

Leading battery supplier delivers dependable service through proactive vehicle management

If your company was built on a promise of being outrageously dependable – what would you do to ensure you consistently deliver that?

It's a challenge that the Fleet Manager of a leading supplier of batteries knew they had to embrace and overcome. The Fleet Manager's company supplies thousands of garages, retail outlets, repair facilities, and vehicle dealerships across North America, and has earned a reputation for its reliable, timely service.

Based out of Texas, the Fleet Manager is responsible for managing over 600 Light-Duty and Medium-Duty vehicles that mostly work local delivery runs. Even at this local level, delivering the right product at the right time means keeping the fleet's vehicles in top shape. An unplanned truck breakdown or repair can impact both customer service and profitability.

That's why the company turned to telematics, to better track the condition and mileage of its vehicles.

"We needed something that allowed me to get my hands on the truck – without actually flying to the truck. Geotab provided that. I could look at the engine and the transmission and never leave my office."



Results at a glance

- Removed an hour of idling per day – creating huge fuel savings while reducing emissions
- Engine fault data and notifications
- Preventative maintenance reminders – cutting maintenance costs by 10%
- Real-time data on vehicle location, health, and idling
- Roll out of easy-to-use MyGeotab fleet management software
- Flexibility to custom-tailor user access to different team members
- Smartphone-compatible Geotab Drive app for Hours of Service, DVIR, and messaging

Fleet profile

Industry:

Sales and service

Fleet region:

Texas

Types of vehicles:

Side loaders, box trucks and cargo vans

Fleet size:

610

Geotab products / features:

- MyGeotab
- Geotab Drive app



The Challenge:

Seeking accurate vehicle data

The company had a GPS tracking solution in place – but it simply wasn't getting the job done.

"We had a system in place that told us where the truck was, but that's about it. I manage the local deliveries, but our fleet is distributed across many different locations. We needed a solution that could handle that level of complexity."

Overall, the company operates a network of 282 distributor locations in the United States and Canada.

To regularly obtain information about the state of the vehicles across a network that wide was impractically slow with the tools they had.

"We'd have to rely on the driver or reach out to the local manager. The more time each manager spends collecting mileage data or inspecting trucks, the less time they have to do their actual jobs. I spent more time trying to take care of my trucks than I did selling batteries."

Data accuracy was also an issue for the company. The Fleet Manager would frequently have to take someone's word on key information about truck maintenance, which made fleet management even more difficult.

"The process of maintenance and repairs was time-consuming. We'd often have to wait on dealership technicians to get accurate diagnosis info and repair estimates before deciding on a course of action."



The solution:

Going from reactive to proactive.

The company turned to MyGeotab fleet management software. The easy-to-use solution afforded its teams visibility, not just on the condition of the trucks, but also on fleet productivity and efficiency. This included real-time data on vehicle location, health, and idling which was a huge improvement from the previous product the company was using.

It was even able to tailor user access to different team members to ensure they got access to the information they needed without it becoming overwhelming.

MyGeotab also allowed the company to monitor engine fault codes of its vehicles and predict a repair before it happened. Notifications for engine light and engine faults are sent to the fleet manager and also the driver. And reminders alert the company when preventative maintenance is due.

"Everything before Geotab was reactionary, instead of predictive. You'd have to wait until something bad happened to the truck before you could act. It was really inefficient. Now we get the info we need to stay ahead of the game."

Another benefit has been the smartphone-compatible Geotab Drive app. This enabled the company's drivers to use their cell phone for Hours of Service and Driver Vehicle Inspection Reporting (DVIR) – rather than have to use a dash-mounted tablet.

"We can do maintenance now based on mileage and time, instead of waiting until the truck breaks down. It helps our costs. It helps keep the truck productive. We're not making any money if the trucks are sitting in the garage."

The results:

Optimizing the fleet and cutting costs

The first big win for the company was reducing idling by one hour per truck, per day. This translated to fuel savings, lower vehicle maintenance costs, and fewer emissions. When you multiply across the fleet's 600+ trucks – you start to see some significant savings.

Another benefit of telematics was cutting maintenance costs by approximately 10%. Having insight into engine faults and the ability to diagnose the truck makes it easier to make the right decisions on repairs when the truck reaches the dealer.

Creating and maintaining value with a Plug-&-Play device

Ease-of-use made Geotab the clear winner for the company and its ambitious Fleet Manager – a stark difference to the company's experience installing a competitor's telematics device.

"With a previous supplier, we had to put screws in the dashboard, mount them into the floorboard, and do the wiring. It was just a mess. Geotab just plugs in and makes it simple. Retaining the value of the vehicle and avoiding unnecessary depreciation is always top of mind for us Fleet Managers. When you start drilling holes, it diminishes the value."

After evaluating many different providers, the company also found that Geotab represented the best value for money.

"When it came down to the overall cost, the initial cost and then the monthly fee, Geotab just blew everybody away. I guess it was just the bang for the buck. Many of the things Geotab offers as part of the monthly fee, others wanted to charge me extra for."

Geotab's community-based approach to improvements has also impressed the Fleet Manager – because when Geotab develops a new tool or report for one company, it offers that solution improvement to everyone.

"The big players and the little players all get the same equipment, the same system. Which makes the solution even more valuable."

Turning Geotab Drive users into super fans

The feedback from the company's managers and distributors has been really positive – they've seen how the Geotab solution can assist their business goals and growth. One manager in Austin, Texas has even become a champion for the system and promotes it to other managers.

The drivers using Geotab Drive are also enjoying the convenience of being able to use their cell phone for Hours of Service and Driver Vehicle Inspection Reporting (DVIR). The previous system required them to do the walk-around first and then punch-in the information using tablets that were fixed inside the truck.

"The old way was too cumbersome and time-consuming. Now it's just easy for them. It's not a lot of hassle."

The drivers aren't the only team getting a more stress-free experience – the company's Fleet Manager has also been impressed by the support they have received from the Geotab reseller.

"My experience with our reseller has been phenomenal. They went out of their way to make sure that everything went as smoothly as possible. It's hard to find a company like that anymore."

The next steps:

Keeping trucks on the road and creating more happy customers

Overall, the company has been very satisfied with its Geotab experience.

The next steps? Rolling out its combination of Geotab solutions across the entire fleet to drive further cost savings and after that – fuel card integration and route planning.

"Geotab is a great team of people backed by a superior product."



Want to see Geotab in action?
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a demo today.](#)

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