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Heartland Coca-Cola Aims for Better Operational Precision with Route Execution and Telematics Solutions

Heartland Coca-Cola Bottling Company originally adopted a telematics solution for its vehicles to meet regulatory requirements. Recently, they recognized the untapped potential of this data to help transform the business moving forward and needed to find an integrated routing and telematics solution. Together, Descartes' route execution and fleet performance management solution and Geotab telematics ticked all the boxes, ensuring compliance and enabling their teams to gain actionable insights to help streamline operations.

"Throughout the process, the level of collaboration and effort from the Descartes team to deliver the solution in the way we asked has been amazing."

Curtis Akerman

Business Process Lead for Delivery
Heartland Coca-Cola Bottling Company

Company Profile
Heartland Coca-Cola Bottling Company
Beverage Industry

Descartes Solution
Descartes' Route Execution & Fleet Performance Management Integrated with Geotab Telematics

About the Client
Heartland Coca-Cola Bottling Company, LLC produces, sells, and distributes the highest quality and best-tasting Coca-Cola beverages across Kansas, Missouri, and Illinois. Our success is rooted in the guiding principles of putting PEOPLE first, serving our local COMMUNITY, and providing great brands to our CUSTOMERS and consumers. We work and win together as a team by promoting a culture that values how our people think, feel, and act. Follow Heartland Coca-Cola Bottling Company at www.heartlandcocacola.com.

Quick Overview

Challenge
Lack of Operational Visibility

Solution
Leverage fleet performance data to help improve operational decision-making.

Results
- Real-time visibility
- Accurate fleet utilization reporting
- Plan vs. actual performance measurement
- Geocode cleanup for optimal routes

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Challenge: Lack of Visibility Doesn't Support Business's Transformation Plan

Facing operational visibility challenges, the company sought to enhance fleet efficiency through better route compliance and heightened driver and customer satisfaction.

Historical struggles in determining vehicle utilization at specific locations impeded overall cost and profitability measurements. Improved visibility became crucial for strategic vehicle purchasing decisions and allocation throughout the organization. Curtis Akerman, Business Process Lead for Delivery, also stressed the need for more precise routes so drivers would know what to expect each day.

Additionally, the company aimed to assess service-level adherence to planned delivery times and gain a thorough understanding of deviations. These challenges underscored the necessity for a comprehensive solution to optimize operations and achieve multifaceted goals.

Solution: Descartes and Geotab Offer a Comprehensive View of Fleet Operations

After evaluating several routing vendors and speaking to fellow bottlers, the Heartland team decided to invest in Descartes' route execution and fleet performance management solution and transition to Geotab's telematics. "We just felt Descartes offered us more than anybody else," commented Akerman.

Geotab's telematics devices provide high-quality GPS-based vehicle and driver performance data that the Descartes' solution uses to help manage delivery operations, track performance in real time, and gain operational insights needed to make improvements.

The implementation began by replacing their existing telematics solution and using Geotab for precise geofence setup, and the incorporation of team members into the system. Subsequently, the team monitored driver compliance, such as logging shipments and trucks, to ensure accurate tracking. Stop compliance was also evaluated to confirm the accurate recording of stops.

The focus then shifted to reporting, specifically comparing planned versus actual measurements and collecting feedback on driver performance within delivery teams. Akerman elaborated, "We've started looking at planned miles versus actual miles. Are they driving significantly more than they're supposed to? Are they not running it in the sequence it was planned? And if so, what are those reasons?"

In addition, drivers are utilizing Geotab's pre- and post-trip paperless inspection reporting. Given the success of the solution, Heartland will be implementing a driver scorecard to enable field supervisors to recognize exemplary drivers and identify areas for improvement.

Akerman commended Descartes' implementation and product experts for their collaboration throughout the process, stating, "The level of collaboration and effort from the Descartes team to deliver the solution in the way we asked has been amazing."

With newfound fleet performance information readily available, Heartland views the combined Descartes/Geotab solution as immensely valuable for ongoing operational performance improvements.

Results:

Real-Time Visibility
Real-time visibility into routes, drivers, order details, and comprehensive customer information is available for more comprehensive operational oversight.

Precise Geocoding
Descartes' solution has enabled the company to automatically correct inaccurate geocodes, ultimately leading to more optimized routes and higher driver satisfaction.

Fleet Utilization Reporting
By capturing the actual capacity utilization of the fleet, Heartland can make better decisions about how to balance vehicles across its locations and optimize vehicle purchasing decisions.

Plan vs. Actual Performance Management
Heartland can analyze planned versus actual miles to build more efficient and realistic routes and coach drivers to better comply with those routes.

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