

# THE GREAT DEBATE: Is GPS Tracking *Really* Beneficial for Fleets?



Since GPS tracking was first introduced to the fleet industry, there has been a debate whether this technology is really beneficial for fleets or not. Some of the most common objections include the fear of employee pushback, budget concerns, big data and not knowing what do with it, it's a hassle, and not having enough time or expertise for GPS tracking. Also, OEMs have introduced vehicles equipped with GPS tracking to the market, which has raised the question of whether it will become the preferred purchasing method for vehicle tracking.

On the other side of the discussion, businesses that have implemented GPS tracking to their operations believe the "great debate" shouldn't even exist. Fleets that use GPS tracking technology have been able to increase productivity and efficiency, reduce costs, improve safety, and overcome many other business challenges. To help you decide if this technology is right for your fleet, compare the common objections versus the benefits to GPS tracking.

## Fear of Employee Pushback

One of the biggest concerns about GPS tracking for fleet professionals is the fear of employee pushback. The "Big Brother" theory often gets thrown around in reference to GPS tracking, as well as concerns from employees who don't want to be tracked, think it invades their privacy, or think that it means management doesn't trust them. A lot of fleet managers have close relationships with their drivers and may not feel it is necessary.

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First of all, you have to understand that the goal is not to get employees in trouble, invade their privacy, or show distrust; the goal is to improve your business. Measuring driver performance is just another way to help your fleet be more productive and increase your business's bottom line. All jobs measure employee performance, so why should a fleet's mobile workforce be any different? If a business is not evaluating employee performance at all, it is likely that the fleet is not where it should be.

Another important question to think about is why employees would oppose being tracked if they are not doing anything wrong? When employees are performing their jobs the way they should be, they will actually want their activity recognized. These employees will likely be on board with using GPS tracking to find the offenders because they don't want to be punished collectively for someone else's poor behavior.



**If offenders are singled out, it will eliminate the chance of punishing good employees when they have done nothing wrong.**

## Budget Concerns

Another common concern fleet professionals have about GPS tracking is that it is too expensive and they don't have room in the budget for this technology. If finding a solution is not a top priority for your organization, it may not seem necessary to incur this cost.

When talking about budget, you are talking about which costs and expenses, liabilities, and cash flows your business is able to sustain while still being profitable. This means that most budgetary concerns about GPS tracking revolve around the idea that it will be a long-term expense for a business. Although there will be a price associated with purchasing a



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is available, but if access to this information can prevent your fleet from being held financially responsible when not at fault, you will be glad to have it.

## It's a Hassle!

You may be thinking that you know where your drivers are, so you don't see the point in using a GPS tracking solution to obtain information you already know. Maybe you don't want to be the person to push the project forward in your organization because it risks placing your head on the chopping block if it goes wrong. All things considered, it's a hassle and you don't want to deal with it.

The thing is, you may know where your drivers are, but do you know what they are doing? Do you know if they are speeding or idling? Do you know how much time they are spending at each job site or if they are arriving on time? These are key issues that are unable to be addressed just by having an idea of where your vehicles should be. You shouldn't write off using a GPS tracking solution because you don't want to be the one held responsible if it isn't used. By doing your research and obtaining the facts on how GPS tracking will help solve your business challenges, you're actually more likely to impress upper management and come out on top for showing initiative.

If you think that GPS tracking is a hassle, consider how much more of a hassle it will be if something preventable happens. By monitoring driver behavior, you will be able to improve safety by preventing driver fatalities and eliminating expensive accidents.



**If an accident occurs and you do not have GPS tracking in place, there will be no way to know how fast your driver was going or if they were truly at fault.**

Without this data, your business will have to rely on "guesstimations" that could end up costing much more than necessary.

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## Not Enough Time or Expertise for GPS Tracking

Some fleet executives don't want GPS tracking because they don't have enough time to take their vehicles out of service to install devices and implement the solution. While this is a legitimate concern to prevent a dip in productivity, GPS tracking providers often work with professional installation teams to make sure installs are well-organized and completed in a timely manner. Professional installers will get as many devices hooked up at once to ensure businesses experience the least amount of down time due to an installation.



As a fleet manager, you are already incredibly busy and may think that you don't have the time to review or take action on all the information from a GPS tracking solution. One of the benefits of using GPS tracking is that it will actually create more time in the day by eliminating manual processes traditionally associated with fleet management. GPS tracking solutions automate fleet operations so that you can spend your time more productively.

Another concern for fleets is that they do not have enough expertise or tech-savvy employees who will be able to quickly learn and use GPS tracking software. You don't need to be tech-savvy to use a GPS tracking solution. Most top-tier solutions are designed to be user-friendly so that they can be widely adopted throughout an organization. Along with ease of use, GPS tracking solutions should offer technical support teams that are available 24/7/365 and account managers to provide ongoing training, present areas for improvement, and demonstrate how to measure success with a GPS tracking solution.

### OEM

Vehicle manufactures are now offering GPS tracking pre-installed, and fleet professionals are asking, "Why not just use this as our source of GPS tracking?" Although it may seem simpler to set up GPS tracking devices that are already installed in the vehicle, it is actually not the case and will present problems for most fleets.

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One of the biggest problems with OEM installed solutions is that they do not work for mixed fleets. It is very unlikely for a business to have just one make of vehicle throughout their entire fleet, so if you do have other vehicle types, you will end up using multiple OEM solutions to track those vehicles. Using multiple GPS tracking platforms is complicated, expensive, and will waste valuable time. Unless your entire fleet is made up of one vehicle make, purchasing OEM installed GPS tracking solutions will likely not be worth the investment.

It is also important to remember that GPS tracking solutions are not created equally, and it is certainly the case when discussing OEM solutions and advanced GPS tracking software. OEM solutions are typically a one-size-fits-all solution with zero customizations available based on your business model. Software development is not a focus for vehicle manufactures, so OEM solutions typically fall short of expectations. If you are investing in GPS tracking to help solve your business challenges, you need to make sure you choose software that has the capability to do so.

## Think Long Term

When considering if GPS tracking is right for your business, think long term about your business goals. It is not just about where you are currently; it is about setting up your business to be more profitable in the future. It is important to stay on the same playing field as your competition that will, if they have not already, implement GPS tracking to their operations.

Your customers expect more visibility into your fleet, quicker response times, and more efficiency overall. With GPS tracking technology, help your business be more successful now and in the future by increasing revenue, reducing risk, and increasing efficiency.

**To learn more about how your business can utilize this technology, contact GPS Insight.**

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