Mobility Plaza®

The top five must-haves in a telematics solution

While telematics solutions are relatively commonplace in fleet operations these days, it's important to remember that not all telematics solutions are created equal. To make sure you're getting the best bang for your buck, be sure to seek out these five features in your telematics system.

1. **Full-Fleet Visibility via GPS**

One of the most common features in a modern telematics solution is GPS tracking. GPS tracking – and the full-fleet visibility it provides – benefits the dispatcher, driver, and fleet manager. Dispatchers can send the right vehicle at the right time based on the location of each vehicle in the fleet. Drivers know exactly how to get to their destinations and avoid construction and high-traffic areas. Fleet managers can see bottom line improvements through miles and fuel cost savings as well as decreased idle time that results when vehicles are dispatched and driven efficiently. Ultimately, the comprehensive visibility that comes with having a GPS-based telematics system enables you to provide your customers with accurate arrival and departure times while giving your team the flexibility to meet last-minute customer demands.

2. **Real-Time Communication**

Just as important as tracking your busy fleet of GPS-monitored vehicles is the ability to communicate with them in real-time. A web-based interface that can receive real-time data transfers about driver behavior, truck location and cumulative fleet drive time, to name a few, is essential to managing current vehicle activity and generating reporting metrics. This information enables agile decision-

making and informs the most dynamic of dispatch needs.

3. **Actionable Driver Data Reports**

While real-time communication is essential, your data needs probably extend well beyond a simple location report. A full-featured telematics solution provides comprehensive driver data reports on speed, location, and harsh braking that keep your drivers, inventory, and the public safe. If you're regularly noticing some red flags, it may be time to invest in a telematics-based behavior management tool. An in-cab driver coach can provide real-time assistance to drivers who consistently exhibit concerning behaviors like harsh braking, speeding or unauthorized truck use. This resource gives driver instruction and feedback based on telematics-generated data, and it's a lot cheaper than placing a human instructor in all your vehicles.

4. **Asset Management**

Your telematics solution also plays a key role in managing your physical assets. Commercial vehicle theft is a very real concern. Even if a stolen fleet vehicle is recovered, fleet managers and company owners still must worry about the possibility of damage inflicted upon the vehicle and stolen equipment. Real-time vehicle tracking and geofencing, both courtesy of your telematics system, can help you stop criminal activity in its tracks.

The benefits of real-time monitoring are obvious, but if your fleet includes even just 20 vehicles, you may not always be able to keep an eye on every one of them. That's where geofencing comes in. A good geofence will alert the dispatcher if a vehicle goes outside the bounds of a predefined delivery area. Look for a telematics solution that permits fleet managers to set a custom perimeter around their delivery area and then deploys real-time alerts in the event of a breach. Alerts for unauthorized use are a bonus.

5. **Cloud-Based Infrastructure**

Telematics systems generate and process tons of data every day, including miles driven, arrival and departure times, idle times, and more. The programs themselves can also be huge. If your shop lacks the server and/or computing power to handle massive amounts of data, you may need a cloud-based telematics system. A cloud-based SaaS licensing model for your telematics system lowers the barrier to entry and delivers a highly configurable, mobile-friendly solution. Maybe you lack the IT department to manage a sophisticated telematics system. Again, the cloud is the way to go. Upgrades, patches, malware prevention, and version control are typically handled by the company that hosts the software, so you can focus your attention on getting your inventory from point A to point B as quickly and efficiently as possible. And when your fleet starts growing, your cloud-based telematics solution grows with it. Safe, simple, and scalable – these are the traits of a solid, cloud-based telematics infrastructure.

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