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Case Study No. 2 Operational economy and improved customer service



Line of business: Cold storage and refrigerated transport throughout the UK

Company Headquarters: Wallsend, Newcastle

FleetBoard services used: Driver & Vehicle Management and Temperature Management

Contact: Paul Martin, Managing Director, 0191 295 8800

1 Company

David Price Food Services Ltd specialise in handling chilled and frozen products offering next day delivery to most parts of the UK, Europe & Ireland.

Part of the Chillnet organization, the national network for frozen and chilled distribution, they provide an added value, time critical, full logistical service to their customers, running a day and night operation from their depots at Wallsend (Newcastle) and South Kirkby (Doncaster).

David Price Food Services Ltd operate a fleet of 33 vehicles and 30 trailers, and supported by their Chillnet partners their network includes locations in Liverpool, Luton, Bridgwater, Peterborough, Dover, Glasgow, Redditch, Belfast, Dublin and Limerick.

2 Background

The Company was established in 1988, and began offering

storage and distribution services for the North East food manufacturing industry. Over the years the Company has expanded to incorporate distribution coldstores with the capacity for 6000 pallets and refrigerated loading docks on their sites. Fleet growth for their chilled and frozen distribution has been through the acquisition of multi-temperature trailers.

Most recently, in 2002, the company became part of the Chillnet consortium which quickly expanded their delivery destinations nationally. Operating through regional hubs trailers are exchanged between partners to speed up the distribution process.

‘We came on board with FleetBoard when we bought the Mercedes vehicles, that’s where the tie in was’, explains Paul Martin, Managing Director. **‘I was taken aback with what the system could do. I thought it was superb and that it would be ideal for us’.**

The company’s main focus is their operational reliability and their depots have a fully integrated operations office monitoring the location and temperature of their units. A continued investment in fleet enhancement enables their customers to be confident of the product being delivered on time and under the best conditions. ‘We’re very operationally minded and customer focused, that’s the way we run the company’, says Paul.

3 Solution

The FleetBoard telematics platform has been installed to tractor units and rigid vehicles with the Temperature Control Unit installed to trailers. As the Temperature Control (T2) units also have GPS the trailers can be tracked independently of the tractor units. Since first implementing the FleetBoard system in July 2006 David Price has had the majority of their vehicles installed and plans are

underway to install the remainder of the fleet. **‘It has always been my intention to have all the vehicles fitted with FleetBoard, we have got another ten units to install and that will be 100% of the David Price fleet using the FleetBoard system’**, says Paul.

The company are utilizing the skills of Phil Davison, Fleet Administrator as their on site driver trainer. ‘He’s doing the full package which is good because it’s one thing to tell the drivers they’re doing it wrong but then you need somebody to show them where they can improve’, explains Paul. The management team ensures the continued motivation of their drivers by using the FleetBoard Performance Analysis to produce and publish weekly driver reports and monthly driver league tables. They comment that **‘of the functionality that FleetBoard provides the most beneficial is the Performance Analysis service this helps us keep our driver grading at a**

'Our insurance companies love it.'

high performance level – resulting in proven savings'.

They also then use these results to run incentive schemes to reward the drivers' hard efforts. 'We just did one at Christmas. We wanted some reward for all the work the drivers were doing, and they had been improving, so we ran two competitions for best improvement one on the day shift and one on the night shift. The awards were well received', explains Lee Johnston, Operations Manager.

In addition to the systems on the vehicles, they have also had their entire trailer fleet installed with the FleetBoard Temperature Management system. Paul Martin explains their decision for implementing the system on their trailers: 'I believe that what we got was the whole package and the added bonus was the fact that we'd already invested in the systems for the vehicles. It's a whole one page scenario, you go on the web and the entire vehicle and trailer information is there'. **'The FleetBoard Temperature Management system provides all the information that competitor systems do, and that bit extra, however it is presented more professionally and is definitely user friendly'**, adds Lee.

