

# ELD Buyer's Guide

A guide to switching ELDs.



## An ELD that can't adapt and scale with your company will cost you time, money and affect how you manage your entire fleet.

Many fleets already have electronic logging devices (ELDs). With the U.S. mandate in place – and the Canadian mandate to be enforced beginning in January, 2023 – ELDs will become a requirement.

Ideally, an ELD addresses your specific needs – it helps you stay compliant, resolve driver issues quickly and pivot with evolving objectives. It's an investment in the growth of your organization.

And if your current solution isn't supporting you, it might be time to switch!

That's what this guide is all about.

We want to share the knowledge you need – along with some tough questions to ask potential ELD providers – so you can switch to a solution that's right for you.

**In this guide, we'll talk specifically about what to look for when switching to a better ELD. If you want to learn more about what ELDs are, read our comprehensive blog, ["What is an ELD."](#)**



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## CHAPTER 1

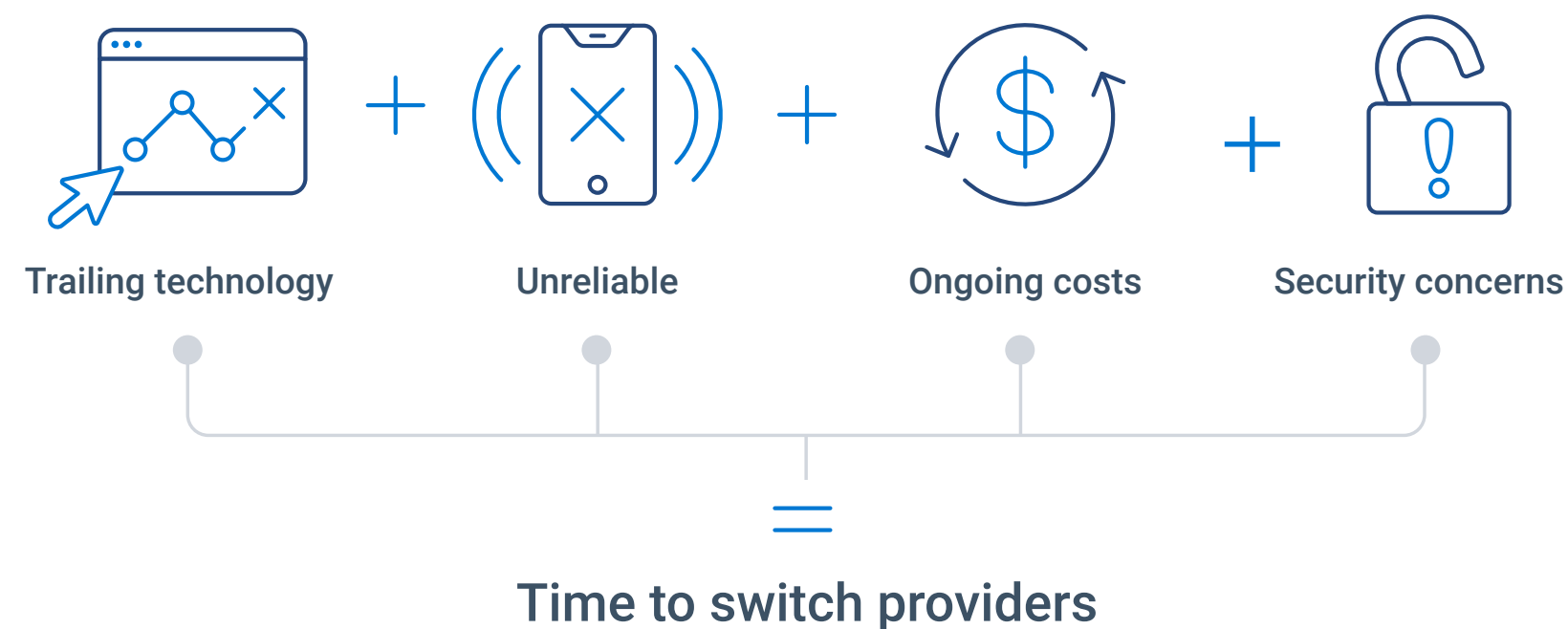
# How do you know when to switch ELD providers?

Before we get into the specifics about what to look for when switching ELDs, let's start with how to know when it's time to switch ELD providers.

It's not just about hidden fees or an inability to meet your needs.

There are some more nuanced indications:

- **Trailing technology:** Unable to grow with your needs
- **Unreliable:** Lack of confidence in daily operations
- **Ongoing costs:** Surprise fees when you least expect them
- **Security concerns:** Your data is vulnerable to attacks



The best ELD gives you foundational, complementary and future-ready options



Foundational



Complementary



Future



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## CHAPTER 2

# Beginning with the foundational elements

First, we'll look at the core features and elements you'll want to consider before switching ELDs. Some of this will be familiar to you, but it's good to keep these things top-of-mind as you begin your search.

