

2022 Craziest expenses

Corporate expense policies vary significantly, and while some are less restrictive than others, there's always a limit to what can be reimbursed. Emburse surveyed folks* involved in the expense reporting process for the craziest and most controversial submissions they encountered in 2022.

How would your organisation's policies approve these gems?



My room has a zipper

£80

Rather than expense £664 for a hotel room (options were limited), one good steward bought a tent to sleep in for the night.

Approved? No. Although the VP initially approved, Accounting later declined.

Receipting hair lines

£160

Profit margins weren't the only thing a VP wanted to grow when he expensed his monthly dues to a hair restoration club.

Approved? No.

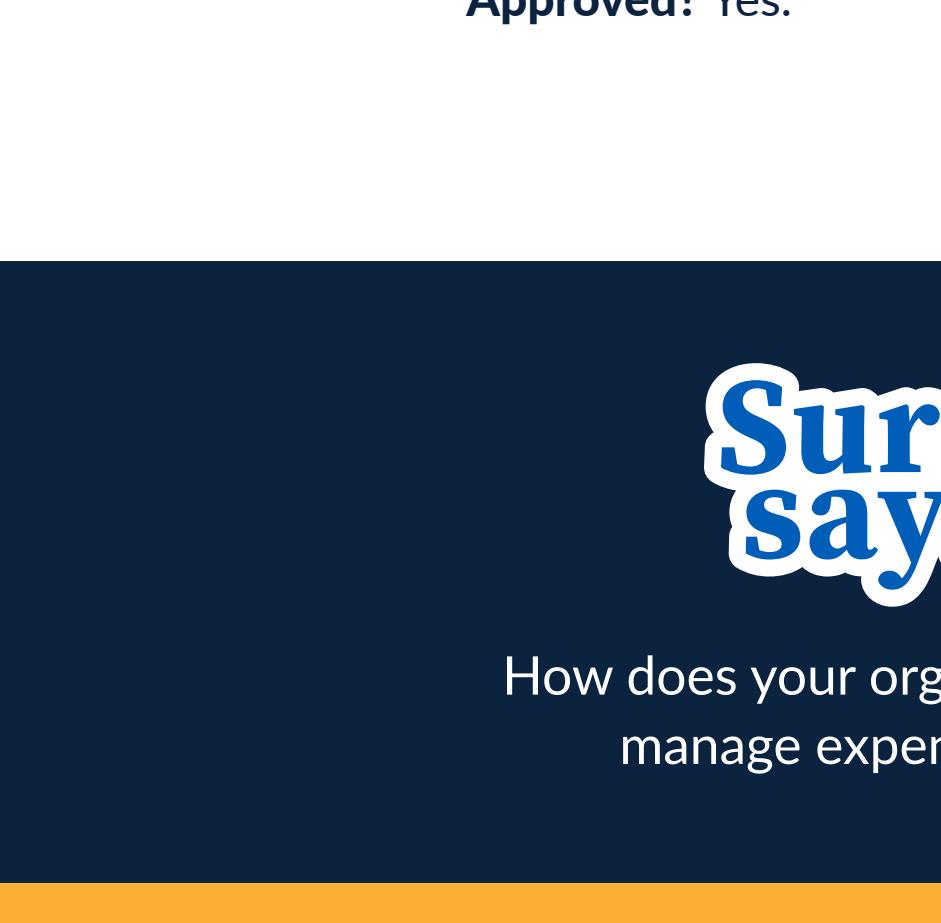


Replace what you didn't break

£60,227

A rental company falsely convinced an employee he had to purchase a car that got totalled in a parking lot before receiving a new one.

Approved? No. Accounting intervened and called the rental company's bluff when the employee's credit card was not accepted.

