



Selecting a fleet management solution

You have reached your destination! TomTom Telematics guides you through successful Fleet Management supplier selection

A fleet management solution (FMS) is a highly rewarding tool for any organisation with a fleet, regardless of its size. Whether the goal is to improve customer service, reduce costs, ensure auditable legislative compliance (including Duty of Care), decrease its environmental impact or all of the above, FMS or telematics offers a cost effective and practical solution.

To be reading this article, you've already decided to be one of the 14% of European fleets expected to be using the technology by 2014* - here we advise you on how best to select your supplier and start taking advantage of a 19% increase in productivity and 29% increase in service profitability**.

Supplier longevity

A good primary indicator of who to turn to is how long a supplier has been in the market. With numbers of FMS suppliers increasing, and start-ups regularly fading away within a few years of entering the market, organisations can be left with either no system support, or worse, no system at all. As with all types of business, trusted brands with a record for stability are the safest place for your financial investment.

Know your needs

Before reviewing and comparing suppliers think twice about what you want from the system. What is the primary purpose of your fleet operations? What do you want to improve? What do you want to gain from FMS?

And, before opting for an extensive list of 'add-on' features, ask yourself whether you or your team will use them and if they address a particular requirement of your business. If you have to persuade yourself of their purpose, they're probably a waste of money and will unnecessarily complicate the user experience.

Usability – a total user experience

Employees and drivers will have to adopt a new way of working, particularly if this is their first FMS, however the system will be easier adopted if you have their buy in. Ease of use, relevance and individual benefits accelerate user adoption, and in turn your ROI.

Familiarity with system tools helps so an internet browser-based application is easily adopted and does not restrict use to company headquarters. Employees in the field are an integral

part of the FMS and if devices are easy to use, intuitive and have similar interface to those they use in their private life, there will be higher acceptability and quicker take up.

Go for proven solutions

Don't be the guinea pig! Don't choose to implement an FMS without a proven track record as this means taking unnecessary risks which could cost dearly in terms of costs and time. Proven solutions are more likely to produce expected savings and an increase in efficiency.

If a solution is successful, your vendor will have a customer base and be able to provide references. If you choose a supplier with clients in your specific industry, references will be more relevant and you'll benefit from the supplier already having learned the daily requirements of the sector and adapted their systems accordingly.

Future Proof

Innovation drives business and in order to keep an FMS solution up-to-date suppliers have to continually develop their offering. There are a number of areas this applies to: software development to deliver cutting edge solutions and customer support to deliver reliable after sales service that keeps customers happy. If your supplier has the financial resources and technical expertise to stay ahead of the pack, it's a positive sign your FMS won't be left behind a few years down the line.

Customer support

All businesses want first-class service and support but all too few enjoy it. From initial consultation to integration, from training to system enhancements, it is vital to have a regional contact. Local services and a network of integration partners with implementation know-how are also critical for the speed and success of an FMS's deployment.

Integration options

Look for an FMS that can demonstrate a wide range of successful integrations. Integration comes in many different guises, but broadly fits into two categories:

'Out of the box' systems are used across a broad range of applications and as such should have already proven their value to many businesses and been integrated numerous times. While they may not provide you with every answer to every business issue, they will have been tested, proven themselves in the marketplace and ensure a quick ROI.

A customized FMS offers a solution tailored to your business requirements, but cost, integration time and a reliance on integration partners should be factored in.

Costs and value

The investment and day to day operation costs of a system play a key role in selecting an FMS supplier. However, the real value to the organisation is seen across a range of tangible benefits and these areas need to be assessed accordingly:

- ROI in time and money
- Ease of use, affordable and periodical update of both the application and the maps
- scalability or opportunities for expansion of a system

Pay-As-You-Go

A special note needs to be made of suppliers offering aggressive pricing and no upfront payment for FMS hardware. To operate a long term sustainable relationship with customers, innovation and investment by the supplier in all aspects of the FMS must be on-going. The pay-as-you-go model does not offer long term benefit to the customer as it does not allow for funding innovation and therefore continually delivering value to the customer.

About TomTom Telematics

Market leader TomTom Telematics has recently announced that currently 400,000 commercial vehicles are connected to its WEBFLEET fleet management system. TomTom Telematics is about user experience and focuses on the mission critical aspects for your business on the road. TomTom Telematics integrates out of the box with dozens of applications across various industries. To find out more about TomTom Telematics, visit www.tomtom.com/telematics to see case studies of businesses it has helped.

* Berg Insight, Fleet Management and Wireless M2M, 2009, p 39

** Aberdeen Group, Service Workforce and Fleet Management, May 2009