

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT TECHNOLOGY FOR YOUR FLEET.



There is no silver-bullet solution for every fleet. To make the right decisions, explore various technology solutions and your specific operation and capabilities to optimize data-driven results for your company's fleet.

ABOUT ENTERPRISE FLEET MANAGEMENT

Owned by the Taylor family of St. Louis, Mo., Enterprise Fleet Management operates a network of more than 50 fully-staffed offices and manages a fleet of more than 470,000 vehicles in the U.S. and Canada. The business provides full-service fleet management for companies, government agencies and organizations operating medium-sized fleets of 20 or more vehicles, as well as those seeking an alternative to employee reimbursement programs. Enterprise Fleet Management supplies most makes and models of cars, light- and medium-duty trucks and service vehicles across North America.

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The size of the fleet isn't the single factor to determining the need for outsourcing fleet management. Fundamentally, outsourcing makes sense for companies of all sizes. While the fleet may be an integral part of the business, it's likely a necessary consequence or a means of operating the business.



Expanding your business to offer services in new markets or growing the number of employees to answer more demand may require adding more service locations, which may create logistical challenges. If the business needs to add or remove employees to meet new business needs, what's the best way to flex the fleet? Would the manager have time to handle additional vehicle maintenance, unexpected accidents, fuel expenses, recalls, or operational demands related to selling vehicles or driver training?

Technology has become the cornerstone of effective and efficient fleet management. In fact, it's become so important, that the number of technological solutions available to fleet managers can make the process of choosing the right solution a seemingly overwhelming and daunting challenge.

But the right technology is worth the effort. It allows companies to track and monitor all aspects of their fleets and make more informed and proactive decisions, such as anticipating required maintenance to minimize downtime or finding the most optimal time to replace an existing vehicle. When applied correctly, the right technology can help organizations save thousands of dollars per vehicle each year.

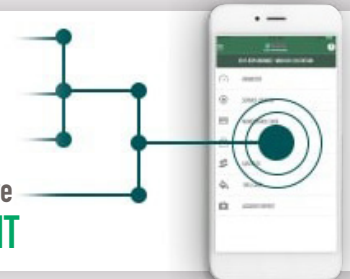
Technology also helps improve safety with the ability to capture data related to both the vehicle and driver performance, including:

- Mileage
- Maintenance expenses
- Fuel use
- Route optimization
- Seat-belt usage
- Harsh braking
- Idling

Fleet Technology Benefit

66%

of respondents reported that they have
RECOUPED THEIR INVESTMENT



It's not just day-to-day operations that have been impacted by fleet technology. Most fleets report a benefit to the bottom line. A recent C.J. Driscoll & Associates study of 500 U.S. fleets and their use of GPS technology titled "2017-18 Survey of Fleet Operator Interest in MRM Systems and Services" found 66% of respondents reported that they have recouped their investment, some in as little as six months. One fleet reported that its ongoing monthly return on investment has been about \$50,000 per month¹.

Ultimately, making the right technology-informed decisions give fleets key insights to learn more about their total cost of ownership (TCO) of vehicles and other operational aspects of the fleet.

However, if the staff person managing the fleet doesn't know what technology is best suited for the individual fleet's operations, doesn't know how to use the technology, or doesn't know what data points offer the best insights, the technology will ultimately be more of a hindrance than a help.

When approaching a fleet technology buying decision, there is no one-size-fits-all solution for every fleet — and there is no silver bullet that will address all of your fleet’s challenges or decisions. To make the most of technology platforms, expertise and experience are critical. A fleet management company (FMC) can help companies make the right decisions about technology and data management to enhance efficiency and the bottom line.



CHOOSING A CRITERIA

For technologies to enhance a fleet, it’s critical to choose a solution that can be customized to the company’s specific needs.

“Technology decisions really depend on the needs of the particular fleet, the diversity of the fleet, the size of the fleet, and how and in which ways technology can be engaged to really accomplish their goals,” says Jeff Schuchardt, Vice President of Information Technology at Enterprise Fleet Management.

He notes that the correct use of technology can impact a number of operational factors, such as minimizing downtime for drivers and vehicles.

To get started, fleet managers, their stakeholders, and their fleet management partners need to answer some fundamental questions about the fleet, including:

- How are we currently tracking current vehicle performance (such as mileage and maintenance), and how could the process be improved?
- What is the purpose of the technology and what vehicle and overall fleet data will help make us more efficient?
- Who needs to have access to the data and who will make actionable decisions based on the output?
- Can the technology integrate with the company’s existing software solutions?
- How will drivers use the technology?

A PROFESSIONAL FMC CAN PROVIDE GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT FOR A COMPANY TO MAKE THE MOST INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT HOW TO USE DATA TO REDUCE OPERATIONAL COSTS.

Answering these and a variety of other questions are just the beginning. Fleet managers also need to determine strategies for how data will be applied, and, in turn, make decisions that will impact operations and staff prior to implementing a new technology. Today’s advanced technological solutions can deliver far more data than fleet and company personnel may want or need — creating a data avalanche that is difficult to handle.

