Heniff Transportation Systems

Case Study

MobileDemand and PeopleNet streamline operations for Heniff Transportation Systems Liquid bulk carrier anticipates savings of roughly $1,150,000 per year

Heniff Transportation Systems is one of the top 20 liquid bulk carriers in the United States. The Chicago-based company operates terminals in Illinois, Texas, Tennessee, Pennsylvania and Louisiana and handles roughly 30 percent hazardous and 70 percent non-hazardous materials.

In 2010, Heniff was utilizing an older fixed mounted fleet management system for its onboard computing and mobile communications. According to Heniff's Director of Information Technology Joe Neal, "The system was plagued with problems. There were consistent hardware and software issues, and the existing system wasn't truly meeting Heniff's business needs. In addition, the bouncing generated inside the cab was causing the units to fail." This began to lead to customer service and support issues. Neal knew it was time for a change.

The company still needed a way to track shipments and provide real-time delivery status to its customers. In addition to an onboard system for truck monitoring, Heniff wanted a portable computer for truck inspections, proof of delivery and other mobile applications. The system also needed to be reliable and provide near 100% uptime, which meant it had to be rugged. That's when Neal and his team turned to PeopleNet, a leading provider of onboard computing and mobile communication solutions, and MobileDemand, the nation's leading provider of rugged tablet PCs in the transportation industry.

The Customer Challenge

Neal wanted to deploy a system that would enable Heniff to provide its customers with accurate, real-time information on loads and scheduling. In addition, he wanted a tablet that was portable, one that could be used for data collection at customer sites. He knew that this would reduce administrative processes and streamline business operations to improve Heniff's bottom line. Enterprise-ready, reliable tablets that offered his business more productivity were a must.

Mobile Demand

Innovation everywhere. **Productivity** anywhere.

"We recognized that everything was going portable, and we really wanted to have a rugged unit that would enable us to take it out of the truck and have customers actually sign for shipments in real time."

"We quickly realized that the PeopleNet solution which included the MobileDemand tablet really fit the bill. The device is perfect. It is rugged, has rubberized corners, is very sturdy, and fully portable," Neal says.
Holding up to the real-world conditions, both inside and outside of the truczk, was high on everyone's list at Heniff. As Heniff Director of Operations Scott Templeman recalls, "We looked at a lot of systems out there. The MobileDemand devices seemed to fit best. They could be mounted in the cab and withstand the shock and vibration. Then they could be used outside of the truck without having to worry about failures from drivers dropping them."

Plus, Heniff operates in several locations so it was also important that the tablets be able to withstand both high and low temperatures. "The tablets themselves are used in many different climates. In winter in Chicago it gets down to zero degrees, even10 F degrees below, and every time the driver goes to the truck, starts it, and takes a few minutes to warm it up the MobileDemand tablet runs, absolutely the way it should. In the Gulf Cost, it really heats up. It could get as high as 115-120 F degrees inside the truck. The driver gets in, starts the truck, cools it down for a few minutes and the tablet works," Templeman continues.

The MobileDemand Solution: Innovation everywhere. Productivity anywhere.

The MobileDemand xTablet offered the reliability, productivity, options and accessories as well as the tough exterior necessary to take Heniff to the highest level of efficiency and improve its bottom line. The open system architecture of the Microsoft Windows OS which supports the PeopleNet fleet management application has allowed Heniff to better manage its fleet, save money, operate safer and meet regulatory requirements. Plus, the Intel processing power has ensured that other data and graphic intensive applications such as Navigo mapping software also runs efficiently on the MobileDemand Tablet PC system.

Heniff began by installing a beta test of the xTablets with a few of the fleet's drivers and rolling out key system features. They began with dispatch. "Our goal was to get accurate pickup and delivery times for our orders," says Neal. "That went very well. It was practically seamless. The drivers took to the interface very quickly and we had literally no hardware issues."

Next, Neal and his team enabled the ability to send messages to and from dispatch and installed a truck monitoring tool that checked key performance indicators, such as oil pressure, and alerted the Heniff office immediately if a component was not performing as needed. "This was a huge benefit," says Neal. "We had one owner/operator who was equipped with a tablet, and was driving to his home terminal when the MobileDemand tablet alerted us that the driver had a low pressure light. We were on the phone with that driver before he even had a chance to look down at his dash and see that his engine light was on."

