



## The best laid plans of fleet management

In his famous poem entitled "To a Mouse," Scottish poet Robert Burns wrote, "the best laid plans of mice and men often go awry." It's clear that in this poem, Burns does not place a high premium on data-based planning. While a solid planning solution is particularly important in the realm of supply chain management, it is often an afterthought. It's no secret that fleet managers and dispatchers can benefit from starting the day, week, or month with a solid transportation and distribution plan, but have you considered the many ways data-based planning could impact your fleet and bottom line?



### **You use fewer vehicles**

Not only does route optimization and planning allow you to use the vehicles in your fleet more effectively, but wise planning also enables you to maximize usage of your higher quality, more reliable, more fuel-efficient vehicles. This decreases the number of vehicles you have on the road, which saves you money at the pump and in the shop.

### **You optimize your distribution of resources**

Data-based planning that is founded on accurate information enables you to evenly balance

workloads in order to create equal delivery across territories. Additionally, it allows you to send the right vehicle to each stop. This could mean lower fuel bills, less maintenance, and fewer tows.

### **You are ready for seasonal or event-related spikes**

Is your delivery schedule impacted heavily by annual events such as Christmas or Father's Day? Or perhaps it is tied to weekly events such as weekend adult beverage delivery? Whatever the case may be, fleets that run on cyclical delivery schedules can benefit immensely from data-based planning – one of those benefits being avoiding depleted inventory (and consequently, depleted profits). Avoid inventory scarcity by planning according to your observed sales and delivery cycle.

### **You increase delivery capacity**

Have you been eyeing a potential client for some time, wishing you could add him or her to your client base, but fearing that you simply don't have the capacity? With data-based planning, you know exactly where you stand regarding delivery capacity, and in many cases, you can find ways to shoehorn in new business. Integrate new customers quickly and with confidence using your efficient, new, data-based dispatch plan.

### **You remove the guesswork**

Do you run around with your hair on fire all day long, wondering where your trucks are or if they're going to make it to your clients in time? By devising a plan and automating your delivery schedule, you effectively remove guesswork (and the resulting stress) from the equation altogether.

### **You save gas**

With a strong, data-based plan, you find the shortest path from A to B, and you use the best resources to make the trip. This one's a no-brainer. A logical, efficient planning solution saves you fuel, which saves you money.

### **You manage delivery anomalies**

As you know, until there's a problem, your company's consistent, on-time delivery will likely go completely unnoticed. You can deliver on time 100 times in a row, but the first time an unexpected delivery delay arises, you can expect delivery time to be top-of-mind for your customers. Sure, this can happen even with proper planning in place – but it will be less frequent and more manageable with a data-based plan.

### **You make your customers happy**

At this point in your relationship with your customers, you've worked out a price point that suits both of you; therefore, on-time delivery is now your primary "channel of happiness." Stay out of the doghouse and deliver happiness. Even if it goes unnoticed, it's far better than the alternative.

### **You better monitor your fleet**

When you know where to expect to see your fleet, you can keep a closer eye on your vehicles. Conversely, dispatching deliveries without data-based planning sends them off your mental radar, and potentially off your dispatch radar.

### **You improve flexibility**

Scheduled deliveries and flexibility may seem to be mutually exclusive, but implementing a solid, data-based plan actually increases flexibility. A good plan allows you to know where your trucks are and where they're going, so if you have a truck heading down one street and you could possibly add a delivery on a nearby street, you have the knowledge, and consequently, the flexibility, to squeeze in the extra drop-off. Without a solid plan, it could be a gamble.

### **Commit now to a data-based planning solution**

No doubt you're personally familiar with one, two, or all of these principles. So what's the holdup? "Our firm is too small to warrant a data-based planning solution." "I know this town like the back of my hand, and so do my drivers." It's time to do away with the excuses and save your company money. This week, devise and implement an improved logistics plan that enables your company to thrive. And if you're not sure where to start, PDI can help you with **data-based planning and dispatch solutions** that empower you to maximize productivity and profits, while increasing visibility and control from the rack to the pump.

## Contact information

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