



Fleet Management: Improving Field Service through Innovation

Fleet management is becoming more critical than ever with the increased expectations of immediate service, next-day delivery, and servitization of all aspects of consumer lives. One study found that 69% of consumers were unlikely to be repeat business customers if delivery was more than two days late.⁽¹⁾ Timely response to work sites and appointments is closely scrutinized not only by the consumer but also by leadership that requires a reduction in costs due to time spent on the road or downtime of assets. Idling alone wastes up to one billion gallons of fuel a year.⁽²⁾

Managing getting the right people and vehicles to the right place at the right time is the main priority in fleet

management. Scheduling of both the people and the vehicles they use is imperative for a smooth service process and increased safety for the drivers and passengers. Using tools like Linxup and OverIT's Geocall, companies can improve their field service and fleet management, saving time and costs while ensuring safety.

What is Fleet Management?

Fleet Management refers to the tools and technology that companies use to make the best decisions about making their fleet and drivers safer, more efficient, and more productive. Any business that relies on vehicles to conduct daily business engages in some fleet management. Knowing the importance of adequately tracking routes, locations, maintenance, and safety policies determines how successful the company can be. Using vehicle data is an invaluable resource, and fleet management software solutions tap into that resource.

Fleet Management aims to cut costs and grow business, making fleet management tools a great return on investment. With proper fleet management, businesses can:

- View real-time location information.
- Access driver behavior data.
- Prevent theft with movement alerts for designated times and locations.
- Tracking maintenance to avoid unpleasant surprises that disrupt scheduled work.
- Save on fuel, insurance, time theft, and more.
- Avoid customer billing disputes with irrefutable data and proof of service.

The lack of a complete fleet management solution forces companies to rely on human labor to carry out these responsibilities on their own time. Given the complication of logistics in mid-sized to large businesses, the reality is that it is very time-consuming. From yard checks to missed service calls, not having an eye on every vehicle and piece of equipment can be costly to a company's reputation and bottom line. Proper fleet management avoids those pitfalls.



Schedule Optimization

People

Using dedicated tools for scheduling the human side of a fleet, companies can enhance their operational efficiency. Advanced automatic scheduling engines are used for daily, weekly, and long-term planning of field activities and improve customer, worker, and company experience.

Elements of Fleet Management software, like Artificial Intelligence for a predictive Field Service Management experience, help manage skills, parts, certification, and shifts to assign and dispatch work orders to the most suitable technicians and crews. In addition, AI, as a crucial part of fleet management, makes the automatic worker scheduling process more accurate.

Fleet management software can even handle high-volume and volatile schedule use cases, with work demand coming in through multiple channels. Analyze, confirm, or manually refine the results provided by the automatic scheduler to create the work agenda of crews simply and quickly with the intuitive interface of daily planner consoles. Then, perform real-time and intra-day rescheduling by managing any exception or unplanned event.

Vehicles

Scheduling everything from routes to vehicle maintenance is a key benefit of fleet management systems. On average, preventive maintenance costs four to 15 times less than emergency repairs. With global shortages of everything from steel to lawnmowers, sometimes a costly replacement isn't even an option. One irreparable vehicle or piece of equipment can bring a business to a complete halt while waiting to refresh stock at a dealer. Fleet management software uses mileage and hours of use to precisely predict when a vehicle or

machine will need routine service. It can even send alerts to mechanic shops, so scheduling the work in advance. Knowing when vehicles might be out of service—for shorter periods and less cost than a breakdown repair—allows fleet managers to appropriately schedule and staff upcoming work and prevents loss of goodwill with customers.

Dispatching and routing are also greatly improved with the data available from a GPS-based fleet management system. In a post-Covid world, with so many working alternative schedules from home or other locations, traffic patterns are significantly changed in many areas, and fleet managers are seeing delays in deliveries and job site arrivals at all times of the day. Dispatchers can identify the most congested areas and times of day using fleet management data to reconfigure routes quickly. In addition, when customer emergencies pop up, fleet management can identify the closest crews who will finish current work the soonest without the tasks or team inconveniencing other customers.

Benefits of Fleet Management

The benefits of Fleet Management for people and vehicles include savings of time, costs and lives.

Time

- Increased speed and accuracy identifying issues and slowdowns within the operating processes
- Enhancements of delivery efficiency
- Greater control of worker performance

Costs

- Fuel savings of an average \$200/month for a business with four vehicles by reducing idling and speeding and optimizing routes
- Up to 30% savings on insurance costs
- Significantly reduced repair costs with a data-driven preventative maintenance program

Safety

- Improved working conditions through technology assistance
- Enhancements in the decision-making process
- Reduced automotive accidents with best route guidance

Conclusion

Fleet Management products can help companies who are conducting their current processes manually. Moreover, it allows field operators to connect and communicate with customers and offices in an even faster, safer, and more precise way due to digitalization. With an improved worker user experience as well as customer user experience, customer and employee engagement increases. Not only can the schedule optimization help with the engagement but the whole service lifecycle. Scheduling of fleet assets is standardized and centralized and can be closely monitored, making it easier to track KPI's and ROI. Most importantly, innovative fleet management solutions help save time, costs, and the lives of those working.

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.websitemagazine.com/blog/the-impact-of-late-and-inaccurate-deliveries-on-customer-loyalty>

⁽²⁾ https://afdc.energy.gov/files/u/publication/hdv_idling_2015.pdf