

Increase Visibility— If You Can See It, You Can Fix It

Proactive Last-Mile Risk Management Through
Increased Visibility

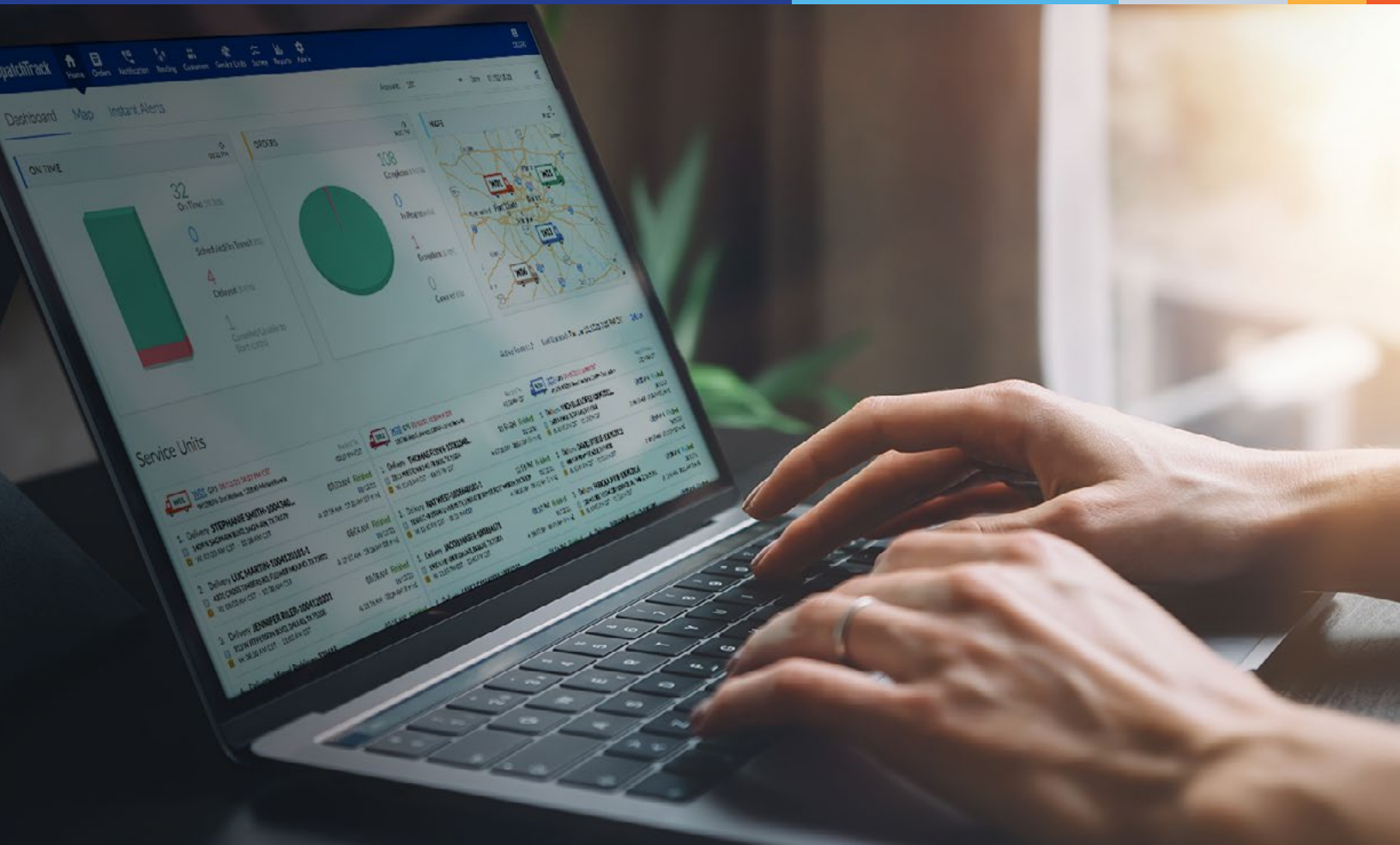


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01

Visibility: The Only Way to Call the Customer Before There's a Problem

Imagine a scene: you're an operations manager at a 3PL company, and you've solved the secret to visibility.

The ability to get a handle on what's happening in the field on the day of delivery has been one of the thorniest operational and technological problems that shippers across industries have had to deal with, but you've found the secret sauce: worrying about visibility is a thing of the past. In this scenario, what does your average day look like?

