

Interconnect

Keeping tabs on the fleet from a web page.

As noted in this space last month, fleet managers use the Internet for a number of tasks in the course of running their business. And dependence on the web to conduct that business will only grow in the future.

Fleets use the Internet to find freight via load boards or load matching services, to track their trucks by accessing satellite/cellular asset tracking information online, to improve service levels and to run hosted applications for dispatch and back office work, notes Barb Catlin with TransCore. You can add telephone calls to that, with TransCore's recent integration of voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) into the company's 3sixty Freight Match service.

Fleets also can get driving directions, fuel prices and a host of other information online, either through subscription services or free sites.

Other recent announcements in this area include a new service from Qualcomm Enterprise Services that works with its OmniVision mobile computing and OmniTracs mobile communications systems, and a fleet management site targeted at small fleets from J.J. Keller and Associates.

Qualcomm's "critical event recorder" is a web-based service that works with the company's mobile communications systems to alert fleet managers whenever specific events on the road might signal poor driving habits.

According to Chris Silver, senior manager of product marketing, the company's newest applications are accessible via a services portal. While noting that the majority of its customers use servers such as AS400 to run their business systems, "What we are moving to as a strategy is really a hosted platform," she says.

"We have to be sure we still take

updates his status, that information can then be accessed via the web portal.

The critical events recording application was launched for OmniVision in October. "This application is really more of a safety-oriented package," Silver says. While other applications measure similar events, these applications are geared toward improving fuel efficiency.

"The critical event recorder captures everything related to driver performance from a safety perspective, which is a really big deal for a lot of our customers right now." Events include hard braking, yaw and pitch motions and driver-initiated alerts. When these events occur, fleet managers receive an alert that allows them to monitor that particular driver and vehicle more closely.

Silver says the system does not record the same things as onboard recorders. "We don't go as deep as some recorders, but we go a little more horizontal. If it is a hard-braking incident, we capture five minutes before and two minutes after so the customer can see the trend line." The application also integrates with roll and stability systems such as those from Bendix or Meritor Wabco.

All the administration is done over the web. Customers use the web services to identify who in the company should receive an alert based on specific incidents. For instance, a safety manager may get an alert if a vehicle has several hard braking events in a row, or the alerts



FleetMentor.com, from J.J. Keller, is a web-based subscription service that includes more than 60 interactive tools designed to help small fleets better manage their business. The site will enter Beta testing in January.

care of our customers who have made the investment in that infrastructure. So, as we move to a hosted type of platform for a lot of our newer applications, it is really important for us to maintain that legacy support."

Qualcomm's hours of service application is web hosted, but uses what Silver describes as a "split scenario. We retain the information. You log into a web site through our services portal in order to see the information."

That information can be downloaded into the customer's system as needed. On the driver's side, the company has moved to a mobile-hosted platform. As the driver

Jim Beach • Technology Editor

can be based on the severity of a roll/stability event.

Silver says the alerts are intended to provide real-time notification that something might be going on. "We also see customers using a lot of this information for what they call driver score cards." The accumulative information on a driver is captured and used by managers during quarterly reviews. Sometimes the information leads to more training, or its something they put in the driver's file. Bottom line: The information can be used to improve driver performance.

The information can be sorted by incident, driver, time period or vehicles, and reports can be run on any of these sorts.

"We are really focusing on providing the right information at the right time in a very useable online format," Silver says. And while it's important for customers to be able to see this information easily, it is also key for their customers to be able to extract it and use it in other

management systems.

"We are very cognizant of the fact that our customers have a lot of other systems within their fleet management operation and it cannot all be contained within our individual web application. Our intent is to provide a usable web view and at the same time have a lot of power and data behind it for our customers to use in the long term."

Applications from Qualcomm's partnership with Maptuit will also be managed through a web environment.

For small fleets that lack the computing power or personnel to run a true enterprise system, J.J. Keller is launching a web-based application called FleetMentor, with Beta testing to begin in January. Located at www.fleetmentor.com, the service provides 60 interactive tools for manag-

Fleets can get driving directions, fuel prices and other information online, through subscription services or free sites.

ing operations, personnel and safety.

Jacqui Jurmu, FleetMentor design manager, says the subscription-based service is targeted at truckers with up to 200 trucks and drivers.

The operations section of the site includes tools to identify fixed

and variable costs, set rates, track accident claims and manage insurance policies. It includes a rate calculator that looks at a fleet's costs, freight lanes, fuel and other costs to determine a realistic rate. It also includes a customer master list that contains information such as delivery windows, lead times, claims and other information on each customer.

