

SPONSORED CONTENT

STATE OF THE

FLEET MANAGEMENT MARKET



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- Roadmap for Growth
- The Right Direction: How Telematics Helps You Manage Better
- Costs + Caveats
- Handling Employee Reactions
- Exclusive Research & Data

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Roadmap for GROWTH

Everyone knows that GPS gets you from point A to point B. But for pest management companies telematics can do much more, from improving efficiency to reducing costs, even growing the business.

Not long ago, fleet GPS was a new technology that held promise but faced adoption hurdles, like any new tech. But today, just about everyone uses GPS tracking to get from point A to point B. But it's also become an essential operations tool for pest management companies.

"It's really a game changer if you're not using it," said Joshua Foster, executive director of Zap Termite and Pest Control in Sacramento, Calif.

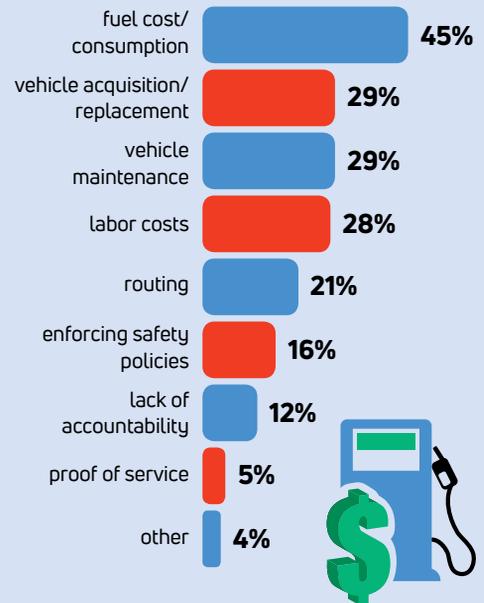
Today's GPS systems let managers see where employees are in real time. They communicate with technicians, and send alerts on driving activity and when vehicle maintenance is due. Best of all, today's systems integrate with existing software programs — customer relationship management, work orders, routing software — for a more streamlined operation.

Foster's system automatically reroutes a technician if a customer cancels. Advances like this have been key to helping him manage the activities of 20-plus technicians and service vehicles at the growing company. "The more data you have, the better off you are. It's become very, very valuable," Foster said of insights provided by GPS.

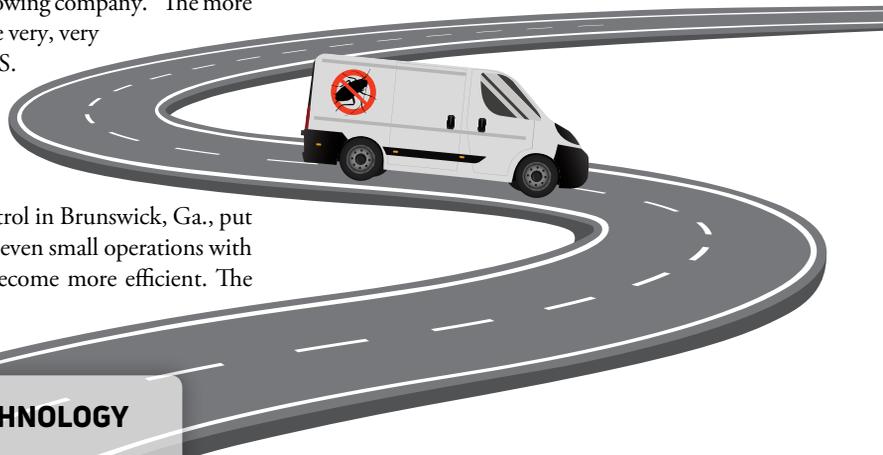
Pest management companies increasingly see the value of this tracking technology with more companies using it to address vehicle- and employee-related challenges to the business.

Jimmy Arnold, owner of Peachtree Pest Control in Brunswick, Ga., put GPS in his 60 service vehicles 10 years ago. But even small operations with two to five vehicles stand to gain. "You can become more efficient. The accountability increases," he explained.

