

COMPLIANCE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE - WHAT ARE THE KEY CONSIDERATIONS WHEN CHOOSING YOUR SUPPLIER?

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Tachograph analysis and compliance management software has been around since before the first generation of digital tachograph was introduced in 2006. In the last 20 years, the software has evolved from proprietary software installed on in-house computer systems to cloud-based Software as a Service (SaaS) accessed over the internet. This is typical of a software lifecycle.

SaaS has many advantages over installed software:

- You can access the software any time, any place you have an internet connection.
 - You always access the latest version with no need to manage updates or back-ups.
 - It is scalable, it works for all operators regardless of size and can accommodate growth or reduction in drivers and vehicles.
 - It will have lower costs, requiring no special hardware, back-up hardware or IT resources to maintain it.
- Today tachograph analysis software is a commodity available from a number of

suppliers. Basically, they all do the same job, albeit the information and data will be presented differently. Bells and whistles have been added over time such as automated email alerts to issues that need attention, but they all have similar features and functionality. Costs have settled around £1 per driver per week and this represents outstanding value for money. It is a very small price to pay to manage drivers' hours and tachograph compliance and avoid any issues with the DVSA. More recently, drivers' hours KPIs have become available for the DVSA's Earned Recognition scheme. This is the gold standard by which all operators should measure themselves. Operators can now sign up to the KPIs to see how they are doing in advance of any engagement with DVSA for earned recognition.

With little product differentiation between suppliers and competitive pricing from all, how do you pick one supplier over another?

Operators should look beyond the core product offering and consider a number of important factors.

1. The supplier - What do you know about the supplier? Are they a private company or a public listed company? Who are the shareholders? What is the financial position of the company (will they still be around in five years)? Dealing with a private company with two shareholders that is just about breaking even is quite a different proposition to dealing with a profitable, global, publicly listed company that can demonstrate its financial performance over ten years or more.

2. The products - Did the supplier develop the product? What complimentary products can they offer for driving licence verification, driver CPC verification and driver vehicle safety checks? Did they also develop these products? Working with the company that created the software means that the support teams have direct access to developers to resolve any issues swiftly. A supplier that has developed a portfolio of compliance management solutions for tachograph analysis, licence checks and vehicle safety checks can provide a complete picture of compliance by driver, vehicle or depot in one system with one login and password.



Outside of compliance management what other solutions can be provided to improve fleet operations such as route and scheduling software and mobile applications (electronic proof of delivery etc)?

Having a single supplier for routing and scheduling and compliance management means that the fleet and driver utilisation and optimisation can be kept in balance with the need to adhere to strict drivers' hours regulations. No longer will a driver be faced with the impossible choice of missing a delivery to maintain drivers' hours compliance or making a delivery and exceeding drivers' hours. It also means that drivers' hours are not managed so conservatively that fleet optimisation is compromised. Delivery capacity can be increased by as much as 35% through the use of routing and scheduling software, so there are big gains to be made.

3. Information security - With the growth in digital data and management information systems security and data privacy is a growing concern - from the threat of cyber-attacks to GDPR responsibilities. Is the supplier ISO27001 accredited? This is the international standard for information security management and should be a mandatory requirement these days. Is access to the various compliance management modules controlled through unique usernames and passwords for different roles within

the organisation? Is your data hosted by the supplier or a subcontracted third party? Does the software enforce criteria for setting strong passwords and do they have to be updated regularly? Does the supplier meet INFOSEC (information security) standards to protect the confidentiality of data, preserve the integrity of data and promote the availability of data for authorised use? With fines of up to €20 million or 4% of annual global turnover (whichever is higher) for serious GDPR compliance breaches this is an area that simply can not be ignored.

A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. So, it is important for operators to consider aspects such as the actual supplier, products and capabilities and information security rather than small differences between compliance management software solutions and saving a penny per tachograph record.

For more information:
<https://smartcompliance.descartes.com/>

