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A new, Kitchener-based company has just introduced new technology that gives Owner Operators the same powerful software that is used by the larger trucking companies at a fraction of the cost.

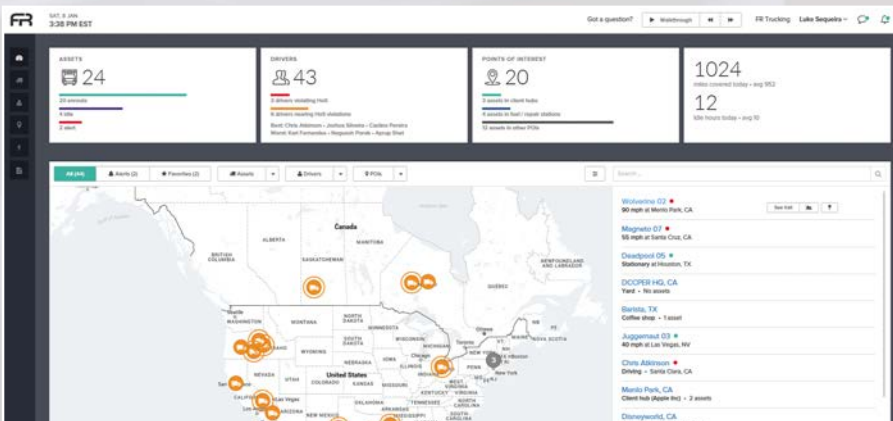
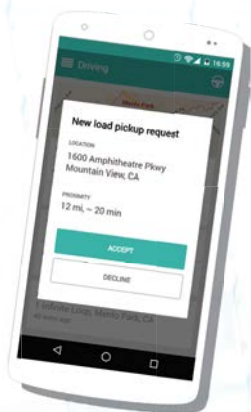
For decades, technology in the fleet management industry has only been built by a few key players. Through the sale of expensive hardware, companies have offered a suite of fleet tracking and analytics solutions that provide trucking companies with GPS at a base-level and engine diagnostics, hours of service and temperature data on a more sophisticated level.

Due to the cost of the expensive hardware, many smaller fleets and Owner/Operator fleets have been left out in the cold, even though they need this information the most.

"Technology has come to a tipping-point and

now the same sensors and modems that cost thousands of dollars already exist in our pockets and are sold with 'no-money down' contracts with low monthly fees for data," explains Chris Atkinson, the Product Officer at FleetRover (www.fleetrover.com). The technology he's talking about is of course, your smartphone. Chris continues, "With a phone and a laptop, we can give you hours of service, messaging, tracking and reporting".

Using their app, downloadable on any Android phone or tablet, the FleetRover team has produced a dashboard that is just as feature-rich as any other and they're offering it to the market at 1/5th the cost of existing systems. Chris states, "Our vision is to give Owner Operators and small fleets access where it didn't exist before."



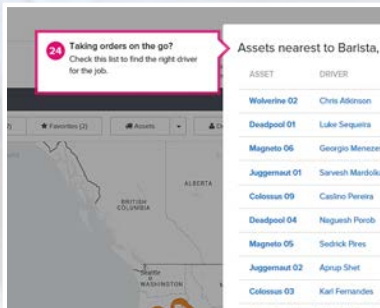
Luke Sequeira, FleetRover's CEO, passionately articulates this further. "The smaller fleets need this data. They need to track their progress with top-line metrics. We're making them better at what they do and are making fleet managers better fleet managers. We looked at the current systems available and they all require training, so we applied new models to this industry that give the operator the ability to get started in less than an hour. That's what Owner Operators need."

"We're here to help the industry evolve" adds in Joe Smelko, an industry veteran with 27 years of experience at some of the largest trucking companies in Canada. Joe has joined the team to bring product insights and build on a bold vision. He explained the history of the company and it became clear how this low-cost solution was born.

FleetRover started out as an application that leverages the flexibility of 'the Internet of things'. By leveraging the power of Kitchener-based company, BlueRover, they're able to connect multiple sensors to one "hub" just by adding them to the truck. Joe spent some time explaining the unique value of a solution like this "The infrastructure doesn't require existing hardware to be adjusted, we just add on sensors. The new approach gives fleets an a-la-carte solution that can be built for their specific needs. Instead of lagging behind the ever-changing corporate objectives of a fleet, we grow with them."

It's this flexibility that opened up the FleetRover team to the discovery that the devices all around us can be leveraged to change the way fleet tracking is done. This is how the concept for FleetRover Lite, a software solution that works off of smartphones, was developed. And the progression doesn't end there - their team has built out multiple features and functions that improve fleet management, including a confirmation-based messaging system that changes driver-dispatch communication.

