



Trailer Tracking Supports Creative Solutions at Pace

“Versatile logistics solutions” require technology

Pace is creative in the way it gets customer freight from pick-up to drop-off; there’s no one-size-fits-all route or equipment. To make such creativity efficient and cost-effective, the company relies on technology.

A key component of that technology is trailer tracking from XTRA Lease.

Pace leased and rented between 70 and 150 trailers from XTRA over the past year. Every trailer came with XTRA’s robust trailer tracking system.

Roy Schleicher, Safety and Compliance Coordinator for Pace Runners, keeps a close eye on equipment. He needs to know continually where it is, what it’s hauling, when its load is due to be picked up or delivered—and anything else someone asks about it!

Schleicher has been with Pace since June 2017 and began using XTRA’s trailer tracking system to its fullest extent in the autumn,

his first peak season with Pace. “It has been a godsend for us,” said Schleicher, “because it allows us to track trailers specifically.”

Clayton Fikes, Safety Fleet Specialist, joined Schleicher’s team just before peak season. “I open the tracking portal in the morning and keep it up all day,” he said. “At a glance we can see where a trailer is and where it’s been and dig into trip details.”

Parcel freight comprises more than half of the business for which Pace uses tractor-trailers. Pace uses the other portion for local contracts and long line-hauls for other regional and national shippers. Their semi business is concentrated in Nashville, Atlanta and Birmingham.

Groups improve Pace’s efficiency and spending

There’s no reason to hang on to rental trailers you aren’t using. XTRA’s tracking system lets Pace group their trailers according to customer contracts.

“Our goal is to turn in rentals as soon as peak is over,” said



pace-usa.com

Headquarters:
Birmingham, AL

Founded in 1997

300+ employees
1000+ contract drivers

Services provided include:
Non-asset logistics provider

LTL, TL, ground parcel—dedicated and on-demand

Trailers on rent/lease:
70 to 150 dry vans, depending on season

Schleicher. “We use *Groups* to keep an eye on how many trailers are rented for particular customer contracts.

As those trailers are returned after peak season, the tracking dashboard lets us watch the number of rentals go to zero and to notice right away when a trailer isn’t returned as expected.”

Recently, Schleicher saw that Pace’s Nashville hub had 12 rentals out after peak season.

They followed up and found the freight those trailers were used for was consistent rather than seasonal. To save Pace money, XTRA converted those rentals to leases, which have a lower cost.

***Landmarks* lay the foundation for managing trailers**

Simply put, a landmark is a center of trailer activity. One of Fikes’ essential tasks is to set up and monitor landmarks along Pace’s network of routes. He looked at the map in the tracking portal to see where multiple trailers were congregated.



“Then I zoomed in to look for an address,” he said. “When I saw it was a customer location, I figured if that trailer’s going to be there three or four times a week, we’d better identify the location. So I made it a *Landmark*.”

“If a trailer’s at a *Landmark*, we can pretty much assume it’s working within our network,” Fikes added.

“*Landmarks* have been really useful for our Ops team,” said Schleicher. “One click gets you to *Trailers at Landmarks* and you can scan to see right this minute how many trailers are at any given facility.

It’s a great tool to find out where

our trailers are dormant. This morning I saw that one of our trailers had been idle for 10 days. I called the location and asked why it was sitting there gathering dust. All it had to do was travel 10 miles to our Bessemer facility to get put into use.”

No tracking system is worth its salt unless you use it.

“Recently we got a call from our Atlanta facility looking for four trailers,” said Chad Godwin, Director of Legal, who handles equipment leases. “We were able to use the tracking dashboard to find them and bring them to the Atlanta team’s attention.”

Focus on dormancy builds bandwidth

“Because of trailer tracking,” said Schleicher, “we’re able to priority-focus on dormancy.

“One of our facilities had a group of 35 trailers, but had gotten into

A tracking system is only worth its salt when you use it.

the habit of using only a portion of them. Because they were so focused on that portion, they weren't noticing the others just sitting. We made them aware of those other trailers and they've gotten better at rotating our stock, which makes for less wear and tear on each trailer."

He added, "Once we got to the point where we could easily see we had dormant trailers, our bandwidth opened up. Now we know exactly where all trailers are at any given time and can get them working for our customers."

Headaches come with the territory

Trailers sometimes get out of Pace's network. XTRA's tracking system helps Pace figure out when that happens and when to intervene.

Fikes notes that "If the trailer's



"Tracking is so ingrained in our operation that I lease only trailers with tracking during peak season."

within the I-20 corridor, it means it's working for customers in our Atlanta - Birmingham lane, so intermingling isn't a big deal. They move back and forth easily."

When trailers don't hit their landmarks, though, Pace relies on tracking to identify them.

Schleicher credits XTRA's tracking system for helping Pace corral strays that are sometimes lost in some of their customers' very large networks.

"Occasionally another carrier shows up at that customer's yard and drives off with our trailer," he said. "We need to figure out how to get it back. Often, the carrier who took it has no incentive to help us return it."

"There's one trailer, in particular, that's been traveling between two locations for a while," Schleicher said. "We suspect a customer is using it. We've reached out to our Ops team to see if that's the case. Ops will either validate that or we can figure out how to get the trailer back."

Using the tracking portal, he can see just what happened. "It was at Pace in Huntsville, then went

to a customer's yard, and then to another city where we don't have a presence," said Schleicher. "We have no question about where it is or who might be operating with it."

"Once we see the trailer's moving, it's too late to lock it down, but at least we can keep an eye on it and work with that customer to get the trailer back in our network."

Reliable consistency

Pace vigorously vets vendors—their reputation is on the line with every delivery.

"When we looked around for a trailer partner, we realized there weren't any others who could supply the resources XTRA does for us on a day-to-day basis," said Schleicher. "During peak season our needs explode by 50% and we were able to meet those needs. XTRA supplies reliable consistency."

"And," he added, "tracking is so ingrained in our operation now that I've been tasked during peak season to lease only trailers with tracking. XTRA Lease is first on my list."