



Outrageously Dependable®



Delivering Dependable Service Through Proactive Vehicle Management

Sales and Delivery Fleet Improves Vehicle Health and Reduces Idling

Interstate Batteries, a leading supplier of batteries to thousands of garages, retail outlets, repair facilities, and vehicle dealerships across North America, has earned a reputation for reliable, timely service. Their company slogan of “Outrageously Dependable® service” shows their strong commitment to customers.

Delivering the right product at the right time means that Interstate Batteries needs to keep its vehicles in top shape. An unplanned truck breakdown or repair can impact both customer service and profitability. That’s why they turned to telematics, to better track the condition and mileage of vehicles.

“We needed something where I could get my hands on the truck without actually flying to the truck. Geotab provided that. I could look at the engine and the transmission and never leave my office,” says DJ Harrison, National Fleet Manager for Interstate Batteries. Based out of Dallas, Texas, Harrison is responsible for managing over 600 Light-Duty and Medium-Duty vehicles that work mostly local delivery runs.

Industry:

Sales and Service

Based in:

Dallas, Texas

Types of Vehicles:

Side Loaders, Box Trucks and Cargo Vans

Fleet Size:

610

The Challenge: Seeking Accurate Vehicle Data

Their previous GPS tracking solution was not getting the job done. As described by Harrison, “We had a system in place that told us where the truck was, but that’s about it.” The fact that the fleet is distributed across many different locations further complicated the matter. Interstate Batteries operates a network of 282 distributor locations in the United States, Hawaii, and Canada.

Bottom line — obtaining regular information of the state of the vehicles was a challenge. Harrison says, “We’d have to rely on the driver or reach out to the local manager.” Unfortunately, as each local manager spent more and more time collecting mileage data or inspecting trucks, they were taken away from their regular duties. Harrison says, “Instead of selling batteries, he was trying to take care of his trucks.”

Data accuracy was also an issue. Harrison notes, “A lot of it was taking someone’s word for it, basically.” A key benefit of the Geotab solution is that it offered visibility, not just on the condition of the trucks, but also on fleet productivity and efficiency.

The Solution: Going from Reactive to Proactive

Before Geotab, Harrison says, “Everything was reactionary, instead of predictive. So, you’d have to wait until something bad happened to the truck.” The process of maintenance and repairs was time-consuming. Interstate Batteries had to wait on dealership technicians for diagnosis information and repair estimates before deciding on a course of action.

“We can do maintenance now based on mileage and time, instead of waiting until the truck breaks down. It helps our costs. It helps keep the truck productive. We’re not making any money if the truck’s sitting in the garage.”

Through MyGeotab, Interstate Batteries can monitor the engine fault codes of the vehicles and predict a repair before it happens. Notifications for engine light and engine faults are sent to the fleet manager and also the driver. Reminders alert the company when preventative maintenance is due.



The Results: Interstate Batteries Optimizes the Fleet and Finds Cost Savings

The first big win for Interstate Batteries was the reduction in idling. They removed about an hour of idling per day per truck which translates to fuel savings, lower vehicle maintenance costs, and fewer emissions. Multiply one less hour of idling per day by 600+ trucks and you have significant savings over time.

Cost savings were another benefit of telematics. Maintenance costs were cut approximately 10%. Harrison looks forward to seeing further cost savings across the country when the Geotab solution is fully rolled out on all the fleet vehicles.

For Harrison, having insight into engine faults and the ability to diagnose the truck makes it easier to make the right decisions on repairs when the truck reaches the dealer.



