

How to Identify Reputable Suppliers of Fleet Management Vehicle Tracking Systems

The supply and maintenance of vehicle tracking systems for fleet management has become big business in the last few years. With the advent of more up to date GPS tracking and smaller, vehicle mounted GPS devices, it is now easier than ever for a fleet manager to keep an accurate log of the whereabouts of all of the vehicles on their fleet. However, choosing a reputable dealer has become increasingly hard because of the inevitable attraction of a fast buck to some less than honest vehicle tracking system suppliers.

To make sure that the dealer you choose is the right one for your business, there are a few questions you can ask first before selecting your provider.

Are they here for the long haul?

Ask your potential vehicle tracking system supplier for a list of other customers. Recommendations from existing customers are gold in any business, and it's just as important in modern GPS network supply as in any other field. From talking to other customers you can find out what their after-care service is like, whether the company is flexible and has an established research and development programme (making sure that they're not going to use your fleet as a 'guinea pig' to try out a new system) and that they're reputable.

Show me the money

Ask to see their accounts. This is a sure way of knowing if a company is reputable or not. Just looking at their advertising literature isn't enough; anyone can have a glossy brochure printed up; is the company behind the blurb reliable?

TrustMark

The major players in [vehicle tracking](#) and GPS tracking devices are currently lobbying the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform to introduce a 'TrustMark' initiative for the industry. The TrustMark initiative has been used successfully in other industries such as building, raising standards and marking out companies that take on the initiative as reliable and dependable. The vehicle tracking industry has attracted some unscrupulous businesses, all looking to make a quick profit from customers who are ill-informed and perhaps a little over-eager to join a technological revolution they know little about. Approved operators would have to meet strict criteria concerning hardware quality and after-care service standards. Although not yet enforced, questioning your supplier on their opinion of the scheme may give you a little insight into their commitment to provide a comprehensive and quality service.

Where's the warranty?

Both hardware and software should be covered by a warranty that includes generic updates and continuing after-sales servicing. If the warranty has 'escape' clauses, the provider (and the equipment) may prove to be unreliable, which can be costly.

At the next junction, turn left

Don't get mesmerised by a wonderful collection of onboard maps, moving location dots on a screen and fancy software. That's only a small part of the capabilities of good vehicle tracking devices. A good system should be able to provide you with a wealth of additional data including such features as unauthorised mileage reports, out-of-hours activity, speed of vehicles, programmable route planning and even silent alarms that are activated when the vehicle is supposed to be stationary (indicating possible theft).

Is it right for your business?

It is essential that you stay in control of the solution offered to you. Fleet management is a complex business, and you know the requirements and needs of your fleet far better than the GPS vehicle tracking supplier. An off-the-shelf system may seem like a cheaper option, but it could tie you in with a supplier who cannot grow with your business and cannot provide you with the information you want. Know exactly what you want from your system before you begin the search for a supplier.

The emphasis is on the fleet manager to research carefully beforehand and draw up a business plan indicating exactly what they expect a GPS system to achieve for your business, how much you are prepared to invest and a list of potential suppliers. Only then can you make an informed choice as to which is the best supplier to choose.

About the Author

Kent Stabler, Marketing Manager, Chameleon Direct are suppliers of [gps vehicle tracking systems](#), gps tracking devices, hands free car kits and speed camera detector equipment. Our [vehicle tracking](#) aims at helping improve your fleet management. With over 1 Million UK customers Chameleon Direct also provide hands free installation services.