

The unCustomer Focus - Bad Profits

My daughter just returned home from studying abroad this summer and was hit with a \$653.68 fee for a 3-day car rental. While the author is all about the right for companies to make a profit, this is an example of outright fleecing. Let me explain.

When she reserved the car 6 weeks in advance, she was quoted \$176.15 (and charged) that included 3-days of unlimited mileage; liability and fire insurance; and 20% sales tax. We were thinking she would have additional fees for when she opted for a GPS at the local airport counter and for additional gas given a 6a return time because of an early flight. Yes, we thought \$176.15 plus GPS rental plus gas if she was unable to find an open gas station.

Here's what we didn't know:

- \$44.19 **Local GPS Rental** (higher fee if you rent the GPS at the counter versus when you reserved the car);
- \$40.81 Local **Environmental Fee** for renting an automatic versus a standard. She had selected an automatic at the time she had reserved the car;
- \$91.55 **Collision and Death Insurance** mandated locally (she did NOT want or need this insurance);
- \$45.59 **Airport Pick-up Fee** which was the location selected at the time she reserved the car;
- \$122.48 **Young Driver Fee** for being under 25, again an input known at the time she reserved the car.

She was also charged \$21.23 for returning the car with less than a half tank and \$21.01 for the gas to fill the tank. Both these charges, albeit high, were understood as a possibility beforehand.

When she received the additional credit card charges 2 weeks AFTER returning the car, my daughter called the rental car company to better understand the additional \$460 charges. They told her that they will look in to the \$91.55 insurance fee, but all the above mentioned fees were in the terms and conditions right before she purchased her reservation. Yes, that 5 page 6pt font that you should all read prior to clicking "Purchase".

Really? I guess she learned more than what was on the syllabus this summer.....