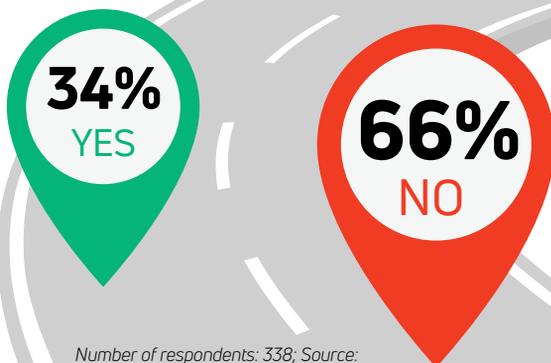
THE BIGGEST VEHICLE- AND TECHNICIAN-RELATED CHALLENGES TO THE BUSINESS:



Number of respondents: 338; Source: PCT 2019 State of the Fleet Market survey; Respondents could select more than one answer



PMPs TRACKING WITH GPS TECHNOLOGY



Number of respondents: 338; Source: PCT 2019 State of the Fleet Market survey

DID YOU BUY IT IN THE PAST 5 YEARS?



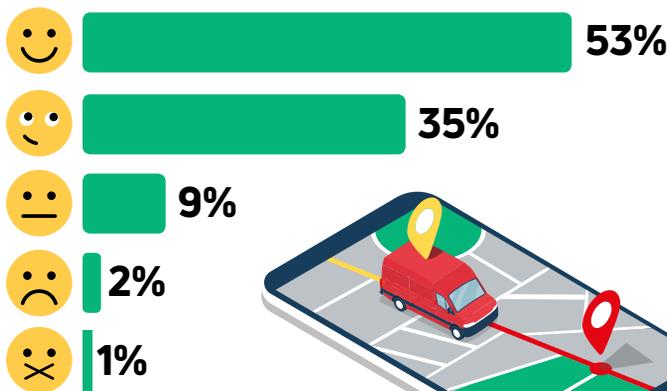
Number of respondents: 116; Source: PCT 2019 State of the Fleet Market survey

The RIGHT MOVE

GPS tracking has become an essential tool in managing a growing pest management business. “I couldn’t imagine having a fleet without it now. There’s just no way,” said Jimmy Arnold, Peachtree Pest Control. “It is the cost of doing business but it’s also helped improve business.”

Kyle Varona, Fahey Pest & Lawn Solutions, agreed. “I think it’s worth the investment. It’s definitely something I wouldn’t go without,” he said.

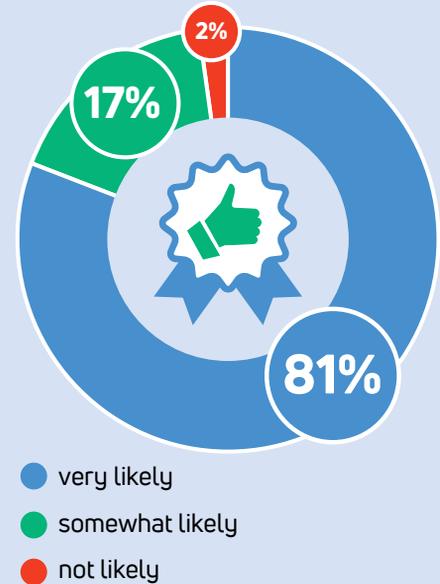
ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH YOUR FLEET MANAGEMENT SYSTEM PURCHASE?



Number of respondents: 116

Source: PCT 2019 State of the Fleet Market survey

HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO RECOMMEND GPS TECHNOLOGY TO OTHERS?



Number of respondents: 116

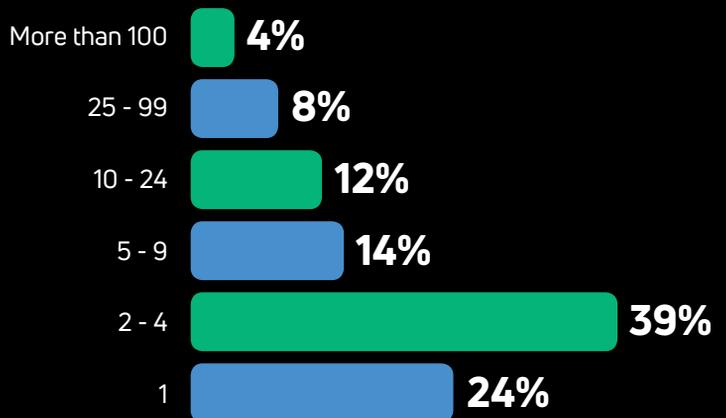
Source: PCT 2019 State of the Fleet Market survey

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

The PCT 2019 State of the Fleet Management Market survey was sponsored by GPS Insight and compiled by Readex Research, a privately held research firm based in Stillwater, Minn.

