IMPLEMENTATION, UTILIZATION, AND SUSTAINABILITY OF A TELEMATICS SYSTEM

INTERACTIVE SESSION REPORT - HOSTED BY BRENT MELVIN, COO, MLCGO

mlcGO

The 5th Telematics Conference Middle East & Africa was held in Dubai end of March 2019. The main topic this year was Advanced Telematics in Fleet Management. The event also hosted 2 interactive sessions, which provided brainstorming and workshop style interaction among the participants and the facilitators.

The 2nd interactive session was facilitated by Brent Melvin, COO at mlcGO, Saudi Arabia based company. The facilitator introduced the framework of the session and acted as moderator, while the participants actively participated in the discussion about “Implementation, Utilization, and Sustainability of a Telematics System”. The goal of this session was to discuss the importance of good implementation practices with regard to the physical device, the system’s capability to transfer knowledge to its users, and the support those users might need to get the most out of the features available. Participants talked about ways of insuring that systems remain up to date, about whether these solutions should be integrated with other software and how that could be done. What is the overall view of digitization and what role do telematics companies see themselves playing in the future?

After a short presentation prompting the delegates to think about their products and services from a customer centric perspective each team on a table was asked to answer one the following questions and to formulate a response from the delegates at the table. Here are the questions with statements represent the general feedback of each table:

The following statements represent the general feedback of each table:

1. *How do I ensure uptake and utilization of my Telematics System to get the best value and return on investment?*

Implementation in a structured and formally agreed way with the customer is key to the successful uptake of the system. Customers need to be as engaged as the provider and implementation team, with individuals appointed from both sides to achieve a full hardware installation, followed by appointed users being trained on the software, features, reports and

operability. Ongoing support programs should be custom designed to ensure full uptake and sustainability of the system, leading to long term relationships and renewals.

2. *Should I integrate my Telematics with my ERP? How easy is this and what is the benefit?*

Many telematics software's have the necessary API's for integration. The key is to understand the type of data that needs to flow between the systems. It is essential to have key IT personnel from the customer available to work with the provider to enable integration. Both parties have to recognize and be able to address the security parameters around each others systems and work with agreed protocols to respect each others systems. The benefits can be beneficial when you relate the information to costs and revenues for the customer, meaning he can make sense of the available information in the same way he digests other commercial data about his organization, helping him to make informed, data driven decisions about his fleet.

3. *What are the essential reports and how do I create sustainable, useable and meaningful reports that I can act upon in big fleet environments?*

Reports will differ from customer to customer, based on their specific needs and purpose for installing telematics solutions. Obvious reports, which are readily available are the speed, idle times, utilization and driving hours. Other reports may require additional sensors to be fitted which may include weight, fuel management, driver identification, cargo status etc. Usability and sustainability are the role of the implementation team and customer during setup as it is typical for customer to want everything but use only a small percentage of what is available. Reports should provide data aligned to the purpose of the installation and customers need to have trained, dedicated staff assigned to the use of the system and monitoring of the fleet.

4. *Are Control Rooms essential to the success of my Telematics System?*

Control rooms are specific to customer requirement. Large fleets with multi faceted reporting and features sets may want to consider a control room approach, but this would typically be linked with the operational management of the fleet, meaning that the data from telematics is driving information to the customer operations that is used to make decisions about availability, location, maintenance, adherence to rules and regulations etc, while passive data like fuel consumption and other exceptions may be utilized as periodic performance indicators.

5. *Has the purpose of installing a Telematics system been realized and do I see value?*

The only benchmark of a successful installation is to be able to review it against the formal defined implementation plan. If a customer is installing a device for legislative reasons with purpose of use, then installation alone is the success factor, however if the implementation is with much greater operational purpose in mind, then it can be measured as an output by showing the customer all the features sets, access, visibility, reports and where applicable integration between systems. Value is derived when a customer can see they have received what was sold, accepted

and paid for. The continued success is in the hand of the customer to continue using the system. The role of the provider is to support and update the system as needed to ensure a lasting customer relationship.

The workshop was concluded with the recognition the customers and providers need to meet eye to eye on the purpose and intent of installing any telematics, to have it clearly defined, agree on an implementation plan and finally execute effectively, using teams from both parties to deliver what was promised, followed by good support post-delivery. It was agreed in general that there is huge value in understanding customer needs before trying to proceed.

ABOUT THE FACILITATOR:

Brent Melvin, COO mlcGO, a new digital supply chain platform from Almajdouie Logistics is an industry veteran with over 27 years of freight and logistics experience in various market sectors. Brent is responsible for new market and product development and innovation, including technology for use within the logistics business, with specific view to visibility tools at vehicle and product level.

Brent has years of experience working with telematics systems starting back in 1999 based on track and trace for security purposes, using a range of telematics for a various purposes, from behaviour to temperature management and exception reporting.