

# Keeping track of trucks



GRAHAM MCKINNON  
MANAGING DIRECTOR  
SMITH AND DAVIES

## FACT FILE

### Company Background

- Privately-owned family firm established in 1927.
- Expertise in bulk haulage, removing of contaminated waste, forestry road reconstruction and maintenance, and moving of heavy machinery.
- Has 140 staff, more than 70 trucks and 50 items of plant.
- Based on the North Shore with depots in Albany and Whangarei.
- [smithanddavies.co.nz](http://smithanddavies.co.nz)

### Challenge

- To increase the efficiency of fleet management.
- To accurately monitor individual vehicle progress.
- To ensure compliance with health and safety and road standards.

### Solution

- Telecom Locate+.

With more than 70 trucks travelling an estimated 9 million kilometres a year throughout the North Island, up-to-the-minute information is key to efficient fleet management for haulage company Smith and Davies.



LOCATE+ WILL BE AN ESSENTIAL TOOL TO HELPING US ACHIEVE OUR GOALS.

Based on the North Shore, the family-owned business provides a range of services including bulk haulage, removal of contaminated waste, assisting in forestry road reconstruction and management, as well as moving heavy machinery.

"We needed a simple method of knowing where each of our trucks are so we can make decisions about who is best placed to do a particular job and also monitor performance," Smith and Davies Managing Director Graham MacKinnon says.

The answer was Telecom Locate+ which combines GPS vehicle tracking technology and Navman Fleet Manager software with Telecom's national mobile data network.

#### Real-time information

"We trialed other options but Telecom's Locate+, was the best solution because it's providing us with current rather than historical information," he said.

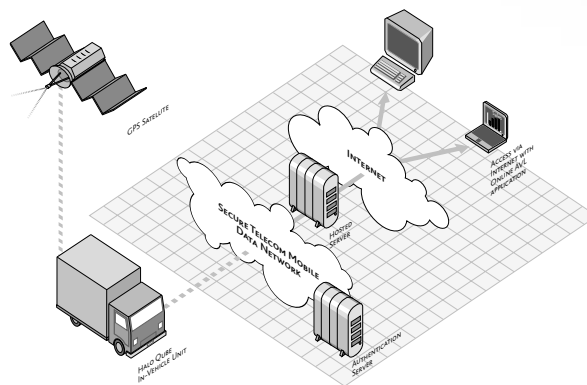
"With a mouse click we can pinpoint a vehicle's location right now."

Prior to introducing Locate+ the firm's dispatcher was reliant on contacting drivers on radio telephones to find where they were, which was time consuming and not always reliable.

With the introduction of the new system the company also discovered their trucks were often spending a long time idling, increasing fuel consumption and also adding to engine wear and tear.

"With our new system we are able to monitor idling time and drivers are becoming more conscious of not running the truck unnecessarily," Mr MacKinnon says.

Locate+ also benefits drivers because the reporting system means that Smith and Davies can track a vehicle's route and monitor speeds during a journey.



"That means we can support drivers with factual information if we receive a complaint from a member of the public about a vehicle travelling too fast in speed sensitive areas, like towns or forestry roads," he said.

Telecom's extensive mobile coverage has meant the firm has had no difficulty locating trucks. And because we access Locate+ over the Internet, the company's supervisors do not need to be centrally based to view the system.

"If they have their laptop they can log in from anywhere to check progress rather than having to go to a dedicated machine," he says.

The bulk of the firm's vehicles were fitted with the technology over Christmas last year, and while it is too early for detailed analysis, Mr MacKinnon is convinced of its benefit.

#### Improving productivity

"We've definitely seen productivity gains and over the coming year we'll investigate the introduction of electronic dispatching so drivers can receive text with information on destinations and report directly back when they have made a delivery.

"This would be linked into our billing process so that it can automatically be updated in real time rather than relying on our present paper-based records," he says.

The 72-year-old firm was established to transport cream from the family dairy farm, with operations gradually expanding. In the past four decades Smith and Davies has been involved in almost every major project in the Auckland region including the city's first shopping mall in New Lynn, the Harbour Bridge approaches and the Sky Tower.

"We're committed to maintaining our reputation for excellent customer service and ensuring our fleet meets standards for health and safety and quality management," Mr MacKinnon said.

"Locate+ will be an essential tool to helping us achieve our goals."