As soon as you sit down at your desk, you can see all of the day's orders and truck routes immediately. You see the location of each driver on the map, and you can immediately visualize everything that's happened so far. Of the thousands of stops that your drivers (or your carriers' drivers) are slated to make today, there are about a hundred where drivers are already showing updated statuses.

“As soon as you sit down at your desk, you can see all of the day's orders and truck routes immediately.”

You cast your eyes down the list: mostly, you see completed orders with photographic proof of delivery. But you also see a handful of flagged orders that either couldn't be delivered or were only partially delivered. You click on a few in order to drill down the details:

Order 1: Your driver stopped at the house (and took a photo as proof), but the consignee wasn't there to receive the order. You go ahead and call the customer, who says that she only stepped out for a minute, and that she's available to receive the delivery now. You find a new delivery window in the next few hours (since the driver's still in the neighborhood), reroute the truck, and let the customer know when to expect delivery.



Stop 2: One driver is running late because of a giant highway pile-up. It's too late to send new routing instructions to avoid the traffic jam—but you can trigger automated alerts to all of the consignees on the route with new ETAs that reflect the traffic. When a B2B customer in the restaurant space follows up by saying that the new delivery window is in the middle of the lunch rush, you visualize the existing route and find a way to move it around.

At the end of the day, you realize that your rate of missed deliveries is much lower than usual. Not only that, but you had to field fewer customer calls than an average day. Why? Because in nearly every case where there was an issue, you called or notified the customer proactively to resolve the situation.

This is visibility in a nutshell: no matter how large your fleet, no matter how many orders you have to manage, you're able to provide proactive customer service and effortlessly manage by exception.

When you have a comprehensive, 360-degree view of your operations on the day of delivery, you can finally gain enough control to decrease risk and uncertainty.

“49% of Supply Chain Leaders (the top 12% of respondents) can capture real-time data insights and act on them immediately.”

Richard Howells, Forbes

02

When You Know, You're in Control: How Visibility Empowers You to Manage by Exception

In the scenario above, you were able to *delight* your customers and limit phone time.

Considering that customers increasingly see voice calls [as an escalation](#), this is a big deal. That alone can have a transformative impact on how your operation manages exceptions and risk. And the scenario we're describing isn't pie-in-the-sky, either—it's something that's possible right now with a high degree of visibility into your last mile logistics.

By the time a customer calls you, it's too late to provide superior service. But knowledge is power. And there are a number of specific ways in which visibility can empower you to make the right decisions in real time and become truly proactive:





LIVE GPS TRACKING IN THE FIELD

Real-time tracking of trucks—even those owned by your carriers—means that the instant you pull up your dashboard you know where every order is in the world. In this way, you can immediately see if a truck is running behind schedule—such that you can start managing those potentially-late orders—and you can see if a truck isn't where it's supposed to be and start figuring out why.

REAL-TIME, DAY-OF-DELIVERY STATUS UPDATES

If you can see each delivery being signed for and marked as completed by the driver at the time of delivery, **you can see at a glance what's going right—and what isn't**. For things that aren't going right, you can be proactive about dealing with them. Thus, your normal operations run more smoothly than ever—and you solve problems for customers before they've even noticed them.

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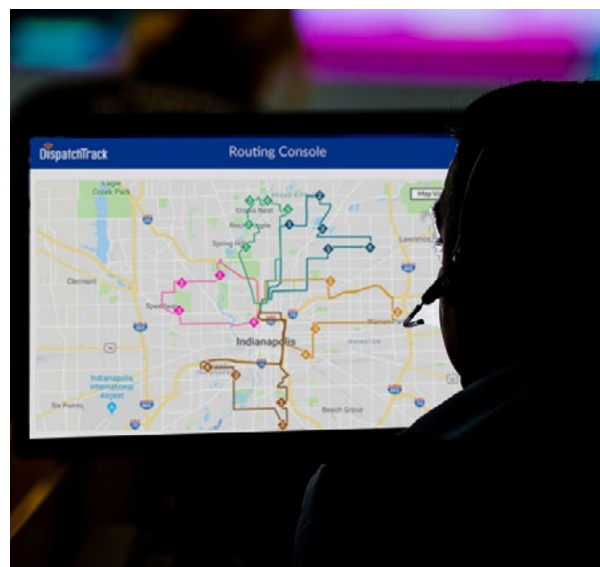
EXCEPTION ALERTS

In the scenario we've been describing, you're getting live status updates from drivers at the time of delivery—without having to spend time on the phone. This makes it possible to turn the last mile from a black box, where you can only pray that things are going right, to an opportunity for delighting customers by skillfully managing exceptions. **If you can immediately see that a consignee wasn't home to accept delivery or wouldn't accept a damaged shipment, you can do something to remedy the situation.** If you can't see these situations unfolding in real time, there's no way to act quickly enough to salvage them.