## Compliance for the ELD mandate and zero violations

Compliance is the foundation upon which an ELD solution is built and might be the most obvious reason you need one – it's why they're being mandated in the first place.

Hours of Service (HOS) violations are costly, so a provider that can evolve their solution with changing regulations, especially if you're crossing the Canada and U.S. border, can help keep you and your fleet violation-free.

So, look for an ELD that's certified in Canada and the U.S. and notice how the provider's solution has evolved to meet compliance requirements.

However, a quality ELD is about more than compliance. ELDs can help fleets save time and money without the need for drivers to fill out paper logs, improve record-keeping and inspection efficiency and – most importantly – prevent collisions and save lives.



### WHAT TO ASK

- [Is your ELD solution certified for use in Canada and the U.S.?](#)
- [How quickly can you move with new regulation changes?](#)



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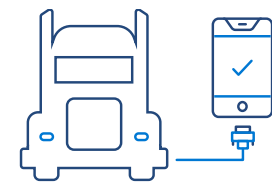
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## Installing your ELD should be smooth and effortless

The speed with which you're able to install your solution will vary by provider and depends on a few factors.

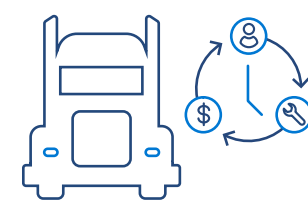
### Plug-and-play



If it's a plug-and-play solution – meaning it doesn't require speciality support, tools or an installer – you should be up and running in a few minutes without costly downtime.

In many cases, you can install the ELD app on the device in the vehicle and follow the instructions to get you going.

### Complex solutions



With more complicated solutions, you might need to schedule time with a specialist or a mechanic to perform the install. That means downtime and additional costs for each vehicle in your fleet.

Find out how much the installation will cost and consider any potential downtime for your fleet.



### WHAT TO ASK

- What is the installation procedure?
- How long does it take?
- Can I install my own device?



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## Look for the highest value from your ELD

Remember, an ELD is an investment in the future of your fleet.

A solution that delivers more savings in the long run might require a larger initial investment. However, a cheaper solution may not include the features you need – and could even cause more issues down the road.

Spend your money where it matters. Avoid complex, expensive installations. Watch out for hidden fees, and instead look for hidden opportunities – like the ability to use Apple or Android operating systems so you don't need to purchase additional phones or tablets.

Find solutions that offer the most value and can help your business grow.



### WHAT TO ASK

- How much does the device cost?
- What are the ongoing fees?
- How long is the contract length?
- Does the contract include an automatic increase year-over-last?



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## An intuitive interface for ease of use

Drivers have a big responsibility to operate safely on roadways. That's why having an easy-to-use interface is so important.

### An ELD should let drivers:

- Focus on safe driving habits by allowing them to easily update their status
- Complete vehicle and roadside inspections
- Manage compliance requirements

An intuitive interface can also lead to higher driver satisfaction and retention. Drivers can concentrate on the safety of themselves and others on the road, rather than fidgeting with complicated technology or being confused about how to perform a task or function.

Find an ELD that's not only effortless for your drivers but also integrates with other easy-to-use applications, like weigh station bypass and toll bypass for a more efficient experience.

When your ELD is easy for your drivers to use, it also means the automated tasks are managed more smoothly.



### WHAT TO ASK

- Is the ELD easy to use?
- What kind of user training do you provide?





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## A cloud-based ELD for reliability and security

Reliable HOS data is critical to your business. Without it, you might see reduced compliance, lower safety and accountability (CSA) scores, fines and out-of-service drivers.

A cloud-based ELD is more reliable and capable than legacy solutions. If a smartphone or tablet is damaged, lost or stolen, a cloud-based solution keeps your data safe and secure.

Also, downtime is significantly lower with a cloud-based ELD. Bluetooth connections can be unreliable. With a cloud-based solution everything is stored – even if you lose your connection.

Look for the peace of mind that comes with a solution that's always accessible from the cloud.

In addition to covering the basics, a quality ELD should also have complementary features to support day-to-day operations. Remember, the right ELD not only keeps you compliant but improves how you manage your entire fleet.



### WHAT TO ASK

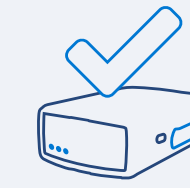
- Is it a cloud-based ELD?
- What is your failure rate?

## Some other benefits of a cloud-based ELD include:



### Simple and reliable

Devices can be misplaced or broken. With a cloud-based ELD, logs are safe if something happens to a mobile device.



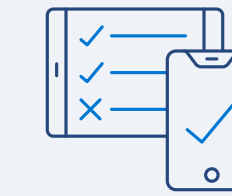
### Dependable connectivity

Bluetooth can be unreliable. Avoid compatibility issues with wireless chipsets or wireless interference from other electronics.



### Compliance

Drivers can automatically sync trip activity and maintain accurate logs even when operating several different vehicles. With a non-cloud solution, drivers would need to recreate their logs every time they switched vehicles.



