

GPS Fleet Tracking Solutions

The Comprehensive Guide on RASTRAC's GPS Fleet Tracking Systems and How They Play Their Part in Increasing Business Productivity



RasTrac[®]

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Letter from the author

GPS tracking goes beyond providing conventional security for the vehicle and assets onboard. In fact, what most fleet managers do not realize is that GPS tracking offers a lot of financial benefits as well. It fulfills the objective of ensuring peace of mind and improving efficiency. By using GPS tracking systems, you get to sit in the driver's seat of all your vehicles, and make the right decisions with the information these devices help you gather. RASTRAC is one company that is striving and doing its best to ensure that this occurs as effortlessly as possible with their customized solutions.

This book contains the following:

1. Introduction to Fleet Management and GPS trackers
2. Fleet Management advantages for managers
3. Benefits of tracking technology
4. The other assets that contribute to business efficiency with tracker systems

Lead-In to Fleet Management

Fleet management simply refers to managing a company's fleet while keeping in mind two main assets - i.e. the vehicle itself and the goods that it transfers. Fleet management is an imperative part of several major industries such as construction businesses, the oil and gas industry, municipalities, and the transportation industry.

Let's take a construction business as an example. The entire operation depends on the functionality and reliability of their fleet, thus making them quite valuable. These can include bulldozers, generators, backhoes, and other highly expensive equipment that is often left on a job site overnight without supervision. This does not mean that the business should stop taking contracts from remote places or be extra anxious when the crew that is supposed to watch after the machinery fails to show. Instead, GPS tracking should allow them to keep track of the exact location of their fleet while making fleet management easier. '

GPS Trackers

Tracking equipment has built-in motion sensors that, if moved from a designated location, can alert the owners and track the asset's movement and current location.

There are also advanced systems that can gather complete data on vehicles such as fuel consumption and vehicle mileage.

However, without the proper tracking system, fleet managers can be victim to thefts and unauthorized use of equipment. The tracker technology is part of a fast and easy flowing system and can, if allowed to, play a pivotal role in efficient operations that can lower costs for a business.

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The Primary Benefits of Fleet Management

GPS devices ensure the security and safety of vehicles and other assets of a business. A hidden tracker within a vehicle is supposed to alert the owner of its location so that if stolen, it may be recovered. More importantly, the assets that are on board may be recovered as well.

Cutting down on fuel costs come with knowing that your assets are only being used when authorized. Also, speeding is a factor that contributes to high fuel consumption. Tracking systems can easily monitor these changes in speed or mileage in real time. Similarly, as a manager, you are alerted if the truck driver has a habit of idling the truck too long and if the truck exceeds set speed limits. Daily reports on these statistics can also be scheduled.

Moreover, when it comes to tracking the vehicle's movements, you are also indirectly tracking the driver's movements and the behavior of an employee. Therefore, this information will help you enforce the driving policies you have in place. Once you make sure that you have a real time record of all your drivers' work, you can easily create a more accurate payroll. You get to stop the company vehicles from being used for personal use, thus reducing consumption of fuel and ensuring their longevity.



The Other Solutions

Other than tracking vehicles and keeping them from getting lost or being used without authorization, the company assets need to be properly maintained. Keeping track of all the maintenance sessions of a vehicle can help to keep a truck free of excessive wear and tear and ensures it remains on the road for a longer period of time.

Today, managers are not just concerned with simple vehicle management. They have to think about productivity levels, corporate goals, and their part in both. An effective fleet manager is described as one who is able to adapt easily to change and be able to handle situations that can appear without warning. The bottom line is that even fleet managers need to divide their attention to the revenue that is made or lost from what is done or is happening to the company's assets.

The Benefits to Your Business Other Than Security

Many do not realize that the benefits of fleet management systems go beyond security and are worth considering when you are choosing the most suited tracking product for yourself. However, the benefits are directly linked to the overall efficiency and productivity of a business.

Increase Driver Satisfaction

With the appropriate tracking products, many fleet managers have noticed that their employee satisfaction has increased. Better tracking products reduce frustration levels, especially for the drivers who need to input critical data and then have it verified. In the end, this not only reduces manual work, but also allows them to focus on their primary job: driving the truck. This way they drive safely and efficiently, which is good for the employees and the business as a whole.