Top Geotab Benefits for Interstate Batteries:

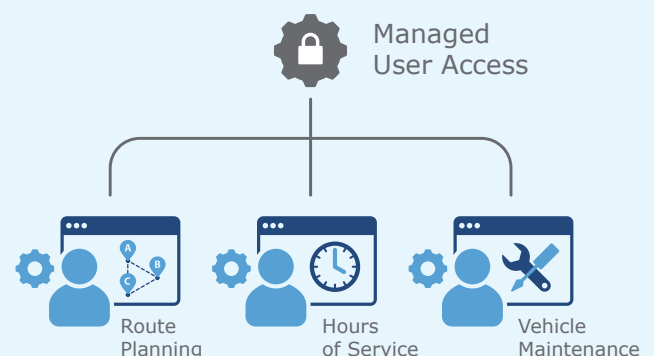
- Real-time data on vehicle location, health, and idling
- Easy-to-use MyGeotab fleet management software
- Flexibility to custom-tailor user access to different team members
- Engine fault data and notifications
- Preventative maintenance reminders for proactive management
- Smartphone-compatible Geotab Drive app for Hours of Service, DVIR, and messaging

MyGeotab Software Is Tailored to Each Team Member

What makes Geotab ideal for Interstate Batteries is that it serves the whole team. User access can be tailored to the different members of the team. For example, regional managers will only see their territory and national managers can have the full view of the country. The clean, simple interface makes it easy for the novice, as well as the experienced fleet manager.

Everyone uses the software in their own way. The technician at the garage can monitor his trucks, plan routes for the day, and locate drivers if a break down occurs. The warehouse manager communicates with drivers and manages Hours of Service and Driver Vehicle Inspection Reporting through Geotab Drive. The fleet manager uses MyGeotab to manage the maintenance program, understand truck activities, and get odometer, miles per gallon, and idle time.

myGEOTAB



“What I like about Geotab is that I could design it for the user, instead of having to make something work.”

— DJ Harrison

National Fleet Manager for Interstate Batteries

Plug-&-Play Device Is a Clear Winner for Interstate Batteries

Ease of use and the affordable price tag made Geotab the clear winner for Harrison. In comparison, he describes the hassle and cost of installing a competitor's telematics device. "With a previous supplier, we had to put screws in the dashboard, mount them into the floorboard, and do the wiring. It was just a mess. I knew Geotab just plugs in and makes it simple." Retaining the value of the vehicle and avoiding unnecessary depreciation is always top of mind for fleet managers. "When you start drilling holes, it diminishes the value."

After evaluating many different providers, Interstate Batteries found that Geotab provided the best value for money. "When it came down to the overall cost, the initial cost and then the monthly fee, Geotab just blew everybody away. I guess the bang for the buck." Harrison says that, "many of the things Geotab offers as part of the monthly fee, others wanted to charge me extra." Harrison also likes that if Geotab develops a new tool or report for another company, they offer that solution improvement to everyone. "The big players and the little players all get the same equipment, the same system."

Positive Reaction for the Solution and Geotab Drive

The feedback has been positive from Interstate Batteries managers and distributors, who see how the Geotab solution assists their business goals and growth. One manager in Austin, Texas has even become a champion for the system and promotes it to other managers.

The drivers using Geotab Drive enjoy the convenience of being able to use their cell phone for Hours of Service and Driver Vehicle Inspection Reporting (DVIR). Previously, the drivers had to use tablets that were fixed inside the truck. The process of doing the walk-around first and then punching in the information after inside the truck was too cumbersome and time-consuming. "It's just easy for them. It's not a lot of hassle," says Harrison.



Support from the Geotab Reseller has also made a big impression on Harrison. "My experience with the Reseller has been phenomenal. They went out of their way to make sure that everything went just as smooth as possible. It's hard to find a company like that anymore."

Keeping Trucks on the Road and Customers Happy

Overall, Interstate Batteries is very satisfied with Geotab. Once the entire fleet is equipped, they are interested in fuel card integration and route planning. For DJ Harrison, the National Fleet Manager, he is looking forward to new opportunities to further improve productivity and efficiency throughout the fleet team.



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From the Fleet Manager

“Geotab is a great team of people backed by a superior product.”

— DJ Harrison, National Fleet Manager Interstate Batteries

Fleet Size:
Medium



Fleet Focus:
Optimization, Productivity, Compliance



Discover how fleet management technology can improve your business:
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GEOTAB
management by measurement