



Virgin Concrete

Editors note: Teletrac Inc. and Navman Wireless are now merged as a global telematics powerhouse. This content was created prior to the unification of both brands.

Efficiency and timing— a concrete case for improvement

Timing is critical during a big concrete pour. Multiple concrete trucks have to arrive at carefully timed intervals. Too early and the truck idles and wastes fuel, too late and the previously poured concrete has started to harden. Virgin Concrete's goal was to improve timing and efficiency. Installing a GPS tracking system gave them the information to do just that.

Virgin Concrete was established in 2008 and services all of Northland from its base in Whangarei. With a fleet of 13 trucks, the company supplies concrete for both residential and commercial builds, and is fully certified by the NZ Ready Mixed Concrete Association.

Tracking the trucks

Managing Director Suzy Fisher says she doesn't know how they managed without the Navman Wireless GPS tracking system.

"We get concrete layers and builders ringing up saying 'how far away is the truck?' Previously we had to phone the driver, who would have to pull over to take the call, but now we just look it up on in the OnlineAVL2 software. We can tell our customers exactly where the truck is and when it will reach them.

"Navman Wireless has allowed us to be very accurate in getting concrete trucks to sites exactly when they are needed, and that makes our customers happy. When the trucks are coming back empty, we can use the system to see exactly where they are so we can plan our next order even before they arrive back at base. As things are constantly changing throughout the day, this gives us the ability to make decisions on the fly. We get the concrete to our clients more quickly, and you can't put a dollar value on that!"

The initial installation was done in 2012 into five trucks. Once Virgin Concrete had tested the system, they gradually installed Navman Wireless Qubes (the tracking hardware) into the rest of the fleet.

"We are getting another plant put in to manufacture more concrete, so we will be increasing the size of our fleet," says Suzy. "Navman Wireless will then be even more important in helping us to manage our fleet efficiently."

Keeping safe

Safety and compliance are top of mind when running a fleet of big trucks. Office Manager David Carr says that the local police know they have GPS tracking.

"One of our drivers was stopped by the police and his logbook wasn't up to date. This meant he couldn't prove that he'd taken the half hour break that he is required by law to do. We were able to show the police, using OnlineAVL2, that the driver had spent over half an hour parked

on our premises, so we could prove he had taken that break. Once he saw that, the police officer was happy." Suzy adds that they also use Navman Wireless to monitor the speed their drivers are doing.

"It's really important for us as employers to monitor their speed and make sure they are driving safely. We set up speed alerts within the system and noticed that one driver was regularly going over the set speed limit. We were able to talk to him to get him to change his behaviour."

Decreasing taxes

David says that before installing Navman Wireless, they never claimed back the RUC.

"In fact it was the Navman Wireless rep that advised us that we could use the system to claim it back! Previously it was just too difficult. We would have to prove the off road component through log books and so forth.

"The system works it out for us, then we send the claim to the LTSA. We found that our trucks are off road about 2.5 percent of the time, usually on new build sites. It all adds up, so it's definitely worth claiming that back. In fact we were audited by the LTSA a while back, and they queried a couple of claims. We used the 'replay a day' function in the Navman Wireless software and were able to prove that our trucks had been off road to deliver to a particular site. Once the inspector saw that, he was happy."

Managing maintenance

Navman Wireless has really improved their maintenance scheduling, according to Suzy.

"We can schedule all the servicing, COFs and regos for all our vehicles. So now we're always up to date and don't have to run round checking the individual trucks to see when they next need attention. It's a huge time saver."

Overall Suzy says Navman Wireless has helped them enormously. "We're way more efficient and better at keeping our customers happy. The system has totally paid for itself. We can keep our customers informed about where our trucks are, and this helps our customers plan their days. We're communicating all the time with our customers and Navman Wireless gives us the information we need to help them."

Benefits

Here's how Virgin Concrete has benefitted from installing Navman Wireless technology:

- Enables efficient and timely fleet management
- Improves safety and compliance
- Provides proof of off-road usage to claim back RUC
- Improves maintenance scheduling and efficiency

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**Suzy Fisher, Managing Director
Virgin Concrete**