Don't view the management systems as something you would use to spy on your employees; look at it as something that will ensure the protection and safety of your team and your fleet. Drivers cannot predict traffic jams and other disruptions. However, the fleet tracking GPS can help save time and money by getting the driver out of a difficult situation in only a few minutes. In addition, knowing that these features are available encourages the employees to drive safely.

Raise Profits

Fleet tracking solutions can help a business save costs and therefore increase its overall profit margin. The following are a few reasons why:

1. Tracking solutions lead to optimized fuel consumption.
2. Fleet tracking solutions can record data, thus streamline reports, paperwork, and the documentation, which will save the business valuable resources and money.
3. It also helps the business improve its driver performance leading to efficient and productive operations.
4. It can avoid unauthorized use of your assets, saving you money. This way you will not be unknowingly spending money on fuel and truck maintenance when these are not serving the business's core purposes.

More importantly, let's look at the cost vs. benefit ratio. With the tough economic conditions, it makes sense why some businesses may be hesitant to invest in fleet tracking systems. However, besides reducing costs, businesses can also avail the other long term advantages that can help them grow.

The Unpredictable Fuel Prices



Whether it is a transportation business or any other industry that makes use of vehicles and equipment, it is a known fact that the most expensive resource is fuel. Therefore, it becomes important to manage this resource as efficiently as possible.

A variety of factors influence the consumption of fuel. These include aerodynamics, tire resistance, maintenance, and weather. Of course, many other things affect the consumption of fuel that fleet tracking solutions can measure. These include excessive idling, over-revving, braking too hard, speeding, improper shifting, and navigation and routing.

With the proper tracking devices, you can control these factors to your advantage. In fact, in a recent survey, it was proven how truck/trailer drivers can achieve 30% better mileage on every gallon than a similar driver with the exact same resources once the former is using a tracking product. The bottom-line is that managing a business's fuel expenditure does make a difference. It can decrease costs and increase profits without you having to go through raising the numbers in the fleet and hiring more employees. Monitor and manage: these are the two things that fleet managers are supposed to do.

Increase in Customer Satisfaction

Your customers have appointed you for one purpose: to make sure that their assets in the freight, like crude oil, are transported safely and as quickly as possible. However, customer demand does not end there. They want to be updated on the cargo in real time. Fleet tracking solutions can make this possible, allowing the business to attract and retain the customers due to this added benefit. This way, your organization will not only be working efficiently, but smartly. You are bringing value to your customer relations, which will give you a competitive edge in the industry.

The right fleet tracking solution helps fleet managers to lower operational costs, improve the fleet's visibility, and increase employee satisfaction. The tracking features that achieve these are also responsible on achieving compliance for the company automatically, making things a lot easier for management. For instance, performance monitoring will allow a record of accurate fuel consumption for a particular fleet. This also includes the features that keep in check the data of automated hours of service.

Avoid Manual Errors

Furthermore, the tracking products can be a replacement to many of the tasks that are usually done manually, such as keeping track of when drivers clock in and out. It also tracks fuel consumption, notifies you where the fleet is exactly, and informs you how much it has travelled. With the help of these products, you can avoid human errors, which can sometimes be costly to reverse.

Get More Customers

In the modern pace of transportation or any other industry that pertains to fleet management, it is imperative that you have competitive advantage over the market. Once you invest in a fleet management system, your employees' increased efficiency will allow you to easily take up new contracts while still delivering on time. In fact, this practice also allows you to single out where the workforce could use a little more optimization, where they lack, and what strategies should be introduced to fill these gaps.

Benefit from Lower Insurance Premiums

Insurance is expensive, and any money that is saved from the payment of premiums can be used in something more substantial and beneficial. In fact, now many insurance companies have started to offer lower insurance premiums to businesses that will be able to present data that has been backed by fleet tracking solutions. You are avoiding higher rates since fleet management systems can take care of lowering the accident claims and lawsuits against you with data which can be presented to support your case. You may be able to have deductibles waived, and premiums significantly lowered just by installing a GPS tracking system in your assets. These savings alone can more than pay for the equipment and services.

