WHITEPAPER

VEHICLE DATA-BASED TIPS TO HELP FLEET MANAGERS CONTROL COSTS



DATAONE SOFTWARE

Fleet management organizations are navigating one of the most sustained periods of cost pressure in recent history. According to Verizon Connect's 2025 Fleet Technology Trends Report, 77% of surveyed fleet professionals identified rising costs as their top operational challenge—for the fifth consecutive year. Likewise, Fleetio's 2026 State of Fleet Management Report also found that more than half of fleet managers say rising costs are their "top concern", and that cost pressure is now "the new normal."

Continuous increases in vehicle acquisition costs are a huge contributor to rising fleet costs. In response to this pressure, replacement cycles are lengthening. This, in turn, results in increased maintenance expenses as fleets retain vehicles longer. Operational complexity also continues to grow as vehicles become more technologically advanced and diversified across powertrains, safety systems, and connected features. Finally, there is more at stake when remarketing, as capturing and communicating the value of increasingly complex vehicles adds to the challenge of extracting the best possible return.

While many cost drivers are outside a fleet manager's control, operational discipline is not. As Fleetio notes, the "fleets that outperform in today's environment are not necessarily those with the newest technology or the largest budgets—they are the ones with the most disciplined processes."

Developing and maintaining that discipline across acquisition, maintenance, compliance, and remarketing requires more than process alone. It requires reliable, standardized vehicle-level data that can move seamlessly across systems and workflows. When fleet organizations can confidently access and operationalize structured vehicle data, they gain clearer visibility into acquisition decisions, preventative maintenance planning, warranty optimization, and resale strategy.

DataOne Software has provided optimized vehicle data to fleet management organizations for over 25 years. This paper, informed by this in-depth experience, explores how accurate, normalized vehicle data can support disciplined fleet management processes and help organizations:

- Make more profitable vehicle acquisition decisions
- Optimize maintenance scheduling and reduce downtime
- Lower total cost of ownership
- Maximize resale and remarketing performance

Vehicle Insights That Add Value to Your Fleet

The escalating cost of new vehicles, including the ongoing uncertainty around import tariffs, has transformed attitudes toward fleet lifecycle management. Digital Dealer states that 48% of fleets plan to delay vehicle replacements and 30% plan to extend their vehicle lifecycles, in a strategic move to stem escalating acquisition costs.

Companies with a pressing need to acquire vehicles require a clear, in-depth picture of prospective vehicles' properties, features, and options. This is made even more important as vehicles continue to increase in complexity, with a widening array of drivetrains, safety equipment, and technology features. Access to accurate and detailed vehicle descriptions provides clearer insight into any given vehicle's value to the business, including its fit within the fleet based on factors such as utility (GVW), seating capacity, fuel economy, luxury features, and safety equipment.

VIN decoding and normalized equipment data can reduce ambiguity in acquisition decisions by clarifying trims, options, and equipment at scale.

VIN decoding tools help remove ambiguity from vehicle acquisition. DataOne's VIN Decoder delivers fast, reliable decoding of year, make, model, and available trims for all passenger and commercial vehicles. In addition, DataOne identifies all standard and optional equipment and features in passenger and light-duty commercial vehicles. The platform also provides out-of-the-box normalization of OEM-specific terminology, enabling fleet management companies to easily compare vehicle characteristics while reducing manual data entry—an activity that 18% of fleet managers spend more than eight hours per week performing, according to Fleetio.

Optimizing Maintenance and Downtime

How OEM Service Schedules Can Help Maximize Asset Utilization

Maximizing the utilization and lifespan of existing assets is central to successfully managing a fleet of vehicles. A common finding across fleet management industry research over the past year is the shockingly high cost of inefficiency in fleet utilization. Torque by Ryder, a mobile fleet maintenance provider, estimates that even a 1% drop in fleet utilization loses nearly four working days per vehicle each year (**approximately $2,450 in lost revenue annually per vehicle**), and fleets often see much larger utilization drops annually. While many increasing costs are outside of a fleet manager's control (such as increased tariffs, fuel, and new vehicle prices) fleet utilization stands out as an area where efficiency gains are within reach and quickly affect the bottom line.

Access to OEM-backed service schedule data allows fleets to align preventative maintenance with manufacturer intent. Solutions such as DataOne's OEM Service Schedules dataset standardize this information across brands.

Since 87% of fleet managers oversee maintenance compliance each year, per the Fleetio report, reducing downtime-related costs is essential to freeing up time for more strategic, revenue-generating activities. Verizon Connect further reinforces the financial challenges around maintenance, emphasizing, "it's not just the cost of maintaining vehicles, but the cost of not maintaining vehicles that add up for fleets."

