



Paul Dassen, Athlon Car Lease 'We drive credit management efficiency with OnGuard'

Athlon Car Lease is undergoing a sustained period of growth and internal transformation and thus evaluating the technology employed across its operations. OnGuard has proven to be effective in delivering business benefits and real return on investment for years in the Dutch head office. Today it has therefore been implemented to five other countries and preparing more global divisions to follow.

Results

- Centralised oversight
- Customised platform
- Highly tailored to local needs
- Able to support any size of operation
- Closer control over debtors portfolio's
- Minimising time chasing unpaid invoices
- Adjustable parameters
- Subtle and consistent approach

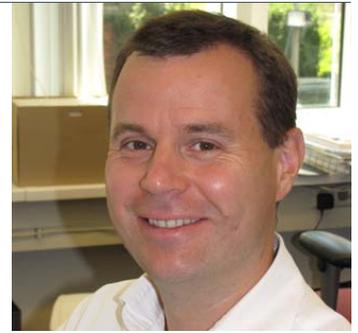
Paul Dassen, Credit Manager Athlon Car lease

- 'We now have one tool that steers our staff across all entities'
- 'Proactive credit management with sensitivity to ensure we maintain our relationships.'
- 'OnGuard allows us to follow an effective debtor strategy.'
- 'In OnGuard we have a solution that not only performs well, but allows us to be proactive in our approach to credit management.'



Paul Dassen:

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Centralised insight

Paul Dassen, Vice President of Credit Risk Management at Athlon Car Lease International: "Our strategy is to adopt an international approach to our operations, and follow best practice, especially within business-critical areas such as credit management and credit risk." Dassen continues:

"As we have grown internationally it has become crucial to have a centralised insight of credit management."

Across all entities

OnGuard's solution has been implemented at Athlon's operations in The Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Italy and Spain. According to Dassen, its experience with using the system in the Netherlands has proved crucial to an effective rollout at its other global divisions and has ensured that a customised platform is delivered. "It was important for us that the OnGuard team recognised the knowledge our staff were able to contribute, and they have drawn on this experience to ensure the solutions deployed are highly-tailored to our local needs." Athlon's operations differ in size across countries, with some leasing as many as 125,000 vehicles, whereas others operate much smaller fleets of about 5,000.

However, using OnGuard, the company is able to support any size of operation, whilst the cost efficiencies remain consistent. "An important factor is the efficiency gains we have been able to make in several countries, and also those that we expect to make once the new systems are operational," confirms Dassen. "We now have one tool that steers our staff across all entities."

Sophisticated profiles

Proactive, positive credit management is playing a key role in allowing Athlon Car Lease to manage its financial exposure and stimulate cash flow, while also providing it with closer control over debtors' portfolios and minimizing time spent chasing unpaid invoices. "Risk management has become an increasingly important area for us following

the economic downturn and, in credit risk particularly, it is essential that it is handled professionally and customers given the contact required" says Dassen. Implementing OnGuard's software solutions has enabled Athlon to build a sophisticated profile of customers, including payment terms, historic payment behaviour, disputes raised and credit scores. It has also helped predict when its customers may be getting into difficulty by spotting – and anticipating – early warning signs or red flags. "OnGuard allows us to follow an effective debtor strategy " says Dassen

Monitoring red flags

The OnGuard software includes parameters that raises red flags according to specific business models and in respect of local credit conditions and payment processes. Credit and payment periods vary from country to country and in some countries late payments are a simple business reality. Payment methods vary across regions and certain countries employ distinct practices entirely, for example the Italian RIBA (Electronic Bank Receipt) and the French TBF (Transferts Banque de France). Payment cultures are also discrete, including the point at which collection agencies are engaged and the perceived acceptable length of the collections process. Certain types of customers, local governments with multiple layers of management and approval processes versus smaller private companies, need to be dealt with in different ways. OnGuard can accommodate these subtleties while providing a consistent approach at a group level. "OnGuard is a solution that allows us to be proactive in our approach to credit management. This allows us to keep arrears as low as possible, and identify at an early stage if there is an issue with a customer, and handle the situation with sensitivity to ensure we maintain our close relationships," concludes Dassen. "The end result is that we can keep any potential losses to a minimum, apply late payment charges efficiently, and improve the bottom line."