A sample of 8,569 owners, operators and executives of pest control businesses was systematically selected from the PCT database. Data was collected from 338 respondents – a 4 percent response rate – via online survey from June 21 to July 1, 2019. The margin of error for percentages is plus or minus 5.2 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

NUMBER OF VEHICLES IN RESPONDENTS’ FLEETS:



Source: PCT 2019 State of the Fleet Market survey; Number of respondents: 338

Moving in the *Right Direction*: How Telematics Helps You **MANAGE BETTER**

Pest management professionals from big and small companies share how GPS tracking has improved fleet management, and the business overall:

HOW DOES GPS TRACKING HELP YOU MANAGE YOUR FLEET?

Yes, we were at your house today!

Before Mathis Exterminating, Olympia, Wash., installed GPS on its 23 service vehicles five years ago it couldn't prove a technician had been at a customer's house when the customer claimed he hadn't. Now Operations Vice President Elmer Bensinger prints out a satellite image that shows the service vehicle sitting in the customer's driveway and for how long, and shares this with the customer. "That usually stops the issue right there."

As well, location data provides insights when an employee is accused of driving dangerously. Managers immediately can identify the place and time of the incident and confirm or deny employee involvement.

McCall Service in Jacksonville, Fla., uses GPS tracking to help monitor quality assurance. Technicians should spend at least 20 minutes at each stop; it's a problem if someone is on site for only five minutes, explained CFO David Cooksey.

83%

INCREASED
ACCOUNTABILITY

Don't be messing with my truck!

Employees know to follow company policy when driving service vehicles; tracking systems hold them accountable with alerts sent for after-hours use or driving outside service areas. "It's one thing when you have a break and you want to go park somewhere; it's another thing when you take a 30-minute drive out to the middle of nowhere. We like to know what's going on with our vehicles," said Cassi Magnus, owner, Phoenix Pest Control, Indianapolis, Ind.

Scott Davis, owner of Pest Pro Pest Control, Camden, Del., once had a technician conduct private business between calls. "With the GPS we could address that," said the retired police officer, who is "a firm believer in checks and balances."

Alerts may go out when an employee drives within a "geo-fence," a zone set around a home address. Reports also identify the "hot spots" they regularly visit. Such stops may be of no concern or warrant a closer look.

"If something doesn't feel right, I have the ability to look into and research it more to make sure our guys are doing what they should be doing," said Kyle Varona, general manager, Fahey Pest & Lawn Solutions, Sarasota, Fla.

61%

PROVIDING PROOF
OF SERVICE

51%

MORE EFFICIENT
ROUTING

We're on our way

Knowing where employees are at any given moment of the day makes for a more efficient operation and better customer service.

"At the press of a button, I can tell you where any of the guys are at," said Joshua Foster, Zap Termite and Pest Control. If an emergency service or new customer calls in, schedulers can dispatch the closest technician. (Or if a customer cancels, the system automatically routes the technician to the next job.)

Elmer Bensinger, Mathis Exterminating, reviews his fleet management system to ensure technicians aren't crisscrossing town or each other's routes. Nor does office staff have to call employees to determine their location. "It's all about efficiency."

Paying attention pays dividends

GPS systems track when employees speed, accelerate aggressively, brake hard or enter turns too fast. The system McCall Service uses on its 141 service vehicles gives employees a monthly driver score. If he or she falls below an 8 (out of 10), managers use the data to individually coach the employee on being a safer driver.

Just being more aware helps improve driving behavior. "We have noticed a significant difference in the guys' speeding from when we initiated some of the alerts to where we are currently. They're not speeding as much because they know we're being alerted," said Joshua Foster, Zap Termite and Pest Control.

By asking questions, Cassi Magnus, Phoenix Pest Control, learned a technician was speeding to get to the next job on time. "That was a benefit for us to know that we were scheduling (jobs) too close together," she said.