Access to comprehensive service schedules data empowers fleet-based organizations to keep up with preventative maintenance while also developing a sustainable, predictable downtime cycle. This would increase vehicle uptime by approximately 25% according to the American Transportation Research Institute.

A well-planned preventative maintenance schedule can drive efficiency increases by also providing opportunities to schedule driver training, compliance updates, and administrative workflows during planned downtime. Coordinating these processes proactively helps fleet teams maximize existing assets, prevent costly breakdowns, and simplify other active operations.

Using Warranty and Recall Data in Planning Maintenance to Reduce Total Cost of Ownership

Warranty information offers critical insights for reducing the cost of maintaining a fleet. Leading fleet management magazine *Daily Filo* breaks down the ways that comprehensive warranty knowledge helps fleets reduce Total Cost of Ownership (TCO):

- Ensuring repairs occur during the warranty period, minimizing out-of-pocket expenses
- Supporting OEM compliance requirements and accelerating repairs through authorized networks
- Preserving resale value by ensuring repairs are performed at approved service centers

The type and length of warranties attached to a vehicle are important considerations for both purchasing decisions and determining how long to keep a vehicle in service. Fleet managers who can quickly review the length of a vehicle's new car and powertrain warranties, and the depth and costs associated with an extended warranty, can use that information to make the most cost-effective decisions for managing their active service fleet. Combining warranty data with NHTSA recall alerts further strengthens downtime planning. Fleet managers can incorporate free, recall-related repairs into their existing maintenance cycle.

Integrating NHTSA recall alerts and warranty datasets into fleet systems enables proactive compliance and cost control. Several data providers offer structured recall and warranty datasets to support this process.

Understand Full Vehicle Value with Enhanced VIN Decoding

Once fleet vehicles reach a designated end-of-life stage, managers need the best possible vehicle descriptions, including valuable installed options, to get the best possible return on their investment. New and used vehicle retail prices remain high, according to Automotive Fleet, raising the stakes of getting the maximum value for the vehicles you'll be selling off.

Key vehicle attributes, features, and optional equipment are vital to include in any listing of the vehicle for sale, as well as being factored in when determining the "book" value of the vehicle. Access to this enhanced data in a Fleet Management System (FMIS) provides several advantages for vehicle remarketing efforts. Additionally, DataOne weights specific vehicle equipment by market desirability, helping prioritize which details to call out and promote when listing your vehicle for sale. These attributes can also inform optimal timing and channel strategy when bringing vehicles to market.

Alex Griffis, President of leading dealer marketing agency Overfuel, attests to the value of option-level data access. "Presenting vehicle features such as transmission, engine, and fuel type in a consistent format is important for us to deliver the user experience our customers expect. Normalizing premium installed equipment is also a valuable benefit - filtering by options such as Apple CarPlay and lane change assistance receives significant activity from end users." A remarketing plan, educated by weighted vehicle details, maximizes profitability by conveying the most valuable and desirable features of your vehicles, increasing buyer interest and engagement, resulting in faster sales and higher average selling prices.

Normalized equipment data allows for in-depth search, research, and comparison across models and brands, empowering vehicle buyers and dealers to clearly understand the features behind OEM marketing terminology across all brands. This dataset is further optimized by weighting the importance of each vehicle feature. This level of insight enables you to push the most in-demand vehicle features to the top of your listing, research pages, VDPs, and virtual "window stickers," enabling the buyer to find your vehicle and confirm it meets their most important purchase criteria quickly and easily.

A Data Solution that Helps Relieve Cost Pressures

There are many challenges that must be overcome to successfully manage a large and diverse fleet of vehicles. Vehicle data is not a quick fix to all those challenges. However, in an industry dealing with significant cost headwinds, the advantages offered by utilizing high-quality vehicle data solutions are well worth considering. Detailed VIN-based vehicle insights, OEM-recommended services and intervals, and robust VIN decoding to power vehicle identification are all important contributors in the quest to minimize growing costs and maximize revenue opportunities. Using the most succinct and valuable data points is also critical in maximizing time-to-sale and the sales price during the resale and remarketing process.

As fleets continue to navigate cost pressures, the role of structured, VIN-level vehicle data will only increase. Organizations that standardize and integrate vehicle attributes, service schedules, warranty details, and recall information into their workflows will be better positioned to control the total cost of ownership and maximize asset value.

DataOne Software provides these data capabilities to fleet and mobility organizations seeking to operationalize vehicle intelligence across acquisition, maintenance, and remarketing workflows.

You can **reach out to DataOne's data strategy team at the enclosed link**,

Or to learn more, you can visit DataOne's dedicated Fleet and Mobility Solutions page.

THANK YOU FOR READING

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A DATA SOLUTIONS EXPERT IS AVAILABLE TO SPEAK WITH YOU ABOUT YOUR SPECIFIC NEEDS

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