A fleet manager's A-Z guide **to using telematics software.**

Matrix iQ

As a fleet manager or leasing company, you'll probably have already begun the journey of harnessing data solutions. The right tools are essential to manage your operations, both effectively and efficiently.

Telematics software is intended to provide real-time data on crucial operational elements such as vehicle location, driver behaviour, fuel consumption, and more.

Put another way, in the modern era - given the tremendous fleet optimisation potential represented by partnering with innovative technology - telematics software represents one of the most practical and versatile tools in your arsenal.

In this A to Z guide, we'll explore the most important terms and concepts related to telematics software and how they can help you streamline your fleet operations.

What is telematics software?

Telematics software is a highly advanced technology that combines telecommunications and informatics to provide a range of functionalities for fleet management.

Tech-agnostic telematics, such as SmartLink, Tab or Nano, collect data from various sensors, devices and providers, and send it to a centralised cloud-based software system for processing, analysis, and reporting.

The data collected includes real-time information on vehicle location, fuel consumption, driver behaviour, and vehicle/engine health. From there, you have the ability to intuitively monitor the entire fleet from a central and standardised location, and make data-driven decisions to optimise fleet operations.

Your telematics software A-Z Guide

So, let's get into your telematics A-Z.

This guide is intended as a quick-reference aid; use it to expand the knowledge and skill-set of your drivers and staff, or for a quick definition when you encounter a novel term.

Asset tracking: Telematics software enables you to track vehicles in real-time and monitor their movements. Asset tracking means you're able to keep an eye on valuable assets and protect them from theft or unauthorised use.

Acceleration: The rate at which a vehicle increases its speed over time, usually measured in metres per second squared or miles per hour per second.

Agnostic technology: Technology that is designed to be compatible with multiple hardware and software platforms, without being tied to a specific brand or operating system. In the context of fleet management, agnostic technology allows different types of vehicles, devices, and data sources to be integrated and managed within a single system, regardless of their make, model, or vendor. This can improve flexibility, scalability, and interoperability, while reducing costs and complexity.

Behaviour monitoring: Technology that identifies elements of driver behaviour, such as harsh braking, accelerating, or speeding. This can help reduce accidents, wear and tear, and fuel consumption. You can use the information collected to implement driver training programs and reward safe driving practices.

Breakdown: A mechanical failure or malfunction of a vehicle that causes it to stop operating.

Compliance: The act of adhering to legal, regulatory, and fleet industry standards and requirements. This might include ensuring that vehicles, drivers, and operations satisfy laws related to safety, environmental protection, and commercial transportation.

Cost efficiencies: Strategies or practices that help reduce operating expenses and increase profitability.

Dash cameras: Cameras mounted on the dashboard or windshield of a vehicle that record footage of the road and the driver's behaviour. Dash cameras can be used to help improve driver safety, reduce accidents and insurance claims, and provide evidence in the event of an incident or dispute.

Data privacy: The protection of personal or sensitive information from unauthorised access, use, or disclosure. For fleet managers, this means safeguarding data collected by telematics software, such as vehicle location, driver behaviour, and maintenance records. Fleet managers must ensure they have appropriate data security measures in place to protect this information.

Decarbonisation: The practice of working to reduce your company's carbon emissions. As an important aspect of corporate social responsibility and environmental sustainability, this involves identifying and implementing strategies to minimise the carbon footprint of your business activities, such as energy consumption, transportation, and waste management. Decarbonisation can also help companies reduce costs associated with energy consumption and transportation, and improve their brand reputation by demonstrating a commitment to environmental stewardship.

Driver behaviour (or performance): Characteristics regarding an individual drivers' activity, including any areas that could be improved.

Engine health: Information around the condition of a vehicles' health and performance, including diagnostics reports, warning lights, and fault codes. This enables preventative maintenance to avoid costly repairs and downtime.

Environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG): A standard of moral responsibilities that dictate how companies work to reduce carbon emissions, address social causes, and otherwise conduct their operations ethically.

EV adoption: Electric vehicle consultancy gives fleet managers visibility into the vehicles exerting a negative impact on their carbon footprint and emissions.

FNOL (first notification of loss): First Notification of Loss (FNOL) is the first step in the insurance claims process. It is the initial report made to an insurance company by a policyholder or

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claimant, notifying the insurer that an event covered under the policy has occurred.

Fuel consumption: The rate at which a fleet, vehicle or driver depletes a given quantity of fuel.

Geo-fencing: Telematics software allows you to create virtual boundaries or geofences around specific locations or areas. You can receive alerts when a vehicle enters or exits a geo-fenced area, helping you to monitor vehicle usage and prevent unauthorised use or stolen assets.

Grey fleet: Non-company vehicles that are driven on your behalf are considered your 'grey fleet,' and as the overall fleet manager, you therefore assume responsibility for them.

Health & safety: The management of risks and hazards related to the health and safety of drivers, passengers, and other road users. This includes measures to ensure that vehicles are safe and roadworthy, drivers are properly trained and qualified, and operations are conducted in a manner that minimises the risk of accidents and injuries.