During the interview, Joe introduced us to the concept and explained how the product isn't just giving data - It's changing the way business is done. "We use decision trees for quick yes and no answers at all the right points in time, to keep drivers safe. Then we pull in this data and give it back to fleet managers and dispatch. We're giving data on capacity, fuel usage, location, trip-by-trip breadcrumbs. You're not just optimizing your fleet, you're now equipped with everything you need to take orders on-demand, all while you're driving. All of this with a single app."



The FleetRover team is just getting started and they have their eyes set on the new opportunities that are created by this data; everything from sharing it to learning from it with connections and correlations. With market expertise and a software focus, they have an interesting year ahead of them.

"We're bringing in experts and they're helping people take their business to the next level. We're looking at this stuff and saying 'how can we help you grow?' We see our success tied to the growth of these smaller fleets. You build your business when they build theirs, our interests are aligned, it's exciting" says Chris.

Chris, Luke and Joe continued to share some of their next steps and it seems that their goal is to continually improve upon their platform to make a difference in the marketplace. They have big plans and with a focus on smaller fleets and Owner Operators, it looks like they will definitely be an interesting team to watch.

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Change is in the Wind

The near future of trucking leadership is about to experience the most significant changes it has witnessed in decades. By this time next year there will be new leadership at the American Trucking Association with the resignation of President Governor Graves and at the Canadian Trucking Alliance and Ontario Trucking Association with the resignation of David Bradley. In addition, the newly hired President of The Truckload Carriers Association, Mr. John Lyboldt will have begun to make his mark.

This is by any stretch, a significant change to the trucking industry. I have had the great pleasure of having met and conversed with both Governor Graves and David Bradley on many occasions over the past number of years. In the case of the Governor I can tell you that from the first time I talked to him I knew I was in front of a gentleman. Someone that has, I'm not sure what to call it, maybe presence? I have in my life, experienced this type of presence no more than a handful of times and I know it might sound strange but from my experience, you immediately know when you meet someone with this quality as they have class and dignity.

I was very fortunate to have been the Chairman of TCA (Truckload Carriers Association) for the 2008-9 term and as a right of passage to the rank, I had the opportunity to have lunch with

Governor Graves in the then newly opened ATA headquarters in Washington, DC. This is an experience that I will always remember and cherish and he could not have been more open and friendly as we shared industry stories and concerns of the day. Governor Graves will be difficult shoes to fill to say the least. It is hard to imagine that it will be possible to find an individual with a greater pedigree and presence. The folks challenged with this task have a hard road ahead.

I've known David Bradley for a number of years and have always had the greatest respect for the man. This is a fellow who is quick on his feet and is as sharp a person as you will ever meet on all trucking industry matters. David has been the very competent gatekeeper of this industry for many years. Best of luck to the group of folks trying to replace the person who has shaped the trucking landscape across Canada for decades. To complicate an already challenging task, David's resignation likely opens up two positions because of his dual role as OTA and CTA President.

Over the years I asked David for some of his time on two important initiatives and I am proud to say, both were successful. The first was for the OTA to adopt the NATMI (North American Training and Management Institute) certification program called CDS (Certified Director of Safety) for Ontario. The

second was OTA's support for the voluntary apprenticeship program called Tractor Trailer Commercial Driver. My interactions on both occasions would be described as dealing with an individual who is methodical in his thought process until a decision is made and after that point, his actions were clear and precise. This is not a person who sits on the fence; this is a person of action.

I had the pleasure of meeting the newly minted President of the Truckload Carriers Association, Mr. John Lyboldt just this past month while in Alexandria Virginia. John's pedigree has him leading various automotive trade associations down successful paths and working for the Dale Carnegie group for some time. John has vision and he is determined. A brief conversation reveals immediately that this is a serious person who is going to make his mark. I am thrilled with the decision that TCA's current leadership made when hiring him. It will be fun to see where TCA is down the road under John's leadership and governance.

Being the person who is responsible for running any of these associations could only be explained as an exercise in herding cats. Dealing with members who are on the extreme side of type A personalities and appeasing their varied takes on events of the day would in itself be a herculean task. Now throw into the mix the never-ending legislative agendas of various levels of government bureaucracy and the multiple levels of safety initiatives and you have challenges that would overwhelm most of us mere mortals. In addition to all of this they also need to effectively manage a staff and run the day-to-day operations required to keep a non-profit afloat.