Fleet and company stakeholders need to determine what and how much data they need to measure the effectiveness of their operation. A professional FMC can provide guidance and support for a company to make the most informed decisions about how to use data to reduce operational costs.



Many FMCs offer state-of-the-art technology, however, there are few companies that offer the technology along with a dedicated account manager, such as Enterprise Fleet Management, who will help the company decipher data and turn it into actionable solutions for their fleet.

If the technology isn't furthering the mission of the company, then it likely isn't the right fit or isn't being leveraged effectively. In a few cases, technology could even be a hindrance, particularly, if it isn't being used correctly. And even if the technology would benefit the fleet's mission, it may still not be a fit if:

- Drivers won't use it.
- Management won't support it.
- There's no possibility of integrating or scaling the solution.

Additionally, if the company invests in a fleet software solution, it is crucial that the technology is scalable, safe, and secure.

"Fleets should consider, for example, do I need a lot of separate software elements to run that solution — because software can change so often — or do I just need a website or a smartphone to enable my company or my drivers to leverage the technology that Enterprise Fleet Management or other fleet management companies can provide? You want to make sure it's easily scalable," says Schuchardt. "The internet isn't going anywhere, but a specific technology around a particular piece of software that changes over time could become outdated and hold you and your fleet back. You want to make sure that it's obviously safe and secure, but also scalable with the tools I already own."

By utilizing existing software from an established and trusted FMC partner, you are leveraging technology the fleet management company has invested millions of dollars to develop, with the goal of scaling as the company's fleet expands or grows.

CREATING A TECHNOLOGY 'PANE OF GLASS'

The ability to integrate various technology solutions can be a major benefit to some companies — particularly related to operational costs.

"You can certainly look at exceptions and outliers to various things, whether that's costs, utilization, or maintenance, etc. It provides a nice single 'pane of glass' to consolidate all of that information around the fleet and the expenditures," says Schuchardt. "And so that's where we see the integration of all that data really helping provide that view for the customer both from within our site or even data they may extract from the site to use downstream in their own systems to do project costing or other cost accounting."

Because a dedicated account manager works to understand what's most important to a client's business, he or she can help provide valuable insight to the data available through the technology, even making recommendations about how a company can integrate it into their internal systems.



FOR EXAMPLE:

The company can set up billing codes and/or identifiers for each vehicle to help with cost accounting in their internal system, or expedite the payment of a bill if they need to charge to a specific job code. Having those customizations integrated into the fleet technology will save time and money. One of the benefits of integration is giving a true TCO analysis of the entire fleet operation — not just how much it costs to run the vehicle daily — but other costs such as license and title, and tax-related expenses.



While integrated technology can give crucial insights into the operation of the vehicle, it also makes the fleet more driver-centric — with the ability to monitor productivity and behind-the-wheel behaviors. In effect, advanced fleet management technology integrates drivers with their vehicles while they are operating it, providing important insights of both driving and worksite behavior. The result is full, three-dimensional insight into the fleet operation, such as the number of on-time arrivals, time onsite, and the number of jobs successfully completed. All of this data can be used to help improve routing, help driver-employees do their work more efficiently, and, ultimately, improve the revenue per job.





GETTING EVERYONE INVOLVED

Technology decisions should not be made by one person, particularly since the choices made by fleet personnel can touch many other aspects of the company from sales to service, risk to accounting. The fleet department should involve all stakeholders in the technology decision-making process.

These decisions should be made collaboratively with goals of the entire organization being established, which will help inform the type of technology necessary to solve the fleet's immediate and long-term challenges.

LOOKING AHEAD: TECHNOLOGY AND THE FLEET'S FUTURE



Many fleets implement technology to solve a specific problem — typically related to the needs of a growing company or fleet operation. While implementing a technology designed to meet a near-term challenge is often

necessary and effective, fleet personnel should also be thinking about the long-term.

The key to long-term technological planning is the scalability of the solution. The solution should be able to meet the needs of the company as the fleet changes and grows. This will give the fleet and its company flexibility as it scales its operation.

By leveraging existing technology, there won't be the need to go through another round of decision making related to new

needs. The growth of the technology should match the growth of the company and the fleet, which allows personnel to focus on the primary mission of the operation and not be hampered by outdated or inadequate technology.

Throughout the technology decision-making process, it is important for fleet personnel and company stakeholders to remember that technology is not an end in itself — use technology in the context of promoting safety and education based on the actionable data received from it.

While the process can be daunting, working with the right expert FMC partner will set you up for success by making informed technology decisions and leveraging it properly to meet the needs and mission of the fleet operation and the goals of the entire company.

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REFERENCE

¹ "What Do Fleet Operators Think About Telematics Solutions?" Lundin, Andy. Automotive-fleet.com. January 8, 2018. www.automotive-fleet.com/157912/what-do-fleet-operators-think-about-telematics-solutions. Accessed Dec. 7, 2018.