



Industry:

Full-suite landscape services

Based in:

Lakewood, Colorado

Types of Vehicles:

Light- and medium-duty pickups

Fleet Size:

40

Perfecting Safety

As a small business, CreativeXteriors knows that accidents and other safety issues with the fleet could result in large and potentially business-crushing expenses. That's why this landscape company does everything it can to prevent accidents of any kind.

Steve Schaefer, fleet manager for CreativeXteriors, says that safety is the No. 1 priority at the company, and issuing a telematics system would hopefully help maintain or even further lower the fleet's accident rate. "When it comes to liability, there are so many risks out there for businesses," he says.

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The company entered into a pilot program with its insurance carrier American Family, in which the insurance company would also access the data, and they would regularly hold conference calls to go over it. Using Geotab software, the pilot program aims to see if the telematics data would be usable in potentially cutting down CreativeXterior's insurance costs.

"Adding telematics has been somewhat of a partnership between American Family and us," Schaefer says, "They're going into two years of the pilot program."



Has It Worked?

CreativeXteriors is confident in what has been seen so far. "Results happened instantly with this," Schaefer says. "Infractions went down, and speeding and braking issues decreased. We didn't have any major problems with accidents, but once our guys knew they were being monitored, we had zero issues on everything." He adds that the drivers have significantly refined their driving habits, which has reduced general wear and tear on the company trucks.

To improve driver behavior, the company can track hard-braking, how well drivers are stopping when pulling a trailer, and other actions that could be potential safety hazards. CreativeXteriors immediately talks with the driver when they see a regular bad habit occurring. In some cases, the company has had to remove an employee from a driving position, and restrict them to a "rider" spot. "Our goal has been to keep this company accident-free and we were happy to add a tool that could help us continue to do that," Schaefer says.

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- Steve Schaefer, Fleet Manager



In one of the only accidents the company has had in the last couple years, CreativeXteriors was able to prove who was at fault in an accident involving a company driver. The driver of a limo that hit one of the fleet trucks claimed he wasn't at fault, but the telematics data showed otherwise. "We were able to prove all the way down to which lane we were in," Schaefer says.

Managing a Mobile Business

CreativeXteriors is largely a mobile business, which can make keeping an eye on operations and employees difficult. Schaefer knew that installing telematics devices onto all the vehicles would bring issues to light immediately, such as providing better and more accurate customer service responses, improving route management, and keeping an eye on vehicle maintenance alerts.

“We are able to cross-reference where people are at with our billing and time sheets, and we can show those to the customer directly so there's no question”

- Steve Schaefer, Fleet Manager

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For maintenance, drivers aren't always the best at telling management when a maintenance warning turns on. "Now, it pops up on our screen and we can get the truck in for an assessment before something goes wrong," Schaefer says.

CreativeXteriors has also used the telematics data to average out the monthly fuel bill. Through routing reports, Schaefer can project what the fleet's fuel cost will be, so the company can make any adjustments and be prepared for busier months. The system has also

nipped in the bud any problems with drivers abusing personal use. The trucks shouldn't be moving on the weekend, so managers are alerted when a truck is on the go when it shouldn't be — furthering the company's savings on fuel.

"It doesn't replace the human being, but it is a good business tool," Schaefer says, adding that he hopes to see telematics pre-installed on vehicles someday in the future.

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