

2018

Fleet Management Buyer's Guide



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Find the right solution for you

For businesses that rely on a fleet of drivers and vehicles to service customers, complete jobs and bring in revenue, tracking your assets is a top priority.

Knowing how well your drivers and technicians are performing when they're behind the wheel of a company vehicle and on a job site is critical information .

Most businesses—no matter the size or industry—rely on some form of technology to help them evaluate their work performance and identify where improvement is needed.

The same goes for GPS fleet tracking, which can help you easily track and access driver behavior, vehicle location, speed, distance traveled, routes taken and any fleet-related costs.

This guide will help equip you with the information you need to get started in finding the right solution for you, including what to look for in a vendor and how to lead a successful implementation to help set your business on the road to success.

Measure cost savings & revenue growth

You can't afford not to have it.

Small, everyday activities can have long-reaching effects on your business that are more impactful than you might think. Tardiness, poor routing, even inaccuracies in payroll can impact overall operations, customer service and your bottom line.

Knowing exactly where your drivers and vehicles are and what's happening while they're on the road is absolutely priceless information.

Most businesses' first priority is to make money. Visibility into how your fleet is impacting revenue helps you make more money without hiring more drivers or purchasing additional vehicles or equipment.

Meet Larry, a business owner who manages 15 vehicles, 20 drivers and 10 office employees.

When his vehicles leave the shop each day, he trusts that his drivers get to their scheduled jobs quickly, safely and in a well-maintained vehicle but he has no real way of knowing. Here are a few common scenarios Larry might experience with his fleet:

Scenario #1: Larry receives a call from a customer saying the technician never showed up for their scheduled service appointment. He tries to call the driver but there's no answer.

Scenario #2: One of Larry's dispatchers receives a call from a driver who's stuck in a traffic jam and is running three hours behind. The dispatcher pulls out the scheduled job list for the day and begins calling affected customers.

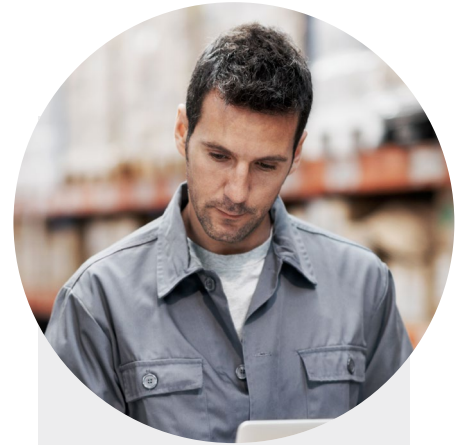
Scenario #3: The local garage calls and tells Larry that the vehicle in for repair will have to stay a bit longer than expected because the damage is more extensive (and expensive) than they anticipated. Larry counted on that vehicle being back in service today because another vehicle got into an accident and needs work done.

Scenario #4: During an afternoon staff meeting, the Accounts Payable team mentions that payroll is taking an average of four hours to complete each week, and two of their team members are going on vacation next week.

Scenario #5: Larry runs into an old friend at lunch who happens to be a police officer. He mentions to Larry that he's pulled over two of his drivers this week for speeding while they were in company vans.

Though you may not experience all of these situations, especially not in a single day or week, they demonstrate the level of chaos and confusion that can occur as well as the domino effect on the overall business when GPS fleet tracking isn't used.

Using the right technology can help you gain insight into fleet activity to help your drivers operate safely, take the right routes to job sites and arrive to customers on time. You'll also know when a vehicle is due for service and keep your assets connected to the back office.



When managing a fleet, almost every activity contributes to an expense or revenue generator.

GPS fleet tracking gives you insight into how key areas are impacted:

Productivity

Easily spot inefficient routes and know when drivers make unnecessary stops so you can fit in more jobs on your schedule.

Safety

Keep an eye on unsafe driving behavior such as speeding and harsh driving and provide near-real-time coaching to avoid accidents and costly fines.

Fuel

Learn how to improve factors that affect usage and costs such as idling and speeding to increase efficiency and decrease spend.

Maintenance

Monitor vehicles for regular maintenance needs to avoid unplanned repairs and lost productivity.

Payroll

Have confidence you're billing customers accurately using metrics such as on-site arrival time and job duration.

