



Dedication at every turn.

## CASE STUDY

# Colonial Williamsburg Foundation: An Outdoor Museum, Thousands of Visitors Strong

**Founded in 1926, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation** is a nonprofit educational institution dedicated to the preservation, restoration and interpretation of the 18th century capital of Virginia. Today, Colonial Williamsburg is the largest living history museum in the United States, with annual attendance exceeding one million.

With hundreds of thousands of visitors and employees populating Colonial Williamsburg's Historic Area, transportation is critical. The Foundation runs 25 buses and more than 200 other vehicles ranging from pick-up trucks, dump trucks, bucket trucks, step vans and passenger vans to company cars, police cruisers, and even four-wheel drive trucks with snowplows.

Before working with Penske Truck Leasing, the Foundation owned and staffed a small facility to maintain and service its fleet. Due to growing fleet demands and a need for a larger, more modern facility, Penske was selected for fleet maintenance and for design of a new maintenance facility. The Foundation sought additional service capabilities in the new facility to accommodate all maintenance needs, particularly those of buses fueled by compressed natural gas (CNG).

### Challenges

- Construct a new facility to accommodate the maintenance needs of all vehicles
- Create a rest area for tour buses and their drivers to reduce area road congestion
- Reduce the average age of the fleet
- Increase fleet uptime

### Solutions

- Penske constructed a new facility to accommodate all vehicle maintenance and servicing, including compressed natural gas fueling
- The facility includes a bus driver lounge and service area offering retail fueling and light maintenance services, which helps tour bus drivers avoid parking on the periphery of the Historic Area

- Penske's maintenance reports and repair order tracking enables the Foundation to make more informed decisions about its future fleet purchases
- Penske's professional and methodical approach to preventive maintenance and employee training helped reduce costs and improve vehicle uptime

### Acting On a Referral

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation contacted Penske about constructing a new facility, after being referred to Penske by GE Capital, its fleet financing provider. While the Foundation first considered other providers, Penske was the clear choice because of its robust bus maintenance capabilities and its know-how concerning facility design and construction for effective accommodation of such a diverse fleet.

Penske's relationship with the Foundation started in 2000 with an outsourced fleet maintenance contract. The relationship expanded to include the full construction and operation of a new facility.

*"[We] like the idea that we can turn to someone when we have a problem. Having professionals with knowledge all over the country that you can call on is particularly advantageous."*

Kurt Reissewer, Fleet Manager

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, Virginia

### Smooth Transition

Penske brought knowledge, experience and professional resources to the partnership. In addition, Penske offered every existing vehicle maintenance employee a job and provided cross training on various types of equipment, making their employment more secure and rewarding. With



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continued training and education, Penske technicians remain knowledgeable on the latest maintenance practices and cost-saving techniques, which improves fleet performance and employee morale.

### **Value-Added Benefits**

When the new facility opened, it was agreed that The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation would own it and Penske would lease space in the main building and surrounding parking areas to provide all maintenance needs to the Foundation. The Foundation receives an additional revenue stream from leasing building space, which partially offsets facility operation costs. The local public bus authority also leases office and parking space, helping to cultivate important relationships with the public and community.

This open-shop facility allows Penske to service other customers. To accommodate a constant stream of business, the facility is staffed with over 20 associates, working two shifts, six days a week, on-call around the clock. Extended hours provide peace-of-mind to the Foundation since its essential transportation operates from about 6 a.m. until 10:30 p.m., with some vehicles always in use.

The new facility, unlike others that Penske leases, is equipped for retail business. Penske accepts credit card payments for tour buses wanting fuel, washing services, restroom disposal treatment, and light maintenance services. Repeat customers can even be direct billed. The CNG fuel island, owned by the Foundation, offers environmentally friendly compressed natural gas to fuel Foundation-owned CNG buses. All of these

conveniences, along with the bus driver lounge, help keep buses away from the Historic Area, thereby reducing emissions and traffic intrusiveness.

### **Continuous Improvement**

Penske's preventive maintenance services are professional and standardized. Vehicles follow proactive maintenance schedules based on extensive knowledge and best practices from original equipment manufacturers and other Penske customers.

Before Penske, the Foundation had limited understanding of maintenance costs. Penske's initial reporting uncovered that the largest cost of bus maintenance was related to the engine, not the air conditioning and handicap lifts as was previously thought. With this knowledge the Foundation can make informed fleet replenishment decisions and train drivers on best practices to help extend vehicle life.

### **A Successful Partnership**

Since 2000, Penske has maintained The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's fleet. Penske's proven maintenance program and seamless development of the new facility confirmed that the Foundation made the right choice. The new facility exceeded the goals of accommodating all service needs for a diverse vehicle fleet, and providing services to tour bus operators.

Collectively, Penske's services aid the Foundation's efforts to reduce the average age of its fleet and lower overall costs. The partnership continues to grow as the Foundation and Penske work together on continuous improvement projects such as customized user-friendly, on-demand reporting.