



Palmer-Donavin Embraces Route Optimization and Mobile Dispatching to Improve Employee and Customer Experiences

Founded in 1907, Palmer-Donavin is one of the Midwest's leading wholesale distributors of residential building materials. With more than 100 years in business, Palmer-Donavin is a company that has grown and changed with the times.

The company began as a tinware manufacturer in Columbus, Ohio, delivering products in horse-drawn wagons. Since that time, it has transformed and flourished due to a willingness to adopt new technologies and commit to industry-leading customer service. Over time, the company added new distribution and manufacturing facilities. They also acquired other Midwest-based manufacturing companies to expand their product lines and service territory. Today, eight divisions of the company are located across Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, and Minnesota.

Paper-Based Routing Becomes Impractical

Before implementing Omnitracs' routing solution, dispatchers relied on an all-paper, physical organization system that had become cumbersome and relied heavily on the personal experience and knowledge of the dispatcher on duty. The dispatcher would lay out paper orders on a table, often spending four or more hours a day adding and rearranging paper records to create and manage standard routes. The process was time consuming and frustrating for dispatchers and drivers alike.

”
The company was getting large enough that we needed to define a solution...We knew we needed a routing solution.”

“The company was getting large enough that we needed to define a solution,” said Tom Bartlett, Palmer-Donavin director of operations. “Up to that point, if we got a new customer or a route was too heavy, route changes were based on a dispatcher's experience and discretion. We knew we needed a routing solution.”

Quick Facts: Routing and Dispatching Technology Maximizes Productivity and Improves Customer Experience

CHALLENGES

- Manual routing processes relied heavily on paper forms and individual dispatcher experience
- Delivery status updates for customers were labor-intensive and not timely
- Inconsistent driver experiences and daily route pressures created constant searches for new drivers

GOALS

- Reduce time spent on manual processes
- Increase efficiencies for drivers and dispatchers to improve employee experience

SOLUTION

Omnitracs' routing and mobile dispatching combines cost-efficient routing, real-time tracking, and powerful analysis tools to ensure that you are running the best routes for every delivery.

BENEFITS

- Reduce miles driven, fuel costs, and driver overtime
- Measure driver performance and productivity
- Meet and exceed customer service expectations
- Assess transportation costs for greater savings through data

RESULTS

- Eliminated inefficient routes, saving drivers time and miles, and allowing managers to focus on preventive vehicle maintenance and personnel management
- Decreased mileage by as much as 15 percent on some routes
- Introduced on-demand, real-time delivery tracking for customers
- Reduced driver overtime costs by 30 percent in one branch
- Reduced inbound phone calls by 15 to 20 percent
- Actual driver routes are regularly under plan and fit well within scheduled hours

Calling on a Trusted Partner

Palmer-Donavin was an early adopter of ELD technology, installing Omnitracs' telematics products in all trucks in 2012. When it was time to implement a routing and dispatching solution, they turned to Omnitracs.

Working in partnership with an Omnitracs team, Palmer-Donavin developed a new workflow, and then trained their transportation staff on route planning and asset management using Omnitracs' routing and mobile dispatching software.

”

The use of route optimizing software has allowed us to eliminate some routes and even out the others... It's taken the pressure off searching for new drivers.

in proactive vehicle maintenance, and ensuring customer satisfaction. Since implementing Omnitracs' routing software, Palmer-Donavin's dispatchers review routes three times a day, spending no more than 45 minutes generating and adjusting routes. With the new solution, the organization was able to reduce mileage by up to 15 percent on some routes.

“The use of route optimizing software has allowed us to eliminate some routes and even out the others,” said Bartlett. “Before, some routes were 12 hours long and others were seven. Now, we can give the drivers a better, more consistent experience. It's taken the pressure off searching for new drivers.”

Enhanced Customer Service with Real-Time Delivery Visibility

Palmer-Donavin is proud of its customer-centric mentality, with the motto “Service is our most important product.” Through the use of Omnitracs' mobile tracking and notification software, Palmer-Donavin now has increased visibility into the delivery day, which extends out to their customers.

