



Maximising ROI on fleet management

Through careful selection and implementation of fleet management systems, businesses can achieve better visibility of operations and make significant improvements in operational efficiency to realise rapid return on their initial investment.

Regardless of the size or nature of your vehicle fleet, there is a variety of benefits instantly available through the effective use of telematics. Greater visibility and control over your mobile assets can help to slash operating costs, boost employee productivity and develop lasting relationships with customers.

Often, cost is viewed as the major barrier for businesses looking to take advantage of such efficiencies but, in reality, your initial investment can reap rewards within a relatively short period of time. Typically, companies are able to realise ROI within eight to 12 months of installation – if not sooner.



Tailoring technology to increase returns

Achieving swift return from your fleet management system depends on careful planning and selection.

Many buyers work under the misconception that all solutions offer similar benefits, which means the market becomes increasingly price sensitive as a result. By making cost their sole concern, poorly-advised businesses often find themselves paying for technology which is under-utilised or inappropriate for their particular needs.

The core functionality that has driven the adoption of technology from the outset remains, but an ever-growing wealth of information has enabled solutions to become increasingly bespoke.

A quicker route to reduced costs

At a basic level, cost savings can be achieved through smarter navigation. By taking advantage of live traffic information and dynamic routing, drivers can avoid congestion and select the quickest, most efficient route from A to B, cutting average journey times by up to 14 per cent.

The resultant benefits are clear. Less time on the road means reduced fuel bills, increased productivity and less wear and tear on vehicles. Furthermore, you will be able to strengthen links with customers by providing accurate ETAs and using extra man hours to fit more jobs into the working day.

When allied with the depth of information provided by effective vehicle tracking, the effect is only magnified. Integrated tracking and navigation provides the visibility and control needed to efficiently manage a workforce that is constantly on the move.



Keeping an eye on your assets

Even greater gains in productivity can be made from knowing exactly where each of your vehicles is at any given time. Improved fleet visibility allows you to send the right person with the right skills and the right tools to each job, removing the need to contact each driver individually when allocating work.

A quick glance at your fleet management dashboard provides all the necessary information to streamline job scheduling and improve response times. That can bring immediate financial benefits for fleets tied to strict service level agreements, but also has clear implications in terms of customer satisfaction.

By ensuring job schedules are adhered to and customers are provided with up-to-date information, your organisation can be positioned as an industry leader in service provision.

Smart advancements in fleet management

The job dispatch element of telematics is further enhanced when combined with job scheduling, offering the scope to pre-load a day's work on to a driver's sat nav. With destinations already loaded, all the driver has to do is touch the screen to activate a job and report on completion to have the next job immediately allocated. Furthermore, itinerary planning allows schedules and routes to take into account hundreds of defined waypoints if vehicles are required to follow a specific plan. Drivers can be given extremely detailed instructions, down to individual streets, to ensure vehicles stick to pre-defined routes.

Telent, the UK rail network's leading technology services supplier, introduced fleet management technology in a bid to improve workflow management and cut the time taken to allocate jobs to the right team by 80% - from 75 minutes to just 15 minutes.

Giving drivers the information they need to optimise performance has been taken to new levels in recent times. Data on everything from fuel consumption, CO2 emissions and RPM to gear selection and idling can be viewed in real time by management or in historic reports that measure a driver's performance against pre-defined business targets. Now, drivers have access to the same data while behind the wheel and alerts on their in-cab sat nav devices make them aware how driving habits can negatively affect the bottom line.

Evidence for the technology's success in producing greener, safer drivers is unequivocal. Zenith Hygiene Systems realised savings of £218,000 per year on fuel costs alone following the introduction of a fleet management system. The cleaning and hygiene specialist also reduced CO2 emissions by 597 tonnes - equivalent to 1,000 return lorry trips between London and Manchester - and saved £50,000 in maintenance costs. A lower risk profile also allowed Zenith to slash its annual insurance premium by £60,000.



A variety of ways to reward investment

There are also substantial cost benefits associated with logging vehicle usage. By easily distinguishing between business and private mileage for your mobile workforce, you can reduce tax liabilities and improve HR practice.

The HMRC's rules on benefit-in-kind taxation demand that accurate records are kept to prove whether a fleet is made available to drivers for personal use and fines can be imposed on both businesses and their employees if they fall foul of the law.

Considering the wide-ranging applications of fleet management technology, businesses are well-equipped to realise ROI in a diverse array of logistical ways.

Even service companies with relatively modest mobile workforces have demonstrated annual savings of tens of thousands of pounds through improved efficiencies and reduced costs.

Importantly, those benefits are lasting and carefully selected, future-proof solutions will ensure you remain well-placed to tackle the ever-changing economic landscape.