The company put the system to good use last Christmas when a partner using one of their trailers had an unexplained loss of some meat and they used the features of the Temperature Management service to identify when and where the loss occurred. 'Using the FleetBoard tracking we could see that there was one place on the vehicle trip record that was off route which the driver went to for half an hour. With the Temperature Management system we could prove that

the doors were open and closed within this half an hour. It proved that there was reasonable doubt and the matter was resolved with the companies concerned', outlines Paul.

With their customers becoming increasingly demanding and having an ever growing interest in temperature monitoring, one of the biggest benefits to the company of the Temperature Management is the ability to download live data. This enables them to provide the customer with immediate information about loading times, temperatures on route to delivery and current temperatures. 'It's a massive benefit because we run a just in time service and so historical information is no good to us, we need data there and then', expresses Lee.

'Every customer we have shown has been blown away by what information is available to them and how easy it is to get. They think it's excellent, easily accessible and great because of what it gives you', adds Paul.

They also take advantage of the alarm feature on the Temperature Management Service and receive alerts via text message whenever there is an issue regarding low fuel level or out of range temperature. The alerts continue in 15 minute intervals until the problem is rectified. 'It lets us know before the event happens', explains Lee, 'so that we can act upon it straight away and save ourselves money by preventing a potentially spoiled trailer with a load worth thousands of pounds'.

'We always have a situation where the system will tell the user, and that's what we need', adds Paul.

4 Advantages

Advantage 1:

Operational cost savings combined with improved service to customers.

Advantage 2:

Real time information available over the web from any location.

Advantage 3:

After sales support and upgrade process gives product reliability that justifies a long term investment.

FleetBoard provides many advantages for the company from saving them time and money by using the FleetBoard tracking, to the convenient assistance with their multi site operation through web based access. **'I love that FleetBoard is web based. The fact that you can log in wherever you are is just so convenient and makes it a lot easier'**, explains Paul. **'The system seems to be maintenance free, we have had very few issues'**, adds Lee. They are also impressed by the upgrade process of the FleetBoard system. 'It just adds a feature to what you've already got which makes the hardware more affordable and means you can transfer it from trailer to trailer and unit to unit. **In that sense it is a long term investment'**, agree Paul and Lee.

The company has seen improvements in factors such as idling time by 50% as a whole and in some individual cases, a reduction in the drivers idling time from 40% to 12%. The advantage of these statistics and measures such as the Performance Analysis and improved safety record has assisted the company in negotiating better insurance premiums. **'Our insurance companies love it'**, says Paul.

For David Price Food Services the risk against reward is massive and despite the support from their insurance company, who can see what they are doing with FleetBoard and the measures that the company is taking to prevent further losses on insured goods, uninsured losses that they incur through goods in transit claims can be a big cost for the company. **'We believe that as part of what we are doing with the investment in FleetBoard we can reduce our costs for uninsured losses by at least 50%'**, says Paul.

The company openly talk about the high quality of the after sales role that FleetBoard has provided them with from the implementation and understanding of the system to operating and general enquiries. 'FleetBoard have worked with us and are giving us good assistance to keep us on the right track. The initial purchase of the system is the easy part it's actually making sure that people are using FleetBoard that's the challenge. The people at FleetBoard have got our guys excited about it and ensured that we know the system and can work it. That comes through on everything we are doing with it. FleetBoard has given us support in the full implementation of the system which has led us to improving and being more efficient in what we do', explains Paul.

5 Outlook

David Price Food Services Ltd considers FleetBoard to be a 'vitaly important' tool that contributes to the success of their company. 'It has a huge bearing going forward', says Paul. 'The criteria on what we get from FleetBoard from a customer point of view, how we are tracing things like temperature and vehicle tracking, has made a real difference operationally and puts us in control of the improved service we can give to the customer. It's hard to put a cost on that'.

Summary

Paul Martin summarises the advantages of FleetBoard: **"A good reliable and effective self managed system, accurate reporting with easily accessible information supplying added value to the customer and our business"**.

For Further information about FleetBoard call 0121 288 8341
or visit us online www.fleetboard.co.uk