DESCARTES™

Lift Off Distribution

Red Bull Distributor Drives Greater Efficiencies with Descartes Route Planning Solution

Lift Off Distribution, the third largest distributor of Red Bull energy drinks in the U.S., is attaining better levels of customer service and greater operational efficiencies after replacing manual practices with an automated solution for route planning and execution. Using Descartes Route Planner™ RS, the company has optimized distribution territories, route plans and delivery frequency for its private fleet operations across a variety of customers and 7-Eleven stores throughout the Mid-Atlantic.

THE CHALLENGE

Lift Off Distribution had become acutely aware of the limitations of traditional manual route planning practices for its large and growing service territory. Drivers were provided with paper-based routes at the start of the day, and completion information was collected manually at the end of the day for reconciliation. During the day, the company had no real-time insight into driver location or delivery performance, and no ability to re-route drivers to respond effectively to changing customer needs or new conditions in the field. Drivers also spent a significant amount of time looking at physical maps to determine routes, and the maps themselves were cumbersome, quickly outdated and expensive to maintain.

As the exclusive off-premise distributor of Red Bull Energy Drink for Maryland, Virginia and Washington DC, Lift Off Distribution works daily to ensure that the company is executing the highest level of service that is deserving of Red Bull, a world-class brand.

Lift Off Distribution

" By automating route planning with the Descartes solution, we are no longer reliant on manual processes and physical maps. Our delivery days are much more tightly managed, and our drivers are servicing smaller territories, yet making more deliveries. Our customers appreciate the increase in our delivery efficiency. **"**

– Bryan Glover,
General Manager, Lift Off Distribution

ABOUT
LIFT OFF DISTRIBUTION

Servicing the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S., Lift Off Distribution prides itself on being the exclusive off-premise distributor of Red Bull Energy Drink, delivering millions of cases per year of this world-class brand to grocery and convenience stores.

The Solution:

In 2014, Lift Off Distribution began work with Descartes to migrate from these inefficient and labor-intensive practices to the Descartes Route Planner RS solution, an automated solution for route planning and execution. The desktop route planning software, which supports a wide range of business environments, helps distribution-intensive companies evaluate the geographic distribution and sales potential of each customer to build optimal territories and delivery plans based on available fleet resources, field personnel and delivery requirements.

In September, 2014, the solution was deployed to support routes in one geographic area first. Subsequent areas followed and, in approximately four months, Lift Off Distribution had fine-tuned its use of the solution for 50+ routes in Maryland, northern and southern Virginia, DC and Hampton Roads. Using the solution, the company also saw the opportunity to develop 7-Eleven — dedicated routes and to consolidate deliveries to the convenience store chain over four days of the week instead of five.

The Descartes solution has helped the company to enhance fleet performance by optimizing delivery frequency, minimizing route distance and time, and maximizing vehicle utilization and driver productivity. Bryan Glover, General Manager at Lift Off Distribution, enthuses, "We work daily to ensure that we're executing the highest level of service that is deserving of the Red Bull brand. By automating route planning, our delivery days are much more tightly managed, and our drivers are servicing smaller territories, yet making more deliveries. Our customers appreciate the increase in efficiency, particularly 7-Eleven, as the Descartes solution has allowed us to develop dedicated routes for the chain's deliveries."

"The customer-centric approach that Descartes took during implementation and training allowed us to achieve our planned deployment schedule," adds Glover. "We now have much greater control of our delivery operations and we are better able to deliver the level of service our customers demand."

The Results

Eliminated Physical Maps and Manual Routing

By moving away from time-consuming and error-prone manual routing and physical maps, Lift Off Distribution optimized the efficiency of its delivery fleet and improved visibility into day-to-day driver performance.

Better Customer Service

With improved control over driver performance and productivity, and the ability to adjust routes in real-time as needed during the day, Lift Off Distribution is better positioned to maximize customer service while delivering orders efficiently.

More Efficient Routes

With the Descartes solution, Lift Off Distribution's route planning processes are inherently more intelligent, which increased the number of deliveries per day, reduced the geographic area drivers covered and cut overall mileage for decreased fuel costs and a lower environmental impact.

Supports Future Growth

With the Descartes solution, Lift Off Distribution has a user-friendly and flexible technology platform to help the company better balance service levels, delivery costs and asset utilization now and as its business grows.