How Do You Attract Hard Working Employees?

Don't you wish that you could have people with lots of potential working under you so that you could get to be a part of a great team and an even greater organization?

GPS Tracking Can Be a Part of Effective Employee Training

In any industry, employees come and go. The hiring process takes its toll and you may find yourself as a manager going through the annoying hassle of having to hire and retrain new staff.

Think about the training aspect for a moment. Most fleet managers need to effectively train their drivers, showing them how to keep track of logs, daily operational tasks, etc. This is how a good manager thinks and works. After all, your drivers are an important asset to you and the company. Managers who make use of fleet tracking systems find that it is much easier to teach new employees with great potential the workings of a vehicle that operates in sync with the features of a customized GPS tracking system. The drivers, though new and inexperienced, typically make fewer mistakes.

Better Track of Performance

With the efficient use of GPS tracking systems, you know where the drivers need help and where they need work. The tracking systems analyze not only the workings of the vehicle but also the work pattern of the driver. This can include any accidental behavior or out of the ordinary driving practice. This lets you improve as an organization as each employee gets the chance to learn and improve. Plus, it also helps in ensuring safety and security for the driver.





Driver/Employee Retention

With fleet monitoring, managers or owners can keep track of fuel consumption as well as the performance of each individual driver on the jobs they are assigned. Moreover, the driver's main focus and priority on a job is what they like to do best: driving. The GPS fleet tracking systems are an excellent tool to take out most of the manual work for which a typical driver would be responsible. This includes the tedious and annoying tasks of paperwork, log in information, vehicle inspection, etc.

Have you ever had a disagreement with a driver on issues such as their working hours? If you have, wouldn't you like to know that you could never have that dilemma ever again? When you are reviewing your options on fleet tracking devices, think about getting one which incorporates the automated hours of service. This feature allows you to monitor each driver's hours. Getting that device will ensure your drivers that you are being fair when drafting the payrolls for the number of hours worked; there will be no disputes in the face of statistical real time data at your side.

Job Security

This does sound a bit farfetched at first glance doesn't it? But that is the truth. Truck tracking does have perks for the whole organization. Here is why your employees will readily welcome this new strategic addition in your operations.

Statistics prove that truck tracking has innumerable benefits when it comes to raising revenue. Once a company experiences this, the financial stability allows the employees to feel they have job security, unlike most companies which need to layover some of their own.

The employees will recognize this once the employers use this financial stability to reward them with bonuses. You are also indirectly boosting the employees' morale.

Why Customized Software is One Step Ahead

Don't you wish you could find the perfect solution to all your fleet management needs? Think about it, whenever you see some sales campaign shouting out how it is the best thing out there, don't you wish that you could make your very own GPS system that would easily encompass all your needs?

The team at RASTRAC thought the same thing, and with that they have brought together the concept of customizable tracking solutions.

Here are a few ideas that you can use when you are choosing the customizable features of GPS tracking software.

Solutions Available for Any Industry

Regardless of your industry, you can start by opting for the messaging feature which allows you to keep track of your employees via different communication technologies.

A major benefit of having these GPS tracking systems in the construction industry is that you can get an automatic alarm if one of many possible conditions occurs. For example, if the vehicle's ignition is turned on or off, the vehicle reaches or leaves a specific area, or if the vehicle gets sidetracked from a predefined area or location, there is an automatic alert that may be sent via text message or e-mail. This can occur even when the vehicle has stayed motionless for very long. However, with RASTRAC, you do not get a simplified version of a list of customizations you can make to your fleet GPS tracking system; you can choose the customizable options yourself in accordance to whatever your goals are.

Choosing the Right GPS Tracking Device

There are several different products available for all of your GPS tracking needs. You need to choose the most suitable option before you start adding customizable features to it.

When you are deciding on the vast array of things you would like out of your tracking system, take each of RASTRAC's products in mind. Even in the same industry, you may have to choose different features. This includes the different management styles fleet managers have, the corporate culture they work in and how that would come to suit their GPS tracking needs.



