



CASE STUDY

WILLOW RUN FOODS

At a glance:

Company: Willow Run Foods
(www.willowrunfoods.com)

Industry: Food distribution

Cadec solution: PowerVue

Objectives:

- Gain real-time visibility in to fleet operations to ensure on-time deliveries.
- Ability to monitor and analyze driver data for activity-based pay environment.
- Manage fuel consumption for both diesel and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) trucks.
- Integrate Cadec PowerVue with other third-party applications to maximize efficiencies throughout the entire supply chain.

Results:

- Enhanced customer service with real-time delivery notifications.
- Improved fuel management to keep costs under control.
- Increased visibility to maximize fleet performance.

Willow Run Foods Optimizes Supply Chain with Real-Time Visibility for Intelligent Fleet Management from Cadec Global, Inc.

Founded in 1949, Willow Run Foods has a history of providing its customers with dependable, on-time deliveries and unparalleled customer service. This commitment to customer service runs deep at Willow Run Foods and permeates all aspects of the employee-owned company.

With annual sales of approximately \$500 million, Willow Run Foods is one of the nation's largest casual dining and fast-food systems distributors in the country. The company's fleet of approximately 100 tractor trailers serves restaurants such as Wendy's, Arby's, Quiznos, and Popeye's in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions.

Like any company, particularly one that moves goods long distances, success is directly tied to its ability to manage expenses at Willow Run Foods.

"Margins in the food distribution industry are very lean which makes managing costs even more critical," said Len Basso, vice president of operations for Willow Run Foods.

One of the biggest of those costs is fuel; volatile fuel prices combined with the volume of fuel needed to cover Willow Run Foods' region significantly contribute to the company's expense column.

"Because there are so many variables that affect our fuel costs, more detailed visibility into this aspect of our fleet was another top priority for our fleet management needs," added Basso.

For Willow Run Foods' customers in the food industry, on-time deliveries are critical. In order to continue to deliver the highest levels of customer service and on-time delivery, Willow Run Foods needed visibility and access to critical data that would enable Willow Run Foods to make last minute adjustments to deliveries so that items get to customers quickly and safely.

"With our previous fleet management system, we found ourselves constantly in reactive mode when it came to the status of our fleet operations," said Michael Albertson, IT manager, Willow Run Foods. "It was clear that with the right system, we'd be able to take a more proactive approach to managing the fleet."

Recognizing that its drivers are the most critical component for ensuring on-time delivery, the employee-owned company addresses driver compensation by empowering the drivers themselves. Unlike most companies that pay drivers hourly, Willow Run Foods uses an activity-based compensation plan that pays drivers on a number of variables including percentage of on-time deliveries, cases delivered, miles driven and

idling time. While an innovative approach, this type of compensation system required insight into driver behavior and data.

With these requirements in mind, Willow Run Foods set out to find a new fleet management provider in 2009. According to Albertson, the company had been tracking Cadec products for a couple of years as it knew a change was inevitable. After a formal review of six fleet management vendors, Willow Run Foods selected Cadec for their fleet management needs.

“Once we reviewed Cadec’s platform, we immediately saw the potential for enhancing our operational processes,” said Albertson. “The application was well-built and one aspect that really stood out was the ease of integration to our existing internal applications.”

A modern and flexible SaaS-based fleet management platform, Cadec’s PowerVue provides the best-in-class, advanced fleet management features in a single, easy-to-use, secure and reliable system combined with an innovative onboard computer designed specifically for private fleet customers.

The implementation in 2009 to the company’s Mobius platform and its recent upgrade to PowerVue were both seamless.

“From an IT perspective, implementation couldn’t have gone any smoother,” said Albertson. “The team at Cadec made it so easy and we started realizing value from the system almost immediately.”

Additionally, PowerVue plays a key role in helping Willow Run Foods manage fuel costs—running on both the diesel and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fleet vehicles. As part of its emphasis on the environment, Willow Run Foods partnered with New York State Energy and Research Development Authority to run 16% of their fleet on CNG, which is more cost effective and friendlier to the environment.

“PowerVue is tracking fuel mileage for both types to help us assess if it makes sense to add more CNG vehicles to our fleet in the future,” said Basso. “With PowerVue we have the ability to separate the data of the CNG and diesel vehicles enabling us to track the differences between the two types of fuel.”

According to Basso, adding PowerVue to its CNG trucks was flawless. “Again, Cadec’s team worked diligently with us to add the software to the CNG vehicles and PowerVue was up and running in no time.”

Overall, Willow Run Foods has realized the following benefits from Cadec’s PowerVue fleet management system:

Increased Operational Efficiencies and Safety:

With PowerVue, the fleet managers have real-time visibility into the entire delivery process. Willow Run Foods uses PowerVue to give them instant notifications if a matter needs attention. For example, if a truck starts running late, the team at Willow Run Foods is notified immediately, giving them the ability to quickly address the situation and take corrective action when necessary. Additionally, Willow Run Foods also uses data from PowerVue to track speeding to ensure their drivers are practicing safety on the roads.

“The data we get from PowerVue provides us an unbelievable amount of business insight that allows us to not only run our fleet efficiently but remain profitable, which is difficult to do in the food distribution industry.”

Fuel Management:

With such a broad coverage territory, fuel costs can escalate quickly and PowerVue gives Willow Run Foods a detailed view of its fuel usage to keep costs under control. The team at Willow Run uses PowerVue's advanced reporting and analysis capabilities to review information from the drivers and vehicles for better fuel management.

Integration Ease with Third-Party Application:

The truck fleet is just one part of Willow Run's operations that also includes a 280,000 square foot distribution center. Cadec's open architecture ties PowerVue to Willow Run Foods' internal system in their supply chain which allows for management of multiple operations from one single interface.

"To manage a fleet well, just having an onboard computer isn't enough," said Basso. The data we get from PowerVue provides us an unbelievable amount of business insight that allows us to not only run our fleet efficiently but remain profitable, which is difficult to do in the food distribution industry."

About Cadec

Cadec ensures the delivery of goods by North America's premiere private fleets is safe, efficient and on time. Cadec's fleet management system provides actionable, real-time data critical for private fleets to remain competitive while delivering superior customer service. Cadec safeguards its customers by assuring drivers are regulatory compliant and operationally secure. Combining its SaaS-based PowerVue software with wireless communications, on-board computing technology, and business applications integration, fleet managers use Cadec's decision-making tools to drive continuous cost reductions and service improvements. Cadec connects private fleets with their drivers and trucks for unprecedented levels of supply chain visibility, automation and fleet management. Learn more at www.Cadec.com.

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