

Thomas Hardie plans its electric future with Geotab and The EV Café

Thomas Hardie Commercials is the main distributor for Volvo Truck, Bus and Coaches in the North West of England, North Wales and Lancashire. The company was selected as the beneficiary of the 'The End of the ICEage' Promotion, run in conjunction with Geotab and The EV Café Fleet Consultancy, by demonstrating a business plan that set it on the road to a zero-emission future.

The challenge: Confidently identifying the right vehicles to transition to electric

As a transport provider and truck dealer, the team at Thomas Hardie believe that they are uniquely positioned to help promote the benefits of electric vehicles (EVs) within the transport industry, and lead the way in encouraging other businesses to make the change.

The fleet manager at Thomas Hardie, Alan Akester, was keen to review the opportunities that existed in their fleet for electrification. He needed to understand the distances that their vans travelled, and the opportunities for charging, so that they could match those real-world considerations to the capabilities of available EVs on the market.

Real-world EV range was a concern for the company when considering the potential to transition to electric vans, since the existing van fleet had a large mileage range, being used for parts deliveries, on-site servicing and attending breakdowns.





Fleet profile

Company:
Thomas Hardie

Industry:
Truck, bus and coach distributor

Based in:
United Kingdom

Types of vehicles:
Cars, vans and trucks; electric, petrol and diesel

Fleet size:
144

Fleet focus:
Sustainability

The solution: working together towards a greener future

The “End of the ICEAge” promotion was a joint initiative between Geotab and The EV Café in recognition of fleets that are committed to making the transition to electric vehicle technology. Thomas Hardie Commercials received 6 months of world-leading telematics support and data insights, courtesy of Geotab, along with consultation support to facilitate the transition to, and operation of a newer, greener fleet.

Geotab conducted an Electric Vehicle Suitability Assessment (EVSA) across 46 vans within their fleet to help Thomas Hardie make crucial decisions such as which vehicles can make the transition to electric now and in the future. Based on the fleet telematics data collected over the 6-month trial period, the EVSA analysed the fleet’s telematics data and created an electrification recommendation based on each vehicle’s distinctive driving patterns, taking into consideration the comparative EV models available on the market and their performance in extreme weather conditions, together with the financials of procuring those electric vans.

The operations team also used the safety benchmark reports and vehicle tracking facilities in MyGeotab to improve fleet productivity, driver safety and environmental performance. Akester reviewed trends by event type including harsh acceleration, cornering and speeding, and provided this to supervisors so that they could have informal discussions with the drivers and improve behaviour.



The results: A more sustainable fleet now, and into the future

Proving the case for electrification: The results of Geotab's EVSA showed that out of the 46 vehicles reviewed, 26 were suitable candidates for electrification when allowing for one charge per day. This would provide lifetime cost savings of £161,000, while reducing CO₂ emissions by 99 tonnes per annum. Alternatively, 9 vehicles could be transitioned to BEVs if it wasn't possible to charge at all during the day. This would still provide lifetime cost savings of £34,000 and reduce CO₂ emissions by 24 tonnes per annum. Akester recognises that they will need to make some changes to business processes to make electrification work successfully, since some vehicles run compressors and other energy-intensive equipment that [couldn't be taken into account within the EVSA study / would otherwise deplete EV range.

Fuel savings: By ensuring drivers took the shortest route back to the depot, fuel savings were also made. The tracking also identified that vans were being sent to areas that should have been serviced by a closer depot, further reducing route mileage and associated fuel costs.

Next steps

The company plans to make changes to the way jobs are assigned to drivers to get the best use out of the vehicles – a change that was required regardless of electrification. This includes improving route planning at a depot and group level to ensure journeys between depots are optimised to consider if a return involves passing a delivery location.

The company also sees the value in installing front-facing dash cameras, the footage of which would integrate seamlessly into the MyGeotab platform.

“As a transport provider, we believe we can lead the way to encouraging other businesses in the transport industry to make the change towards EVs. With Geotab's telematics support we have been able to take the first steps towards this goal, while making our current fleet more fuel efficient.”

– Alan Akester, Group Facilities,
Procurement and Fleet Manager,
Thomas Hardie Commercials



In a nutshell

Goals and challenges

- Review the opportunities for electrification in their fleet
- Overcome EV range anxiety based on real-world EV data

Solution

- 6 months of world-leading telematics support from Geotab
- Consultation support to facilitate the transition to, and operation of, the new electric vehicles from The EV Cafe
- Electric vehicle suitability assessment (EVSA) across 46 vans in fleet
- Driver safety benchmarking for harsh acceleration, cornering and speeding,
- Real-time vehicle tracking to compare against scheduled routes

Results

- Proving the case for electrification - EVSA identified potential lifetime cost savings of £161,000 and 99 tonnes of CO₂ per annum by switching 26 vans to electric
- Improved productivity by identifying where drivers were deviating from scheduled routes
- Fuel savings by reducing route mileages and better assigning jobs to closest depots

Geotab products / features

- Geotab G09 device
- MyGeotab fleet management platform
- EVSA
- Safety benchmarking reports
- Real-time vehicle tracking



Discover how fleet management technology can improve your business:

Visit <http://www.geotab.com/uk> or email infouki@geotab.com

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