### Compatible with different platforms

Use any device, including Android or iOS operating systems. You have greater flexibility for different types of technology.



### Access to log history

Easy access to historical logs without administrative support.



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## Beyond the ELD mandate

Although not required by the ELD mandate, support for rulesets and exemptions make it easier for drivers and fleet managers to monitor hours correctly under the appropriate rules for that jurisdiction. That means fewer compliance violations, saving time and money.

A solution that calculates driver hours and shows them how many HOS they have remaining keeps them compliant with regulations. There are lots of exemptions to rulesets, so choose a vendor that can update with new exemptions as needed.

Also, consider how your business will scale and evolve.

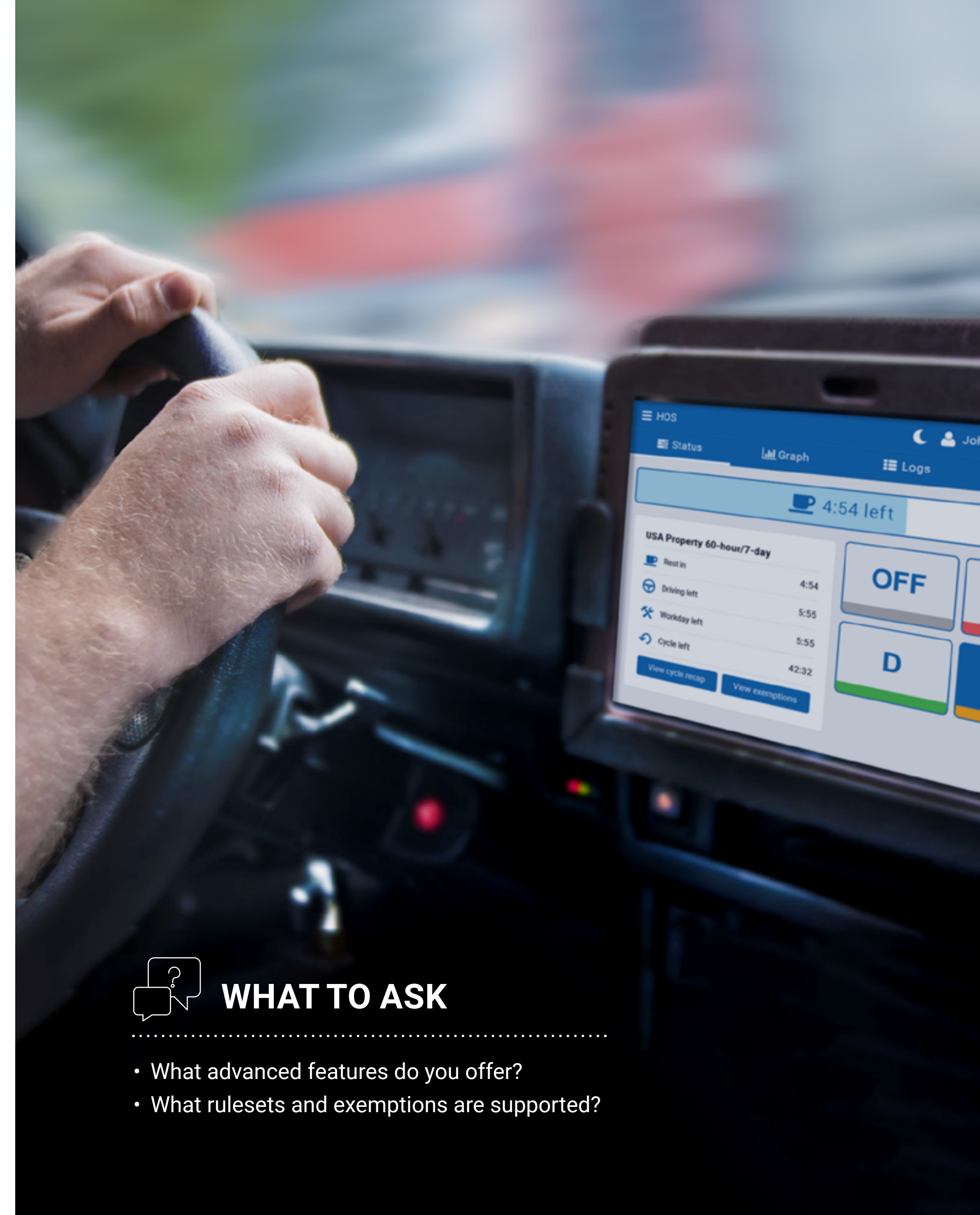
### Look for advanced features like:

- DVIR
- Risk management
- Routing
- Driver safety score cards
- International Fuel Tax Agreement (IFTA) support
- Messaging

It's important to understand how these features are integrated into the system.

If you have access to third-party experts in a highly expandable solution — for things like cameras, temperature sensing and tire pressure monitoring — your ELD could go far beyond basic compliance. These extra features can generate greater efficiency and cost savings. For example, monitoring driving habits to increase safety, reduce fuel consumption and lower emissions.