Scott Davis, Pest Pro Pest Control, likes another safety aspect of GPS as well: "Say somebody gets injured and we don't know where they're at? Well, I can punch you up on GPS and I know exactly where you're at and get people to you," he said.

Respondents could select multiple responses; Number of respondents: 116; Source: PCT 2019 State of the Fleet Market survey

Thanks for the reminder

It's easy to get caught up in the daily grind and forget preventive vehicle maintenance, like oil and tire changes, brake inspections and the like. GPS systems send out digital reminders based on mileage driven. "I think that's a very big benefit," said Kyle Varona, who manages 40 service vehicles for Fahey Pest & Lawn Solutions.

A service vehicle unexpectedly sidelined due to mechanical failure can cost the company a lot more in lost business than repairs. It's also a safety issue.

49%

ENFORCING SAFETY POLICIES

28%

REDUCING FUEL/ LABOR COSTS

10%

IMPROVING VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

The case of disappearing fuel costs

Tracking driving behavior, including excessive idling, had a direct impact on fuel consumption and costs for Mathis Exterminating.

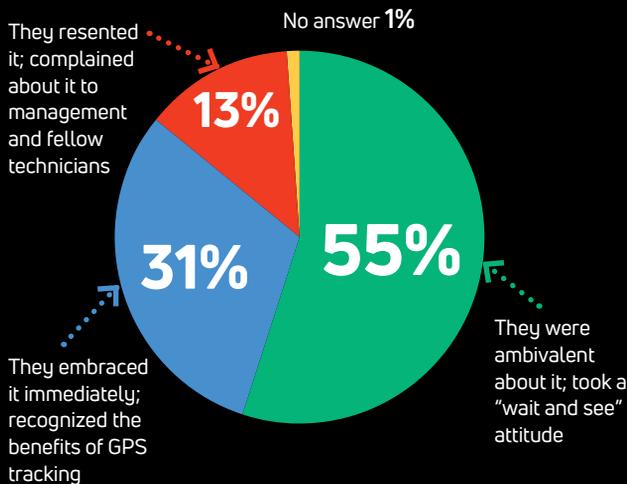
The company's policy states that service vehicles are not for personal use. "We knew people were doing it but we couldn't prove it," said Elmer Bensinger. "As soon as we rolled (GPS) out, all of a sudden our gas prices started coming down. Even with the cost of the GPS unit, we were still saving money," he said. More efficient routing also contributed to lower fuel costs, he said.





Employees: It's **NO BIG THING**

HOW TECHNICIANS FELT ABOUT GPS TRACKING BEING INSTALLED



Number of respondents: 116; Source: PCT 2019 State of the Fleet Market survey

Employees once bristled at the idea of GPS tracking them like “Big Brother.” Today, not so much. “Most employees didn’t bat an eye at it. It really wasn’t an issue,” said Elmer Bensinger, Mathis Exterminating, of installing the technology.

Jimmy Arnold, Peachtree Pest Control, agreed. “Now it’s just standard. There’s no question. Everybody knows the trucks have GPS,” he said. By comparison 10 years ago, he terminated two employees within two weeks of installation for after-hours activity.

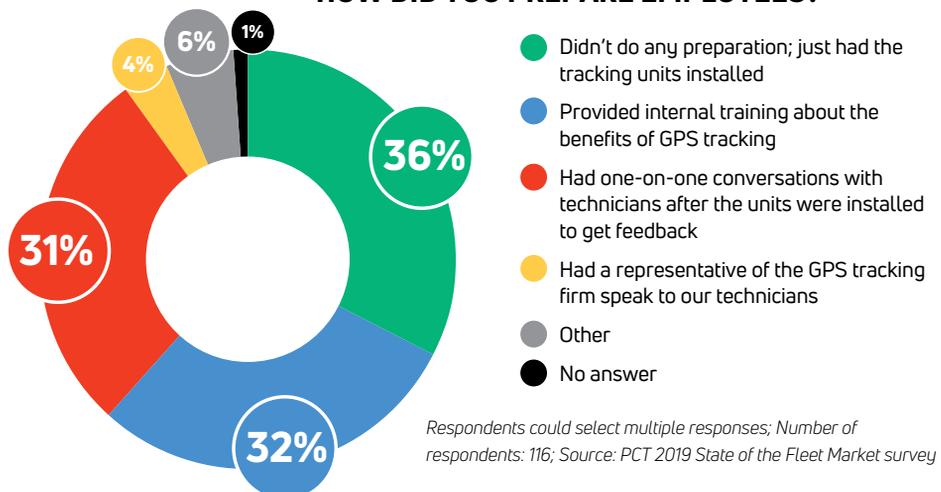
Companies promote GPS as validation. “If you’re following the law and you’re doing your job correctly, the GPS is really a built-in protection for you; to prove that you were at the service location, to prove that you weren’t speeding,” said Joshua Foster, Zap Termite and Pest Control.

