

TECHNICIAN TRAINING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

How REMOTE TRAINING options can keep fleet personnel up to date on the LATEST SERVICE and MAINTENANCE PRACTICES.

By David Brierley



[EDUCATION & TRAINING]

Training is important to any job, including technicians servicing commercial vehicles. The safety of the truck drivers, as well as the safety of other drivers on the road around them, is at stake. What's more, the financial well-being of the fleet relies heavily on technicians to ensure vehicle uptime is maximized as well as keep the latest vehicle technologies up to date.

There is a lot riding on the performance of technicians, so continuous training is crucial to maintain a fleet's viability.

The importance of training

Whether working at a fleet, a dealership, or a third-party repair shop, a major concern for technicians is safety. They need to know the proper procedures to service and repair trucks to keep the vehicles safe while on the road.

Safety

"The main factor is safety," says Joe Baumer, after-market training manager at Meritor, a supplier of commercial vehicle brakes and components. "Annually, about 30 percent of major heavy duty truck accidents are attributed to brake issues. We're operating on our nation's highways and trucks are having accidents just like automobiles, but when a truck accident occurs it usually results in larger consequences. I believe that training can do a lot to prevent that."

A properly trained technician is more likely to use appropriate procedures when servicing critical vehicle systems such as brakes, and less likely to make a mistake that could be catastrophic.

Efficiency

Cost is another consideration when it comes to maintaining vehicle safety, and an efficient fleet is a cost effective one. Training can help here, too. Keeping technicians up to date on the latest repair and service processes means they can do quality work at a more rapid pace, thereby improving efficiency and uptime.

"Customers want their trucks on the road as quickly as possible," says Charlie McKinney, manager, technical communications and training at heavy duty power management manufacturer Eaton. "Every day of downtime is potentially thousands of dollars in lost revenue, so it's critically important for these dealerships to have trained technicians who know how to repair the product properly and quickly."

McKinney adds that when completing warranty work, technicians need to be able to make repairs properly within the standard repair times in order for the work to remain cost effective.

Equally concerning when it comes to cost, Baumer notes that violations discovered during roadside checks can be costly to fleets both in terms of mandated repairs and downtime.