

Telematics, logistics and Industry 4.0: Geotab central link in Tirso's cold chain

Tirso - Logistica Mediterranea S.p.A. is a family-run company in the transport and logistics sector, whose history began in 1969, when founder Primo Fabbri ("Bibi"), at the wheel of a single vehicle (a truck), set up his business in the town of Oristano (Sardinia region, Italy), transforming it into what it is today, namely a long-lived and successful company destined to be passed down from generation to generation. Tirso's growth saw a progressive specialisation and a constantly avant-garde service, also thanks to the merger (we are in the early 1990s) with San Paolo Trasporti, from which Logistica Mediterranea originated, extending the service offered from the Sardinian territory to the national one. The needs of the supply chain and a transport market increasingly oriented towards the real-time traceability of goods, especially foodstuffs and therefore their temperatures during transport and on delivery, convinced the Sardinian company to equip itself with goods and vehicle monitoring devices to manage its fleet.

The challenge: a changing market and new technological requirements

With the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, the logistics and transport sector has undergone several changes. The considerably high number of product demands has led to an increase in the number of loads, fleets circulating and, consequently, in the information needed to organise the entire cold chain. A truly efficient management model requires technology that keeps pace with these new market requirements.

Behind the decision to adopt a telematics solution for fleet management, Tirso identified the main objective as being the interconnection of vehicles to company management systems, hence the need to employ innovative technologies for analysing the large quantities of data acquired.

"This last aspect was the most important leverage: being able to check and verify, after the execution of the service, what was the essential data," said Michele Busia, Tirso's Finance Director.

The Sardinian company specialises in the transport of food products that must comply with cold chain regulations. The solution proposed by Geotab through one of its authorised partners allowed not only careful and precise monitoring of the vehicles' tractor and refrigerated semi-trailer, but above all, exploited the aggregation of the micro-data to subsequently obtain a highly strategic analysis.



Fleet profile

Company:

Tirso – Logistica
Mediterranea S.p.A.

Industry:

Transport of various goods
on behalf of third parties

Based in:

Elmas, Italy

Types of vehicles:

road tractors, car transporters,
semi-trailers

Fleet size:

400

The solution: transport traceability for fast, safe and compliant service

The fleet management platform connected to the solution offered is rich in functionality, much of it related to programmable reports. This enabled the Tirso team to quickly implement the tool within their usual work processes.

Particularly useful, among the various features available, was the ability to set up alerts and automatic e-mail notifications based on vehicle transit zones, residual charge levels of the refrigeration unit batteries, and variations in load temperature with respect to programmed thresholds.

On the other hand, the transport and logistics company's requirements include the report on refrigeration engine operating hours, which has made it possible to keep track of the maintenance schedules for the vehicles in the fleet; as well as the punctual and highly qualified support offered by the dedicated help desk service, which, on several occasions, has quickly resolved doubts and handled requests of various kinds.

"Especially in the transport of goods at negative temperatures, responsiveness and punctuality are fundamental, also because very strict attention is also required on the basis of the cold chain itself," recalled Busia.

If in the past the Sardinian company's services were carried out with the refrigerating unit attached and - in the event of problems - it was physically the driver who called us to warn us, today it is possible to detect any anomalies even before the driver is on the road. The key is here: the ability to anticipate problems makes it possible to manage them better.

Alongside the aforementioned improvement in the traceability of transport, both in terms of timing and in relation to the conformity of the storage temperatures of the goods, other strong points in favour of the solution proposed by Geotab were identified in the increase in the security of the load; and in the availability of real-time reporting on temperature profiles throughout all phases of transport, without having to wait for the paper printout of the data collected by the device installed on the vehicle.

"We have acted in favour of customer satisfaction, guaranteeing a high quality service," Busia emphasised.

In summary, the main functionalities that have made Tirso's fleet management, and consequently the existing work processes, more efficient are: the rapid monitoring of the correct operation of the refrigeration unit; the receipt of convenient scheduled alerts instead of manual checks; and the possibility of immediate analysis of the information collected by the devices using an intuitive and customisable web interface.

The benefits of Industry 4.0: savings and impact on ROI

In Italy, the digitisation process, the PNRR and Industry 4.0 are revitalising companies, which were usually forced to allocate limited resources to investment. "Having the state on the side of entrepreneurship, with not inconsiderable tax benefits, has been an important stimulus in the renewal of equipment and software.

The company's compliance of the transport and logistics sector with the characteristics of the National Transition 4.0 Plan has generated not only implicit economic benefits, deriving from the facilities provided for Industry 4.0, but has also qualified as relevant for strategic purposes in terms of both visibility towards customers, who can rely on an operator that continues to innovate and create added value; and the increase in the skills of individual members of the company teams, who are put in a position to devise new development prospects," Busia commented.

In this scenario, "The savings from contribution is 37%, while the ROI (adjusted for the contribution part) is 6%," he concluded.

The reasons for a choice: Geotab's pluses for Tirso

"Despite the fact that there are many seemingly similar ICT (Information and Communications Technology, Ed.) solutions applicable to the transport sector in the market, the opportunities offered by the PNRR prompted us to adopt a high-profile solution both on a technical level and, above all, with a view to a scalable development project to be extended to other business sectors," Busia noted.

The ability to offer a high level of service, the scalable software solution, the possibility of renewing devices over time, and the presence of dedicated support to minimise technical downtime were the main factors that guided Tirso in the selection phase of the offer within a constantly evolving sector.

The Sardinian company, which has now exceeded fifty years in business, found in Geotab's proposal some elements that confirm its choice. First and foremost, the competence and professionalism demonstrated to date, combined with the guarantee of being able to count on partners who are constantly updated on the state of the art of the sector. Added to this - a situation that has positively surprised Tirso's management - is the assistance received during the installation and also in the after-sales stages, since many operators are characterised by a great presence during the quotation phase and an absence in the subsequent moments.



“In our case, however, we found timeliness, great competence and support at all times,” Busia pointed out. At the beginning of the project, we put the various operators out to tender and made our evaluations. Of all of them, the first thing that struck us about Geotab and its partner was their capacity for 360° analysis.

We were followed in everything from the product to the information on Industry 4.0, the fiscal impact and its applicability, as well as the technology itself and the professionalism in implementation, which were the great value of such an important project.

In short, thoroughness and responsiveness from A to Z.”

**– Michele Busia, Financial Director of
Tirso - Logistica Mediterranea S.p.A.**

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