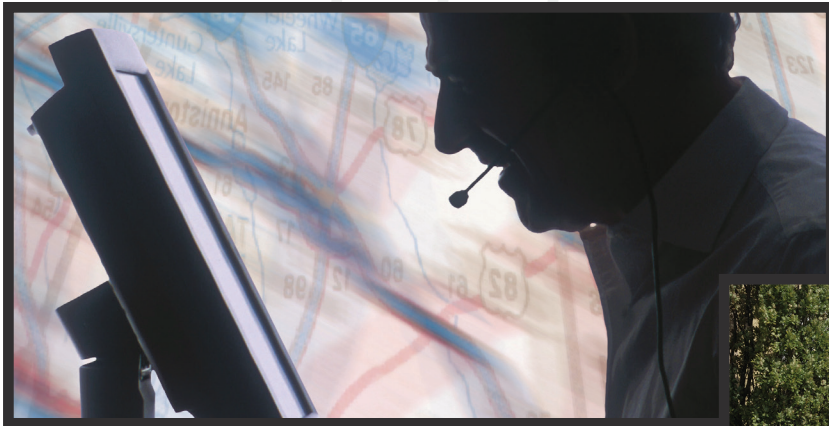


# OVERCOME PRIVATE FLEET MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

WITH TWO-WAY RADIO COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY



**P**ivate fleet managers are facing a remarkable set of challenges in today's demanding business environment. The "from any place at any time" omni-channel fulfillment mindset is just one significant development that companies have had to adapt to in their quest to keep customers and business partners happy. Having its impact felt in both distribution and manufacturing sectors, omni-channel is forcing all business-to-business (B2B) logistics operations to pick up the pace, predict, and react quickly to customer demands.

Add issues like driver safety and productivity, increased governmental regulations, the need for ongoing cost reductions, driver shortages, and fuel price volatility to the mix, and the need for robust, reliable technology solutions becomes

that much more critical.

Fortunately, technology has kept pace with these growing fleet management challenges. Viable communication solutions are available to address these pressing issues and help companies tackle obstacles that would have been insurmountable just a few years ago.

In this white paper we'll explore the key challenges that private fleet managers are currently facing, discuss the top solutions that firms are using to address these issues, and learn more about the benefits that fleet operators are achieving



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by applying two-way radio communication solutions in their operations.

### Addressing Key Fleet Management Challenges

Average warehousing and transportation costs eat up 2.3 percent to 4.6 percent of sales in the consumer products industry alone.<sup>1</sup> Charged with maintaining smooth-running vehicle fleets and the drivers that guide those activities, fleet managers tackle the supply chain from a unique perspective. Nearly 70 percent of total freight movement involves trucks<sup>2</sup>, and the individuals who manage these activities are asked to ensure driver safety and productivity; adhere to budgets; adjust to fluctuations like fuel price volatility; and comply with both existing and new regulatory rules.

At its simplest, the fleet manager's job is to increase productivity (in a safe manner) while decreasing costs. Achieving that goal isn't always easy, but it can be made simpler through the use of advanced technology equipment, software, and applications. Many times, applying communications technology within the fleet operations can go a long way

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in helping companies be more effective, competitive, productive, and safe—all while staying within the parameters of ever-increasing regulations and working to limit business liability.

These and other benefits often come once a fleet owner decides to either upgrade a current communication system or install a state-of-the-art option. A private fleet operation that operates on a regional basis, for example, using analog radios and/or cellular devices has limited capabilities to maintain communications.

Knowing that vehicle maintenance costs are a significant expense for any fleet owner,



for example, companies use this approach to help direct the vehicles to the right location as quickly as possible, monitor vehicle status or condition, and optimize the maintenance process such as changing oil or checking the engine before it fails.

Technology can play a crucial role in reining in those costs and helping owners optimize both their equipment and their human resources. Downtime is tremendously expensive for trucking operations who need to keep their vehicles on the road and rolling. Firms don't make any money or add to the productivity efficiency of their supply chains when trucks are sitting in the yard.

### Making the Right Choice

Keeping up with technology while attempting to optimize vehicles and operations are ongoing missions for fleet managers. Challenged by older, disparate systems, budgeting issues, and a technology world that's advancing rapidly, companies have an array of choices at their fingertips.

Motorola's MOTOTRBO™ digital two-way radios, applications such as WAVE™, and other technology solutions can help companies improve across a number of areas. Driver and vehicle safety, for example, can both be enhanced through the use of digital two-way radios.

