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Fuel, Energy, and Environmental News & Developments of Particular Interest to Automotive Industry Executives



The Fuel Stop

This Week: Gary Scanlon



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Gary Scanlon is the National Sales Manager for **Merchants Leasing**. Scanlon has more than 25 years of experience in the leasing industry, has established a strong track record and is highly regarded among his peers. He previously represented Donlen Fleet Services as a Senior Sales Executive for business development functions. Prior to that he was Senior Vice President of LeasePlan USA in Atlanta, where his responsibilities included national sales, marketing, contract administration, strategic accounts, as well as product development and market introduction for their emerging markets unit. Scanlon began his career in client relations and sales with Dart & Kraft Financial and later became regional Sales Manager for ARI in Chicago.

1. What is Merchants offering to help its clients rein in fuel costs?

Controlling fuel costs begins with the vehicle selection process. Fuel efficiency is but one component to be considered along with the

actual utility of the vehicle, company image, driver satisfaction, safety, acquisition cost and total life cycle costs. As the cost of fuel escalates it can carry more weight when trying to balance the various selection criteria.

However, once the selection is made and the vehicle is in use, there are many ways we help our clients optimize the expected efficiency of each vehicle, including:

- Proper and timely preventive maintenance of the engine and drive train is critical.
- Diligent monitoring of tire pressure and wear.
- Making sure all unnecessary weight is taken out of the vehicle.
- Monitoring the vehicle's performance using Telematics and a comprehensive fuel management service.
- Providing driver education and monitoring driving habits.

2. What changes do you foresee in fuel management over the next year or two?

The use of Telematics, specifically using in-vehicle GPS and engine monitoring technology, will continue to expand rapidly and become the newest tool for many in their efforts to control fuel costs. Among other benefits, this technology can track overall vehicle performance, record vehicle speeds and engine

idling, track usage patterns and a host of other metrics that can be managed right from your desk top in virtually real-time. This type of information can improve scheduling, enable targeted driver behavior training and modification, as well as help to ensure preventive maintenance is done on time and much more.

Additionally the criteria for vehicle selection may be increasingly influenced by advancements and availability of alternative fuels and power plant options. Hybrids, bio-diesels and perhaps other new technology breakthroughs will play a part in the short term.

3. What are you reading and monitoring that is giving you an edge?

Certainly the available trade resources, both electronic and print, are excellent for keeping pace with the latest news and trends. Also maintaining an active network of sales, technical and executive level contacts within all the industry verticals that have direct and indirect support to the fleet industry proves invaluable. And lastly, our work with existing clients to tailor specific solutions to their ever changing challenges gives us a wide ranging set of best practices that can be shared from one client to the next.