

Chapter 6: Roadmap to Success — Routing

Participants:

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Michael Smith: I guess we are on to slide number 6 now, or topic no. 6, The Road Map to Success in Routing. So now we are going to talk about routing as a means of savings. Now, the first things you are probably thinking when we talk about rerouting vehicles is to say, oh well its easy, all you have to do is take the shortest distance between two places and it will be fine, right? Well, that's not really the case. Consider the things like traffic when you are thinking about that shortest route.

If you take a short route that's in heavy traffic, you are going to be wasting a lot of fuel with stop and go acceleration and all the idling while sitting in traffic, so by taking a longer route with fewer stops, you are actually saving money by avoiding the traffic. Any time you can avoid stopping, well, that's instant fuel savings. I'll give you an example; UPS implemented a policy that restricted the drivers taking only right turns whenever possible. You might have heard of this. This change reduced idling time waiting to make left turns and saved the company lots of money on fuel.

Benton Routh: I'll give you another example of a parameter to use in routing that you might not think about. You've always heard, "Hey I can't control the weather", and generally that's true. But, it is something that should be thought about when planning a route – a big thunderstorm can cause a driver to pull over which would be the right safety answer, but while that truck is idling it's costing you money sitting on the side of the road in fuel. And, roads, of course, can be closed in the winter in certain areas by



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major snow storms, which can cause long costly detours or again idling. You might be surprised to know that there is specialized software available that can certainly use current weather patterns to help you develop routes, but also there is predictive aspects to some of these technologies that are available, where it basically looks at the history of the weather in a certain area and gives you an idea of whether you should be thinking about rerouting your vehicles around areas that tend to have bad weather at this time of year. So, there are a lot of advances in technology and weather prediction and building that into your routing is another thing that is available today that you know, that depending on where you run could be helpful to some fleets.