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**TOOLS AND SERVICES TO BOOST FUEL EFFICIENCY (3/4):
MEASURING AND ANALYSING FUEL EFFICIENCY ON A LONG-TERM BASIS**

When drivers have been trained, it is essential to ensure that the instruction will have a long-term effect on reducing fuel consumption, that they can also be given ongoing support in maintaining their fuel efficiency and that consumption of the fleet as a whole can be constantly monitored. To achieve these goals, Renault Trucks' Optifuel Solutions includes easy-to-use, straightforward tools which help drivers and fleet managers monitor, analyse and reduce their fuel consumption however big - or small - their haulage business may be. These tools are *Optifuel Infomax* and *Optifleet*.

New functionalities for Optifuel Infomax

In 1997, Renault Trucks was the first manufacturer to offer software for measuring and analysing fuel consumption. In 2012, *Optifuel Infomax* now benefits from new functionalities to help its users even further. In addition to an enhanced interface for reading and filtering results, the software now has a tool making it possible for drivers to analyse their personal performance and improve on it.

Offering the possibility of defining individual objectives, comparing results and carrying out analyses over a specific period of time, the software helps users improve - whether they are instructors, fleet managers or drivers.

Because the amount spent on fuel is important to all its customers, whatever their size or field of activity, Renault Trucks is further fine-tuning its analysis of fuel consumption, particularly for those in the construction industry. For example, the software can supply data on the consumption of litres per hour, particularly when stationary or when PTOs are being used. And to make fleet managers' work even easier, *Optifuel Infomax* can also be configured for multiple site usage, so that every time data is downloaded from one of an operator's various sites, everything is automatically shared via a centralised database.

Infomax, the support tool for drivers

"Just giving a figure for consumption doesn't mean anything at all," states Bruno Malluret, head of training at Renault Trucks. "Consumption must always be seen in relation to the route being followed and the load being carried. For example, 28 L per 100 km can be a very poor figure if the route is extremely easy and 39 L per 100 km could be an excellent figure on a very difficult route!" Just considering an average figure is likely to result in dialogues that go nowhere between drivers and fleet managers. Optifuel Infomax is therefore a "key" tool available to all those involved which will provide relevant analysis and help establish an ongoing improvement in consumption.

Thanks to the accuracy of the data which it provides, *Optifuel Infomax* can, for example, explain differences in consumption between two identical trucks driven by two different drivers. It can also reveal key elements which increase consumption. Once these have been identified, drivers can change their driving style to consume less. If they are working for a fleet they can also talk about the multiple and objective databases with their managers, who will be able to take into account the route they have followed and the difficulties it entailed. This will make their conversation all the more constructive.

Introducing the *Optifuel Infomax* software into a fleet enables drivers to become active players in reducing fuel consumption since it takes account of the conditions they have to face. This is particularly important because we know that their involvement is essential for meaningful results to be achieved. It is also why several companies use this tool to organise challenges or a system of monthly rewards for drivers who record the lowest consumption over a particular route.

70 accurate indicators

To achieve this aim, *Optifuel Infomax* provides 70 different indicators drawn directly from vehicles' engine data, all of which can be leveraged by drivers to reduce their consumption. For example, excessive use of the brake pedal reveals a lack of anticipation. Drivers who find themselves in this situation will therefore understand that they have to use more anticipation in their driving to get their consumption down. This line of reasoning is similar when the *Optifuel Infomax* report shows that the ABS or the ESP has been triggered or that the robotised gearbox has been used abnormally. These show that the driving style has been too dynamic. Similarly, indicators supplied by the software such as the percentage of fuel consumed in the green zone or the time spent in it are very valuable since they show if the economic driving is efficient or otherwise. To ensure that it is, Renault Trucks recommends that these proportions should be as close as possible to 100%.

Optifuel Infomax also logs the consumption per hour (L/hour). This figure is particularly interesting to analyse consumption when PTOs are being used or the vehicle is at a standstill. If the percentage used is too high, drivers are warned of the consequences resulting from letting the engine run when the vehicle is stationary and it will help them to be more vigilant. Even the most experienced drivers are not always aware that an idling engine consumes around 3 L an hour! By switching off the engine more quickly when at a standstill, drivers are able to reduce their consumption to a degree that they may not have realised.

A unique training tool

The software also provides analytical tools designed to be used for training purposes. This allows users, whether they are instructors, fleet managers or drivers, to monitor their improvement over time, carry out an analysis within a specific timeframe, establish individual objectives or carry out comparative analyses. To make fleet managers' work easier, *Optifuel Infomax* can also be configured for multiple site application. This means that every time data is downloaded, even if an operator has several sites, it can all be automatically shared via a centralised database.