For instance, if you want to keep track of employee performance, you may want to choose the LMU-2700. You can count on it to provide you with an accurate record of driver behavior including motion sensing, hard braking, and impact detection. Other than this, it also offers fundamental fleet tracking solutions like options for internal GPS or external GPS antenna, and that it can work just fine in freezing environments down to -30 degrees Celsius and up to 75 degrees Celsius.

If that was not enough, the small device encompasses a huge message log and an automatic sleep mode that ensures efficient use of power.



On the other hand, if you are looking for a GPS tracker that enables you the ease of managing larger assets, or certain assets that sit idle for extended periods, then you should opt for the TTU-2800. This is because battery on the device is capable to stay charged for up to six months at a time, while providing a 500 message cycle. It has a built in cellular and GPS antenna for an easier installation.

There are a couple of things that you should definitely keep a check on when you are deciding on your final choice on purchasing a GPS tracker system. Think about what your areas of focus are as a fleet manager. It could be to just to eliminate the communication gap in the way your organization works, or to transmit accurate data of the vehicles usage pattern. If your primary concern is the communication gap that your company has been facing, then you may want to go for a tracker system that works like the LMU-2700.

GPS Tracking System

Myths Debunked

There are many myths about the use and installation of GPS tracking devices and software. Most of them are just simply not true.

GPS devices are the same as cell phones

Many people believe that a tablet or a cell phone will do the same job as a GPS tracker. Cell phones and tablets are great communications tools, but they are not the same, and therefore do not provide the exact functions as fleet tracking products. The difference is present and apparent: the GPS tracking products provide the user, i.e. the fleet managers, with important data like the status of the engine, log of the stops made and the exact times, mileage, speed pattern and how much of the fuel is used.

And when it comes to using cell phones to do maybe one of these things, they can be damaged and dropped easily. You will also need another person, or the driver while he is busy driving, to keep the manager updated verbally. The potential hazards to this include distracted driving, and, of course, the device getting damaged or running out of power. In the end, even if the cell phone ends up working fine, it will only be tracking people who are giving the updates and their perception and assumptions on the fleet's status rather than accurate readings.

RASTRAC does, however, specialize in the PocketRASTRAC application which works more than just a typical cell phone. Primarily, the application turns your iPhone, iPad, or Android device into a GPS tracker, complete with secure, 2-way messaging.

Installing a GPS tracking system makes us look like we do not trust our employees

Of course, if that were true, it would be highly demotivating for all the employees that work under you. However, you must know that installing a GPS tracking system in your vehicles is not only about you tracking your employees. Its primary function is to lower operating costs and get rid of any inefficiency that exists in the field. GPS tracking systems were devised to help organizations cut fuel costs and maintenance hassles as well as expense. Fleet managers use the information provided to them through the tracking systems to give their drivers more security, raise their response time to customers, and eliminate delays.

It is difficult to find drivers for a business that uses fleet tracking systems in their vehicles

