COMPANY
Eaton Sales & Service LLC is an industry leader in servicing state-of-the-art petroleum equipment. From its nine Rocky Mountain locations, Eaton maintains an extensive client roster of major oil companies, big box retailers, grocery store chains and independent retail fueling facilities in five states – Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Arizona.

Originally a petroleum equipment provider, Eaton switched in the 1950s to steel manufacturing to pursue better economic opportunities. In the 1980s, as the steel industry slowed, Eaton returned to petroleum equipment and expanded the business through acquisitions and organic growth.

The company focused on delivering turnkey petroleum equipment to customers, but in the mid-1990s, the emphasis shifted to service. Fueling facilities started using products from multiple vendors, requiring a common interface so they could work together. Eaton delivers and maintains the interface, which is essential to keeping its customers’ operations running properly.

CHALLENGE
With a fleet traveling hundreds of miles daily across five states, Eaton relies on Trimble Fleet Management for routing, tracking and ensuring drivers get to the right place at the right time. A Fleet Management user for more than a decade, Eaton originally installed the solution to track vehicles.

More recently, however, the company decided to address driver behaviors that, left unchecked, might lead to accidents, higher insurance and fuel costs, and premature vehicle wear and tear. So Eaton expanded its use of Fleet Management with the Trimble Driver safety tool to monitor hazardous driving.

Because we are now using Driver Safety, our drivers are adhering to the safest practices possible. When you take all this into consideration, Trimble Fleet Management and Driver Safety have brought us tremendous value.”

Bruno Busnardo, Eaton General Manager

THE RESULTS
- Reduced speeding by more than 30 percent
- Reduced fuel usage by 10 percent
- Improved efficiency
- Improved customer satisfaction
- Eliminated unauthorized vehicle use
Trimble Fleet Management is a cloud-computing platform that offers visibility into day-to-day field service operations, helping managers make intelligent decisions using real-time fleet status information. The solution helps organizations identify, manage and improve areas such as driver safety, customer service, back-office administration, fuel use and vehicle efficiency. Companies that leverage Fleet Management can improve productivity with vehicle tracking and trip management tools, and reduce costs by lowering fuel use and improving vehicle efficiency.

Trimble Driver Safety enables fleet managers to execute back-office analyses of aggressive maneuvers such as accelerating too fast from a dead stop – “jackrabbit starts” – as well as hard braking, harsh turns and excessive speed so managers can identify and coach the drivers that put the company at risk.

TRACKING VEHICLES

Eaton General Manager Bruno Busnardo says the company had multiple reasons to implement Fleet Management. “What was important, though, was that we knew where the vehicles were at all times. Our drivers are allowed to take their vans home at night. We gained efficiency by not having them come into the office and go directly to the job site. But we found by using Fleet Management that there was unauthorized use by the drivers.”

Eaton stopped unauthorized vehicle use, which led to an immediate 10 percent reduction in fuel costs. “The drivers’ reaction was mixed, which is what we expected, but those drivers abiding by company rules had no objection,” Busnardo recalls.

Another way Fleet Management has improved operations is through timecard verification. “I look at the reports every day and know what the drivers are doing,” Busnardo says, noting this helps keep drivers honest while also protecting the company in customer disputes. “We’ve had customers say our technicians weren’t on site as long as they reported and we’ve run a report to show that they were there for the hours billed.”

IMPROVING SAFETY

Driver safety is a priority for any field service operation, and Eaton is no different in this regard. The company had taken advantage of accelerometers built into Fleet Management to monitor harsh braking, hard turns and sudden acceleration. “We set alerts at 75MPH and we got exception reports when drivers exceeded this speed. We reduced fuel usage even more because there was no more hard acceleration,” Busnardo says.

But Eaton wanted more granular data on exactly who was speeding and when – the type of information available from Driver Safety. “We get a case-by-case report every week that we post in each office so all the drivers can view it. If drivers are having issues, the manager talks to them,” he says.

If problems persist after that, Eaton installs a device in their vehicles that beeps every time the driver exceeds a certain speed or accelerates too fast. “It’s like live training,” Busnardo says. “Drivers learn the parameters of safe driving and can make immediate adjustments to their driving behavior.”

Thanks to Driver Safety, Eaton has reduced speeding by at least 30 percent, while raising awareness with its drivers about the importance of safe driving. Beyond safety, he says, improved driver habits have reduced fuel costs and vehicle wear and tear caused by overly aggressive driving.

“Our vehicles are a huge asset and, with Fleet Management, we have peace of mind knowing where they are at all times,” Busnardo says. “On top of that, because we are now using Driver Safety, our drivers are adhering to the safest practices possible. When you take all this into consideration, Trimble Fleet Management and Driver Safety have brought us tremendous value.”

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