



Elevating Customer Service:

THE ROUTE TO SATISFIED CUSTOMERS AND
SUCCESSFUL FLEET OPERATIONS



THE CHALLENGE: BALANCING CUSTOMER HAPPINESS WITH BUSINESS PROFITABILITY

The most fundamental goal of any successful last-mile distribution business is to make the customer happy. While this seems intuitive, today's customers have higher expectations than ever before. They demand tighter scheduling, shorter delivery windows, and flexibility to meet their constantly changing needs. This includes real-time order tracking, immediate delivery confirmations, and the ability to change a delivery location or schedule at a moment's notice.

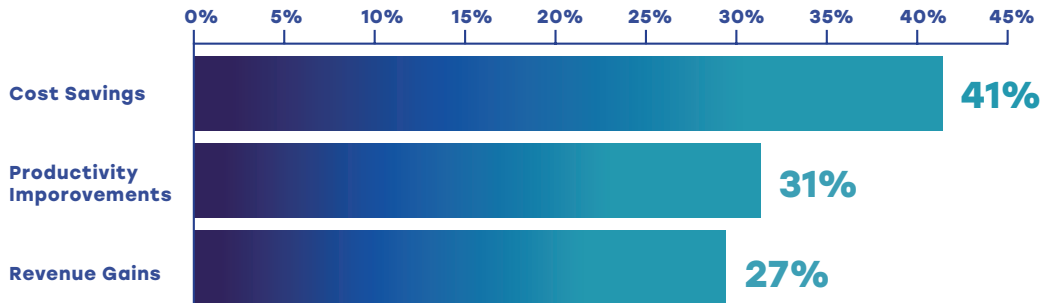
The core challenge is to meet and exceed these demands while operating a profitable fleet. A successful business must achieve high customer retention while also realizing the highest possible profitability. Operational expenses, such as fuel, equipment, and employee costs, add up quickly, making efficiency a top priority. You also have to consider daily issues that can affect profit margins, such as:

- Meeting a customer's off-day delivery request without losing money.
- Deciding if low-volume orders are worth accepting.
- Understanding how a customer's restrictive service window impacts your bottom line.
- Handling a transition when a customer's needs greatly increase due to a merger or acquisition.

THE SOLUTION: ROUTE OPTIMIZATION

Fortunately, these challenges can be met while increasing your fleet's profits through a process called route optimization. Improving route optimization is about increasing your fleet's overall efficiency, which can dramatically improve profitability even with a small percentage gain.

Route optimization can be as simple as shaving minutes off established routes, which reduces time in traffic and fuel consumption while increasing driver productivity. With the right data and tools, routes can be combined, re-assigned, or even eliminated in favor of more efficient options that better service both your business and your customers.



A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO ROUTE OPTIMIZATION

The most effective route optimization solutions incorporate long-term planning, daily routing, and real-time tracking.

- **Strategic Planning:** An optimal solution analyzes historical data, such as sales and service schedules from the past three to six months. Based on factors like resource cost, geography, and customer expectations, it helps you improve efficiency while still satisfying customers. This can lead to sales territory realignment, delivery route balancing, and new service plans.

Solutions like Solera Strategic Planner automatically analyze your fleet's historical data to create an optimal territory solution for fixed routes or pre-sale territories, helping you create a strategic roadmap of balanced routes in just seconds.

- **Optimal Daily Routing:** The best routing solutions help you create the most efficient routes by considering each day's specific customer priorities, updated service windows, and unexpected requests. They provide fleet managers with dynamic data, ultimate flexibility, and easy resource management.

Solera Routing is an intelligent, cloud-native solution that allows you to quickly compare and score routes based on cost and distance while reducing transportation costs and improving customer service.

A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO ROUTE OPTIMIZATION

- **Real-Time Dispatching:** Mobile dispatching provides real-time updates to your drivers, back-office personnel, and customers. It allows you to see if drivers are following the planned, optimized routes, and it tracks driver stop locations and times, giving you better visibility into overall fleet performance.

Solera Dispatch provides trip management capabilities that go beyond routing with GPS-enabled driver location and real-time arrival and departure information. It allows you to re-route drivers “on-the-fly” in response to customer needs, weather, or traffic. You can also create exceptions that alert you if a driver goes off-route, makes an unplanned stop, or is running behind.

- **Customer Visibility and Expectations:** Keeping customers informed about their deliveries is a key part of meeting their high expectations and can help reduce service inquiries.

Solera Active Alert provides customers with visibility into each state of their order lifecycle, from scheduling to delivery. By automating the tracking process, this powerful tool enhances customer satisfaction and saves your business valuable resources that would otherwise be spent on manual processes, which helps reduce costs.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS AND IMPROVEMENT

After implementing strategic planning, routing, and dispatching solutions, it's important to ensure your fleet is getting the best possible return on its investment by checking results with web-based analytics. Web-based analytics use the data generated by planning and routing solutions to help you answer questions like, ***"Was the plan followed?"*** and ***"Can it be improved?"***. If the optimal plan wasn't followed, it helps you determine why.

Analytic-centric solutions also use the most recent data to create a better plan for your business. Drivers can only do as well as the route you've planned for them, so accommodating their preferences can lead to happier drivers and, in turn, improved customer service.

FINANCIAL METRIC	3-YEAR VALUE
PAYBACK (MONTHS)	ROI
3.2	1,226%

THE PROOF: IMPRESSIVE, DEMONSTRABLE RESULTS

Implementing these solutions has been shown to improve both fleet efficiency and customer satisfaction, regardless of fleet size. The results are impressive:

50% | REDUCTION IN
ROUTING AND
LOAD TIME

75% | REDUCTION IN
RE-ROUTING TIME

8% | REDUCTION IN
DRIVER HOURS

50% | CUT IN MISSED
TIME WINDOWS

The value of a validated vehicle routing, scheduling, and fleet management solution is immediate and demonstrable. For a sample organization with 75 trucks that drives 2,000,000 miles annually with an average operating cost of \$0.76 per mile and spends 120 hours per month on routing, the annual benefits can exceed \$2.4M per year. The three-year investment of \$421K generates a positive return in just 3.2 months. The three-year net present value (NPV) is strong at \$4.2M, and the return on investment (ROI) is 1,226%.



SOLERA FLEET SOLUTIONS

With a legacy of innovation dating back to the creation of the trucking industry's first mobile satellite communications system over 40 years ago, Solera has continually redefined fleet management technology for decades.

Today, Solera is once again transforming the global commercial fleet management industry with the delivery of the Solera Fleet Platform—a groundbreaking solution that unifies fleet intelligence, optimizes operational efficiency, and empowers fleets with unparalleled visibility and control.

Find out more at www.fleet.solera.com/solutions/routing-and-planning/
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