A solution that goes beyond HOS and supports other aspects of your business is one that can help you grow, scale and pivot.



### WHAT TO ASK

- What advanced features do you offer?
- What rulesets and exemptions are supported?



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# Complementary features for a better ELD

Complementary features go beyond ease of installation, cost and compliance. They help you manage things like logs, violations and driver set up for smoother day-to-day operation and better communication across your organization.

## The power of an electronic DVIR

A **Driver Vehicle Inspection Report (DVIR)** confirms a driver has completed their inspection. DVIR compliance improves road safety and helps drivers identify faults or defects in their vehicle and equipment before they become a hazard.

An electronic DVIR is an intuitive and paperless way that drivers can conduct and submit their pre- and post-trip inspections.

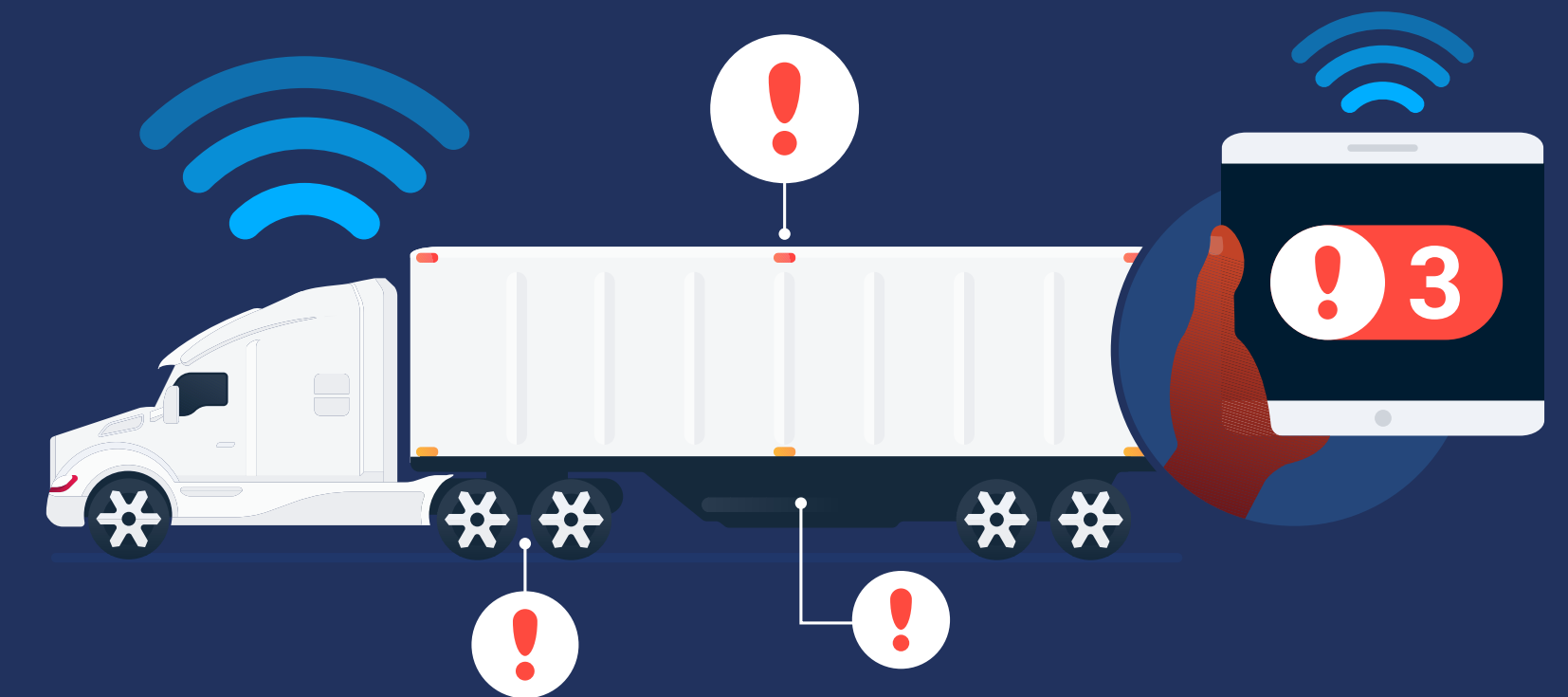


### WHAT TO ASK

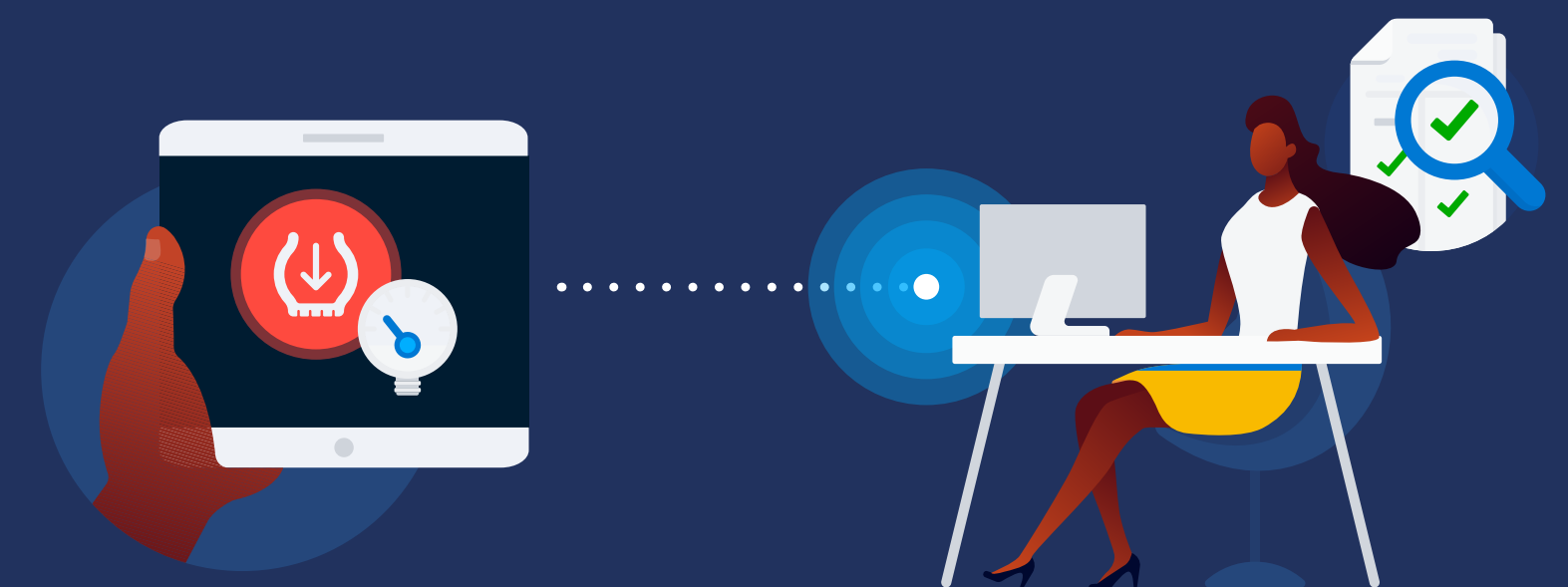
- Do you offer electronic DVIR capabilities?
- Can I customize the defect list?
- Can I attach pictures to DVIR reports?

## Reduce downtime and get instant notifications of defects and missed inspections

Inspections are easy and drivers are prompted to do the same inspections every day.



Integration with other maintenance apps means more streamlined workflows and less administrative work.



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## One device for multiple vehicle classes

Depending on your operations, your fleet may include vehicles designed for construction, oil and gas operations, utilities or waste operations. Integrating these vehicles into one system means your solution works for all the vehicles in your fleet.



Drivers and personnel will only need to learn one system rather than multiple systems. Also, having one device in each vehicle reduces the overall complexity. Fleet managers can monitor their fleet on one platform to save time and reduce administrative overhead.



### WHAT TO ASK

- Will the same device work in any type of vehicle?
- Are there different devices for different operating conditions?