A vehicle and inventory tracking application allows users to track vehicles by terminal location, region or fleet. The insurance policy manager helps fleets keep track of their various insurance policies, generat-

Qualcomm Updates OmniVision Mobile Computing Platform

Qualcomm has added new applications for its OmniVision mobile computing platform, and a terrestrial option for fleets - or portions of fleets - that do not require ubiquitous coverage. The system upgrade is a software and over-the-air firmware update resulting in new applications and additions, including Critical Event Reporting, Maptuit's NaviGo, and Vehicle Maintenance for improved logistical planning and operational performance.

The new terrestrial option includes a data modem and antenna for CDMA communication and terrestrial communication plus satellite GPS positioning.



Critical Event Reporting records, retrieves and analyzes truck and driver performance information in order to reconstruct and review critical events, such as hard braking or onboard sensor events. CER can help identify trends of risky driving behavior so fleet managers can use targeted measures to improve driver behavior, enhance productivity and lessen the risk of accidents. CER data is automatically sent over the air immediately following an event.

Maptuit's NaviGo is a real-time, hybrid (a combination of onboard and

server-based technologies), in-cab navigation application that provides interactive maps for increased routing efficiency and improved driver satisfaction.

Vehicle Maintenance gives fleet managers a view into the mechanics of their fleet's truck engines. Engine fault codes are used to determine how each engine is running and troubleshoot if something goes wrong.

Driver e-mail, another feature added to the OmniVision platform, allows drivers to receive messages from designated family and friends. The designated contacts send e-mails via a dedicated web page. "Jill," the voice of the OmniVision platform, broadcasts the messages over the air so drivers can concentrate on driving. **Circle 177 on Reader Action Card or go to www.hdt.hotresponse.com**

ing alerts and reports based on policy expiration dates, policy coverage and insurance company.

In the personnel area, tools aid small fleets in managing their drivers, including tools for creating competitive pay packages, managing DOT required drug and alcohol testing and other tasks. Daily alerts remind managers which drivers need to go in for a drug test or who needs to renew their CDL.

A scoring section allows users to establish driver standards and create driver scorecards to see how individual drivers measure up against that standard. Another tool administers reward and appreciation programs.

In the safety section, tools help with OSHA and DOT record-keeping requirement, compliance audits and hazardous materials management. Users can also print out cargo securement wallet cards with instructions for securing loads specific to their operation.

"A lot of smaller fleets say they want to function more like the big boys, but they don't have the resources for the kinds of systems the large fleets use." FleetMentor offers tools they can use to automate these for a number of tasks, says Stephanie

Dean, marketing communications specialist with J.J. Keller.

The site also includes access to a reference library with more than 600 topics and includes U.S. and Canadian regulations. Canned training programs are also available online, or they can be customized for each fleet.

Other web-based applications recently unveiled include McLeod Software's new Agent Access for Truckload module that works with the company's LoadMaster and PowerBroker enterprise management software system. The new module is a web-based tool that provides carrier or broker agents with full capability to manage vehicles without the need to install a full-scale enterprise management system at each location.

Users can manage trucks from any computer with a web browser.

PowerBroker now also includes a Carrier Insurance Renewal interface to integrate with Carrier411's web service that monitors trucking companies for changes in insurance, operating authority, carrier safety ratings and SafeStat scores

McLeod says the new interface provides users quick access to a single source of up-to-date information on carriers.

Compliance. Companies can choose to implement any or all modules depending on needs.

In the first two modules, prospective employees complete an application online or with a recruiter. Once the information is entered into the system, tasks such as reviewing applicant qualifications, managing documents, verifying USIS reports and sending acceptance or rejection letters are handled automatically. A paperless new-hire orientation process is built into the system. New hires can review and sign all necessary paperwork electronically with EBE's digital signature capability.

A driver management module

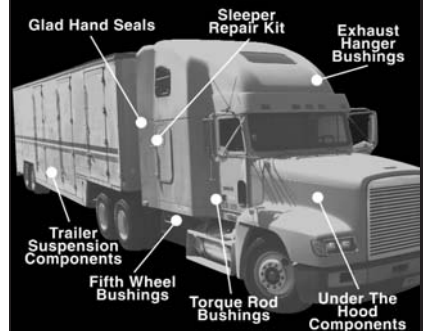
TECH *Briefs*

Recruiting And Compliance Software Offered

EBE Technologies introduced a suite of driver-focused software that integrates data from trucking companies' existing dispatch, accounting and mobile communications systems to help deliver a more efficient process for recruiting and managing drivers and other personnel.

As part of EBE's SHIPS software package, the Recruiting and Driver Management modules include: Driver and Non-Driver Recruiting, Human Resource Management, Driver Performance, and Safety and

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