



| Pacific Coachways

Motorcoach general manager turns to Zonar to prepare for greater fed scrutiny.

**Industry**

Transportation

Organization

Pacific Coachways Bus Charter

Location

Garden Grove, California

Website

www.pacificcoachways.com

Solutions

- Zonar Ground Traffic Control®
- Zonar V3™ TCU
- Zonar EVIR®
- Zonar Logs™
- Zonar 2020® tablet

Benefits

- Real-time customer service
- Increased driver accountability
- Pre- and post-trip inspection compliance
- Better planned vehicle maintenance

Garden Grove, Calif.-based Pacific Coachways Charter Services had been using a telematics system custom-designed for its operation for the past ten years. But, with an obsolete system, the telematics platform couldn't meet the company's changing needs.

"For the most part, it allowed us to see where our buses were, where they were going and how fast, and that was good when the technology was new," Giddens said. "But there was so much more information we wanted and so many more things we wanted to be able to do with it."

First, the vice president and general manager wanted a system that could help him get a firmer handle on the motorcoach company's operating expenses and reduce the incidences of idling and speeding. He was also looking for a system to improve the company's compliance with federal regulations.

Giddens prospected several telematics systems but found only one that offered the tools and the goldmine of operational data his company needed to improve its efficiency and meet his goals. Giddens felt he hit paydirt with the Zonar 2020 Mobile Communications Tablet and the Zonar V3 telematics unit.

The initial performance of the Zonar equipment equipped on one of his company's fleet of 20 motorcoaches convinced Giddens to install all of the company's vehicles with Zonar's tablets and telematics units. The tablets came pre-loaded with four applications including the Zonar Electronic Verified Inspection Reporting (EVIR) System, ZLogs hours-of-service reporting, two-way messaging and a navigation application.

Since the installation in early 2015, Giddens said the company has seen a reduction in idling times with the buses in the company's operation. The Zonar devices have also nearly eliminated speeding incidents. Giddens can't offer any precise amount of savings from idle reduction since he's never had a reliable way to track idling times and fuel consumption with the company's previous telematics system.

"The important thing is that I now have a clear window into our fleet operations," he said. "Zonar provides me accurate reports of idle times and speeding, so I can go over them with drivers immediately and address any issues before they become bigger problems."

Established in 1989, Pacific Coachways Charter Services specializes in providing transportation for organized tours for seniors and other affinity groups throughout the Southwest and excursions to local and regional attractions. It also offers ground transportation for corporate, family and special event charters in most of Southern California. The company also provides daily home-to-school transportation for private and public schools in the area.

While Giddens believes reducing operating expenses is an important benefit of the telematics system, he sees Zonar solving a much more pressing concern for his company – accurate documentation for hours of service. That’s the second, and perhaps foremost reason why, Giddens said, he chose Zonar’s telematics system.

Zonar 2020 eliminates driver error on HOS reports

In the first six months Pacific Coachways drivers have used the Zonar 2020, the charter bus company has achieved a near-elimination of the number of incorrectly filled-out driver logs. The Zonar 2020 helps ensure accuracy by associating driving hours with time and location using GPS readings from the telematics unit.

“Since our drivers started using the ZLogs application to track their hours of service, we haven’t had a single adverse audit of driver logs at roadside inspections,” Giddens said. “Not one. That’s a huge benefit.”

That’s a far cry from what Giddens experienced last year when one of the company’s drivers inadvertently wrote in the wrong city when he filled out his driver logs while out on a week-long tour. “The driver was probably tired after a long trip and just wrote down the wrong city.”

When FMCSA inspectors came in and completed the agency’s periodic inspection they found the error during a random search, which then triggered an even more rigorous inspection of all driver logs, he explained. The inspectors found other instances of driver errors and as a result, the company faced several violations and fines.

That’s why Giddens began the process of looking for options to replace a near-antiquated system that had been installed on the company’s motor coaches several years ago. An IT contractor hired by Trailways developed the system for all Trailways-affiliated partners. The work was in part paid for by a federal grant, and the system worked well for a few years.

“It was a great system when it was first installed almost ten years ago,” Giddens said. “But as time went by, and PC operating systems advanced, the ELD system was not updated.”

Giddens also knew it was just a matter of time before officials with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration started focusing more attention on

vehicle inspections and hours of service compliance in the motorcoach industry. After all, for the last several years, FMCSA officials have paid a lot of attention to the way trucking companies and truck drivers record and track HOS compliance, vehicle inspections, and vehicle maintenance, Giddens said. They’ve also placed greater emphasis on the use of electronic logging devices (ELD).

“But I didn’t want to just wait around until that day came,” he added. “I wanted to be ahead of the game.”

Ready for the ELD mandate.

Pacific Coachways drivers are able to utilize the 2020 to view available hours, update duty status, and electronically submit service records. Visual alerts help your drivers manage driving time and immediate access to data helps you improve CSA scores.

Because the 2020 offers fleets like Pacific Coachways the ability to keep their compliance processes much more consistent, they can more easily avoid violations during inspections and significantly improve the efficiency and safety of their operations.

With its combination of automated vehicle inspection and reporting, two-way messaging and hours-of-service applications that the 2020 offers, he said the Zonar 2020 Communications Tablet and telematics platform has helped the company gain a greater sense of confidence in the company’s safety compliance efforts.

Cloud-based telematics system offers worry-free service

Since the Zonar telematics system is hosted and works using the cloud, Giddens said he doesn’t have to worry about compatibility issues with his computer system or software updates for the devices. Giddens also doesn’t have to wait until drivers turn in their logs when they return from their excursion trips. He can access the information as the driver fills it in for that day or for the entire week.

“I can be much more proactive in identifying issues and correcting them,” he said. “And I can sleep better at night not having to worry so much about those things.”

About Zonar

Zonar exists because you deserve better. Student transportation fleets trust us to protect our nation's children every day. Now, we're the trusted leader and clear choice for small to mid-sized businesses, enterprise fleets, and public sector organizations across the Americas. To some, you're one of a million. To us, you're the one in a million. Our proven fleet management solutions help you run better, safer and more efficiently. We help you save more of everything. We work late, push harder and deliver what's needed, faster—for you.

You might not get fired for choosing someone bigger or shinier. But when there's a surprise, you'll want the one who picks up and shows up to help. You call? We answer, 24/7. Whatever size, mix or industry your fleet is, we move at your speed to help solve real-world problems.

Zonar HQ: Seattle, WA. Other locations: Cincinnati, OH, West Chicago, IL & Lakeland, FL. Top priority: You.

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