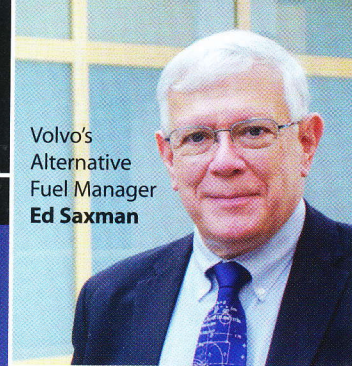


## ALTERNATIVE FUELS:

Volvo's new DME comes from "pretty much anything," Pg. 8

Volvo's  
Alternative  
Fuel Manager  
Ed Saxman



# Today's Trucking

The Business Magazine of Canada's Trucking Industry

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## MAKING LONG HAUL LOOK GREAT

Does trucking really have what it takes  
to lure new people? **PG. 24**

**PLUS:**

A CURE FOR BROKEN BRAKES, **PG. 36**

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**BY JASON RHYNO**

**N**early every week since 1995 when my mother bought a PC so I could “do homework,” I’ve used Microsoft Word. Now, I use it every day. I’m using it right now as I type this story and I was using it when I was speaking to Ken Weinberg, vice president and co-founder, Carrier Logistics Inc.

“Are you using Word to type up the notes today?” he asked me.

“Yup.”

“I betcha you aren’t using all that Word is capable of, but if someone forced you to take a half-hour every week to learn more about Word, your eyes would just light up.”

Technology is technology—whether it’s a smart phone or Microsoft Office or a

That approach to buying a smartphone is roughly the same approach we have to purchasing any technology. And that’s a mistake, says Weinberg, one he sees motor carriers making all too often.

“The amount of work that is done on figuring out the amount of payback is quite limited in its scope—both with the effort that is put into it and the confirmation of payback,” he says.

### **Everyone Wants the Boss’s Dollar**

“Remember that an executive has numerous decisions being placed on him each day,” Weinberg says. He has one dollar to spend and every department is asking for that dollar—and investing in a new system is a hard dollar, one that needs to be justified.

The best way to do that?

Make a list of all the areas you are looking to address: mileage, vehicle monitoring,

much you would save if your monitoring operated perfectly. If you’re going to save one gallon of fuel a week, how much is that per week, per month, per year? Do that with every point and the money saved becomes a little more serious. “You get the potential for what the payback is and now you have a pot of gold for when I hit you with that bill,” Weinberg adds.

PeopleNet’s Elise Chianelli, product manager Safety and Compliance adds that “you should consider that technology is constantly changing—stuff that we developed yesterday is old news today in a lot of situations. What I would look for in a solution is really somebody who is able to partner and drive future products and opportunities to better my business.”

### **Ensure You Use the Information**

“If we’re talking tech for the sake of tech, and not looking at what the information is

# **The Software Soft Sell**

fleet management and monitoring tool. It’s supposed to make life easier, better, save time and improve my life. But often, as Weinburg rightly pointed out, even the most basic software we’re not using to its fullest potential.

Not using it correctly starts even before we make the actual purchase. Take smart phones: Before I buy one (or commit to a three-year contract), I have a short but important list of things I expect it to do to make my life easier. (Often, I’ll consider if it has a fruit on it; like say an Apple, but that’s beside the point.)

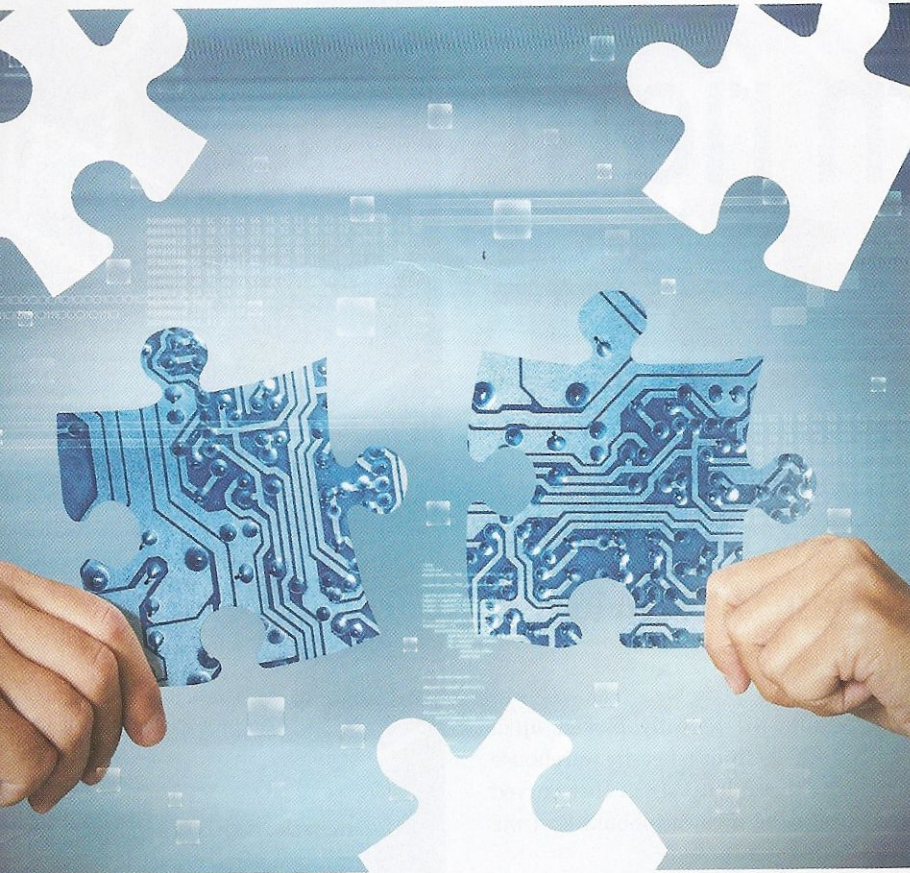
## **Money-saving ideas that make the purchase and installation of truck high-tech palatable and profitable.**