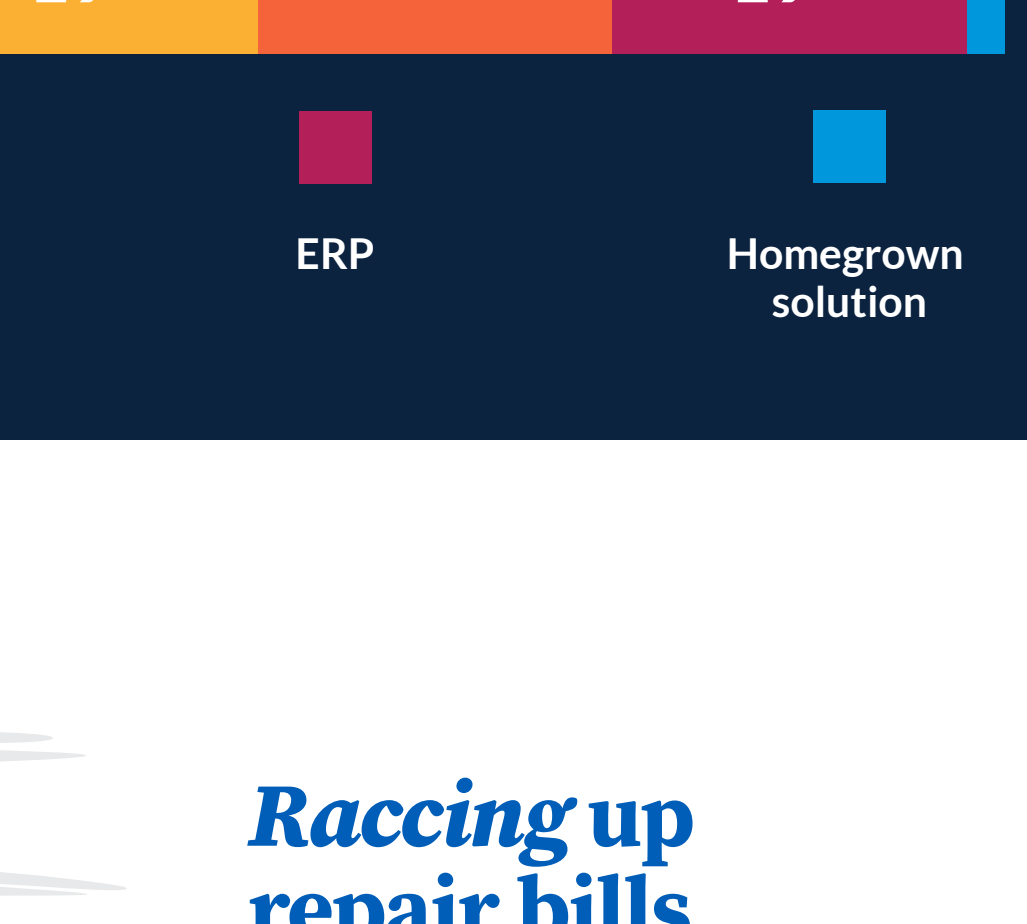


Surviving on dorm room cuisine

£35

To endure a COVID-19 quarantine while on business overseas, one traveller stocked up on three cases of ramen noodles for his meals.

Approved? Yes.



Survey says...

How does your organization currently manage expense reporting?



Racing up repair bills

£565

Nature delayed one business trip when a large raccoon jumped in front of an employee's car and damaged the engine.

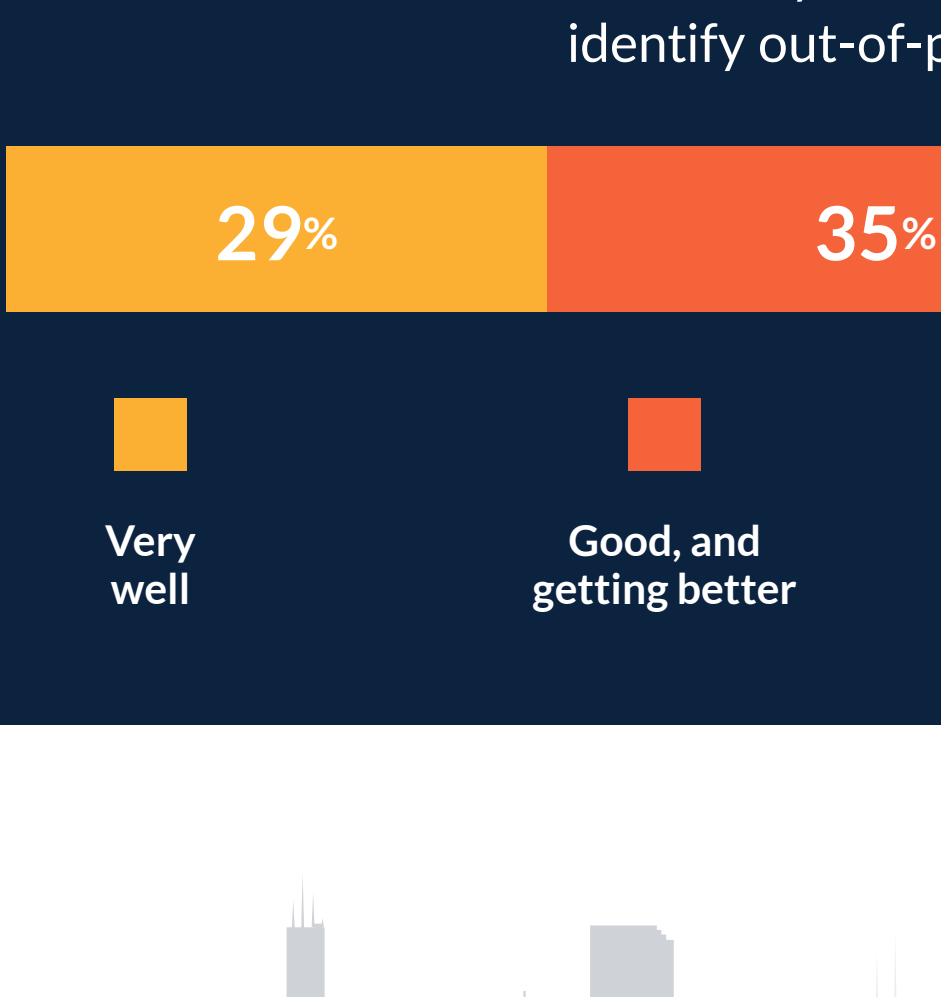
Approved? Yes.