Using driver location data from the software and Omnitracs' mobile delivery notifications, Palmer-Donavin added a 'Track My Truck' widget to its website, allowing customers to get on-demand updates about their deliveries. Previously, if customers had questions about delivery timing, they would call a sales rep, triggering a series of calls to dispatchers and drivers. By the time the information was relayed back to the customer, it might no longer be accurate. With Omnitracs' technology in place, Palmer-Donavin saw inbound phone calls decrease between 15 and 20 percent.

“Customers love the ability to see where they are in the delivery process because it lets them plan accordingly,” said Bartlett. “It highlights our customer service focus and shows that we are a company willing to change and evolve with the times.”

”

Customers love the ability to see where they are in the delivery process because it lets them plan accordingly.

Seeing an Immediate Return on Investment

Omnitracs' routing solution gives planners the ability to review actual routes versus planned routes on a daily basis. While dispatchers still need to make adjustments, combine routes, or move stops each day, the company has found that actual routes often come in several hundred miles under plan. Those efficiencies result in reduced wear and tear on vehicles and lower labor costs. One branch reduced year-over-year overtime costs for drivers by more than 30 percent.

For managers, the efficiencies created by route optimization have freed up time for holistic fleet management at their locations. Rather than spending days handling physical files, managers are able to fully utilize their skill sets in focusing on personnel issues, engaging

A Complete Solution for the Entire Fleet

With Omnitracs as a trusted software provider, Palmer-Donavin is working toward their next step: routing, mobile dispatching, and mobile ELD compliance in a single solution. Palmer-Donavin treats all vehicles the same, supplying each truck with the ability to record Hours of Service so that no driver is stuck when he or she needs to comply.

The organization is also looking to integrate an extended productivity suite, including trip management and proof of delivery applications that would allow drivers to easily perform actions such as signature capture without requiring cumbersome paper processes. Palmer-Donavin's technology transformation has enabled them to streamline fleet management so that more time is spent doing what they do best — putting the customer first.

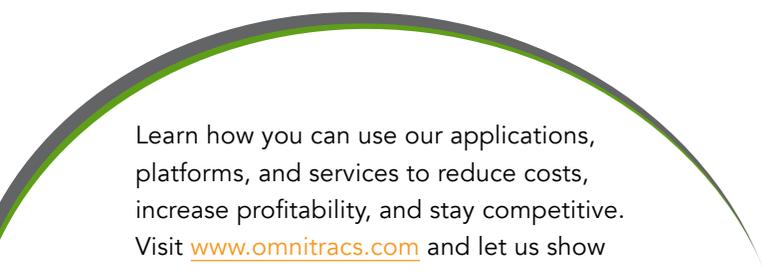
Omnitracs Routing and Mobile Dispatching

Distributors face multiple challenges every day — high volumes of customer orders to organize, fluctuating fuel costs, drivers and vehicles to manage, changing road conditions, and tight time windows. Omnitracs' routing and mobile dispatching software allows you to optimize routes and balance profitability with customer requirements. The software offers the industry's most sophisticated algorithms, which allow users to create routes and load plans that work best for their fleets. Keep drivers up-to-speed in the field with real-time notifications and monitor their performance with reports customizable to fit your business needs.

Omnitracs tools reduce miles, numbers of vehicles, overtime, and routing time — increasing vehicle capacity and making improvements in driver management and customer service.

About Omnitracs, LLC

Omnitracs, LLC is a global pioneer of trucking solutions for all business models. Omnitracs' more than 1,000 employees deliver software-as-a-service-based solutions to help more than 12,000 customers manage nearly 1,100,000 assets in more than 70 countries. The company pioneered the use of commercial vehicle telematics over 25 years ago and serves today as a powerhouse of innovative, intuitive technologies. Omnitracs transforms the transportation industry through technology and insight, featuring best-in-class solutions for compliance, safety and security, productivity, telematics and tracking, transportation management (TMS), planning and delivery, data and analytics, and professional services.



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.



omnitracs

717 N. Harwood Street
Suite 1300
Dallas, Texas 75201
U.S.A.
(800) 348-7227
www.omnitracs.com