Cell phone distractions alone caused 600,000 crashes, 330,000 injuries and, 3,000 deaths



in 2014.<sup>3</sup> Rather than trying to talk on a cell phone—or worse yet, text—while driving, operators can stay on the right side of distracted driver regulations by simply having the proper type of

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communication equipment such as two-way radios in their vehicles. For example, with the text-to-speech capability in MOTOTRBO radios, a text message can be read aloud and the driver can respond using a steering wheel-mounted push to talk button (PTT) and visor mic. Companies implementing new advanced technology see productivity gains and also reduce risks by staying out of lawsuits, reducing tickets for driving infractions, and other costly mistakes.

Fleet owners can securely connect personnel on different networks and devices—like smartphones, tablets, two-way radios and laptops with Motorola's WAVE Work Group Communications solution. This technology is particularly useful in operations where one or more employees may not want to carry a two-way radio on a daily basis, but where they do gain value from communicating via a radio system. The owner of a small business, or an off-duty supervisor, for example, would be able to access the radio network working with his or her own cellular device.

The WAVE platform bridges the gap for these users, helping them gain access to integrated operability between their smartphones and two-way radios. By leveraging multiple systems, companies are able to optimize their communication networks while also maximizing their own value—a benefit that can't be achieved by simply equipping drivers with cell phones.

An effective digital two-way radio system will provide firms with reliable coverage in the areas where they operate. Digital technology also allows companies to integrate both voice and

data, the latter of which could be as simple as the vehicle/driver identification or as complex as GPS-based location information.

Digital two-way radio technology also helps to feed fleet managers' growing appetite for solid analytics on just about every aspect of their operation. Being able to monitor driver status (Is the truck en route at the scene or out of service? Is the driver at lunch?), truck status (Are the flashers on or the back door open?), or any other number of data points (Is the trailer hooked to the tractor the right way? How long has the engine been running?) can give companies valuable insight that can help improve both driver productivity and safety and vehicle efficiency. If there's an emergency on the truck, the driver can hit an alarm button to send that information to the dispatcher or other interested party.

There are a variety of systems available to private fleet managers and freight transportation companies that want to achieve these goals. Companies can purchase a private radio system or gain access to wide-area coverage for a monthly fee on a shared system where the company will hear only its business unit—no other radio users.

### Making Strong Connections

The list of benefits that fleet managers can achieve when they integrate two-way radio communications into their operations is lengthy and growing. Not only does it help firms tackle the challenges mentioned earlier, but it also improves vehicle and worker productivity, enhances worker safety, improves customer service response times, lowers operational

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costs, and helps fleet managers optimize vehicle management and tracking including maintenance scheduling, route adherence, and location for optimum dispatch.

By adding speakers, microphones, earphones, and Bluetooth® capabilities to the lineup, fleet managers can further leverage their communication connectivity while ensuring good collaboration among drivers, dispatchers, and other employees. A driver that shows up at a construction site and is

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unsure of where to go, for instance, can use a Bluetooth-enabled headset and two-way radio to quickly connect back to the home office to get the delivery details.

Two-way radio technology also helps companies reduce operational liabilities like distracted driving and other issues that can be hard to control once a driver leaves the warehouse or yard. For example, if your drivers are using the radio, they can't be surfing the Internet or sending personal texts with that device. In many cases, being able to avoid safety problems also translates into improved customer service, better scheduling, and improved routing. Quick redirection of a truck when a customer

needs a follow-up visit, for example, is made easier when drivers are contacted via two-way radio while en route. Dispatchers can use a GPS console to easily identify which vehicle is nearby to a valued customer who needs a quick pickup or repair and immediately contact the driver. It makes the entire process faster and easier and gives companies the ability to service a customer in ways that they were never able to do before.

Dealing with an increasingly long list of business challenges, not the least of which is a demanding customer that wants fast, omni-channel fulfillment, fleet managers are increasingly turning to technology to solve their key business problems. Equipped with state-of-the-art digital two-way radios, a platform like WAVE, and a supportive communications network, private fleet managers can position themselves for success in even the most challenging business environments.

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<sup>1</sup> 2014 Supply Chain Benchmarking: Consumer Products, Gartner Inc.

<sup>2</sup> Predicts 2015: Global Logistics Differentiating the Future, Gartner, November 4, 2014

<sup>3</sup> National Safety Council Cell Phone Fact Sheet

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For more information on how seamless communications can improve safety and efficiency for your fleet, visit [www.motorolasolutions.com/transportation](http://www.motorolasolutions.com/transportation).