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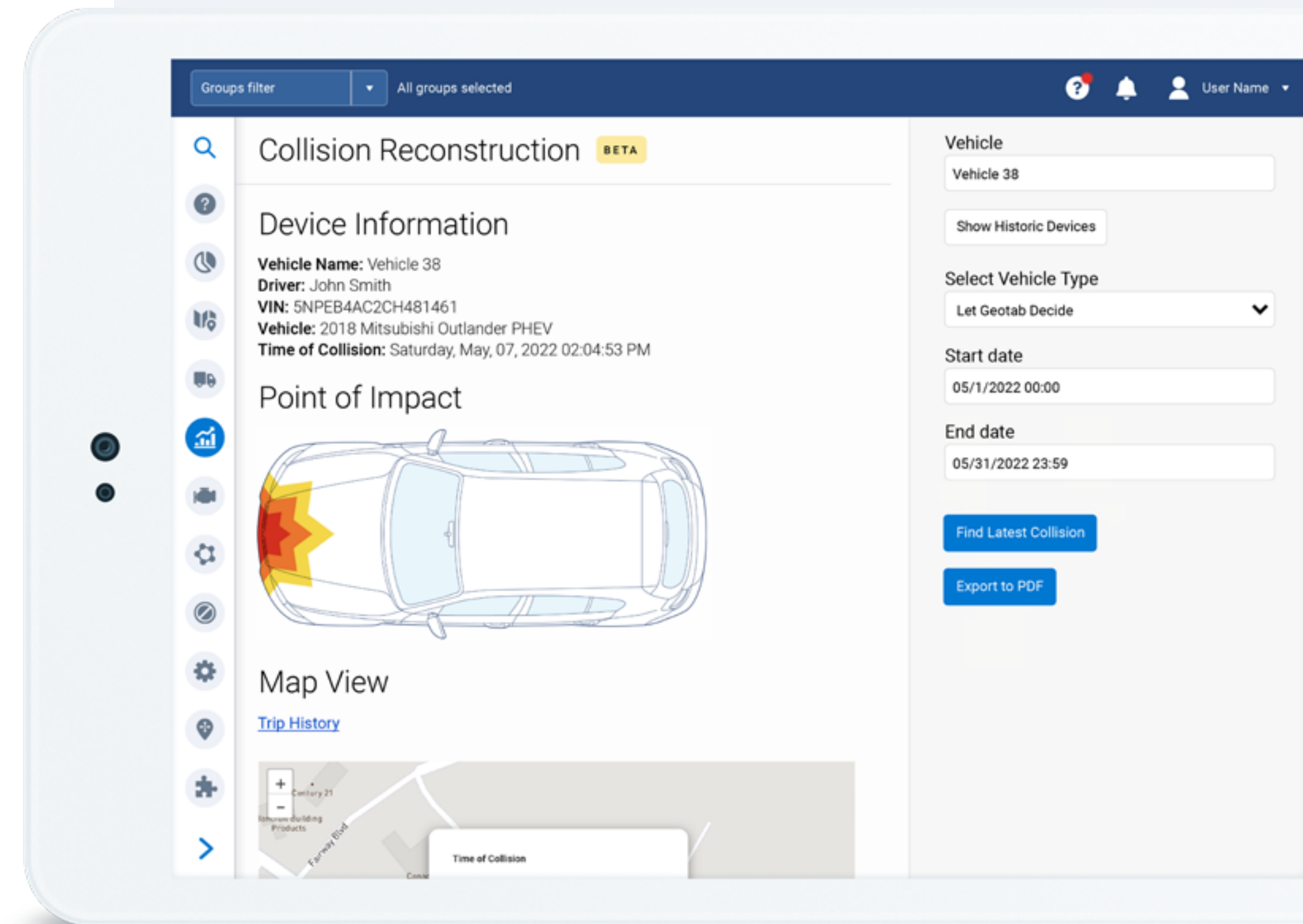
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## Collision reconstruction for improved safety

Class 8 fleet managers know first-hand that collisions involving large trucks can have severe consequences. Collision reconstruction provides situational awareness before, during and after an event.

With data insight into vehicle motion, you'll have a better understanding of who was at fault. You'll know the cause of the incident and how to prevent similar events from happening again, enhancing safety for everyone.

Also, telematics makes it possible to view and understand historical patterns for specific drivers, vehicles or routes. You can gain a broader perspective, whether it's a one-off incident or a recurring pattern. That means additional information about problematic routes so you can plan for alternatives.



### WHAT TO ASK

- Can I access data for collision reconstruction?
- What reports do you offer for analyzing collision data?
- How accurate is the data provided?



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## Expand and customize your solution

When you have open access to your unfiltered data, you can create custom reports unique to your fleet that provide context for the data you're collecting.

Not all solutions offer the level of access you need for that type of flexibility.

Also, look for a high level of expandability. Without the capability to customize your solution with third-party vendors, you might miss a world of possibilities with other expert solutions.

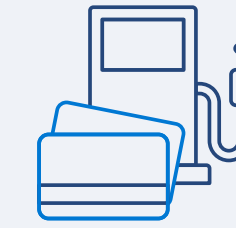
Choose a solution that makes it easy to integrate with third-party apps for a fully customizable and endlessly expandable solution.



### WHAT TO ASK

- Are there any access limitations to the data my vehicles collect?
- Can I integrate third-party software and/or hardware into my solution?
- Will your solution integrate with the tools and systems my fleet already uses?
- Can I customize the ELD solution?

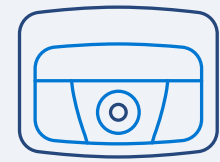
## Don't miss out on expert solutions such as:



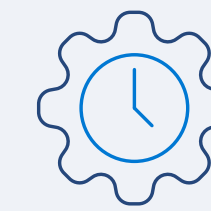
**Fuel cards**



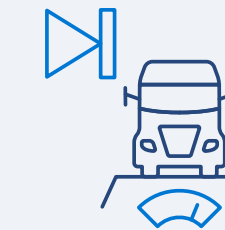
**Temperature sensors**



**Cameras**



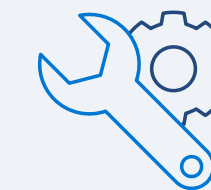
**TMS applications**



**Weigh Station bypass**



**Asset trackers**



**Maintenance and diagnostics**



**Customized applications designed for your fleet**



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## Create your own customizations

Each fleet has unique needs and goals for their business. You may need a specific report, dashboard or rule to help you better manage operations.

The right vendor will support your customization needs.

Some vendors may require you to submit a special request and business case for a customization. These requests will depend on their capacity rather than your needs. Even small requests could take months and result in additional costs.

