



# COMMERCIAL FLEET TIRE DIGEST

*The authoritative guide to reducing commercial tire expenditures from  
Pressure Systems International,  
the manufacturer of the Meritor Tire Inflation System by PSI™*

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## Maximizing Overall Cost/Mile

See MTIS by  
P.S.I. at the  
ZONAR  
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A successful tire program means a lot to a fleet's overall financial success. You should not be tempted to purchase the least expensive tire available in the market as this is unlikely to result in overall tire cost reductions. A specific tire make/model may have a high initial cost but if it averages higher miles to removal along with more retreads per casing then the result is a big reduction in overall tire cost/mile. In addition, if the tire is a more expensive “fuel efficient” model, you may also be saving, over the life of the tire, an additional 1-2% or more from improved fuel economy. Fuel efficient tires may cost a little more but the savings on the back end makes up for that really fast.

Maximizing vehicle fuel economy, increasing tire removal miles, getting that extra retread out of every casing, and eliminating costly tire related roadside service calls goes a long way to a serious cost reduction program. The real measure of tire cost is cost/mile and cost/32<sup>nd</sup>. The factors you should consider include:

Choose the best tire for your specific service vocation: There are many available tire makes/model to consider for steers, drives, and trailers. Since no two fleets are the same, the only way to determine which tire is optimum for a specific application and wheel position is through real world testing. Working with your tire professional is the best way to develop a test program and track a statistically valid sample size.

Retreading: When it is time to choose a retread keep in mind not only do you have a choice of a specific tread design but there are several compounds to choose from as well. Fuel efficient compounds, high mileage, and high traction are typical options. You also need to determine what is the maximum casing age where retreading is a win-win option

in your fleet. Some fleets say a five year old casings is the limit for retreads while other choose six or seven years. This choice depends on the results of your scrap tire pile analysis. For instance, in your tire program you typically retread seven year old casings. You later discover that the majority of tires in your scrap tire pile are actually seven year old casings with plenty of tread rubber remaining. That would be a sign that a seven year old casing retread spec may be just too old for your operation. In this case, your fleet spec should be to only retread casings no older than 6 years.

Determine proper tire pressure for steer, drive, and trailer tires: Pressure should be based on the worst case load that tire will see in your various applications. Air is what carries the load so it is important to specify the correct tire pressure. Too high or too low a pressure will lead to irregular wear and early tire removals.

Determine the target tread depth when tires should come out of service and be sent to the retreader: Running tires down to the legal DOT limits of 4/32” for steers and 2/32” for drives and trailers can lead to casing damage and that will adversely affect the tire casing for retreading. There is a sweet spot when it comes to tread depth pull points for every fleet.

Tire rotation: There are different scenarios when it comes to the best tire rotation and moving sequence on your vehicles; for example, many fleets run their steer tires down to 6 or 8/32”, move them to the trailer position, and then run them down to 2/32” before sending to the retreader.

Every fleet should have a current cost/mile figure for their tires which is considered the baseline. Optimizing various components of your tire program as mentioned here can result in the best overall cost/mile for your individual fleet.

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