



12-Month Listening Tour Generated Best-in-Class Fleet for J.R. Simplot

COMPANY



Bringing Earth's Resources to Life is the prime mission at J.R. Simplot Company. As one of the largest privately held food and agriculture companies, much rides on the success of its three core groups: The AgriBusiness Group handles phosphate mining, fertilizer production and retail distribution. The Food Group operates the finished frozen potato and vegetable production facilities. And the Land and Livestock Group manages farms and ranches.

"Not only does fleet move my salespeople so they can go to their growers, it moves our product to

"Not only does fleet move my salespeople so they can go to their growers, it moves our product to deliver it to those customers," said Keri.

deliver it to those customers," said Keri Moran, category manager for mobile equipment at J.R. Simplot Company. "We have a division that is farms and ranches; you cannot grow crops without a pickup and you cannot move livestock to and from the range without a vehicle."

FLEET PROFILE

Fleet Size **7,000**

Industry **Agriculture**

Vehicle Type **Light Duty, Medium Duty,
Heavy Duty Trucks & Trailers**

OPPORTUNITY

FLEET MANAGER PROMOTION CREATED GAP IN FLEET SUPPORT

For years, Keri managed the day-to-day fleet operations at J.R. Simplot Company. However, her recent promotion to the procurement department left little to no time to remain the main support contact for the fleet.

“I would take the daily calls from drivers, operations support and managers,” said Keri. “I would generate and send reports, manage vehicle reassignments and personnel changes, request fuel cards and place all vehicle orders in the [Wheels FleetView™] system.”

She leaned on her long-term fleet partner, Wheels, for guidance. Simplot predominately used the fleet management company for vehicle acquisition. Now she needed to fill the administrative gap left with her promotion. Additionally, she had ambitious goals for the fleet: reduce depreciation, collisions and fuel costs.

Wheels’ own mission was clear: Create a fleet that was best in class in the agriculture industry.

“When I was a one-person show, I would have to work extra time to try to get data to managers, or it might be delayed by several days or a week,” said Keri.

STRATEGY

CONDUCTED 30+ SITE VISITS TO LEARN SUPPORT NEEDS

The team organized the top-down mandate into three steps.

- 1. Increase utilization:** Move from service renegades to service advocates.
- 2 Standardize processes:** Focus on replacement planning and service additions.
- 3. Control costs:** Access new insights for smarter spending.

Simplot needed to outsource the fleet function. Wheels had a simple solution: Fleet Admin. It provided an expanded support team, strategic consultation, and execution and oversight of daily activities. The solution is founded on Wheels quality processes that are continuously improved to provide the highest levels of efficiency. And the level of service delivery is always customizable to ensure the delivery meets the clients’ needs.

STRATEGY

“The key takeaway was really about there being expanded support and a quicker response directly to the drivers,” said Keri. “Quicker response of being able to get data to managers when they were asking for information. When I was a one-person show, I would have to work extra time to try to get data to managers, or it might be delayed by several days or a week.”

For the approach, they sought a bottom-up strategy.

The team hit the road. The fleet consulting manager and truck consultants visited dozens of worksites to better understand how the vehicles were used and to see firsthand how they were managing inventory, collisions and maintenance.

To facilitate an environment where ample and honest feedback was given,

the fleet consulting manager instituted a rule:

- No suits
- No presentations
- No assumptions

Farm work is a long-honored tradition filled with generations of experience and institutional knowledge. Often, corporate entities are quick to issue directives to the field yet don't readily listen and learn about the unique experiences of frontline workers, such as these growers. Showing that the Wheels team was open to an unfiltered impression of fleet helped them gain pivotal insight. In 18 months, the team accomplished over 30 site visits, asked countless questions and gained a deeper understanding of Simplot's specialized equipment, inventory management, collision, repair and fuel needs.

18 months

30+ visits

DOZENS of questions

GAINED a deeper understanding of:

- How vehicles utilized specialized equipment
- Inventory management
- Collision
- Repair
- Fuel

RESULTS +

FLEET TRANSFORMED TO BEST-IN-CLASS

For replacement planning, they standardized and streamlined the system to deliver optimal fleet analysis, cost-effective parameters and template standardization. Tackling fuel, they added customized reporting and checks to reduce fraud.

On the incentive front, they reworked the selection and negotiation process while instituting a continuous review model. The Wheels Incentive Management program is a vetted process that analyzes vehicle replacement parameters and facilitates ordering by creating replacement analyses based on corporate goals and objectives. It evaluates vehicle options based on an OEM/model scorecard; identifies the OEM short lists through specified criteria; obtains OEM bids that measures all inspects above and beyond cost; presents selectors once options are vetted; begins ordering and monitoring of volume; and finally, debriefs the results with both clients and OEMs.



“I would say the biggest highlight of the results that we’ve done is using Wheels for our collision management program,” said Keri. “It was being handled at an individual level.”

RESULTS +

On the other hand, reducing collisions was a mandate that needed a specialized approach. The high number of collisions was affecting the amount they sold the vehicles for in the aftermarket. Additionally, there was a disconnect between the risk team and the field. Risk believed accidents were being reported when they occurred, there was a straightforward process established and they had all the data. However, the reality in the field was that all accidents weren't being reported, there weren't clear definitions of what constituted a collision and repairs weren't being handled strategically.

Since J.R. Simplot had a strong safety culture in many of its operational departments, Wheels wanted to help bring that same focus to its fleet. Through several working sessions that

included procurement, the risk team, Wheels and the insurance broker, the team hammered out the details for a path forward.

"I would say the biggest highlight of the results that we've done is using Wheels for our collision management program," said Keri. "It was being handled at an individual level. So as an aggregate, we really didn't have any kind of information about how many and what kind of accidents we were having."

Now, there are over 3,000 units on the collision program, which has centralized reporting and metrics. A third of the fleet is now coded, saving more than 500 hours of labor. There is a new service reduction in downtime and an increase in productivity by moving this process from the field.

SMOOTH PROCESSING OF 34,632 TRANSACTIONS

Maintenance	1,404
New order processing	361
Registration/renewels/transfers	353
Driver phone inquiries	1,382
Violation processing	46
Fuel transactions	31,086