

# Five Things You Should Know Before Selecting a GPS Partner

By Mark Behnke

**E**ver wonder, as a buy-here, pay-here dealer, what to ask or look for before choosing a GPS tracking device company? It's imperative that you do your research and put together a plan before being tied to a product or company. Failing to plan could leave you high and dry in the long run. Putting together a list of questions or areas of concerns before talking to GPS vendors is your first step. It can be a daunting task. But we're here to give you the five essential steps in determining the best GPS partner for your dealership.

**1. Think of your GPS vendor as a business partner, not just a company selling you a "thing" you can buy elsewhere.**

The overall strength of the company you're about to do business with is key to a happy long term relationship. Why? "Here today and gone tomorrow" is running wild in the GPS tracking device industry. You can't afford to partner with a company that hasn't proven longevity in the market place. Investigate how long they have been in business and in what other areas and markets they provide solutions. Do they produce their own products? Do they reinvest back into their own company? Who are their business partners in the world? Ask these questions of their representatives and don't settle for vague answers.

**2. Analyze the company's internal / external infrastructure.**

What is this you ask? Though you never see the back end, it's the engine that makes up the GPS system. The infrastructure is more than the actual device you are buying but what backs it up and makes it do those things you need it to do. Where is the website hosted? Do they have backup systems in place in case of a natural or unnatural disaster? How often is the website down and does the system bog down during peak usage hours? All great questions and ones you can't afford to take for granted. You must ask and dig to get the

answers. It's simple really: knowing that whenever you need to utilize your GPS system, it will work and work 100% of the time. Anything less could cost you thousands of dollars every day.

**3. Educate yourself on today's technology.**

Is the device really state of the art technology, and how does this benefit you? Do they have an R&D (Research & Development) department both for testing technology and feature options? What features come standard with your system: locating, geo fencing, speed alerts, monthly or weekly auto reports, battery disconnect alerts, starter interrupts, etc.? It all comes

**“Peace of mind knowing that the system is working for YOU, not YOU working for the system may be hard to measure but is priceless in your analysis.”**

down to the simple question "What do I get for my money?" Like buying two similar cars at auction, one is fully loaded and the other is stripped down. Are they asking for the same money despite the obvious? The answer should be "NO". Rather than "bottom line" thinking, compare what you are really getting for your money. If the extra cost is justified by the answers you receive in this area of concern, remember that you get what you pay for.


**4. Know what type of support and training the company provides AFTER your initial purchase.**

Support and training are extremely important so you use all the features available to their optimum, but also vital in case of failure or trouble in the field. What are the company's hours of availability? Can you reach someone 24/7 or are you limited to certain business hours and on your own the rest of the time? Do they provide useful training for their installation and website features? Are their training

materials readily available? Do they offer installation support after you purchase their device? Where are their support centers located, US or offshore? But, the biggest question you should be asking is, "does the information they provide you, the end user, help fix the problem and simply make it work?" It's all well and good for a company to sell you on what their product can do, but your time is too important for you to be left in the cold actually using the product after the sale.

**5. Investigate what type of return on investment you get.**

Naturally, you start measuring your return with the cost of the device, but does the device and system pay for itself? Reliability and security are major factors but hard to place a value on. Peace of mind knowing that the system is working for YOU, not YOU working for the system may be hard to measure but is priceless in your analysis. How does utilizing the system create a positive flow of monthly or weekly payments back to you? Do you constantly have to chase? Does having a GPS system change your thinking process allowing you to take a higher risk than normal and increase loan amounts in the future?

There are many questions you should ask before aligning yourself with a GPS partner. You have to be your own best advocate and ask the tough questions and look through vague, uninformative answers. We hope this helps you understand the process of making a profitable business decision when choosing a GPS partner. 

**MARK BEHNKE**

Director of Sales

GoldStar GPS

[www.goldstargps.com](http://www.goldstargps.com)

[markb@goldstargps.com](mailto:markb@goldstargps.com)