How do you say "second gear" in German?

£3,600

While on business in Europe, a traveler killed his stick-shift rental and got charged for the repairs and the days it took to fix.

Approved? Yes.



Bugging out in an airport bathroom

£60

After learning the apartment he inspected was mid-treatment for bedbugs, a man turned a new tracksuit and some alcohol wipes into a makeshift delousing kit before flying home.

Approved? Yes.

Doubling your first impression

£145,000

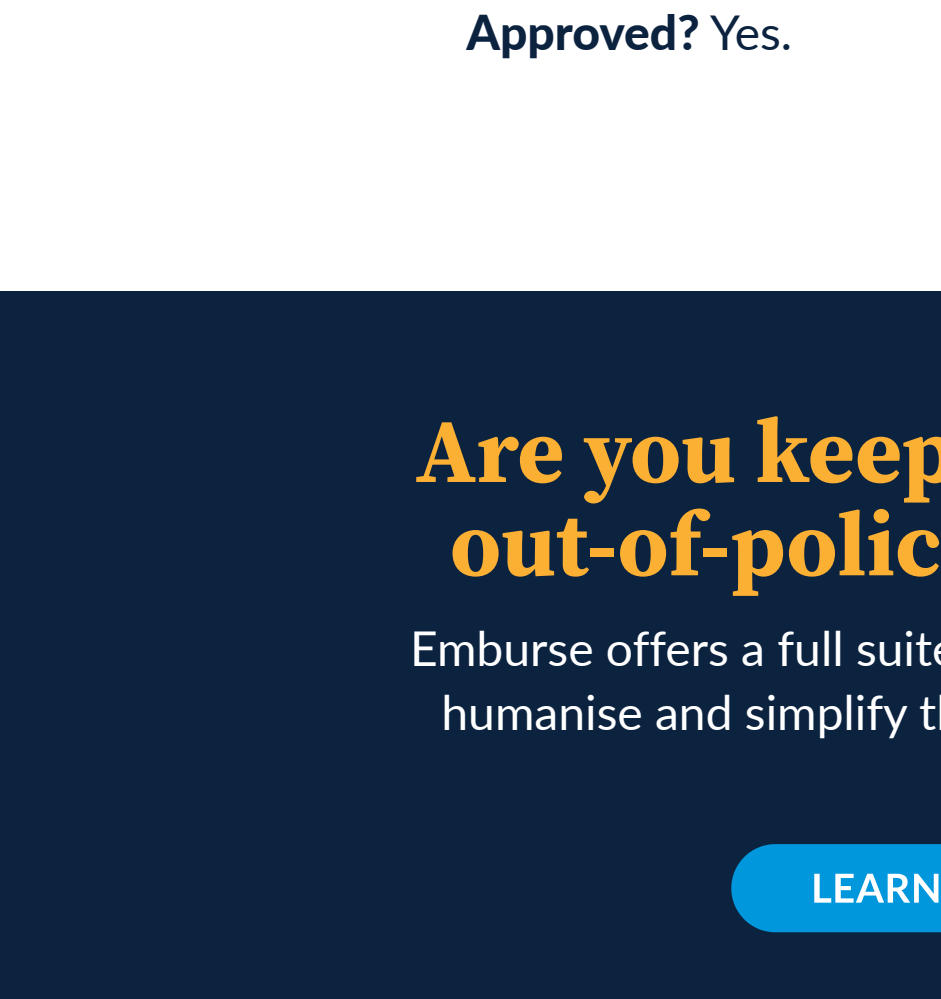
Adding European flair to a company involved with North American auto shows, an employee put two BMWs on his personal card to impress a client.

