

## Tech Tip Tuesday—February 19, 2019

### LCT Las Vegas

A continuing reminder that we will be exhibiting at the LCT Show in Las Vegas at the end of March. As usual, we expect to have our user meeting the afternoon of Sunday, March 24<sup>th</sup> (details will be forthcoming once we confirm the room, etc. with LCT—this is taking waaaay longer than we had hoped). We also encourage you to participate in the Limo Patriot Ride ([www.limopatriotride.com](http://www.limopatriotride.com) for more details).

### IMPORTANT - Google Maps Update

As we have previously announced, since last summer Google has made a lot of changes to the way they charge for usage, and we are also making some changes to accommodate.

Livery Coach uses mapping data in a variety of ways:

- Tracking the location of your chauffeur (using iChauffeur) and presenting it on a map.

- Calculating ETA of upcoming trips to make sure trips won't be late

- Verifying the address of a Pickup, Stop, or DropOff

- Calculating the route of a future trip

- Looking up the name and location of a "Place" as an addition to your internal Locations/Points of Interest table

- Determining TimeZone of farmed out trips

When we began charging an optional "Google Maps" license fee a few years ago, it was to cover the costs we had to pay Google for tracking locations of chauffeurs. We purchased a bulk "asset tracking" license (for which we paid up front), and then recovered our costs by charging \$4/month/iChauffeur license. This license (what we paid, and what we charged), **only covered chauffeur location tracking**.

It did NOT cover address verification, route calculation for future trips, looking up the name/location of a place, or timezone lookups.

For a time, Google allowed these uses on a limited basis without a license key, but that all changed last June. Since that time, Livery Coach has been subsidizing this use (and paying a big monthly bill from Google) because Google's change was fairly sudden, and we didn't have a good mechanism of separating out the asset tracking use (for which you paid us) and the other uses (for which you hadn't).

While we were determining what to do about that usage, we were then informed that Google would not be renewing our asset tracking license when it expires this March. Instead, we would be converted to a "pay as you go" model, and our estimated cost would increase approximately 2700%. (Unfortunately, that's not a typo)

The simplest thing to do would have been to just get out of the Google licensing business altogether, refund each of you your future licensing payments to us, and just let each of you pay Google directly for this. But with a 27x increase in costs, we were concerned that this would greatly raise your map license costs, so we continued to search for an alternative.

We are happy to announce that we have reached an agreement with a mapping company called MapBox, and have nearly completed the coding necessary to convert the chauffeur tracking maps to the MapBox system. (MapBox is used by companies such as Lonely Planet, SnapChat, Weather.com, Bloomberg, and Lyft, among others.)

While this new solution is quite a bit more expensive than Google (before the price increase), it's a lot cheaper than Google would be after the price increase.

Therefore, we will be able to continue with our existing model of charging a fee per iChauffeur per month and then having a master asset license for maps.

At this time, we do not anticipate any change in the \$4/iChauffeur/month map license charge.

We will be rolling out updates for both Livery Coach and the apps in early March to reflect this change.

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

## **SUMMARY:**

You need your own Google Maps license for address verification, advance routing, and points of interest. For more information, see

<http://www.liverycoach.com/TechTips/2019/2019%20129%20Google%20Maps%20update.pdf>

Livery Coach will continue to provide (optional) mapping related to tracking of chauffeurs at the existing price of \$4/month/iChauffeur.