

White Paper

GPS Tracking in the Security Industry

GPS Tracking in the Security Industry

Introduction

The security industry has been a very early adopter of GPS tracking technology. In fact, the benefits of GPS for security purposes was identified by the military long before GPS became available for civilian and commercial use.

Since the emergence of GPS tracking and GPS fleet management software, security companies around the world have been embracing the technology across various verticals including:

- Cash in Transit
- Home/Business, Building and Industrial Security
- Installation and Maintenance
- Port and Border Security
- Close Protection Security
- Town and City Patrols
- Emergency Service Management
- Cargo and Hazardous Material Transportation Security
- Law Enforcement/Military and Defense Security
- Prison Security and Inmate Transport
- School and University Security

There are a number of reasons why GPS tracking has become a significant benefit to the security industry and are not just limited to the sectors of the industry listed above.

Install & Service

Like other service industries, businesses in the security industry that offer system installation and maintenance are acutely aware of the need to have a productive, efficient team, excellent customer service and to carefully monitor costs.

GPS Fleet Management allows these businesses to have full transparency of their mobile workforce, virtually guaranteeing accurate timesheets, maximum number of jobs completed, reduced vehicle operating costs and the ability to respond to customer inquiries promptly and accurately.

Patrols

There are three key areas where GPS is valuable for security patrols:

1. Proof of Patrol

Either live alerts when a patrol vehicle enters and/or exits each area, historical reporting and giving customers the peace of mind that patrols are taking place. Some businesses will even fit door sensors to the vehicle, to show the locations where the driver got out of the vehicle.

2. Safety

GPS provides live tracking of the employees, so they can be located instantly if there is an issue. Some businesses also fit panic/duress buttons in the vehicle to further enhance these safety benefits.

3. Response

Some GPS systems provide a “Show Nearest” function, allowing users to locate the nearest vehicle to a particular location - be it another vehicle in need of assistance or to respond to a triggered alarm. This function improves response times and reduces cost by sending the closest available vehicle.

Transport Security

Cash in Transit is perhaps the most obvious use for GPS tracking, but it's not simply about knowing the location of the vehicle. A good GPS Fleet Management System can also incorporate additional peripheral inputs such as cameras, door sensors, panic/duress alarms and remote (over the air) locking of doors or shutting off of the starter motor.

The same principle applies when transporting high value items, including VIPs.

Asset Tracking

In addition to tracking security vehicles, GPS offers the ability to track individual assets. Using compact GPS trackers or utilising RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) or NFC (near Field Communication) technology, a wide range of items can be monitored.

If the asset is powered (E.g. a generator, bobcat or golf cart) a standard or ruggedised GPS tracker can be used, in much the same way as you would track a vehicle. If the item is unpowered, and it doesn't move frequently or each individual movement doesn't need to be tracked (you just need to be able to know where all your assets are) then a battery powered tracker could be ideal. Examples include portable buildings, signage, unpowered/infrequently powered plant and equipment or containers. Some businesses also use these to keep track of the general location of trailers. The limitation however is the battery. Unlike a normal GPS tracker, that gets power from the vehicle to keep it operational, a battery powered tracker has a limited battery life, so to extend the period between recharging/replacing the battery they typically only update a few times a day to give you several years of operation.

For tracking tools and very small items, RFID tags (or similar) can be set up with RFID readers. These are connected to GPS trackers in vehicles and in fixed locations to track the movement of the items. For example, if a tool is swiped into the depot, its location will show as being in the depot. If the item is swiped into a vehicle, its location is then paired with that vehicle. As such, if it is swiped out of a vehicle, but not swiped back in, its location stays as the last known location, so it can be recovered if it is not returned to the depot.

There is also an extensive range of miniaturised GPS tracking devices available for tracking children, pets, the elderly or VIPs, these come in the form of pendants, watches, collars or bracelets (or anklets for certain individuals!)

Conclusion

While GPS tracking has been available for civilian and commercial use for over 20 years, there is still a considerable scope for most industries (including security) to take advantage of the ongoing development within GPS technology.

Tracking devices are getting smaller, more accurate, gaining greater functionality and are being used in new and more interesting ways.

To discuss how GPS Fleet and Asset Management could help in your business and give you a competitive advantage, contact simPRO Software.