Approved? Yes. Leadership later changed the expense policy and invoiced the cars to the client.



Survey says...

How effectively does your current process identify out-of-policy expenses?



Document your expenses, please

£40,300

Some ideas float better than others, as proven when a Chicago-based team hosted an event for media members aboard a rented boat.

Approved? Yes.

One destination. Different gates.

£12,000

A cancelled flight home from a Colorado conference motivated one manager to book alternate travel for 75 employees on different airlines.

Approved? Yes.



Signed, sealed, delayed

£0.73

A pandemic-delayed expense for postage was turned in 15 months after mailing the correspondence by an employee who lives in a £5M house.

Approved? Yes, though the approver did so begrudgingly.

The write way to annoy accounting

£0.40

All the ink at home must have dried up, which led to an employee expensing a single pencil from his local office supply store.

Approved? Yes.



Are you keeping ahead of out-of-policy expenses?

Emburse offers a full suite of solutions designed to humanise and simplify the process for everyone.

[LEARN MORE](#)

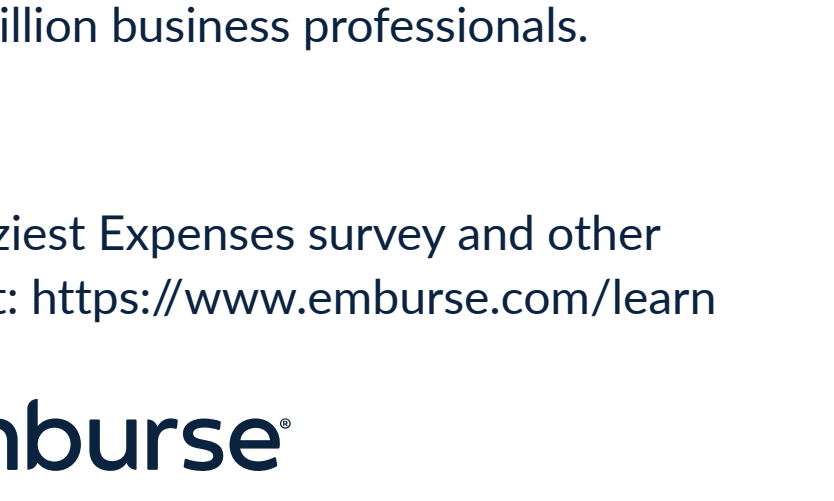
Too good to be untrue

Respondents were also asked to share some of the most legendary and controversial submissions they know of. Would you approve these expenses?



Right-down-the-road warrior

Time is money when you're in sales, as observed by an approver who received a single short-haul mileage expense of **£1.33** after an employee drove to a pitch meeting.



Moving back to the office

Feeling the company was liable for their return to the office costs after working from home, someone requested reimbursement for **£8K** worth of new office furnishings—and a washer/dryer combo.

Membership has its privileges

Because he couldn't get into an airport lounge with his corporate card, a man expensed the **£400** membership fee to start a new personal card, on which he charged a passenger seat upgrade to gain access.

Sneaking the spouse overseas

Perhaps motivated by the romantic promise of a trip to Paris, one devoted partner submitted an expense for his wife's **£1,700** accompanying airfare.

Survey participant demographics

Emburse collected data for its Craziest Expenses survey in the fourth quarter of 2022.

Organization size

Role in expense processing

Role in expense approval process

*Survey participants we're mostly US-based, and original expense amounts in USD have been converted to GBP.

About Emburse

Emburse is the leader in spend optimization. Our expense, travel management, purchasing and AP, and payments solutions are trusted by over 12 million business professionals.

To learn more about the Craziest Expenses survey and other reports by Emburse, please visit: <https://www.emburse.com/learn>