

Fleet Management in India



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Q. Tell us about AEMIndia and G-Locator.

We have been primarily working in telematics and our main clients are Indian Airforce, Indian Railways and other companies working in telematics business. About 70% of our workforce consists of just R&D staff. We are working through four working facilities in India.

In reference to the Vehicle Tracking system, The problem which we were trying to address was that of monitoring and identifying the movements of goods and the vehicle, and we developed a product called Vehicle Tracking unit which we call G-locator which is an acronym for communication and location. We are working on both GSM & CDMA technologies. We started with being an OEM supplier to Tata Motors for their Novas Range of High End trucks, One of the best features we offer is battery backup. We also have an in-built data storage/recording mechanism which can record the movement of the vehicle and can then dump the data on the server at the time of reconnecting with GSM/CDMA. It has some other benefits which includes monitoring the air-conditioning of the vehicle, monitoring

the predefined mapping of the vehicle, in case the vehicle tries to jump over a specific route.

Q. Fleet management can provide a good ROI for companies in the logistics/transportation business. What are your views on ROI being realised by companies.

To understand this I will give you an example. Imagine a truck going from Bombay to Delhi. The truck is supposed to go via National highway. In order to save money the driver actually manipulates the route and he takes the route which is short but not smooth enough for taking the transportation. Here, we can virtually keep a check on them and the trucks moving. Instead of looking for ROI in terms of money, I would recommend that companies

and clients should look at term ROI as related to the actual benefits they derive out of this service.

Q. Large fleet operators can benefit, but what about small-to medium-sized businesses? How best can they use technology and at what price point?

There are so many small operators working around the Delhi region. What we propose is that instead of buying the system the idea of renting it out is more practical which will enable small operators utilizing the same thing. We have started giving the vehicle tracking system on rental basis. This has an advantage. Suppose, the product is once sold the control goes over to the owner. But in case we give it on rent we may also offer enhancements in terms of better services or

other features. It will be easier to implement because the ownership still lie with us.

Q. What is the approach of vehicle manufacturers in India with respect from Fleet Management?

Every transport company, every vehicle manufacturer is looking at GPS based Fleet Management. The companies like Ashok Leyland are using a particular truck having load sensors dubbed with GPS. It is now possible to find out at what place and at what time the load was reduced from the truck. This is a major benefit of this technology.

Q. How do you profile the FMS market in India as a whole?

We understand that fleet management in India is still at nascent stage. There are not many big companies into this business. Japan has showed a very good example here. All the commercial vehicles there irrespective of their size and shape are GPRS enabled. This is one thing India can take lesson from these countries. I see a big potential down the line but a lot depends on cost reduction both in terms of the price of the units, in terms of the price of the services from the service providers. The mapping companies all have to come together in terms of work of machinery. They can reduce the cost of total service and make it portable. So that everybody can think of opting for this particular mechanism. But in today's term I still feel that it is on higher side.

Q. To what extent is telematics working in other modes of transport, e.g. rail, and how quickly is this technology being implemented?

I understand that railways is one big opportunity. I am aware of the system in which you can monitor the movement of the train using the GPRS technology and most of the stations has been enabled by the GPRS technology now, So that you can know the exact location of the train. Not only that, I am also aware of a system especially in shipping business.

For example DHL gets their goods cleared even before they land in India. The moment they collect the packet, the data reaches via GPRS through the central server to differ-

ent destinations, even before the goods come in the country they get them cleared by the customs.

Q. Where do you think the location based technology or industry is heading for?

I personally believe that things are changing in India and we should involve the technology virtually in all aspects. Challenge before the companies is to eliminate the human interference. GPRS & RFID along with GPS can really eliminate to a large extent the human interference in the production and service process. The moment you get technology to eliminate human interference in data management you are becoming up-to-date online on real time basis. Garmin launches nuvi 700.