“Visibility technology... has ‘become a necessity’ amid pandemic-driven lockdowns, demand spikes and supply disruptions.”

Bart De Muynck, Gartner Vice President of Research
quoted in the Wall Street Journal

In shipping, exceptions *are* the rule. Here, visibility means that the hunt for the right information is trivially easy—at best, you don't even have to leave the main dashboard to see situations unfolding that require attention. The less time you spend searching for information, the more time you have to actually act on that information. The result? Increased control, and increased agility.



03

What Makes Proactive Customer Service Possible for Large Fleet Operators?

The amount of visibility and control that we're describing might seem far-fetched when it comes to businesses that are tracking thousands of orders and hundreds of trucks at any given moment.

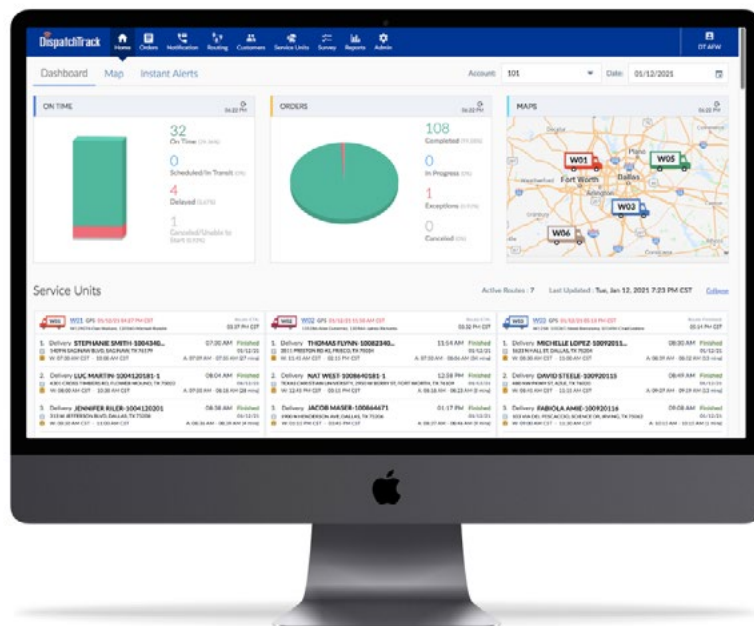
Getting information quickly enough to deal with customer service, driver management, and routing issues in real time just doesn't seem possible. But when we begin to think of visibility in terms of a simple concept—minimizing the time and number of clicks it requires to get any given piece of data—it's not impossible to imagine a scalable architecture that powers live visibility into field operations on the day of delivery.

The question is: what do 3PLs need in order to make this level of visibility possible?



DRIVER AND CUSTOMER INTERFACES

First and foremost, upping visibility is a technology problem. The right technology will connect you to drivers and customers. This might look like a driver-specific application that prompts drivers to send live updates from out in the field, and a web portal that allows consignees or shippers to track their own orders at whatever level of detail you specify.



CENTRALIZED DATA

By giving drivers the ability to send updates from along their routes without phone or radio communications, you make it easy to gather the data you need. From there, you need to centralize that data and put it in context—with telematics information, order specifications, route maps, etc. For this, you need technology that integrates easily with any other tools and solutions you're already using. Rather than spending all day flipping back and forth between three or four different applications, you want data to flow freely from one tool to the next, so that it's always at hand when you need it.