reduce missed pick-ups, improve customer service, and so on. Then put that list into finer points. “Then you go to the vendor, and you ask, ‘what have you seen other customers achieve using this?’ And then you have a starting point for what you are looking for and you can rank them.”

Problem with reefer monitoring? Put it high on your list. Then calculate how

telling us, you might as well literally just close the doors and walk away from it,” says Mike Ham, vice president, Shaw Tracking. “Whether you’re in the transportation business or the steel business, carving out margin is tough. You’ve got to pay attention to the trends, the analysis, the cost, mistakes, the revenue, and what the margins are saying.”





You do that by using the information. Insurance companies can help and it's best to tell them early what you're implementing.

Scott Creighton, manager, Risk Services with Northbridge Insurance, says they work closely with their fleets on capitalizing on the data a new system provides. "We're going to see if we can benchmark what their lost-trend analysis is, see if that's improving, if their carrier profile is improving."

"There's no technology that's going to guarantee zero risk or loss, but if they take their drivers, their loss trend, their carrier profile, and then tie it all together, they'll see the improvements."

Using that info is the easiest way to drive money to the bottom line, explains Ham. "That's just being aware of it, monitoring it, benchmarking it and being aware of driver behavior to improve."

## Getting Away from Driver Discipline to Driver Help

Vendors like PeopleNet are developing more technology that is aimed to help drivers deal with regulations and rules—like HOS. "One of the things around the

HOS is trying to help drivers in the cab," Elsie says. "So tools to help them manage their day, let them know when they are eligible for their 30 minute breaks, when they have to do their next 34-hour restart."

Creighton says that technology is a great tool for helping high-risk drivers.

"With monitoring, you want to get in front of the high-risk drivers immediately," he advises—who, for the record, believes high-risk drivers are everywhere and it's best to work with them, not fire them. "We have to get away from discipline and try to determine a way of helping them become better drivers, and if they become better drivers, it's better for the company."

Mike Millian, driver and vehicle safety with Hensall District Cooperative, out of Davidson, ON., recently gave a presentation to the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada demonstrating how to use data to monitor drivers. First, they installed monitoring hardware in 74 of their trucks and trained their drivers immediately. Two months later, they activated the EOBRs and began monitoring their drivers, communicating areas for improvement. Idle time, harsh braking, and speed infractions improved immediately.

Then it flat lined.

Then it began to slowly reverse.

What was needed was a bonus program. Hensall took nine months of data and created a baseline to build a bonus program. The details of the bonus program are intricate, broken down into percentages and even takes into account seasonal issues—basically using all the data available to make a fair and motivating reward system for good driving. Although Millian is adamant that Hensall had great drivers to begin with. **TT**

## HOW NOT TO SCARE YOUR DRIVERS

**W**E ASKED A COUPLE OF DRIVERS WHAT ADVICE THEY'D GIVE MANAGEMENT WHEN IT COMES TO INTRODUCING NEW TECHNOLOGY INTO THE CAB. HERE'S WHAT THEY SAID:

- "Be honest and up front about how this tech is going to help not just the company, but the driver."
- "Don't tell me how awesome it is or talk in generalities. Be specific and tell me what I can do to make it work."
- "Give the guys a basic training course and then let them play with it, let them figure it out. As it gets implemented, the company will see the guys who are in tune."
- "Our company implemented the system a little bit at a time so a guy wouldn't get slammed—trucking is a full-time job and you don't have time to go to school. Do it gradually."
- "Companies need to adjust their expectations in terms of how they organize loads and get feedback from drivers."
- "It can totally change the mentality for the driver when done right—if a guy can ease up, not stress and not drive the truck hard, it'll save equipment."