



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™*

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 11

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2009

How to Run a Good Tire Evaluation



Happy Holidays
from everyone at
PSI and

Commercial Fleet
Tire Digest.

May you and your
family have a
joyous holiday
season.

Fleets today have a wide variety of tire makes and models they can spec on their tractors, trailers and dollies. There are tires with deep tread depth, shallow treads, different rib designs and lug patterns, and special directional tires. Some models claim to maximize fuel economy while others claim to give extended tire life with great traction. Some tire manufacturers claim their casings can survive two or even three retread cycles.

With so many choices, it is important to make the best business decision to find the right solution for your specific operating scenario. Performing a thorough tire evaluation can help you do that. The most important consideration when running your tire evaluation is choosing a large enough sample size so that statistically at the end of the evaluation you can state unequivocally that Tire A outperformed Tire B or C.

Real world fleet testing on different tire designs has many parameters that must be considered, and you want to be sure that you minimize as many variables as you can. The following are the primary variables that will affect tire performance.

Make/Model/Age of Vehicle

You should choose tractors and trailers that are the same make/model with similar vehicle mileage. Comparing tires on a new tractor versus the same tires on a tractor with 500,000 miles would give you misleading results.

Duty Cycle

Service vocation will play a very large role in how tires perform. Tires on tractors that are running from California to New York in a straight line will give significantly higher mileages than tires on tractors that are in a combination of line-haul and pickup/delivery i.e. P&D with lots of turning will lead to faster tire wear.

Age of Tires

If you are running a serious tire evaluation, you will want to run new tires or new retreads. It is almost impossible to run an evaluation on tires that are 30% or 40% worn when you begin tracking the data.

Drivers

We all know that a driver can have a serious impact on his vehicle's performance. If possible, choose drivers that have been around awhile. I was once involved in an evaluation at a small fleet where the same tire designs were evaluated on 10 trucks where 10 drivers were assigned to those same trucks for over a year. All the trucks had similar routes and loads. After 12 months, the steer tires had a very wide range of treadwear between the 10 trucks. It turned out there was a direct correlation between the experience and age of the driver and how the tires performed. The worst tire performance was turned in by the 25 year old "hotshot" driver from Texas. The best results were from Charlie who had been driving for 35 years.

Remember, a good evaluation is always well thought through:

What trucks & trailers

What drivers

What routes & loads

What data do I need to record

- tread depths
- wear conditions
- fuel data
- punctures
- roadside service calls

Taking the time up front to do your homework will result in a successful real-world tire evaluation that will give you the information you need to make the right tire choice for your fleet.

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