




**How Telematics Can  
Streamline and Strengthen  
Business for Australian Trades**



*Electricians, plumbers, and carpenters, as well as landscapers, automotive workers, waste removalists and security professionals constitute 30% of Australian workforce.*

## Forging ahead: Trends in the Australian trades industry

The trades and services industry in Australia employs more than 30% of our entire national workforce<sup>1</sup>—and it's showing no signs of slowing. In fact, according to Seek, data released in 2018 demonstrated a 23.3% growth between 2016 and 2017<sup>2</sup>. Of course, it's only fitting, as a steadily growing economy demands a greater workload and offers greater opportunity for those in the industry. In June 2018, the GDP increased by 0.9%, continuing its uninterrupted growth trend since September 2016<sup>3</sup>.

The trades and services industry is a broad one, encompassing roles like electricians, plumbers, and carpenters, as well as landscapers, automotive workers, waste removalists and security professionals.

With a solid future on the horizon, many businesses in this industry are taking this opportunity to one-up their competition and take full advantage of this strong growth period in three key ways.

<sup>1</sup> Infographic: Serious claims for tradies, *Safe Work Australia*, last updated 1 August 2017, <<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/infographic-serious-claims-tradies>>.

<sup>2</sup> Schutt, Ella (2018), Job growth continues to rise in the trades & services sector, *WorkPac Group*, <<https://www.workpac.com/blog/job-growth-trades-services-sector/>>.

<sup>3</sup> (2018), Demand for tradespeople continue to Rise in Australia, *Bayside Group*, <<https://www.baysidegroup.com.au/blog/demand-for-tradespeople-continues-to-rise-in-australia/>>.

<sup>3</sup>Australia GDP growth rate, *Trading Economics*, n.d., <<https://tradingeconomics.com/australia/gdp-growth>>.

# 1. Prioritising Customer Experience

We live in an on-demand world, where we can order a meal or book a holiday at the touch of a button. Those in the trades industry should be considering how they can solve the problems of their time-poor customers who expect instantaneous service. Many businesses in this industry manage multiple jobs across multiple sites on any given day, so gaining better visibility and streamlining internal productivity is paramount.

And it's not only efficiency, but also relationship-building that remains central to successful long-term trades operations. Word-of-mouth referrals are key, with one NSW study suggesting that 44% of clients relied on it when selecting a contractor or a company<sup>1</sup>.

# 2. Embracing technology

The trades industry may have been slow on the technology uptake, but more and more businesses are realising its potential to monitor and improve operations on both an individual and organisation-wide scale. From simple fixes like reduced paperwork, more accurate quotes and more timely billing, through to more tailored training for tradespeople and improved safety measures, the opportunities for streamlined operations are tremendous.

# 3. Realising cost efficiencies

Financial challenges will always be prominent for anyone in the trades industry, particularly as customers have greater comparative insight—thanks to social media and internet searches. As such, trades providers are continuing to seek out ways to deliver more for less, reducing spend in areas like equipment maintenance, travel, and administration to remain competitive.

<sup>1</sup> Valerie (2014), Research: Word of mouth is best marketing for tradies, *Tradebusters*, <<https://www.tradebusters.com.au/word-of-mouth-best-marketing-tradies/>>.





**25%** Reduction in fuel expenses

**15%** Increase in productivity

**5%** Reduction in vehicle maintenance costs

## What is telematics?

Telematics is the intersection of telecommunications and informatics. Put simply, it's the collection, transmission, and utilisation of data for business.

In-vehicle GPS tracking and monitoring is one area of telematics offering businesses of all sizes real-time visibility across their entire fleet, granting access to key information like vehicle health as well as driver safety and performance at the touch of a button.

In addition, by tracking and storing historical data, managers are also

able to pull reports together and recognise trends as they develop, paving the way for larger scale, systemic improvements to business operations. Finally, by automating time-consuming processes like quoting and billing, a key drawcard is the ability to slash paperwork and reduce human error.

Far more in depth than simply location tracking, fleet management software allows business owners to take a hands-on approach to almost every aspect of their fleet, from better allocating resources and improving delivery times, to boosting

safety compliance or adapting to on-the-go change.

As such, fleet managers can expect to see significant return on investment after installing fleet management software, including a 25% reduction in fuel expenses, a 15% increase in productivity, and a 5% reduction in vehicle maintenance costs.

While business-centric measures like these are perhaps the main motivator for trades companies to adopt this new technology, the benefits also apply to employees as well as trickling down to clients.

# Deliver a better customer experience

Regardless of the industry you operate within, customers' expectations remain the same—efficiency, reliability, and accessibility. Neglect these key factors, and they will try their luck with a competitor. But succeed in making an outstanding first impression, and you'll likely have a client for life.

Fleet management software enables you to react faster to new jobs, to schedule changes, or to answer client queries. As a manager, you can see where your tradespeople are at all times and assign their closest contractor, all while accurately communicating the expected wait to your customer.

Perhaps you'd like to set up an alert that tells them when their tradesperson is 10 minutes away—you can do this instantly using the Point of Interest (POI) feature.

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***Installing in-vehicle monitoring and tracking software can deliver a 14.8% reduction in average travel time per job, and a 23% increase in the number of service calls completed per day, per technician<sup>1</sup>.***

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<sup>1</sup> Dutta and Long (2008), Improving productivity and profitability through service fleet management: A roadmap to best-in-class performance, *Abderdeen Group*, <<http://servicing.co.nz/AberdeenReport.pdf>>.