Look for a vendor that offers the data you need in the format you want, to help you make the best decisions for your fleet.



### WHAT TO ASK

- Do you offer Software Development Kits (SDK) and Application Programming Interfaces (API)?
- What is the process to create customizations?
- How flexible are you for custom reports and dashboards?



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## Get the customer support you need

Since ELDs are a relatively new technology, fleet managers and drivers are still learning about the benefits and how to navigate each system.

An active 24/7 support team can be the difference between compliance and non-compliance, which can cost your fleet unnecessary violations and downtime.

Fast and expert support with your ELD is essential to hit the ground running — especially when you're switching providers — so you can keep your fleet moving efficiently.

### Look for an ELD that offers:

- 24/7 support
- Technical support resources for self-guided problem solving
- Fast email response times
- Multilingual support specialists
- Little wait time for support
- Variety of contact methods: call, chat, community, etc.



### WHAT TO ASK

- What level of support do you offer?
- Is support available in multiple languages?





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# Transitioning into the future

Adapting your fleet to uncertainty while you scale means choosing an ELD that can pivot with your evolving business.

Driver retention, growth, sustainability and electrification are all things your ELD provider should be able to address as they grow and adapt along with you.

Look for a reputable company with experience, well-thought-out security protocols, and the ability to adapt your fleet to growing electrification trends with deep insights and strategic advice.

## Reputation, experience and expertise

With so many ELD solutions to choose from, look for industry recognition and steady growth over time as a good indicator of vendor reputation. Find out how deep their industry knowledge is in your sector. Next, look at their track record of success. Furthermore, case studies demonstrate how they've helped companies similar to yours.

Also, look at how much a provider invests in themselves for the future and how they stay competitive in the market. A steady history of reinvestment into research and product development shows a commitment to continuous improvement.

An ELD provider should be a partner to your needs and capable of customizing the solution to your requirements to help you get the most out of your investment.



### WHAT TO ASK

- How long has your company been in business?
- How many customers do you serve?
- What will the relationship look like after the sale?
- Are you investing in the future?



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## Data security strategy

Security deals with every part of a telematics system.

Simply asking “is our data secure?” isn’t enough. An ELD provider should be able to identify specific strategies that follow security protocols to leave you feeling confident in both the provider and their solution.

In 2020, the FBI issued a warning to fleet companies about potential vulnerabilities to cyber attacks in their ELDs. In response, the FMCSA released [cybersecurity best practices](#) for fleets to reduce the probability of being attacked.

The right vendor should have end-to-end security measures; from manufacturing, to hardware and software, data transfer, and data storage. This will prevent attacks that aim to either steal data or disrupt operations with ransomware.



### WHAT TO ASK

- [Who manufactures the telematics hardware?](#)
- [Will the device be the same across my entire fleet?](#)
- [What steps are taken to ensure my data privacy?](#)
- [Do you encrypt the data as it is sent over the cellular network?](#)
- [If your servers are compromised, how do you protect the account information of your users?](#)

**The National Motor Freight Traffic Association (NMFTA) suggests preference to ELD solutions based on existing secure platforms.**

### Watch for:



#### Internal manufacturing

Consider a provider with direct control over hardware and software security as they can respond faster to threats or cyber attacks.



#### Failure rate

Look for a provider that can offer a failure rate that’s better than the industry average, which is around 7-10%.



#### ISO 27001

ELD vendors should be ISO 27001 certified, which is an international standard on how to manage information security.



#### FedRAMP and FIPS 140-2

Consider FedRAMP approval and FIPS 140-2 validation, which is the standard used by the U.S. government to validate that hardware and software produced by private sector companies meet the NIST standards and adhere to the Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002.



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## The future of fleet electrification

Electric vehicle adoption has grown exponentially over the last five years. As more fleets are considering electrification, it's essential to work with an ELD provider that understands the nuances of integrating electric vehicles.

The right provider should not only be able to capture data but provide data-driven tools to help you better understand EVs and how you can electrify your fleet with confidence.

Look for a vendor that can help fleet operators navigate the electrification process and provide support as part of a mixed fleet strategy.

With EVs, there are unique metrics to monitor to optimize their performance, range and return on investment. This can include reviewing historical charging behavior and monitoring the vehicle's current state-of-charge.

