3 Great Ways to Work Smarter, Not Harder

Save time, resources, and money on propane and commercial fuel deliveries

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How Quickly Can You Re-energize Your Business?

Every company faces the challenge of continually refining their business operations. But how does that impact operators delivering propane and commercial fuel?

Many follow the mantra of "do more with less," but that works only when you have the right data, tools, and insights. And in the era of staffing shortages, you also need the right people. As a result, your ultimate goal should be to work smarter, not harder.

When you have the tools to inject more intelligence into your business, you open up new opportunities to reduce costs, save time, and free up resources for strategic projects. Plus, your customers reap the rewards of a better overall experience.

Here are three time-saving tools to help your team work smarter, not harder:

1 Smart Groups

2 Smart K

3 Smart Season Pulling of Automatics

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1 Optimize Deliveries with Smart Groups

Many software packages can help you organize your deliveries. For instance, if one customer pulls for a delivery in a certain area, the software can automatically add other nearby customers to form a delivery group. But what if only some of those customers actually need a delivery?

With the Smart Groups tool, you can quickly analyze the usage for every customer in the group and automatically determine whether each account needs a delivery—or whether they could wait until the next group delivery period.

This gives you the flexibility to add significantly more customers into the Smart Group, because the software identifies the optimal delivery schedule for each customer. Because you're no longer delivering only 25% or even 50% of their optimum delivery, your efficiency rises as you decrease the number of partial deliveries. Each customer gets the right amount of gallons—in fewer deliveries.

To optimize deliveries to 30 different stops, a dispatcher would have to analyze trillions of possible combinations.

Advantages

- Optimized delivery schedule
- Less disruption for customers
- More productive deliveries
- Fewer miles and hours delivering fuel

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2 Go beyond Traditional K Factor with Smart K

Traditional K Factor systems have an inherent flaw: they aren't linear. If a customer's K Factor is 5.0 when the average temperature is 30 degrees, that K Factor will be lower than when the average temperature is 20 degrees.

If you can apply more granularity to your K Factor calculations, you can improve your forecasting and deliveries. For example, if it's winter but you experience a warm spell for a few days, most systems continue to use the "Winter" K Factor for those days—and they'll overestimate the customer's usage by anywhere from one to a few gallons per day.

If the warm spell lasts five days, the customer likely would take 10 to 15 fewer gallons during their next delivery. The same principle would apply to a period of unseasonably cold days.

Fortunately, the Smart K tool automatically applies the appropriate K Factor for each day—such as adjusting to the "Spring" K Factor during warmer days to provide a more accurate calculation of gallons used—and more accurate forecasting.

Smart K automatically adjusts the K Factor for each customer on a daily basis.

Advantages

- Improved delivery efficiency and accuracy
- Automatic adjustment of gallons
- More flexible delivery scheduling
- Increased customer satisfaction

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3 Redefine Your "Offseason" with Smart Season Pulling of Automatics

How much could your business benefit if you could you spread your delivery work outside your busy season, similar to how you manage preventative maintenance work and "offseason" tasks?

With Smart Season Pulling of Automatics, you can identify customers who, if you did nothing, would pull for a delivery in the winter. The tool allows you to determine whether you could move their delivery to just before winter. The customer wouldn't necessarily take much less fuel and—more importantly—they wouldn't need another delivery until winter is over. You'd make the same number of deliveries, but none would occur during your busy season.

For instance, you could run Smart Season Pulling of Automatics a month before your winter season. The system would identify all the customers that qualify and recommend the earliest delivery date at which they could receive a delivery, yet still not require a second delivery until after the busy winter season.

01 Customers with large tanks or those who don't use much fuel are good candidates for Smart Season Pulling of Automatics.

Advantages

- More flexible delivery schedule
- Reduced driver overtime costs
- Better management of seasonal drivers
- Reduced fleet maintenance

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Case Study:
Small Gains Add Up to Big Savings

Modern management software provides an enormous amount of data that can help you analyze customer delivery history, create a more precise annual usage model, and better forecast future deliveries.

In turn, making your deliveries as efficient as possible can improve customer satisfaction, maximize resource utilization, and drive more sustainable profitability.

In a recent customer case study, a fuel dealer used Smart Season Pulling of Automatics software for 12 months to manage forecasting and deliveries. By the end of the year the dealer had:

- Increased its average delivery by 19 gallons
- Eliminated one delivery per customer, per year
- Eliminated one truck on the road
- Added 30 deliveries per day

Know well in advance when your customers need their tanks filled and precisely how much they need.

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Start Saving Today

Running a successful propane or commercial fuel business can be much simpler and more efficient with powerful, energy–specific PDI Propane and Commercial Fueling solutions.

You can enjoy all the advantages of a single synchronized software environment to:

- Easily manage products, people, and performance with full transparency across your entire operation
- Get accurate and timely data on which to base your daily decisions and strategic planning
- Leverage intuitive management software designed specifically for energy retailers

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