That being said, when one looks at ATRI's (American Trucking Research Institute) annual list of top ten trucking concerns, nothing seems to have changed over the past decade. Driver shortage, hours of service, highway congestion, truck parking, CSA scores, driver health and wellness are things that don't seem to be moving as priorities to be addressed. Just saying that maybe having fresh eyes look at some of these old problems may be a good thing, as it will provide new ideas, new techniques, and new paradigms on old issues.

So hats off to the years of service we've enjoyed from two outstanding leaders in our industry, they have been the competent gatekeepers and we as an industry have benefitted greatly from their dedication. Also best of luck to the new faces that are with us now and the new faces yet to be hired and thrust into the whirlwind of the industry. There are plenty of challenges yet to be tackled and plenty more on the horizon I'm sure, for the one constant in the industry is change.

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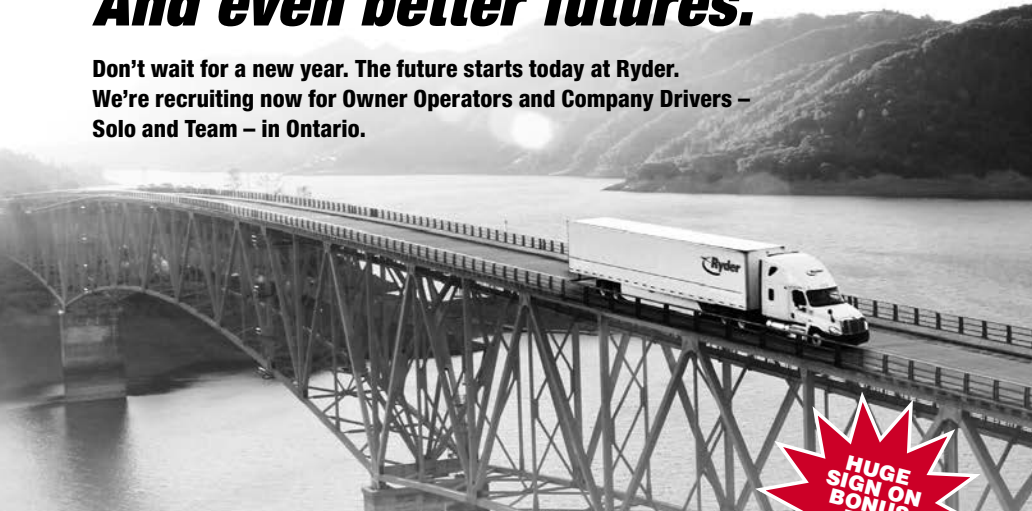


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What you need to know about ELD's

My goodness, it is February already. I missed writing an article in January so please let me wish you all a Happy New Year and good health.

Well, on with this month's article. Changes are all over the place in the trucking safety industry. The ELD rule has finally been released in the United States with implementation to be mandatory in December of 2017. That is for any units going to the USA. What if you are a Canada only carrier, or work only within your province?

In Ontario, the Ministry of Transportation, Steven Del Duca, gave support to Electronic Logging Devices (ELD's) back in November of 2014. Ontario was the first government to come out in support of the devices. Since then the Federal Conservatives and Minister Lisa Rait also supported the use of electronic logs. There has since been an election and the Liberals as of the time of this writing have not indicated their stance on the subject.

All of the provincial trucking associations seem to be supporting the initiative and the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) has been a very vocal supporter, as well as the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA). Whether you agree with ELD's or not, I believe, is not important.

What does matter is that we stay competitive and Canada is aligned with the United States of America.

So, what do drivers' think about ELD's? I have been fortunate enough to conduct several driver training sessions since the release of the ELD rule. These meetings have all been with smaller carriers and their drivers. When the topic of the new ELD rule comes up they always express their opinion and overwhelmingly the drivers are afraid. Yes, afraid. As one driver put it "How am I going to recover the hours when a shipper holds me up for 4 to 6 hours"? So that means that right now, the driver gets creative with the logbook so he/she is able to drive and still make the money that she/he needs to support their family. It is not fair... not fair at all; but this is still happening every day to our industry.

How will we adapt to the Electronic Logging Device (ELD) rule? I believe in the short term that it will be painful! Very disruptive and painful. And I'm one of the people that view ELD's as a great move forward as it is a maturing of sorts for our industry. No longer will we be encouraging the drivers' to break the law and drive while fatigued. But as I said earlier, in the short term, it will cause pain.

The shippers, I believe, will not change until they have to. And they will not change until some of them have paid out large sums of money in court settlements. Many shippers are responsible and currently understand their responsibilities. However, there are still many shippers that ship based on the lowest cost and that is all that matters to them. It is these shippers that need to change and these shippers are the ones that I'm talking about.

