

Evaluating Routing Software

4 Things you Can't Do Without

Buying routing software is a good idea, period.

Every solution out there will help you improve efficiency and reduce costs if you use it properly. But, as you shop around and compare technical features and vendor characteristics, there are some checklist items you should consider mandatory. We've based this list on what we hear from our own customers and users who have used multiple products over the course of their careers.

The four we've included here are things that will directly impact the level of ROI you get from your investment and the headaches (or lack thereof) you have down the road. You may have to do some digging to get hard answers, but it will be well worth it in the end.

1 Industry Knowledge

Every fleet operates differently, has different priorities, different customer needs and even regulatory issues with which to contend. Compare beverage delivery to paper, fuel oil to textiles, and you will identify significant differences in business models that will affect routing needs. A beverage company may plan routes by the day, while fuel oil plans on a weekly basis. Portable toilets have elaborate cleaning schedules that must be factored into the routing plan. Do you run dynamic routes or static — or a combination of both? You don't want to be teaching your vendor about your business and customers. Quite the opposite, you want them to come to the table with insight and experience that adds value to the equation for you.

Has the vendor worked in your specific industry and with your types of customers?

2 Training + Support

Training. The quality, quantity and accessibility of training on your new software will have a huge influence on how much value it brings your business. If your users and drivers don't feel competent and on-board, you will find them avoiding utilization and returning to old manual processes in no time.

Training can't be a one and done proposition. To fully leverage the features and advantages of your system, your users need ongoing opportunities to learn and apply new skills and techniques.

WHAT TO ASK ABOUT TRAINING:

- How many sessions are provided without additional cost?
- Is it live or through recorded tutorials?
- Is training conducted by professional trainers or salespeople?

Will they be there when you need them?

Support. Even the best trained users will need help and advice on occasion. You want that support to be experienced and available in real time. This is another area where industry experience is vital — because many of your team's questions won't be about technical features, they'll be about routing nuances that are unique to your business. Support personnel should be able to handle both technical and practical questions.

Most important, good customer service works when you do — which isn't always 9-5. In fact, if something goes wrong during the routing process, it's usually from 4-9pm when the next day's routes are being prepared. If someone isn't available to answer questions, then your routers are left hanging and unproductive.

WHAT TO ASK ABOUT SUPPORT:

- What hours is support available?
- How quickly do support personnel respond?
- Does the provider outsource support or provide it directly?
- Where is the customer service department located?
- Are they in the continental US?
- Do they offer remote support with live screen sharing if needed?



3 Adaptability

Static vs. dynamic routing is just the beginning. Your new routing system must have built-in flexibility to adapt to your routing quirks, exceptions and unique scenarios.

For example, can the system handle a combination of dynamic and static routing so you could deliver your VIP customers first and remaining deliveries on a dynamic basis?

Can it help you automatically balance customer service and profitability?

Does it permit you to prioritize variables, such as preferred start/close times, maximum route duration, time window requirements and other special rules that apply to your routes?

Can it handle daily exceptions like route loads, off-day deliveries and extended runs?

In looking at vendors, it's also important to work with partners that provide mobile tracking technology that allows you to compare actual vs. planned route information to make improvements to your business.

Are the system's routing methodologies flexible enough to align with your business?

Additionally, a partner that continues to enhance its solution based upon market feedback is essential. Users should look for providers that commit to frequent software updates. Understand if updates are included in your package and if your feedback will be considered in software enhancements.

Bottom line: routing software needs to conform to your business, never the other way around.

4 Technology Platform

Once you've evaluated all the features and benefits of a software solution and company providing it, there's IT to consider. Systems that are available in dual platforms — on-premise system and SaaS — let you choose the technical environment that's ideal for your IT environment and culture.

Talk to users. Talk to other fleet managers. And most importantly, ask endless questions. If the vendor you're considering takes your questions in stride, it's already a sign they are customer service-focused.

With so many options available, no fleet, large or small, should have to compromise or conform to software limitations. Find a company that knows your industry, has worked with fleets your size, and will be a long-term partner – from training to support to implementation or maintenance services – to get the most value possible from your software year after year.

FLEETS CHOOSE SaaS FOR:

- Low upfront costs
- Subscription basis
- Fewer IT resources needed – human and hardware
- Available 24/7 over the web on any device

FLEETS CHOOSE ON-PREMISE SYSTEMS FOR:

- Greater internal IT control over management and maintenance (including pay for management services)
- Higher upfront costs but no monthly fees

Getting More from Your Technology Investment

The Omnitracs Alliance Program facilitates integration of Omnitracs solutions with other leading companies that provide complementary technologies and services. This program taps into the power of integration in order to best meet the needs of our shared customers.

We offer Omnitracs Professional Services to all sizes of fleets to help you utilize our applications and our partners' applications in the most efficient way. Our assessment, integration, custom development and programming, training, business intelligence, and predictive modeling services deliver practical solutions. This critical information increases your productivity and efficiency, so you can both grow and differentiate your business.

The Omnitracs Services Portal provides access to a suite of web-based fleet management applications, including satellite mapping. Data from the Services Portal can be integrated into your existing enterprise systems.

About Omnitracs, LLC

Omnitracs is the global pioneer of innovative and comprehensive fleet management solutions transforming the transportation industry through technology and insight. Omnitracs' more than twenty five years of leadership and experience uniquely positions it to serve the industry's needs for seamlessly integrated compliance, safety, productivity, route planning and delivery, analytics, and transportation management system solutions. Omnitracs' more than 1000 employees deliver software-as-a-service based solutions that help more than 40,000 private and for-hire fleet customers manage over 1500,000 mobile assets in more than 70 countries. Omnitracs' portfolio encompasses Omnitracs Latin America and the solutions formerly known as Roadnet Technologies, XRS Corp, Sylectus, and Omnitracs Analytics. Omnitracs is a member of the Vista Equity Partners group of companies.

Learn how you can use our applications, platforms, and services to reduce costs, increase profitability, and stay competitive. Visit www.omnitracs.com and let us show you how you can save time and money.



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