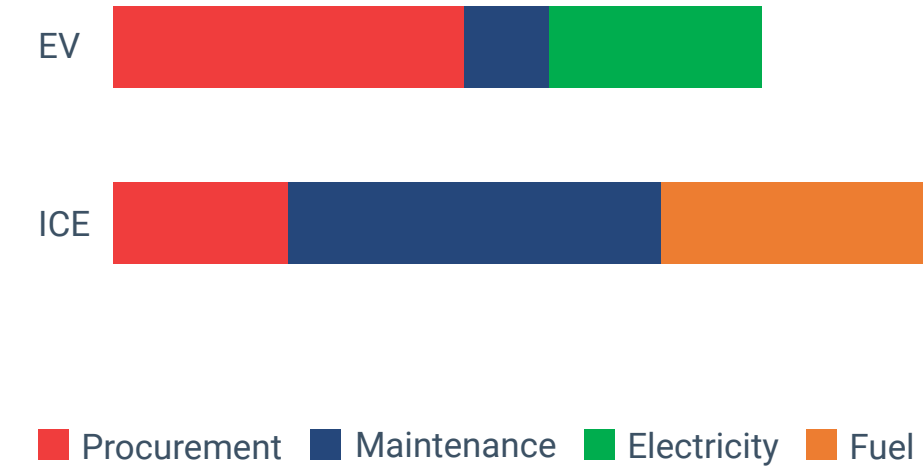
If your vendor has the ability to manage both ICE (Internal Combustion Engines) vehicles and EVs on the same platform, you can efficiently monitor and compare all the vehicles in your fleet.



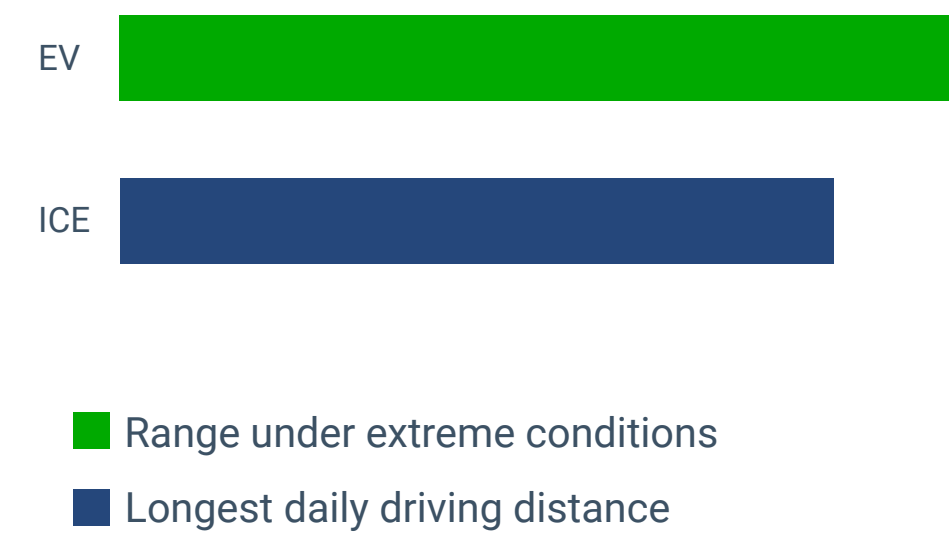
### WHAT TO ASK

- Does your solution support EVs?
- Can EVs be monitored alongside ICEs?

#### Lifetime cost



#### Range assurance



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# Geotab Drive: your all-in-one ELD solution

Geotab Drive is an affordable, expandable and flexible ELD solution that streamlines HOS, DVIR and driver identification to save you time and money.

It works with the Geotab GO telematics device to help you meet compliance regulations, keep your fleet productive and keep your drivers safe.

Learn more about [Geotab Drive](#) today.

[Learn more](#)

## Key ELD Features



### Ensure fleet and regulatory compliance

- Notify drivers that are low or out of hours
- Reminders for pre- and post-trip DVIR inspections
- Supports over 100+ HOS rulesets and exemptions for the U.S. and Canada
- Track miles by state or province for each fleet vehicle to simplify IFTA reporting



### Improve fleet safety

- Video-based driver risk management solutions
- Driver scorecards and reports
- Driver training and gamification solutions



### Improve profitability with actionable insights

- Quickly identify and manage your greatest cost drivers
- Rightsize your fleet
- Eliminate fuel waste
- Reduce downtime



### One platform, unlimited customizations

- View, segment and share data however you need
- Customize rules and alerts to your fleet's needs
- Build custom integrations with APIs and SDK toolkit
- 250+ integrated Marketplace solutions



### Simplify fleet management

- Easily track and bulk-annotate unassigned logs
- Intuitive dashboard reports on driver status with real-time alerts
- Log in and log out reminders



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# About Geotab

Geotab is advancing security, connecting commercial vehicles to the internet and providing web-based analytics to help customers better manage their fleets. Geotab's open platform and Marketplace, offering hundreds of third-party solution options, allows both small and large businesses to automate operations by integrating vehicle data with their other data.

The in-vehicle device provides additional functionality through IOX Add-Ons as an IoT hub. Processing billions of data points a day, Geotab leverages data analytics and machine learning to help customers improve productivity, focus on sustainability, optimize fleets by reducing fuel consumption, enhance driver safety, and achieve strong compliance to regulatory changes. Geotab's products are represented and sold worldwide through Authorized Geotab Resellers.

To learn more, please visit [www.geotab.com](http://www.geotab.com) and follow us [@GEOTAB](https://twitter.com/GEOTAB) and on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/geotab).

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