all working parents.