



SUCCESS STORY: E.A. SWEEN

## Controlling What You Measure

If you're wondering how the management principle "you can't control what you don't measure" works in fleet management, ask E.A. Sween. Its Combined Distribution Centers (CDC) division was an early mover in automated data capture and knows down to the dollar, just how much it saves the business.



### BACKGROUND

E.A. Sween's CDC division, which has a globally recognized convenience store chain as its major customer, first trialed fleet management technologies in 2011. It chose the Coretex (then ibright) reefer solution, partly because it was intuitive, but largely for its potential to boost efficiency and cut costs.

#### ! The Situation — Idle times

Robert Forte, then a General Manager and now the Vice President of the division at E.A. Sween, was looking for a way to automate his drivers' manual manifests. "It was all done on paper," he explains. "The driver would get to a stop, write down what time they got there, the mileage, the temperature of the airflow, the number of totes going in. The driver would bring that product into the store, someone would sign for it, then the driver would get back in the truck, write down the time out, and go to the next stop."

That time-consuming process was responsible, to a large extent, for keeping Forte's trucks idling for too long. With fuel then at \$5 a gallon and more than a few of his drivers ignoring the division's no-idle policy, Forte calculated that **cutting idle times could save the CDC \$300,000 a year.**

#### 🔗 The Solution — Measure Where it Counts

With the new Coretex platform reporting idle times per asset on a daily basis, idle rates swiftly dropped from 90-plus percent to 10 percent. "Then we pushed it to the point where, once we saw that a driver had hit a geofence, we'd give them one minute to shut the engine off," Forte says.

"Well, we got our return on investment in the Coretex solution in a number of months, just by focusing on that idle time."

ROBERT FORTE, DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT

Another point of measurement and control was park time. Forte figured he could save between \$80,000 to \$100,000 a year by trimming it down by two minutes per stop. He began by using the Coretex data to create a benchmark chart which showed each driver what their weekly average stop time was. "Every week we'd report back to the drivers and try to get them to bring their stops down by one minute or two minutes," says Forte. "With that data, we went from 21 minutes average stop time per day and we knocked that down under 18 minutes per day. **We beat our goal of \$80,000; we were able to realize cost savings of over \$200,000.**"



## The Results — Improved Operational Efficiency

Forte is delighted but not surprised by those results, noting that measurement without control has little point.

“You can bolt anything you want on a truck, but if you don’t take that data and go out there and create some behavior change, it’s a waste of time.”

ROBERT FORTE, DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT

The big winner has been the division’s major customer, Forte says. “I had to prove the results to our customer, so I did, and they were very surprised. Now they’re all fans of the solution and the group has sanctioned it nationwide.”

More recently, the division has adopted Coretex in-cab tablets which, amongst other things, provide for electronic signatures. In part, the tablets were a response to their customer’s requests for electronic delivery tracking. The in-cab solution also paid dividends by sharply reducing the millions of dollars of losses from returnable plastic containers that had previously been untraceable.

Working with Gateway Truck & Refrigeration, Forte’s original Coretex deployment was in his home base in Chicago. Since then he’s rolled it out in four more states. With E.A. Sween distribution centers in Texas recently adopting the solution, the company now has **assets in eight centers, across six states, all running on the solution**. His experience, he says, is that on top of the measurable gains the division has achieved using Coretex data, the OBC units have proven to be reliable and, especially when compared to competing solutions he has assessed, Coretex has been very user friendly and intuitive.

“The other thing is that the partnership with the Coretex team has been invaluable as they’ve worked through building a platform that is just specific for this kind of business,” he says. “They’ve been totally engaged.”

### RESULTS AT A GLANCE

14.3%

REDUCTION IN  
AVERAGE STOP TIMES

80%

DROP IN  
IDLE RATES

\$200,000+

PARK-TIME  
SAVINGS



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### KEY STAKEHOLDERS



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