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Industry: Transportation & Logistics

Challenge

- Provide customers with accurate, real-time information on loads and scheduling

- Reduce administrative processes and streamline business operations

Solution

- Deploy xTablets across entire fleet

- Utilize PeopleNet software to automate key business processes to streamline operations and reduce human error

Result

- **Efficiency:** Increased fleet's mpg performance

- **Near 100% Uptime:** Improved dispatch planning

- **Reliability:** Enhanced navigation capability

- **Innovation:** Introduced eLogs to dramatically reduce administrative review processes

- **Cost-savings:** Automated trip sheets for fuel cost reporting

- **Customer Service:** Proactively manage potential customer issues

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Electronic logs were the next step. With more stringent Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (CSA) regulations looming, Heniff's Director of Safety Leon Lupina knew it was important to transition from a paper log system to eLogs. The MobileDemand tablet gave Heniff the ability to look at logs in real time, rather than waiting for drivers to submit paper. This virtually eliminated human error and made the entire process much more reliable. "The electronic logs are essential for keeping our drivers in compliance and the main reason is for safety," says Lupina. "Our top priority is to pick up and deliver loads, and to do it in a safe manner."

The productivity gains and cost savings from the MobileDemand tablets and PeopleNet software have helped Heniff achieve measurable bottom-line results, especially when it comes to fuel consumption, the company's largest operational expense. Improvements in driver habits and reducing out of route miles are just two of the ways Heniff saves on fuel.

"Using the MobileDemand tablet we can actually see how that driver is driving. Is he over revving, is he speeding, is he idling for long periods of time? The second thing we can do is look at out of route miles. Is he taking a non-optimal route? If he needs to, he can switch that up and run a Hazmat route and get any specific instructions. All those kinds of things burn fuel and affect the bottom line," Neal says.

The xTablet has also greatly enhanced Heniff's ability to communicate with drivers in real time and maximize hours. "We're really looking at operations and customer service. With the xTablet we know where the drivers and loads are at any given time. We want to make sure we're optimizing the driver's time, so we're able to handle more loads. Drivers do more and they get paid more," says Templeman.

The success of the implementation to-date has fueled Heniff's plans to roll out more mobility features in the near future. Signature capture, bar code scanning and the color camera are next in the queue.

Heniff drivers deliver chemicals which makes it essential that the right material is delivered to the right customer. "Our drivers have a process they go through when they make a delivery. They need to make sure that everything is correct before we open any valves allowing the product to flow. Part of that process is collecting a signature from the customer to verify that everything is correct," Lupina says.

"Occasionally a driver will take the wrong trailer," Lupina says. "One of our solutions for the future is to bar code all of the trailers and require the driver to scan the bar code to confirm that they are taking the correct trailer. In the case of an accident we plan to use the color camera to take pictures of damaged shipments or damage to the truck. These will help determine liability for insurance claims," he continues.

The Results

Today, Heniff is roughly 60 percent through deployment with about 145 units installed. They anticipate full deployment this quarter. The benefits of the new system have been immense. Heniff anticipates that with the MobileDemand tablets and PeopleNet application in place, they will save even more in the future. "The main thing we are focusing on now is fuel. Based on what we are achieving today, if we can save just a half-mile per gallon on consumption, we can save a million dollars or more as we grow the fleet in the future," says Templeman.

The benefits Heniff from the PeopleNet/MobileDemand Rugged Tablet PC system include:

• Cost savings through fuel performance – The xTablets give Heniff real-time insight on its fleet's mile-per-gallon performance. The potential ROI for this is huge.

• Better communication through better dispatch planning – the MobileDemand system has greatly enhanced Heniff's ability to communicate with drivers in real time and maximize hours. That means drivers are more productive.

• Reliable navigation – As some of Heniff's loads are hazardous, finding appropriate routes can often be challenging. With the xTablets, routes are generated for the driver on the unit, making route planning completely automatic and much more reliable.

• Innovative eLogs – eLogs have dramatically reduced the administrative review process. In addition, it's flagging issues for Heniff's safety department providing a level of accuracy that was never available before.

• Automated and accurate trip sheets – the MobileDemand system has automated trip sheets for Heniff drivers, enhancing productivity and eliminating the administrative nightmare of reporting miles driven in each state by paper.

• Maintenance – by capturing key performance data with the xTablet, Heniff has been able to quickly identify trucks that are underperforming.

• Customer service – With proactive monitoring, Heniff is able to address potential delays or other issues with customers sooner.

The system has clearly increased productivity. Heniff can now better utilize its drivers, give them more work, match loads and drivers better and become more proactive, rather than reactive. New levels of productivity and reliability have yielded long-term cost savings. According to Neal, "The company anticipates it will save roughly $1,150,000 per year, with a full return on investment realized in five months."

Heniff has been so pleased with the Tablet PC system that the team is planning on rolling out additional features next quarter, including a vehicle inspection module.

"The PeopleNet application and MobileDemand tablet really seems like a system we can grow into," says Lupina. "It offers so many different options, and even if we don't utilize them all right from the implementation, we can if we want to in the future. It's something that we'll definitely feel confident with purchasing today knowing that it's going to still be a great product years from now."