

How diesel fuels can help your business: What to ask your fuel supplier

The pace of change in the trucking industry continues to grow rapidly, leaving fleet managers to work tirelessly in an effort to stay one step ahead of new technologies. The diesel fuel space is no exception, and many fleets have realized the potential benefits of working even more closely with their fuel supplier to ensure they are using the right product for their fleet.

Beginning a dialogue with your fuel supplier to better understand the products and services suppliers provide, and what will best meet your fleet's needs, can be vital in determining a fleet's success.

Fleet managers should discuss these six questions with their current or potential fuel supplier.

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1. How is my product handled, stored and transported?

Fuel can be easily contaminated, and that can translate into added downtime and overall decreased fleet efficiency.

Having a conversation with your supplier about their regulatory awareness, safety focus and qualifications for the carriers who store and handle their products can build trust. Confidence in a reliable fuel supplier is critical given the average fleet spends between 30 and 40 percent* of its maintenance, repair and operations (MRO) budget on fuel.

2. Should I use an additized diesel? Will it cost more?

While an additized diesel product will cost more than a base diesel fuel at the onset, it is a superior product that is designed to ultimately lower fuel consumption and emissions, and improve both power and responsiveness, among other benefits.

While the product itself is more expensive, the performance benefits additized diesel provides are designed to increase a fleet's overall efficiency. This can, in turn, help the fleet meet sustainability goals and help reduce the long-term total cost of ownership of each vehicle.

3. Does your product provide performance benefits?

An additized diesel will help maintain optimal performance in the engine's fuel system. This translates to fuel savings, better power and cleaner combustion when compared to trucks running unadditized diesel fuel. Protecting the fuel system with detergent can also help increase a fleet's overall efficiency.

Over time, realizing these benefits from a high-performing, additized diesel can lower the total cost of ownership and upkeep across a fleet. Reducing the number of trips to the shop can provide more efficiency across operations and a stronger return on investment.

4. How are additives administered into your product?

While a base diesel product will come ready to use, more advanced products may vary in terms of how the additives are mixed with the fuel. The preferred way is to receive the additive injected into the diesel by your supplier. This assures the product is properly mixed to meet performance expectations in your engines. In particular, hand dosing is not recommended.

Underdosing is likely to result in underperformance versus claims, while overdosing could potentially lead to operational issues. It's important to ask for proof that the additive and fuel are homogenous and the additive concentration is within specification.

5. Should I be looking at alternative fuel options?

While alternative fuels have become more popular in recent years, we do not expect diesel use to dwindle anytime soon. In fact, we expect the opposite. According to the [2018 Outlook for Energy: A View to 2040](#), diesel use will continue to rise globally through 2040, in large part to meet increasing trucking demands.[†]

As diesel formulations continue to evolve, advanced diesel products – such as additized diesel – will continue to offer impressive fuel economy and maintenance benefits while reducing emissions.

Combining the right diesel fuel supply with the highest quality service and fuel supplier can have big benefits



6. How do you test to ensure your fuel meets product specifications?

It is essential for the well-being of your fleet that the diesel fuel meets all relevant product specifications.

If the fuel supplier's testing parameters go beyond what is required, even better – that may indicate the supplier is dedicated to providing you with quality diesel fuel that goes above and beyond industry specifications, adding an extra level of protection.



Why it matters

Combining the right diesel fuel supply with the highest quality service and fuel supplier can have big benefits for fleets in today's transportation landscape. By viewing diesel not just as a necessary spend (and a rather large spend at that), but as a solution for improving a fleet's overall efficiency, uptime and performance, fleet owners can realize business benefits in the long term.

^{*}ATRI's "An Analysis of the Operational Costs of Trucking: 2016 Update."

[†]ExxonMobil's "2018 Outlook for Energy: A View to 2040."