Even employees without stellar driving records appreciate the need. “We do have a tech who likes to get tickets and so he wasn’t necessarily all that enthused but he understood why we were doing it,” said Cassi Magnus, Phoenix Pest Control. She said GPS serves as his “gentle reminder” to drive appropriately.

Making the **CHANGE**

Employers should adequately prepare staff for the installation of fleet management systems. “Like anything else you roll out, you don’t want to just hammer the guys who aren’t performing; you want to reward the guys who are performing,” said David Cooksey, McCall Service. Emphasizing how it helps employees will go a long way in getting it accepted more quickly, he added.

HOW DID YOU PREPARE EMPLOYEES?



Respondents could select multiple responses; Number of respondents: 116; Source: PCT 2019 State of the Fleet Market survey

Fleet Too Small for GPS?

PROBABLY NOT

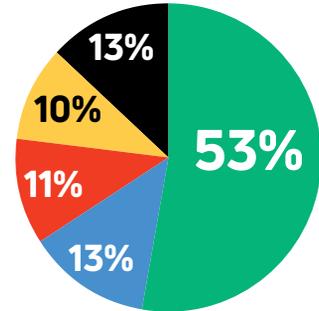
Some PMPs don't use GPS tracking because they're the sole employee. But once someone else starts driving for the company, it's time to reconsider. "If you've got more than one truck beyond the owner's, I think you have to have it," said Jimmy Arnold, Peachtree Pest Control.

Others said five vehicles make sense. Carl Braun, president of Quality Pest Control, Omaha, Neb., plans to explore a fleet management system for his five trucks at PestWorld in October. The company is growing and he either needs to rent a bigger shop space or let employees take the trucks home. GPS would not only "keep them honest during their off hours," but "I think it can add a whole lot to our efficiency," he said.

Daniel Shank, director of technology at Broken Arrow Pest Control in Livingston, Texas, anticipates getting GPS for his five trucks by year end. Currently his technicians use a smartphone app for directions but he wants a hard-wired system for improved accountability and routing.

"I think it's a good tool to use whether you're a small fleet or whether you're a large fleet," said Pest Pro Pest Control's Scott Davis, who runs two service vans and likes the liability protection that GPS provides. "We all have those risk exposures, no matter who you are," he said.

WHY AREN'T YOU USING GPS TRACKING?



- don't need it (e.g., no other employees)
- don't believe it will help
- need to do more research
- don't have the budget
- other

Number of Respondents NOT using GPS: 222;
Source: PCT 2019 State of the Fleet Market survey

Stop Slacking: Everyone Needs DRIVER SAFETY TRAINING

HOW GOOD IS YOUR COMPANY DRIVING RECORD?



Number of respondents: 338; Source: PCT 2019 State of the Fleet Market survey

Driving can be deadly. "In our industry it's the number one dangerous thing that we do," reminded Kyle Varona, Fahey Pest & Lawn Solutions, which holds training sessions on safe driving for employees.

Jimmy Arnold, Peachtree Pest Control, pulls data from GPS reports to discuss in driver training sessions, branch meetings and conversations with employees. Managers also must act on the data. He recently wrote up a new employee for driving over the speed limit several times in one day. "We have to show action on that, especially if we ever have to terminate that employee," said Arnold.

Even a company with one or two technicians benefits from the safety awareness that GPS systems provide. "I feel like when you know that it's in there, you're more cognizant of how you're driving," said Cassi Magnus, Phoenix Pest Control. She admitted to stopping more carefully with GPS installed.

GPSINSIGHT

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“

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Jason W., President of Budget Dry Waterproofing
User review on G2 Crowd

4.5-Star Rated



5-Star Rated



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