

E85 Makes Good Business Sense to Minnesota Company

One of the main ingredients to any company's success is to discover what a community is missing and then provide that product or service. That's certainly been the case for Barbara Gentling and Northfield, situated approximately 45 miles from Minneapolis, Minnesota.

"Three years ago I conducted a survey and realized that Northfield had a need for more transportation choices, so I started Care Tenders, Incorporated," Gentling said.

The company addresses three specific community needs.

"Although Northfield is a community of only 18,000, we have two colleges: St. Olaf and Carleton. The airport shuttle aspect of the business, running between Minneapolis and Northfield, is ideal for students, faculty and anyone else needing transportation to and from the Minneapolis airport," Gentling said.

In addition, Care Tenders provides specialized transportation for small groups wanting to travel within a 100-mile radius of Northfield.

"We try to give groups of up to 25 whatever they want in terms of specialized transportation. For example, we recently had a group of Scandinavians ask us to take them to various cemeteries to research the Scandinavian heritage of this area," Gentling explained. "We're also about 60 miles from the world-famous Mayo Clinic – a frequently requested destination for this service."

The third service Care Tenders provides is home and community service, such as taking the elderly and those unable to drive to the bank, the post office, doctor appointments, grocery shopping, or to run errands.

To accommodate these diverse needs, Care Tenders has a fleet of six minivans, three of which are Chrysler Group vehicles: a 1999 Dodge Caravan, a 2000 Plymouth Voyager and a 2001 Dodge Caravan. All three run on 85 percent ethanol fuel. The use of this natural and renewable resource makes perfect sense to Gentling.



Barbara Gentling, Founder of Care Tenders

"With us being a college town, there's a great deal of emphasis on environmental issues. We're finding that E85 is less expensive, currently 25-30 cents a gallon cheaper than regular unleaded gasoline. Plus, people in this area raise corn, so there's a big push in the community for increasing the use of this fuel," she explained.

According to Gentling, the vehicles are averaging fuel economy of approximately 28 miles per gallon. And all three vehicles are performing as good as – or better than – the day the company first acquired them.

"We have 270,000 miles on the '99 Caravan and it runs and performs better than some of the other vehicles in the fleet. It has been fueled almost exclusively with E85," Gentling stated.

Having experienced firsthand the benefits of using flexible-fuel vehicles (FFVs), would she recommend them to others? You bet.

"I would recommend FFVs to friends and relatives because we've been very pleased with the vehicles. We're also seeing more ethanol filling stations going up, which will make refueling more convenient.

"Besides the financial benefit of using the E85 fuel, it's good to know that we're doing something that's better for the environment and better for the community," Gentling concluded.

For a list of flexible-fuel Chrysler and Dodge fleet vehicles, visit our Web site at www.fleet.chrysler.com. Or please call the DaimlerChrysler Fleet Information Center at 1-800-999-FLEET.

. . . Who is Your Potential Customer?

GENERATION Y'ER AND E85

When buying his Ranger at North Country Ford, the salesman did mention it could run on E85. But, Jacob Taylor didn't really know what it was all about until he received the Minnesota E85 Team's invitation to try "Free E85" at the Holiday Stationstore off the Interstate 35 Spirit Mountain exit in Duluth.



Why are these nice people smiling?
They use E85.

FAMILY FUELS ON E85

Rick and Cheryl Molenaar fuel their S10 and Yukon XL with E85 at the Freedom Value Center in Hutchinson. Cheryl is a teacher and Rick, who was raised on a farm, is a pilot for Northwest Airlines.

COUPLE CHOOSES E85

"I heard about E85 on the news one evening," says Marilyn Gravelle. "About a month later, I saw the Road and Leaf logo on the side of our Taurus and remembered the story . . . I hadn't thought we could actually use it."

Now, Marilyn and her husband, Robert, use only E85. Marilyn tells the story of pulling into an E85 station and being amazed to see 5 flexible fuel vehicles filling up with gas. "I wanted to jump out and tell them all they could use E85," she says with a chuckle. "Our car seems to run better with E85 and E85 is usually about 20 cents cheaper in our area. We love it. We should all be more reliant on American-made fuels from American crops."

"I like E85. Its environment-friendly," states the University of Minnesota Duluth student. "It runs cheaper than gasoline and I haven't noticed a mileage difference . . . I just wish you could get it at more stations."

Jacob made E85 the topic of his final speech for public speaking class this spring. "We were supposed to give a speech that was informative and persuasive. My belief is that all new cars should be able to use E85 . . . I guess the speech worked because after class, I had a lot of people asking me if their cars could use E85."



BUILDER POWERED BY E85

Bruce Olson of **Northland Buildings** drives this flex fuel Chevy S-10, spreading the word about E85 as he travels throughout the state. Bruce's message is a simple, but clear one—our dependence on Middle East oil hurts the U.S.