***Improved internal efficiency means happier customers***



*Safe employees are more productive*

## Facilitate employee growth and safety

People are any business's best asset, and companies in the trade sector are no exception. By adopting fleet management technology across your business, you'll give them the best possible support.

As an employer, it is your duty of care to ensure your drivers' safety is a top priority. You can set up alerts to notify of a potential safety breach—like speeding or not wearing a seatbelt. Not only does this keep employees accountable for non-acceptable behaviour,

it also helps to correct behaviour in the future. No one likes being blamed for something they didn't do, and Fleet Tracker's customisation enables you to pinpoint either employee-specific or organisation-wide issues. Further, this feature can also alert you to any out-of-hours activity like moonlighting and off-the-books cash jobs.

Particularly for solo jobs, ensuring your employees' safety at all times is essential. Using Fleet Tracker's auxiliary Iridium

Satellite functionality, you can keep tabs on every worker and every vehicle even off the grid – a handy tool for more dangerous long-distance or remote jobs. In fact, in-vehicle monitoring is considered such a well regarded safety measure, that many larger sites will require it as standard.

Your team are the ones who either help or hinder your business growth. As the first point of contact with your business, it is in your best interest to ensure the face

that greets your customer is prompt, reliable, and a sound advocate for your company. Fleet Tracker can show you exactly which employees, if any, are falling behind their expected response times.

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***Not only does a focus on improved Work Health & Safety (WHS) protect businesses from long-term costs, but it also increases productivity and innovation<sup>1</sup>.***

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<sup>1</sup> Revesencio, Jonha (2015). Why happy employees are 12% more productive, *Fast Company*, <<https://www.fastcompany.com/3048751/happy-employees-are-12-more-productive-at-work>>

# Decrease your workload

Time is an important resource. The more time you spend on mundane administrative tasks, like quoting, data entry, invoicing and reporting, the less time you have left in the day to focus on your trade and improve your business. That's where Fleet Complete's automation helps tradespeople to streamline their time-

consuming processes, freeing up their schedule to complete more billable work.

Using Fleet Complete reports, you can collate key information including travel time, fuel consumption, onsite arrival and job duration to process faster and more accurate invoicing.

What's more, in-vehicle tracking can clear up everyday headaches associated with trades work, like disputes about whether or not a worker was on site at a stipulated time. Trip history historical data will prove your employees' movements accurately.

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***Up to 47% of tradespeople use their spare time to catch up on paperwork. Use Fleet Complete's automated data entry for faster billing<sup>1</sup>.***

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<sup>1</sup> (2013), Tradesmen are working longer hours than bankers, *Express*, <<https://www.express.co.uk/finance/city/424875/Tradesmen-are-working-longer-hours-than-bankers>>.



***Automated, more accurate paperwork***

# Reduce your operating and ownership costs

Utilising a Trip Report, managers can track unsafe driving practices like harsh braking, cornering or speeding. Improving on driving behaviour can increase fuel economy by 10-40%<sup>1</sup> and decrease the vehicle's wear and tear.

But monitoring driver behaviour is not solely for safety reasons; it may be that you may uncover inefficient practices like leaving vehicles idling while completing small jobs, or failing to select the optimum route to a new location. Tightening these processes will see your fuel costs drop and your return on investment rise.

Further, Fleet Tracker integrates with your vehicles' engine control module, logging vital data like coolant and oil temperature, fuel consumption and odometer readings. By informing you of critical thresholds, this feature will ensure you catch maintenance issues early and reduce costs associated with accidents, malfunctions, and snowballed repairs.

And finally, Fleet Complete's Asset Tracker can help to reduce theft by giving you greater visibility into where your field equipment is at all times.

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***Installing a telematics solution across a fleet can achieve a 20-25% reduction in fuel costs—a major cost-saving measure, considering fuel makes up almost a third (1/3) of total fleet management costs<sup>2</sup>.***

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<sup>1</sup> Robinson, Jessie (2018), 7 ways to reduce fleet costs, *Fleetio*, <<https://www.fleetio.com/blog/7-ways-to-reduce-fleet-costs>>

<sup>2</sup> (2014), How to use telematics to control fleet costs, *Verizon*, <[https://commenco.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/WhitePaper\\_Field-and-Fleet\\_WP-N023\\_Costs\\_NC.pdf](https://commenco.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/WhitePaper_Field-and-Fleet_WP-N023_Costs_NC.pdf)>

***Use less fuel with vehicle monitoring***







# The Fleet Complete Advantage

Telematics is booming, and leading the charge is Fleet Complete's comprehensive solution appropriate for businesses of all sizes. This specialised set of products is designed to automate, streamline and optimise operations for those in the trades industry, laying the foundations for faster turnarounds, happier customers, and better business.

With greater visibility across all of your mobile workforce, combined with the ability to monitor and track your vehicles and equipment, this is the ultimate investment for growing trades businesses.

In the current market conditions, Fleet Complete helps close to 500,000 users worldwide improve accountability of asset engagement, increase staff productivity, create operational efficiencies, comply with WH&S regulations and gain significant savings.

For more information, please visit [www.fleetcomplete.com.au](http://www.fleetcomplete.com.au) or call us at 1300 653 395.

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**HEAD OFFICE**

31-35 George Street Thebarton, South Australia 5031

Ph: 1300 653 395

Fax: 08 8404 3699

**SALES**

Ph: 1300 653 395

[sales@fleetcomplete.com.au](mailto:sales@fleetcomplete.com.au)

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