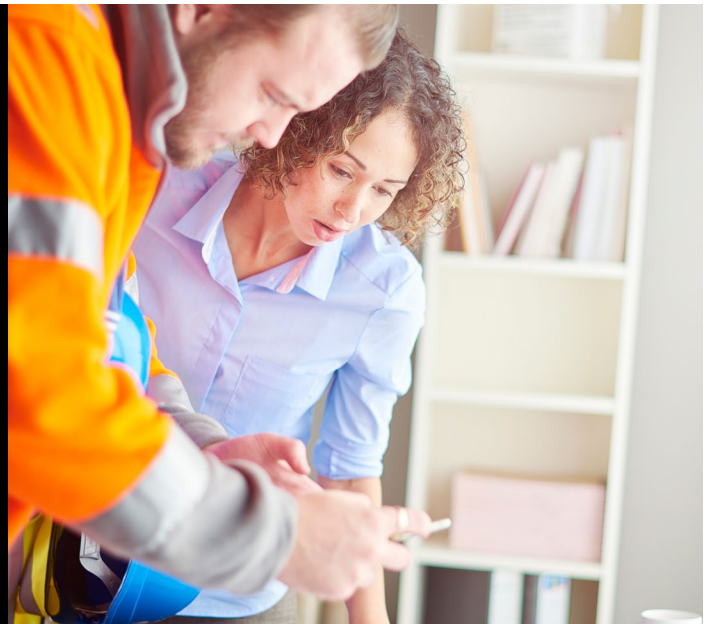
Discover your options

**A GPS fleet tracking solution
can help you monitor your fleet.**

No matter how many drivers and vehicles
you manage, a GPS fleet tracking solution
can provide actionable insights that help you
make impactful business decisions.

Visibility into your mobile workforce means you can:

- Coach drivers the moment a harsh driving or speeding event occurs
- Plan ahead for vehicle maintenance
- Bill customers for exact time worked based on arrival and departure times
- Monitor fuel costs



Deciding which solution is the best fit for your business can be tough.

The best way to start is by identifying your specific business needs and goals. Here are a few questions to ask yourself to as you get started:

What concerns can GPS fleet tracking help me address?

Decide on a few specific goals you want to achieve with your GPS fleet tracking solution, like improving driver safety or reducing fuel costs. Sharing these with potential vendors will help them demonstrate how their solution will help you achieve those goals, helping you see exactly how the solution will work for you.

Which features are most important to my business and staff?

Determine what features you think you and your staff will interact with most. A strong mapping feature is often the #1 feature used in a GPS fleet tracking solution but there is also reports, dashboards, benchmarking, trending and alert functionality that can help you manage your fleet. Also, prioritize your list of “must haves,” like a simple user interface, easily scheduled and exported reports, simple management of driver data, and easy setup of roles and permissions.

What qualities should I look for in a vendor?

It's important to work with a vendor that understands your unique challenges and goals – they should be a true partner. Your encounters with various vendors and their support staff will give you a good sense of whether you “click” and that you're more than just a sale. Make a list of your ideal vendor's qualities and use it to narrow down your choices.

What is my budget?

Knowing how much you can spend on a monthly and annual basis is also important when choosing the right vendor and solution. Though it's important not to compromise quality for cost, it's also important not to overextend your budget to the point where you feel uncomfortable with the overall spend. Choosing a solution based on the cost alone may leave you with features you won't use, or, even worse, is missing features you need.

What is my timeline?

Implementing a GPS fleet tracking solution can take time. If you have a date or timeframe in mind that you'd like the solution to go live, communicate that during the demo process to make sure the vendor can accommodate you. A vendor should be able to work around your needs and schedule.

Prepare for the demo

**The live demonstration
is a crucial part of the
selection process.**

Get an in-depth, actual look into how the
solution can help your business.

Before attending a demo, prepare a list of questions you want to ask the sales representative.

Be sure to focus your questions on the areas of your business you would like to see improvements in by using a GPS fleet tracking solution.

Here are some questions we suggest to help you get the most out of your demo experience:



Service Contract, Warranty & Cost

- What is the monthly cost per vehicle?
- What is the length of your service contract?
- What is the length of your warranty on hardware devices?
- Are there additional fees for upgrades or feature improvements?

