rest of the travel industry like the work of artisans and cinema owners. They do. But not for much longer. Epstein’s base rate for a weekly rental came to a reasonable $280. But then the car rental company added daily and weekly surcharges, including “government supersedes” of $25, a “reconnaissance fee of $54,” plus a $2 “no-show licence fee,” a $1 “energy surcharge,” an $11 “facility charge,” a $10 motor vehicle license fee, and a $64 state sales tax. By then the cost was $411. “That’s 46 percent increase,” he says. He believes that customers wouldn’t tolerate that kind of nickel-and-dime charging. “Imagine going to the grocery store and getting paid when you check out,” he says. “In addition to the cost of the food, there’s a fee for delivering your food to the store, the space for the cash register and a fraction of the bill for keeping the refrigerators cold. This is what rental car companies are doing.”

There’s good news for motorists like Epstein. There’s good news for motorists like Epstein. "That’s the takeaway for people renting cars in that part of the country," he says. "That kind of pricing has no place in the car rental business." So why isn’t everyone showing an all-in price? Yet times take its move from the old way to the new one. Some companies still withhold fee information until late in the booking — a process called “drop pricing” — for competitive reasons. It makes it easier to lock a few dollars lower, enterprising travelers who may not pay attention to the details of a deal. But that competitive edge is rapidly disappearing. Car rental companies are moving from a way to sell travel in a way that the site compare rates on a matrix. "You can’t fool the matrix," Epstein says. "It won’t in the future. Industry newcomers and online travel agencies will want to find out if there is a better deal. You can’t negotiate taxes and junk fees off your bill, but you can ensure that the price you’re quoted — and not a penny more — is the price you pay."