

Why Paid Vehicle Tracking Systems are better than Free Tracking

The advent of freely available GPS devices and vehicle tracking systems has meant that fleet managers have been able to keep a closer eye on the exact location of all of their vehicles quickly and easily. As GPS tracking has become more popular, free tracking systems have made an appearance, such as Google's Latitude and the independently operated Locatea.net. So if there are free vehicle tracking systems now available, why pay for a system?

Put simply, the free systems are not specifically designed for business users. Google's Latitude in particular is more of an extension of the social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace, enabling those who choose to participate in it to see the location of friends and family across the world. Although a very good (and fun) system, it really doesn't have a practical application for the modern fleet manager who wants to incorporate an accurate vehicle tracking system into their business plan. In the same vein, Locatea.net allows those who are members of the site to see the location of those who wish to be tracked, and herein lies another weakness in the two sites' application as a business tool. Participation is voluntary and those who do not wish to be tracked simply remove themselves from the database, effectively becoming invisible to the tracking system.

A paid-for system that is tailor-made to a business model design is far more accurate and reliable. Paid [vehicle tracking systems](#) are set up for the individual user, enabling them to track and monitor all vehicles in their fleet to within a few metres. But it's not just a case of Big Brother is watching you; with vehicle tracking systems. Their use is also beneficial in many other aspects of modern fleet management, including optimising delivery route planning, providing protection for vehicles, reducing a fleet's motor insurance levels, improving customer care levels and minimising the risks of unauthorised mileage or speeding offences. Once GPS devices have been fitted to a fleet the information can be relayed back in real-time to a central control point, through which the transport or fleet manager can then update drivers of any changes to scheduled routes or additional pickups or deliveries. This ensures that the nearest available vehicle can be despatched to a customer, reducing waiting times and improving customer relations.

Paid systems also benefit from regular updates and servicing by the provider - something that free systems do not offer. Although free services may update their mapping functions, for example, these are still only designed for general use and have no route-plan function availability. Although Locatea.net does offer a courier route planner, again it is only a general map-based GPS system rather than a specialised function that can be customised to suit an individual company's needs.

Fitting a fleet with GPS tracking can also lower the cost of fleet motor insurance, making the company a considerable saving in the long term. It offers a greater degree of security and should vehicles be stolen, a silent alarm can be triggered informing a central control point of the theft. This gives a fleet manager the ability to respond more quickly to a vehicle theft, alert the Police and consequently have a greater chance of recovering the vehicle undamaged.

For professional and business use, a paid vehicle tracking system is a worthwhile investment and although the free systems are perhaps a fun and even useful addition to the general public's GPS tracking network, for businesses they do not offer the comprehensive features that a paid-for system does.

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.

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