

CUSTOMER STORY

TENNESSEE CONTRACTOR CUTS FUEL COSTS, BOOSTS PRODUCTIVITY USING TRIMBLE CONSTRUCTION MANAGER



Summers-Taylor used Trimble Construction Manager to measure the idle and work times of its equipment to see where they could save money on fuel.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Summers-Taylor reduced fuel costs by 20 percent per year using Trimble Construction Manager
- Trimble Construction Manager provides decision makers at Summers-Taylor with precise real-time or historical idle time data from each piece of equipment
- Trimble technology also supplies Summers-Taylor with detailed information for more accurate job bidding and employee timesheets as well as more efficient dispatching

WHEN BUSINESS LEADERS AT SUMMERS-TAYLOR, INC., THE LARGEST HEAVY AND HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTOR IN NORTHEAST TENNESSEE, SAT DOWN TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THEIR FUEL CONSUMPTION NUMBERS FOR 2007, THEY EXPECTED TO SEE SOME WASTE. THEY FULLY ANTICIPATED THAT BY CUTTING EQUIPMENT IDLE TIMES AT JOB SITES, THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO SAVE MONEY ON FUEL IN 2008.

CUSTOMER: SUMMERS-TAYLOR, INC.
ELIZABETHTON, TENNESSEE, USA

PROJECT: FUEL SAVINGS

What Summers-Taylor didn't expect was to find a solution that would be so easy to implement and use that their employees would adopt it almost immediately, and that there would be so many unforeseen benefits.

Owned and operated as a family-run business for more than 75 years, Summers-Taylor has maintained its reputation for delivering quality work at a fair price through three generations. Today, that means operating a modern and well-maintained fleet of equipment and delivering quality workmanship on time and within budget.

Summers-Taylor leaders maintain a close eye on business expenses in order to keep their services competitively priced. As gas prices crept up throughout 2007 and 2008, managers knew that finding a way to reduce idle times would mean big cost savings for the company.

"In every meeting, we would discuss the need to reduce our idle times to save money on fuel, but without the numbers to back it up, it didn't remain a priority for long," said Ted Bryant, vice president at Summers-Taylor. "As soon as we left the meeting and another issue came up, we forgot about idle times."

To get a better sense of exactly how much fuel they were using, Summers-Taylor executives compiled the amount of fuel their yellow iron, dump trucks and cement mixers consumed in 2007.

To determine the amount of fuel used when their equipment idles, they filled up several dump trucks, excavators, bulldozers, loaders and other heavy equipment and let them idle for several hours. Afterward, they refilled

each tank to find out exactly how much had burned during the idle time and how much it cost to recoup that fuel.

"We were surprised to learn that we were wasting well over a million dollars in fuel each year just on idling equipment," said Bryant. "As soon as we realized how much it was costing us, we knew we needed to monitor idle times and enforce idle time restrictions."

Summers-Taylor evaluated two remote asset management and monitoring solutions and chose Trimble's CrossCheck® Global Locator hardware with the Trimble Construction Manager software.

The GPS hardware sends the equipment location data to a central server via a cell phone tower. Back in the office, decision makers access the data through Trimble Construction Manager software. By viewing various charts, graphs and dashboard views, managers can see the precise location of the equipment—which may be spread across multiple job sites in multiple states—as well as information such as run time, idle time and speed. The software provides customizable and easy-to-read charts, graphs and reports to make the data even easier to utilize.

After a week of on-site training from Trimble's Construction Services team, Summers-Taylor installed the hardware on approximately 195 pieces of heavy and highway equipment and 100 other assets such as dump trucks and service and equipment transportation vehicles. The Trimble Construction Manager software provides an interface that connects the equipment in the field to decision makers in the office.

Using Trimble Construction Manager software, Summers-Taylor executives can monitor exactly when an asset enters or exits a job site, its exact location, site run times, utilization reports and more. Most importantly, the software makes it easy for managers to view real-time or historical data about vehicle idle times using a web browser.

"Now, we can log in to the site to see exactly which pieces of equipment are idling where, and for how long," said Bryant. "We can use the software to generate automated reports easily, which we send to superintendents so they can see idle times for the equipment they're responsible for, and we can create reports to help us track idle times and trends over longer periods of time."

The results have been shocking, even to Summers-Taylor.

"We are saving approximately 20 percent on fuel costs throughout the year just by paying more attention to idle times. We also saw

right away that when our idle times went down, our productivity went up," said Bryant. "The total cost of the technology was about \$300,000, and it has paid for itself many times over in the first year alone."

In addition to reducing fuel consumption and increasing productivity, Summers-Taylor is also using the new visibility into their job sites to more efficiently move equipment from job to job, to help determine equipment run times for operator timesheets, and to support their existing maintenance programs.

Bryant anticipates that the technology will help them bid jobs more accurately in the coming year.

"The cost savings have been huge, and the unforeseen benefits are the icing on the cake," said Bryant. "It has worked even better than we hoped."



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