



10 THINGS

TO KNOW ABOUT MODERN GPS TRAILER TRACKING SYSTEMS

A GPS trailer tracking system used to be very straightforward: Either it located your trailer, or it didn't. Fleets have much more sophisticated options today.

Now when you're sourcing a GPS trailer tracking system, it's important to know what the latest technology offers and how you can use it to make your fleet more profitable. Some bells and whistles sound good, but in real life they're not as useful as you might like. And other innovations can truly take your fleet to the next level.

Let's look at 10 things you should know about a modern GPS trailer tracking system, from buzzwords like "Smart Trailer" and beyond.

1. What is a "Smart Trailer"?

"Smart Trailer" has been a hot buzzword and has come to mean anything from accessory light packages to machine learning. In reality, it should mean trailer technology that provides you with actionable data about how your trailers are being utilized.

2. What is "Intelligent Trailer Management"?

FleetLocate Intelligent Trailer Management® (ITM), built upon Spireon's award-winning trailer management solution, brings a new generation of intelligent tools to carriers, helping to translate the billions of data events being collected each month into actionable intelligence. ITM equips fleets with the tools to organize and analyze the data that means the most, improve fleet operational efficiency and generate true ROI.

3. What does Intelligent Trailer Management include?

FleetLocate's [Intelligent Trailer Management](#) includes these tools:

- Smart Sensor Integration
- Advanced IntelliScan® Platform
- Data Sharing and Custom Analytics
- Actionable Intelligence

4. What do those tools mean to a fleet?

Integrated smart sensors increase trailer visibility, drive operational efficiency, mitigate maintenance costs and reduce CSA violations. They include: Door sensors, temperature probes, liftgate monitoring, Automatic Tire Inflation Systems (ATIS), Tire Pressure Monitoring Systems (TPMS), and more.

Spireon's patented IntelliScan cargo sensing technology delivers 99.9% cargo detection accuracy, and includes: Time of flight lasers, optical imaging technology, soft cargo sensing, irregular cargo sensing, and image capture and retrieval.

Data sharing and custom analytics allow fleets to combine telematics data with third-party data sources to create custom intelligence and customizable KPIs. With this next-level data tool, you can: Access thousands of assets, access years of data, utilize advanced APIs, extend TMS integration, maximize data sharing and warehouse, and utilize our partnership with [Snowflake](#).

Actionable intelligence means you get the right insight at the right time, which allows your fleet to become proactive versus reactive, reduce downtime, and extend trailer life. With this kind of intelligence, you can make the most of: Advanced KPIs, intuitive reporting, visual dashboards, predictive analytics, and target maintenance monitoring.



5. What do most fleets use this kind of technology for?

In a recent survey, 50% of carriers said they use Smart Trailer/Intelligent Trailer Management (ITM) for:

- Monitoring trailer location
- Tire pressure sensing and control
- Recovering lost/stolen trailer

40% of carriers in the same survey said they use Smart Trailer/ITM for four additional uses:

- Monitoring trailer mileage and maintenance schedules
- Reducing or improving detention billing
- Weight sensing
- Detecting whether a specific trailer is connected to a specific tractor

More sophisticated fleets use their trailer intelligence systems to prove load damage, see available capacity in the trailer and more. But the industry is just getting up to speed with these more leading-edge functions; less than 40% of carriers in the survey said they use Smart Trailer/ITM for these advanced capabilities:

- Capture photos or videos of cargo
- Use telematics devices to measure cargo load and available capacity in the trailer
- Integrate trailer data into a TMS
- Monitor tire temperature

6. What can Intelligent Trailer Management really do for me?

When used to its fullest capacity, ITM can:

- Provide you with data regarding your cargo loads, such as whether a trailer is fully unloaded and ready to use as reported, or if the trailer is still full of broken pallets and trash
- Capture cargo photos to prove detention/theft/damage claims
- Ensure trailers are utilized evenly and turn rate is improved
- Monitor your tire temperature so that underinflated tires and excessive heat don't lead to tire failure
- And multiple other uses

7. Why do fleets need Intelligent Trailer Management?

ITM provides fleets with the ability to get actionable, real-time data, tracking and monitoring capabilities that enable companies to analyze performance and make timely improvements. With the type of data and data analysis that ITM provides, fleets can analyze a number of KPIs such as landmark circulation—that is, how quickly a trailer is unloaded after arrival at various locations—as well as loads per trailer, deadhead miles and other key factors that can be used to improve profitability. And they can do this analysis over years, giving a better picture of long-term trends and usage.



8. What's a real life example of how a fleet is using GPS trailer tracking to improve profitability?

Pan American Express had two key challenges: detention billing and yard checks. The company was relying on manually generated, and often flawed, second-hand information that was costing the company in wasted resources, revenue and time. After a thorough needs assessment, the FleetLocate team recommended a solution that gave Pan American Express a significant increase in the real-time visibility they needed, and that their customers were demanding. Now, rather than having to wait for a third party to provide written status reports, Pan American Express Operations Manager Sal Verazzi has instant access to real-time rich trailer data. He can also provide his customers with their own logins so that they can view their freight status for themselves, whenever they need to or want to.

To improve detention billing, the FleetLocate trailer management system enables the company to track and see the actual inactive time for trailers at their customers' locations and share this information with their customers. This has resulted in more accurate detention billing as well as minimized disputes.



9. How can a GPS trailer tracking system help improve trailer utilization?

Pan American Express also had success with that. The improved visibility into inactive trailers benefits Pan American Express's customers as well. "By sharing this data with our customers, they're able to see where they're losing money on unnecessary or avoidable detention billing," explains Verazzi. "What's more, we're able to identify those inactive trailers and free them up.

"This allows us to get better utilization of our equipment, be more efficient, and provide better service to meet our customers' needs."

All told, Pan American Express is saving more than a million dollars a year due to these improvements. Want to know more about how Pan American Express achieved this success? [Get the case study now.](#)

10. How will this technology continue to evolve?

Premier Trailer Leasing sees where ITM is headed. "We look out into the future where the data derived from these systems eventually becomes predictive through heuristics – ways to help humans crunch this information," said Larry Hall, former executive vice president of sales and marketing.

"So instead of saying, 'Hey, you've got 18,000 miles on this trailer, so at 25,000, you should do a maintenance inspection.' It can say, 'Hey, we have sensed how many times the brakes have been applied, and not only the application of the brakes, but the pressure on the pedal.' And that information is analyzed to predict how it will affect the brake shoes, so we know that within the next 60 days, we're going to need a brake job, or a wheel end, or more closely check the tire tread depth," Hall added.

Modern GPS trailer tracking systems are indeed evolving far beyond the simple "Where's my trailer?" of their origins.

For more information about how Intelligent Trailer Management can help your fleet, visit spireon.com/trailer-management or call one of our friendly experts at **800.557.1449**.