Idling: The act of leaving a vehicle's engine running while it is stationary. Excessive idling can waste fuel, increase emissions, and cause unnecessary wear and tear on the engine.

Intervention: Identifying trends of concern and taking action to address them. For example, if a driver is found to be consistently speeding or driving dangerously, an intervention may involve providing additional training. Intervention may also involve changes to fleet policies or procedures, such as implementing a new safety program or introducing new technology.

Journey planning: The practice of strategising more efficient routes for your drivers, saving time and reducing fuel consumption. You can also provide drivers with real-time traffic updates, helping them avoid delays.

Key performance indicators (KPIs): Important metrics of particular note to fleet managers, that you wish to monitor and assess operations by. This might include fuel efficiency, vehicle uptime, and driver productivity.

Location management: Strategies and technologies that inform fleet managers' view of where vehicles are in real-time, and the related capability to locate them.

Location tracking: The tracking of fleet vehicles' whereabouts in real-time, making it easy to keep tabs and ensure vehicles are where they're supposed to be.

Maintenance: Routine upgrades and optimisations to a vehicle, such as oil changes or tyre rotations. Careful attention to maintenance enables a significantly extended vehicle lifespan, and dramatically improves safety.

Milage: The total distance travelled by a vehicle over a specific period of time.

Optimisation / Route optimisation: The process of identifying the most efficient route for a vehicle to take between two or more locations. Route optimisation matters in fleet management, as it can help reduce travel time, improve fuel efficiency, and increase overall productivity. It can also help reduce vehicle wear and tear and improve driver safety by minimising time spent on the road.

Queuing theory: Queuing theory is a mathematical concept used to analyse waiting lines and optimise processes. Telematics software can use queuing theory to streamline routes and cut downtime.

Regulations: Laws, rules, and standards that govern the operation of fleets and the use of vehicles on public roads. Fleet managers must stay up-to-date on relevant regulations and ensure that their fleets comply with all legal requirements. This includes regulations related to safety, emissions, vehicle maintenance, driver qualifications, and more.

Risk management: The process of identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks associated with fleet operations. Fleet managers use risk management strategies to minimise the likelihood of accidents, breakdowns, and other costly incidents; this may involve implementing safety programs, training drivers on safe driving practices, and using telematics software to monitor driver behaviour and vehicle performance.

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Route planning: The process of identifying the most efficient and effective route for a vehicle to take between two or more locations. Also see, 'Optimisation'.

Servicing / Critical service intervals: The recommended schedule for routine maintenance and repairs on a vehicle. Fleet managers use service intervals to ensure that their vehicles are maintained properly and are in good working condition. Critical service intervals are particularly important, as they identify key maintenance tasks that must be completed to avoid breakdowns and other costly issues.

Speeding: The act of driving a vehicle above the posted speed limit or in a manner that is unsafe for road conditions.

Strategy / Strategic fleet planning: The process of developing a long-term plan for managing a fleet. This may involve setting goals, identifying KPIs, and developing strategies to achieve desired outcomes.

Taco infringements: A violation of regulations related to tachographs (also known as "tacos"), which are devices used to monitor driver hours and ensure compliance with regulations related to rest periods and driving time.

Technology: Tools, systems, and applications to improve fleet management and optimise operations.

Telematics: A technology that combines GPS tracking, vehicle diagnostics, and other data to provide real-time information about vehicle performance and driver behaviour.

Uptime: The amount of time that a vehicle is available and operational.

Usage-based tariffs: A pricing model in which customers are charged based on the actual usage of a product or service. Usage-based tariffs may be used to charge customers based on the amount of time that vehicles are in use, the distance travelled, or other usage-based metrics. This can help ensure that customers pay only for the services that they use.

Vehicle health monitoring: Telematics data on the state of various vehicle systems, including the engine, transmission, and brakes. Temperature monitoring sensors can even give insight into refrigerated vehicles.

Workforce: Your best and most valuable asset; the drivers, mechanics, and other personnel who are responsible for your operations.

You: Naturally, when you choose Matrix iQ as your innovation partner, your fleet, your goals, and your potential are our highest priority - so it only makes sense to include 'you' on this A-Z! Got a question about how we might work together? Simply get in touch. Let's discuss it.

Zero-emission vehicles: Zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) are vehicles that produce zero (or, in some cases, very low emissions). Electric or hybrid vehicles are two such examples, and are effective at reducing carbon emissions and improving sustainability.

Leveraging telematics for fleet optimisation

Modern and efficient, tech-agnostic telematics software is a powerful tool for fleet management that can provide real-time data and insights into various aspects of vehicle operations.

With the **A-Z** guide provided above, leasing companies and fleet managers have a quick-reference guide to some of the most common terms in the industry, and how these various concepts feed into improved efficiency, reduced costs, and enhanced customer service.

Connect technology with intelligence as part of your fleet management infrastructure by deploying **Matrix IQ**'s innovative tools.

Call us directly on 0161 441 1001, or book a demo today.

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