Currently a driver shows up on time and sometimes is held up at the shippers for several hours. The shipper fails to reschedule the delivery time and quietly (through silence and lack of action on the shippers part) implies that the driver should still make the delivery on time. It will be this type of "lack of action" that a smart lawyer will jump on and they will prove in court that a shipper should be held at least partially responsible for the losses that have been incurred. Since many shippers have much more to lose than a small trucking company has to lose, through a legal term called "Joint and Several Legal Liability", the shipper may pay a great deal more money than the trucking company. Only after the shipping community pays out millions of dollars or more, will many shippers wake up and realize that they have a responsibility to make sure that they do everything that a responsible person in their shoes would do.

So how long will this take after the new ELD rules come into existence? I think 2 or 3 years after the mandate to implement takes place. (Current implementation is scheduled for December, 2017, but there appears to be a

few court challenges to the new rule on the horizon). I believe that it will take a few years for the shippers to see the monies that they are needlessly spending in defense costs and payouts, before some of them realize that it is less expensive to ship the goods within the law and without implying to a driver that the delivery needs to get to its destination at any cost.

I do think that the next few years will be very interesting as we all adapt to the changes that Electronic Logging Devices will bring to our industry.

Stay safe.

Chris Harris

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WOMEN IN TRUCKING

Ellen Voie



We Need to Elevate Safety to a Higher Level

Recently a young (23-year-old) professional driver maneuvered her loaded tractor-trailer onto a 19th century bridge in Paoli, Indiana. The driver held a commercial driver's license (CDL), but apparently the definition of a ton was not part of the curriculum. The bridge was posted with a six ton weight limit while the tractor-trailer weighed closer to 30 tons, or 60,000 pounds.

She admitted that she did not understand the definition of a ton, which she should have learned in a grade school math class as "a unit of weight equivalent to 2,000 pounds." The driver had taken a wrong turn and was using the bridge to get back on track and demolished the bridge, the truck and her career in the process.

This incident could have been avoided with proper training, but before we point fingers at the carrier or the truck driving school, consider her error. The sign clearly stated a limit of six tons; her misunderstanding is not solely the fault of her training. Even a great instructor might make the assumption that a person pursuing a license to drive a tractor-trailer would understand the meaning of a ton.

Last year, Women In Trucking was one of 26 stakeholders who participated in the Entry Level Driver Training Advisory Committee for the

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. After numerous meetings and months of debate, the committee determined a model curriculum for commercial driver training.

Truck and bus operators will be required to demonstrate proficiency in everything related to skills, road operations, communication, paperwork, and even health concerns. Not once did the committee discuss terms and definitions related to an elementary school education.

However, this just reinforces the need to know the driver and continue the training beyond the training facility. Would a carrier's trainer have discovered this driver's lack of understanding of a ton? Why didn't the driver ask before crossing the bridge?

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recently completed a study on over-the-road (OTR) professional drivers. The research was intended to investigate the cause of truck crashes to address the safety of professional drivers through surveys.

The agency found that the work environment was "adverse" due to the long hours, mileage-based pay, delivery schedules, traffic congestion, and shipper delays. However, an interesting result of the research found that truck crashes can be related to a driver's risk

behavior. Or, as the NIOSH study reported, "a relatively small percentage of commercial motor vehicles drivers (10-15 percent) accounted for a disproportional percentage of total fleet risk (30-50 percent) measured by critical incidents, which were defined as significant unsafe driver actions."

The report also determined that moving violations and near misses can help carriers predict those drivers who are more prone to continued crashes. Since risky behavior includes moving violations, speeding, and refusing to wear a seat belt, these could all be indicators of driver behavior that is more likely to result in a crash. Is it possible to anticipate a driver entering a creaky metal bridge marked with weight limits by noting previous violations? Perhaps that is the case.

A report from Omnitrac (formerly a division of Qualcomm), based on the electronic logging devices of carriers using their technology, found that only fifty percent, or half, of a carrier's drivers will experience ninety percent of the serious collisions. These "serious" collisions include roll-overs, running off the road, head-on accidents, jack-knives, side-swipes, and rear-end collisions.

Omnitrac developed an "accident severity model" to identify the ten percent of these accident prone drivers to address these risk behaviors before they result in a collision.

It's difficult to imagine how a driver could earn a CDL without understanding weights and how they pertain to axles, gross weight, and bridge laws. The carrier might have noticed some signs of incomprehension of the meaning of a ton in the driver's paperwork or through better training interaction.

Today there is a bridge in Indiana that is no longer usable and a driver who may never operate a commercial motor vehicle again. Whether it is predictive analysis through technology or addressing driver risk factors with better training, the trucking industry still has room to elevate safety to a higher level.

Ellen Voie

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