

“MICHIMO” A round-trip transport tool that considers the environment and characteristics of the local area

Asuka Village



Situation

The Asuka region of Nara Prefecture is a travel destination to which about 800,000 people visit every year. Since tourist spots are scattered around a vast area of hills and mountains, a more functional round-trip transportation system became necessary. Tourists were mainly using rental bicycles, public buses or privately-owned cars, but those means of transport did not help tourists to see many sights. Consequently, the introduction of a fresh round-trip means of transport was considered.



Action

Ultra-compact vehicles were introduced as a new round-trip transportation system. Ultra-compact vehicles are more compact than ordinary vehicles and can easily make tight turns. They have a capacity of two persons, consume only about one-sixth of the energy used by ordinary automobiles and emit no CO2. This high environmental performance aligns with the characteristics and features of the Asuka region. They are rented out to tourists in front of Kintetsu Asuka Station, one of the gateways to sightseeing in Asuka.



Impact

- Since the introduction of the system, about 1,000 vehicles have consistently operated every year. Round-trip transportation that considers both tourist convenience and the environment has gained wider recognition.
- Opportunities have been created for citizens to learn about and experience ultra-compact vehicles, which have yet to be sufficiently introduced in Japan.