

SAFED for Vans: Case Study

Office Depot Uk

Office DEPOT

The Company

- Global office products/solutions organisation
- UK Head Office in Leicester
- Operate a fleet of 300 panel vans
- Total annual mileage: approximately 7,224,000
- Total annual fuel use: approximately 1,500,000 litres

“The excellent results of the pilot study has given us the confidence to roll out SAFED to our remaining depots.”

Matt Burton, Learning and Development Manager, Office Depot

The Company’s Perspective

Office Depot is a major supplier of office products through a range of outlets, including mail-order and contract delivery within the UK. It operates an own-account fleet of some 300 vans, ranging from 3.5 tonne Transit style vehicles to larger 7.5 tonne vehicles, from 13 UK based depots. The team of drivers deliver around 115,000 parcels on a daily basis, covering some 65,000 miles each day. The delivery operation also includes using third party suppliers such as Nightfreight and DHL.

The Office Depot customer base includes many UK based blue chip companies across a range of industry sectors as well as central and local government, utilities, educational institutions and the National Health Service.

Office Depot take the training of their drivers and staff seriously. They have developed a number of short, medium and long-term strategic training objectives, all based around their vision of becoming the best UK-wide transport fleet. Their training objectives cover every staff member and includes such topics as:

- Improving skills and techniques
- Improving culture
- Improving business results

Additionally Office Depot passionately advocate the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) and other transport related qualifications. In fact one of their staff members from their

Newcastle operation was the very first person in the UK to complete the newly launched NVQ Level 2 Carry and Deliver Goods.

The Office Depot Transport team now has over 200 staff members registered for, or completing a range of NVQs.

As well as a commitment to staff training, Office Depot UK is committed to minimising the impact of their vehicle operations on the environment through a programme of continuous improvement, including:

- Training drivers with the Institute of Advanced Motoring
- Reducing mileage by carrying out route analysis to optimise vehicle usage
- Maintaining vehicles to manufacturers' recommended standards
- Encouraging drivers to maintain good MPG indicators
- Taking into consideration Euro regulations and fuel efficiency during vehicle purchase

To further improve the company's and drivers' environmental performance and safety record, Learning and Development Manager, Matt Burton, was keen to undertake a pilot programme of SAFED training within one of their distribution depots. Matt felt that the combination of IAM and SAFED training would provide the drivers with improved driving skills and techniques.

To fully explore the benefits of SAFED, Matt decided to undertake an initial pilot study at their Northampton depot using 16 drivers, which took place between August and



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October 2006. Initial results of the training have been very positive, with an average of a 12% increase in fuel efficiency and up to a 20% decrease in numbers of gear changes being reported.

Furthermore, the Northampton trial has heralded the following additional results:

- Average saving of 2.12 pence per mile driven
- Fuel saved during 6 week SAFED pilot period: £928
- Potential annual saving for Northampton depot: £9842

The positive results achieved at their Northampton depot have led Office Depot to implement the roll out of the SAFED training at their other Transport depots.



The Driver's Perspective

The team of drivers at the Office Depot Northampton Depot, came from a variety of driving backgrounds, with some having driven for over 15 years, while others were relative novices.

The differences in driving experiences led to a range of fuel efficiency improvements being recorded during the training. Beyond this, there was a degree of scepticism around the training, with some drivers stating that the training was good in theory, but could be impractical in their working environment. However, other drivers found the training very informative and could see the benefits of making their fuel go much further.

Despite some concerns being voiced by their drivers, clear improvements in fuel efficiency have been recorded since the training started. It is hoped that these results will help motivate the drivers to continue to put into practice the methods they have learnt during the SAFED training.

Benefits

- Clear improvements in MPG
- Reduced driver stress

Cost Savings

- Average saving of 2.12 pence per mile driven
- Potential annual saving for Northampton depot of approximately £10,000

Trained by:

- Drivewize