



Idling Reduced & Maintenance Improved

So far, the telematics initiative has yielded positive results, including reduced idling and fuel consumption, maintenance costs, and waste, as well as increased safety. Through telematics, UPS reduced idling by 15 minutes per driver per day, totaling 25 gallons of fuel per driver per year. While that reduction may seem a small change, on the large scale, it's a major improvement.

"When telematics is fully deployed in the small-package delivery fleet in the U.S., the reduction of idle time by 15 minutes per driver per day would save 1.4 million gallons of fuel annually," Longino said. "Multiply results like that by more than 90,000 drivers worldwide, and you can see the potential."

Maintenance is another key area in which UPS will benefit from the program. Prior to installing telematics, the company performed maintenance at regular time intervals, regardless of a truck's mileage or use. Now, UPS mechanics base maintenance decisions on the actual vehicle use and performance.

Telematics also helps identify which parts to replace. For instance, UPS found, in some cases, mechanics were replacing fuel injectors when the truck simply required an inexpensive "O-ring."

Because UPS can more accurately

determine the right time to pull trucks off the road for maintenance, the company can reduce downtime and wasted maintenance expenses. Telematics also allows UPS to more accurately allocate replacement dollars, as the system helps identify trucks performing less efficiently, or when to simply place a vehicle on a shorter route.

Safety is another critical area of improvement. While UPS already has an exemplary safety record, the company didn't shy away from improving it. One key metric tracked through telematics is seat belt use. Test sites showed that drivers wore their seat belts a nearly perfect 99.8 percent, up from 98 percent.

Likewise, providing drivers with information on the number of times they placed trucks in reverse — behavior UPS drivers are trained to avoid for safety reasons — reduced this behavior by 25 percent.

In addition to reducing idle time, telematics systems provide other environmental benefits. By helping UPS optimize dispatch planning and driver routine, the system reduces overall driver miles, cuts fuel consumption, and reduces emissions. Further, by optimizing vehicle performance and improving maintenance, telematics help UPS increase the useful life of parts and decrease the disposal of parts, including lead acid batteries and tires, Longino said.

Training & Information Management Keys to Success

With a large-scale implementation of telematics in its delivery truck fleet, UPS anticipated and planned for challenges. Hance said two areas were critical to the company's success: training staff and managing the information.

"We have some of the best-trained drivers in the world, and they are really committed to doing an excellent job. We find that quite often when a supervisor uses the data to coach drivers on improving safety, service, and performance, the response is very positive," Hance said.

In addition to training drivers how to improve driving behavior based on the reports, other UPS employees are also trained how to employ it to get the most from the telematics investment.

"Telematics is information-rich. Our reports and data are profiled to pinpoint what is important to impact results," Hance said. "We invested in training to ensure we leverage this technology to effectively impact service, safety, and cost."

UPS plans to continue using telematics technology, with the next major initiative focused on reducing idling time on its LTL (less than truckload) fleet at UPS Freight. Hance said telematics technology is also used to monitor several test vehicles, such as hybrid electric, hydraulic hybrid, and automatic transmission tractors, in the UPS fleet for efficiency, performance, and reliability. 🌱