

Information pays

Telematics can be used to improve driver behavior.

Improving road safety starts with improving drivers' behavior. One effective way to do this is to adopt fleet telematics. Using the internet, sensors, cameras, cellular-baseband radios and complex algorithms to monitor things like driver performance, a truck's mechanical status and other critical truck-safety issues, telematics can shed light on areas that need improvement. According to Octo, a global leader in telematics, there are three specific ways telematics can improve driver behavior.

1 PROVIDE SHORT- AND LONG-TERM FEEDBACK ON DRIVER BEHAVIOR: Immediate alerts, daily reports and driver scoring provide feedback to telematics users, allowing drivers to understand how their driving habits impact safety – and respond accordingly. Immediate feedback helps drivers change their behavior, while trend reports and driver scoring help reinforce behavior change and improve habits over the long term.

2 INCENTIVIZING SAFE DRIVING: Insurance discounts offered for safe driving incentivize improved behavior, helping to reinforce gains made in safety. Gamification flips the focus of driver improvement from reactive feedback to proactive. By incentivizing drivers toward safer behavior – whether the incentive is a coupon, reward or digital badge – telematics can help people drive safer immediately, without the need to wait for a critique of poor driving.

3 REDUCING DISTRACTED DRIVING: Telematics-driven mobile apps can identify when someone is driving and restrict inbound texts, calls or other cellphone behavior to reduce distracted driving. Telematics devices can also detect the symptoms of distracted driving, highlight these events to the driver and provide awareness of the impact of this behavior.

As with any business solution, there are questions decision-makers should ask when deciding which telematics solution to adopt. First and foremost, it should have verified driver-improvement features and increase efficiency and promote safety.

Following is a list of questions that have been adopted from Telematics.com, an online publication that covers telematics news.

DOES THE SYSTEM INCLUDE, OR IS IT COMPATIBLE WITH, AN ELD THAT IS FMCSA-MANDATE COMPLIANT?

This is the first item to consider, as the federal mandate for electronic logging devices (ELDs) is law. The FMCSA list of certified ELDs can be found at <https://eld.fmcsa.dot.gov/List>.

IS THE SOLUTION SCALABLE AND ADAPTABLE TO USER'S NEEDS? Changes and improvements in telematics technology are inevitable. A system that cannot be customized, expanded and modified as the technology advances will quickly become outmoded.

DOES THE PROVIDER OFFER CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SUPPORT? After a telematics system is selected and implemented, it's not the end of the process but a beginning. A good telematics provider can be a partner throughout by helping the user stay current with or ahead of developments.

IS THE SOLUTION COMPATIBLE WITH A DIVERSE RANGE OF ASSETS? With the rise of telematics as an OEM installation in most vehicles and equipment, a variety of hardware and software solutions may be in a user's fleet. Telematics technology must have the ability to receive all inputs through a single interface and consolidate the information.

CAN THE SOLUTION BE INTEGRATED WITH OTHER BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY? Telematics can be part of an overall suite of vehicle and back-office systems – including functions such as payroll, accounting, timekeeping, regulatory, inspection and maintenance – which will streamline operations and reduce administrative hours.

IS THE SOLUTION USER-FRIENDLY? The best telematics system is one that can easily be learned and forgiving of errors, designed for simple operation. This makes for a shorter learning curve during the system's implementation and onboarding new staff.

DOES THE SOLUTION OFFER A MOBILE APP? This is becoming increasingly important in transportation, construction and other business segments where the data review and analysis take place in in the field and the office.

IS THE PROVIDER REPUTABLE, EXPERIENCED AND RELIABLE? A purchaser should take reasonable care not to end up with an orphan system – one that is no longer supported. Likewise, a provider with years of experience that is recognized as a leader in the industry is a good bet for making sure that a large capital investment doesn't turn out to be a bad decision. ■

THE AUTHOR



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www.bauma.de

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www.khl-group.com/events/esta/

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Cleveland, OH
www.awrf.org

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www.scranet.org

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www.acrp.net

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www.windpowerexpo.org

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www.liftandmoveusa.com

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