



Preparing for the post-COVID-19 fleet

How to turn your downtime to uptime

Since the global COVID-19 pandemic emerged, fleet-based businesses have faced a number of logistical, operational and monetary challenges. Focusing on preventing the spread of the virus and keeping employees safe while at the same time trying to stay profitable, or even just afloat, is a real challenge for fleets.

Fleets have been impacted in varied degrees. If your business is presently slow, that won't always be the case. Before things get busy again, owners and managers may want to consider making the most of this downtime to help build a strong foundation for the future. Now is the ideal time for fleet owners to constructively take stock of existing processes and establish new procedures to help strengthen their business to emerge stronger in the post-COVID-19 world.

According to Kevin Aries, Leader, Product Success, Verizon Connect, "Now's a great time to do an audit of your tools and technology. Especially for companies that are existing Verizon Connect customers, but aren't as close to the product as they want to be or want more training to create different reports."

Here are some ways you can transform today's current downtime into your future uptime.

Get laser-focused on cost control

Budgets are tight right now, and cost control is more critical than ever. Taking the time to put fleet management expenses under a microscope can go a long way in streamlining and maintaining efficiency. Aries says, "There's definitely an ROI associated with Verizon Connect products and solutions that can help companies worried about their bottom line and cashflow during these times." Telematics technology helps keep tabs on both obvious and hidden costs, highlighting where capital "leakages" are occurring and where the business is under budget. Utilizing the right fleet management tools, businesses can review these cost categories for improvement opportunities.



Engine diagnostics

Preventative maintenance is a firm step toward achieving optimal vehicle performance – and this means knowing the constant state of all vehicle engines. A fleet management software can track diagnostic data like battery voltage, coolant temperature, powertrain malfunctions, intake valve issues, oxygen sensor problems and more. This helps extend the life of vehicles and reduce the likelihood of major repairs and breakdowns with timely service. It's a good idea to review this data while times are quieter to see if any repairs might be needed.

Service records tracking

Fleet management tools enable operators to automatically track vehicle service and date of completion, regardless of service provider. And they can set proactive reminders for oil changes, tune-ups and other routine upkeep. If vehicles haven't been used as frequently these past months, it's possible that regular servicing has also been delayed. Now is a great time to check service records to see if any fleet vehicles are overdue for regular maintenance, and to update automatic reminders to reflect these new service dates.

Fuel use

Fuel purchases represent one of the biggest expenses for most fleets.

Fleet management technology enables businesses to control these costs by helping to:

- Reduce idle time
- Reduce speeding
- Reduce unauthorized vehicle use
- Improve route efficiency
- Leverage engine diagnostics
- Verify fuel expenditures and reduce fraud

Wear and tear

Driving fewer miles puts less wear and tear on tires and other vehicle parts, translating to fewer part replacements. Right now, it's likely your vehicles have covered less distance in these past months. But that hasn't always been the case, and won't be the case in the post-COVID-19 world no matter how distant it may seem. To help reduce total miles driven going forward, take the time now to review your telematics records to see which vehicles may have put on more miles than necessary in the past, and take advantage of all the capabilities of technology.

- Improve dispatching decisions by viewing near real-time maps of all vehicle locations
- Route closest vehicles to the next job
- Provide drivers with point-to-point driving directions
- Leverage geofences to reduce unauthorized and off-hours vehicle use

Insurance

By itself, using a fleet management system to monitor vehicle and driver performance isn't enough to impact insurance rates. However, when part of a fleet safety program that includes using data to coach employees on safe driving behavior, fleet management technology can often help contribute to lower insurance premiums. Many insurance companies offer discounts for having telematics technology installed. If you already have this technology, but haven't informed your insurance carrier, now's the time to do so. You could possibly realize significant premium savings.

Make the most of analytics and reporting

Telematics technology lets you analyze your fleet's performance over time, allowing you to showcase important trends by team, department or across the entire fleet. Customizable dashboards make this possible. Dashboards can be set up to facilitate easy review of progress towards KPIs or budgets, with near real-time fleet analytics.

To make the most out of this capability, it's important to run the right reports and have the right dashboards programmed for your organization's specific needs. While you have the time, take the chance to review your telematics tools and your analytics reporting capabilities. This could include:

Trend analysis

Run historical reports on up to two years of fleet data to uncover insightful trends, support investigations and extrapolate reliable forecasts.

API integration

Integrate with other enterprise systems, such as SAP, using standard web-based APIs (REST, SOAP etc.) to help improve the speed and accuracy of



data collection for your payroll, HR and CRM solutions.

Fuel card tracking

Track fuel card usage and automatically identify suspicious transactions using smart algorithms that help spot and reduce fuel card fraud.

Smart maintenance

Generate vehicle maintenance alerts for your own service department or local dealer to help improve the accuracy of your preventative maintenance program to control costs.

Improve customer experience

Many fleets, especially smaller or field service-oriented fleets, depend on customer satisfaction for repeat business and referrals. Telematics technology makes it possible for customers to leave a review, whether requested post-job or initiated by customers. Using these reviews, you can get a sense of how the company

is performing overall, and view a custom ratings dashboard to track performance over time.

If your company has ever received a less-than-shining review, you may not have had the time to address the issue at the moment. Before business starts to ramp up again, it might be a good time to reach out to any unhappy customers to see how to remedy the situation. This small gesture can help boost future business and bolster a cache of long-term customers.

To read the latest COVID-19 industry updates, please visit our website at [verizonconnect.com](https://www.verizonconnect.com)



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