

Data made simple with ALD ProFleet

05 July 2021 / Theme(s): All articles, Fleetech



Data is the new gold – it's impossible to evolve as a business or become cleaner, greener and more efficient unless you have data at your fingertips. But data is worthless if you can't convert it into a tangible business value. It's complex and needs to be gathered, processed and analysed to understand and make sense of it – and there's a lot of it. The good news is that things have just got much simpler....

What's the current state of play?

Connected car technology in itself is not new. Also known as fleet tracking or GPS vehicle tracking, it's been around for 10-15 years and is now considered an essential management tool for many commercial vehicle fleets. Technological advances such as telematics enable companies to monitor cars, trucks, equipment and other assets using GPS technology and, coupled with on-board diagnostics (OBD) data - to plot the vehicle's movements, behaviours and alerts on a computerised map - it can be invaluable to fleet managers and drivers.

In terms of use, telematics can help fleet managers react quickly to requests, optimise routes and create efficient logistics and delivery systems. However, until now it's had less of a focus in car fleets, where the ethical issues raised by fitting devices to vehicles used for both business and private purposes have sometimes been perceived as more problematic.

Within the leasing industry, however, for 15 years we have played a pioneering role in telematics and were among the first to deliver solutions for both cars and vans, fleet managers and drivers. That experience has given us a competitive edge in being able to forecast and predict some of the trends that we see – insights we then pass on to our customers.

This has all been cast into much sharper focus by the COVID pandemic. The reduction in journeys undertaken and the enforced changes in the way we work have led to greater focus on vehicle usage patterns in a more granular fashion. An example of which is that we are now much better able to identify vehicles appropriate for electrification, as well as highlighting the drivers best suited for those vehicles. All this has been factored into the programmes we've built.

What does this mean for you?

The benefits of enhanced data management for efficiency and productivity are clear. From a fleet manager's perspective, it helps them monitor overall fleet activity, prevent prolonged vehicle downtime, track CO2 emissions, identify cost optimisation opportunities, apply geofencing policies, and remedy risky or costly driving practices, using the observations that emerge to implement driver safety initiatives for example. As a result, strategic fleet decisions can be improved significantly if the right data is harnessed at the right time. The impact on driver training and, therefore, employee welfare is just as important as the positive effect on the bottom line.

Meanwhile, it also makes life easier for drivers, helping them streamline administrative tasks for business and personal travel, facilitate fuel claims, adopt smarter and safer driving habits, optimise time management with regular service reminders, and support a company's commitment to CSR through safer, greener driving.

How does our ALD ProFleet solution work?

OBD telematics devices are fitted to vehicles and can measure distances travelled, number of journeys, erratic driver behaviour (such as harsh braking); these can lead to targeted training programmes aimed at reducing risk or improving fuel economy.

The encrypted data they provide is transmitted to a secure cloud platform where it is stored and processed. It is then enriched by our experience and expertise in data matters, before being displayed as a customisable dashboard on a web portal for fleet managers. At the same time, drivers benefit from value-added services through a mobile app providing them with identical data.

Concerns about privacy?

Naturally, in a GDPR-conscious climate and with an increased focus on data privacy, some users may be concerned about what data is gathered and how it is used. Consequently, 'privacy by design' lies at the heart of the ALD ProFleet solution and rightly so.

ALD ProFleet has a full permissions and consent module, enabling drivers to choose precisely what data to share and to whom. That puts the driver in control, opting to share, for example, only data related to business travel, while completely blocking access to any private data. This transparency, clarity and assurance ensures a healthy relationship between employee and employer and guarantees that the fleet manager obtains just the right amount of data they need to optimise their processes.

Why ALD ProFleet?

Over 15 years, we've been blending industry insight and expertise into our connected fleet approach and solution. Whereas a telematics company will be an expert in the field of providing multiple reports, we use our background in vehicle leasing to crunch the data that fleet managers specifically need in order to provide a much more tailored solution with ALD ProFleet; and all this, at the right price point. It's that blend of technology and hard-won insight that enables us to play the role of trusted consultants in a whole new arena that's opening up, helping fleets to benefit from such innovation in technology.

Because we've been ahead of the curve for over a decade, we're on hand to guide fleets through the mass of data that now exists, helping to identify and focus in on the specific information needed to optimise the fleet and enhance driving behaviour, keeping vehicles on the road, achieving greater savings, and promoting greener policies.