A simple and inexpensive tool

Optifuel Infomax can be used on all Renault Trucks vehicles, however large or small the haulier's fleet may be. It can also be configured for multiple site usage. This means that each time data is downloaded, the information collected from an operator's various sites is automatically transferred to the centralised database. The software can be installed on a computer in just a few seconds.

Once the software has been purchased, no monthly subscription is required. Data is downloaded after each journey by connecting to a specific port which is featured on all Renault Trucks vehicles. Renault Trucks can supply it to customers as part of a pack known as *Optifuel Program*. In addition to the software, this pack includes the Renault Trucks training in economic driving module designed for fleet managers or instructors.

Together with *Optifuel Infomax*, Renault Trucks offers *Optifleet*: its on-board, real-time fleet management and monitoring IT solution. It enables hauliers to increase their profit margins by reducing operating costs.

Optifleet, manufacturer's on-board IT solution

Simple to use and set up, Optifleet is an on-board "turnkey" IT solution offering secured access via an Internet portal from any computer. It is free of any time commitment and comes with one day's training on the customer's premises. It is made up of four modules so that this solution can be adapted to each haulier's needs.

The first module ("Map") manages a geo-location function based on Google MapAPI Premier cartography. It enables operators to know the exact position of their vehicles in realtime and analyse the route they have taken. This makes it possible to optimise rounds, avoid "parasitic" kilometres and give customers greater satisfaction by, for example, informing them of estimated delivery times.

The second module, supplying technical data ("Check") enables each driver's consumption to be monitored so that kilometrage costs can be reduced, particularly for fleets with different makes of vehicle. Optifleet also allows operators to give their customers an environmental report (CO2, Nox emissions, etc.) relating to the transport of their goods.

Apart from allowing operators to consult their drivers' activities in realtime, Optifleet now makes it possible to comply with tachograph regulations and save time with the "Drive" module. This gives operators the possibility of programming remote downloads of data from the tachograph's on-board memory and the driver's card, which are initially stored on the Renault Trucks server.

Drivers are also assisted in their assignment via an interface incorporated into the dashboard that uses a wireless keyboard. This "Link" module enables them to communicate by e-mail with their operator, consult the details of their activity and transfer GPS coordinates of delivery points received from their depot to the PL GarminDezl navigation system (option). This module also makes it possible to maintain communication between operators and drivers in realtime - with a written record - so that quality transport assignments can be carried out at the lowest cost and in the fastest time for customers.

By means of these four customisable modules, operators and drivers can get the most out of their vehicles, respond quickly to unforeseen events and generate even greater loyalty among their own customers. Each service is subject to a monthly subscription per vehicle, totalling between €15 and €60 according to the combination of modules chosen. The communications box which gives access to the first three modules is fitted as standard in France without any increase in the price of the vehicle.

All subscriptions include one day of instruction and training provided by an *Optifleet* specialist, on the customer's premises. The tool requires no IT investment, only an Internet connection. Web portal maintenance ensures 24/7 accessibility. The monthly subscription, with no time commitment, includes unlimited communications throughout Europe, automatic updates and a free hotline. *Optifleet* can be used for all Renault Trucks commercial vehicles and those of other brands.

With its two *Optifleet* and *Optifuel Infomax* complementary offerings, Renault Trucks is the only manufacturer to offer its customers a range of tools for measuring, analysing and monitoring consumption which is individually adapted for each one of them. These tools make it possible for all sizes of organization - from SMEs to large companies with extensive fleets - to reduce their fuel consumption. Furthermore, they can be adapted to all kinds of activities, whether in the construction, distribution or long distance haulage fields.

Reducing fuel consumption is not something to be improvised or imposed. A precursor and leader in this field for many years, Renault Trucks has a global approach to this issue embodied in its Optifuel Solutions.

In order to achieve substantial and sustainable results in this area, Renault Trucks recommends users to correctly configure their vehicles, particularly their mode of propulsion, train their drivers properly, carefully measure and analyse their consumption and then optimise their fleets by regularly maintaining and updating them.

Optifuel Solutions are one of the cornerstones of Renault Trucks' All For Fuel Eco approach, which aims to mobilise the energy of the manufacturer's entire workforce, from the design stage right through to vehicle sales or repair. As a result, it will be possible for customers to be offered concrete and efficient ways of continually driving down their fuel consumption.

Further information is available from:

<http://corporate.renault-trucks.com>

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