Customer Service

- Is customer service outsourced or kept in-house?
- What will the overall customer service experience be like?
- What is the operational uptime of the solution?
- If the solution goes down, what are your procedures to communicate outages and time back online?
- What is your customer renewal rate?

Training

- Is there an additional cost for training?
- Do you offer training in various formats (i.e., web-based, in-person, video tutorials, etc.)?
- Do you offer ongoing training?
- Will you train new hires on how to use the solution?

Ease of Use

- How easy is the solution to use?
- Is data easy to interpret and understand?
- How convenient is the solution setup for an administrator?
- Do you offer a mobile app?

Installation

- How long does installation usually take?
- How long will my vehicles be off the road?
- Can installation take place at a time and location convenient for me?
- Do you use a certified network of hardware installers?

References

- How many customers do you service in my industry?
- Can you provide references that I can contact regarding their experience with your solution?

Make your choice

After you've participated in a few demos and Q&A sessions with potential vendors, it's time to make your choice.

We know this isn't a choice that's made easily or quickly. There are likely several factors that play a large part in your decision.

Now is a great time to make a pros and cons list for each vendor you've met to weigh all the feedback you've received.

We've listed a few things to consider when making your decision.



Ease of use

- ☐ Accessible via computer or mobile device
- ☐ Access to fleet-related data in just a few clicks
- ☐ Views are customizable by user based on their roles and permissions
- ☐ Administrators can easily update information stored in the solution
- ☐ Easily customized benchmarks and alert thresholds based on your fleet's needs

Reports & dashboards

- ☐ Easily customizable so users see only the view they need to see
- ☐ Ability to schedule and export reports and dashboards to solution users and non-users
- ☐ Summarized data shown in a way that provides actionable results

Installation

- ☐ Can schedule at a convenient time and location based on your fleet's availability
- ☐ Flexibility around multiple installs if some vehicles are unavailable
- ☐ Use of certified installers who are trained in GPS fleet tracking installation processes

Training

- ☐ Offered in several formats (i.e., online, in person, video tutorial, etc.)
- ☐ Easy access to help center or digital resources for ongoing educational purposes
- ☐ Cover areas of the solution that you and your team will use most

Customer service

- ☐ Offers metrics such as average time to respond to emails, calls or online chat sessions
- ☐ Customer service staff should demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the product and assist in troubleshooting any issues you may experience

Ask your employees for their feedback, too. Because they will be using the solution most, their input is extremely valuable.

Plan for implementation

**Implementing a GPS
fleet tracking solution
takes time—especially
if you want to do it right.**

The most important part of planning your implementing is getting your staff on board and involved in the process.



Clear and open communication can help take your employees from skeptical to excited.

Take the time to reassure employees that fleet tracking is not meant to be “Big Brother” and explain the benefits that both they and the business will experience.

Keep these tips in mind as you and your staff prepare for implementation:

Determine areas where you'd like to see improvements in your fleet (e.g., safety, productivity, customer service, payroll, billing, etc.).

Understand why certain areas of the business haven't been performing as well as they should and how fleet operations could help.

Set any fleet-related benchmarks against which you want to measure performance.

Use any preexisting company policies around fleet operations as a starting point.

If you don't have any fleet-related policies, create new policies that reflect your company's values and goals using the metrics and data provided by your GPS fleet tracking solution.

Create a communication plan and timeline to roll the solution out to your team.

Final thoughts

Once you implement a GPS fleet tracking solution, you'll be eager to see results as quickly as possible.

Some results may come quickly—think safety, fuel spend and payroll—but others will take a bit longer to see and feel. Having patience is key. Set your benchmarks, communicate your goals and put plans and policies in place to help make your telematics solution more effective.

Keep this list handy to help you measure your progress in improving your fleet's performance:

- ✓ # of vehicles
- ✓ # of drivers/technicians
- ✓ Average hourly and overtime rate
- ✓ Average # of stops made per day, per driver/technician
- ✓ Current pain points and areas of improvement
- ✓ Budget

Our goal was to provide you with lists and tips to help you get on your way to choosing the right vendor, which can make a big difference in how much your business benefits from a GPS fleet tracking solution.

**Don't hesitate to call us at 866.844.2235
or visit us at [verizonconnect.com](https://www.verizonconnect.com)**

We're always happy to help.

