

IS YOUR WORKFORCE MOBILIZED?

With today's technology, intelligence has become fuel for success.



The propane delivery industry has many assets, from the integrity of family-run firms with rich traditions and loyal consumers to lucrative regional and master limited partnerships.

But this industry, with its many technological innovations regarding safety, conservation, fuel economy and more efficient equipment, has yet to maximize the greatest – and most immediate – form of technology: The power of a mobile workforce.



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This technology is designed to communicate and confirm deliveries, and connect – to each other and to a manager or dispatcher – so this vast network of drivers, customers, distribution routes and territory is accessible up to the minute on a desktop, laptop or tablet.

That intelligence is the difference between enhanced productivity and instant savings of at least \$100,000, versus the current system with its inefficiencies, redundancies and post-event analysis.

The latter requires combing through reams of paper to tabulate and cross-reference the belated reply to a question every manager wants to know now:

Do I have the right number of workers, doing the right number of things, at the right times and for the right reasons?

The only way to properly answer that question in real time is with a connected mobile workforce, which is far different than a workforce with mobile devices.

Put another way, workers in the propane industry already have their own smartphones and tablets.

A mobile workforce is more than devices.

They use these devices to email friends and coworkers, download files, exchange information, retrieve news and, yes, make calls, too.

But this fact alone still does not constitute a mobile workforce, no matter how busy or active employees may be. So, while every employee in a company probably has an iPhone or iPad, or some variation of an Android device, the missing component is the application responsible for linking all of these devices, relaying real-time intelligence to a central office.

This ability to see the where and when of all propane jobs, installations, deliveries and tanks is the foundation of a mobilized workforce and a must-have resource for any business dependent on the use of a fleet of vehicles for the movement of fuel.

Cooperation, not conflict

A successful company is one where camaraderie and cooperation flourish, not a setting for a battle between management and labor.

Technology is not a glorified form of Big Brother. On the contrary, a mobile workforce uses technology to strengthen a favorable relationship among all employees.

By that standard, the most productive employees earn their bonuses and recognition without resorting to unnecessary politicking and favoritism.

At the same time, a manager may realize, with no disrespect to an individual driver, that two workers can handle what was previously done by three, in the same period of time, without any compromise of quality or service. The subsequent savings, at a minimum, can add up – for just one employee.

Take into account the employee's salary, overtime, benefits, health coverage, disability compensation, Social Security taxes, as well as the cost of a truck, insurance and the price of maintenance, repairs and fuel, and the total expense quickly adds up to as much as \$100,000. Indeed, the vehicle alone may be \$30,000 to \$45,000.

Real-time intelligence bestows these savings to a propane delivery business, courtesy of a mobile application that reveals just as much as it unites, because communication – information – is the essence of a fruitful workforce.

That knowledge is the gift of technology, which gives companies the money necessary to reinvest in other crucial projects, for the satisfaction of clients and the effectiveness of each respective delivery business. To seize these rewards requires nothing more than the tap of a finger on an app in a smartphone downloaded from often frequented either the Apple or Android app stores.

That upward mobility comes from the use of mobile devices by a mobilized workforce, complemented by communication and unity