SINGLE-PANE-OF-GLASS DASHBOARD

You want to minimize clicks in order to minimize time. To do that, you need a single-pane-of-glass dashboard that immediately shows you what you need to know about how your operations are unfolding. This can—and should—include easy-to-digest, color coded charts and other visualizations that show you completed, pending, and problematic deliveries. It might juxtapose this data against a live map view of your trucks, and an easy-to-navigate list of orders, with accurate ETAs for each and flags for any important notes or updates. This dashboard should act as your command center: without clicking to a second screen, you should immediately spot the information you need to offer proactive customer service. This means that you can see exceptions at a glance—but it also means that you can operate with confidence that everything else is going right and doesn't require your attention.



RAPID, AUTOMATED COMMUNICATION

All the visibility in the world is useless to you if you can't act on what you know. That's why you need to pair your increased visibility with the ability to communicate in real time with drivers and customers—ideally without resorting to phone calls. This might look like automated alerts that are pushed to drivers to let them know about route changes, or messages that are sent to customers automatically for certain specific delivery updates. To stay on theme, you might think of this as the mechanism for extending visibility from dispatchers and operations managers to drivers and consignees.

Information goes stale quickly in shipping. That means that if you don't "know" something quickly enough, you don't know it at all. You need visibility to optimize, manage, and improve delivery runs—and luckily, this level of visibility is possible.

“Our platform is built around a single-pane-of-glass dashboard that shows trucks, delivery statuses, ETAs, delivery window commitments, and much more in real time.”

04

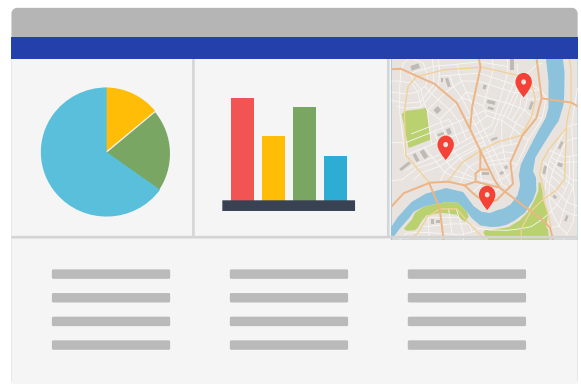
CONCLUSION

How DispatchTrack's Visibility Dashboard Shows You What's Going Right... and What Isn't

At DispatchTrack, visibility is our business.

Our platform is built around a single-pane-of-glass dashboard that shows trucks, delivery statuses, ETAs, delivery window commitments, and much more in real time. Careful UX design means that all of the highly-visible maps, reports, and alerts are color-coded in such a way as to ensure easy understanding, so that dispatchers can see the last mile situation at a quick glance and immediately take action to manage exceptions.

Our system connects to (and centralizes data from) a driver mobile app that provides paperless, digital dispatch of orders, turn-by-turn driving directions, GPS tracking, and frictionless communications (i.e no need for phone calls) with both customers and dispatch, plus easy documentation of deliveries and exceptions. The result is that when exceptions do arise, they're immediately identified and dealt with. It takes one click to check on the alert, and one more click to dive into the details.



From there, it's easy to reschedule deliveries, troubleshoot any issues that your customers might be having, send out automated communications, and maximize the number of completed shipments that each driver gets through over the course of the day. Of course, we also offer a best-in-class, high-precision route optimization interface that maximizes on-time delivery—which means there are fewer exceptions to manage in the first place. In this way, when you offer visibility to customers, for instance, you're offering visibility into something that works.

Growing your business requires control over the last mile—and to do so at scale. This means you need to invest in visibility. By partnering with DispatchTrack, you're doing exactly that.



“When we begin to think of visibility in terms of a simple concept—minimizing the time and number of clicks it requires to get any given piece of data—it’s possible to imagine a scalable architecture that powers live visibility into field operations on the day of delivery.”



DispatchTrack is a leading provider of SaaS solutions for food distributors, furniture retailers, and anyone else who struggles to optimize the last mile. Our streamlined and intuitive user dashboard provides the real-time visibility that dispatchers need to keep track of their deliveries and proactively manage them.

Among the platform's many features, we offer modular tools for self-scheduling, route optimization, customer communication, real-time tracking and ETA, proof of delivery, and delivery network intelligence and analytics.

With customers across North America, Europe, South America, and Asia, DispatchTrack is used by thousands of businesses of all sizes and many multi-billion-dollar enterprises across a wide range of industries. More than 60 million scheduled delivery experiences are powered by DispatchTrack each year. **For more information, [contact us now](#) at 1-866-437-3573 or sales@dispatchtrack.com.**