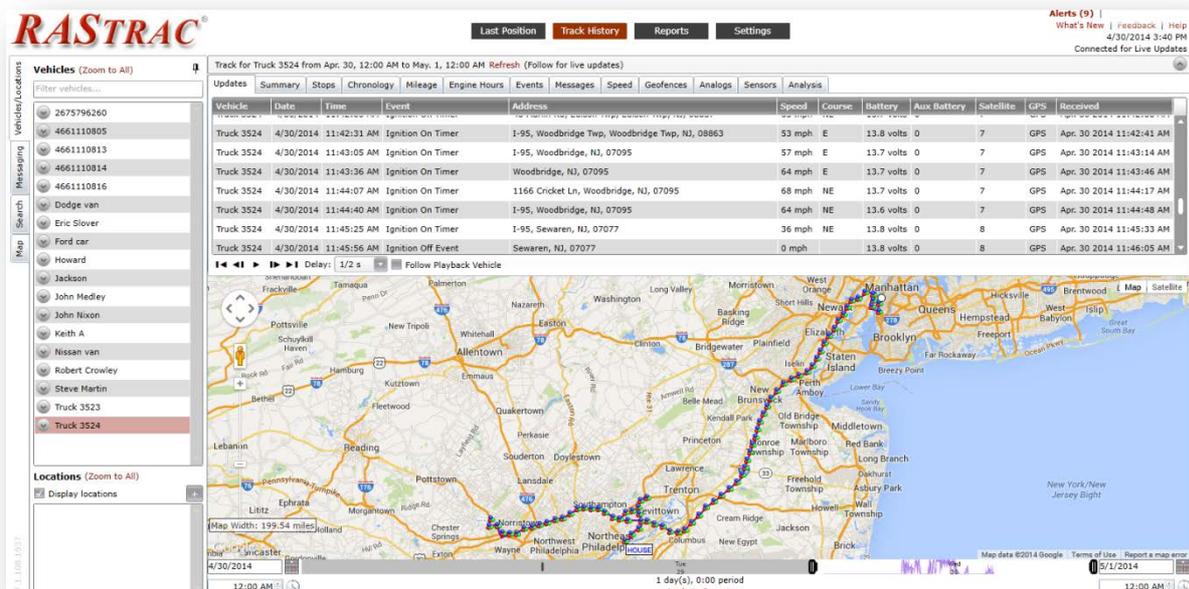
Many users will tell you that this is not true. In fact, many employees like working with a GPS tracking solution. This way, they easily get accurate routing information, roadside assistance, and get the tasks they take care of verified. Moreover, the GPS tracking systems does your work for you, and prevents you wasting time and energy on paperwork and forms that ensure safety and security of the driver and vehicles on the road. Drivers will eventually realize the benefits of the GPS tracking systems when you install these in your operations.

All fleet tracking systems are the same

Most manufacturers know that GPS tracking systems are more than just moving dots on a screen. Therefore, many providers have come up with improved versions and features. Simply put, most may seem similar, but none of them are identical. After using their tracking system for a while, many users will often realize that they could use a more capable provider for their tracking solutions. Some providers only set up the basic GPS capabilities and fail to take advantage of the functions that could possibly transform the way operations run for a business. Most of the advanced tracking systems do exactly that.

GPS tracking systems are a luxury my business cannot afford right now

GPS tracking systems are an investment, not an unwarranted cost. GPS tracking systems usually only require the equipment costs and the monthly monitoring fee for wireless services and data transmissions. But here is the best part about this investment: the fleet tracking solutions are known to strike the very inefficiencies that cost businesses thousands of dollars. This includes inefficient routing and wasteful fuel consumption, as well as reckless driving and many more issues that the business will not realize until installing a GPS fleet tracking system. These costs are way more than what fleet tracking systems are worth, which will allow you to not only go beyond breaking even, but eliminate many inefficiencies.



Last Word

Everything has its pros and cons. However, the GPS tracking software engineered and customized by RASTRAC have almost none of the latter. At the end of the day, even if you do a cost benefit analysis, you will find that getting a GPS tracker for your fleet management needs can, in fact, be looked upon as a long term investment with zero risks.

The best part is that you can choose from an array of different customized devices. Your choices can depend on what suits your business best so that operations and projects run smoothly and efficiently for you.

Contact us today for a free consultation
and demonstration

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RASTRAC is a leading GPS fleet tracking and remote asset management solution for companies of all sizes. Since 1993, we have provided vehicle tracking solutions to companies all over the world to help them reduce their operating expenses. Our GPS fleet tracking and remote asset management solutions can help you reduce unnecessary costs on everything from excess fuel usage to costly vehicle breakdowns, and more.

RASTRAC helps you manage your growing fleet of vehicles around the world. Fleet management solutions need to be efficient and constant, and RASTRAC's comprehensive GPS tracking services help reduce your fuel waste, ensure on-schedule transport, and help you monitor your most valuable assets every inch of the way.

RASTRAC knows that the cargo you're transporting is an important asset, and so is the fleet of vehicles you rely on to get it where it needs to go. In order to help ensure successful, on-time delivery, RASTRAC can create an economical GPS vehicle and equipment tracking system for any-size operational fleet management. Industries and businesses of all sizes have depended on RASTRAC to manage their fleets around the world. RASTRAC solutions have been proven in many global and local enterprises, including security, transportation, construction, government, education, and more.

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