Future Practice

I Notching up the miles, smiles, and savings

Mercedes-Benz do Brasil has a presence in the Latin American country for the past 65 years. With its 9,000 employees, the three-pointed star is the largest manufacturer and exporter of trucks and buses in Latin America. It is also a leader in the development of technologies for the transport of cargo and passengers. Continuing its investments in Brazil, the Company has been implementing a contribution of R$ 2.4 billion between 2018 and 2022.

A testament to the company’s commitment to customer experience is Fleet-board telemetry, a management tool that produces detailed reports on fuel consumption, distance traveled, route difficulty, and other conditions related to the registered vehicles.

Levelling up on this, Mercedes-Benz recently teamed up with T-Systems—as part of its more than 20-year partnership—to develop another state-of-the-art solution that aims to monitor driver performance and behavior: the Liga na Estrada application.

Solution for the people

The demand for a solution came not from the Board or the leadership team of Mercedes-Benz. Instead, the application was developed for the people who worked in the field operations directly with the end customers. The fleet operators wanted to reduce fuel consumption, extend the life of vehicle components, and prevent the potential latent risk of truck accidents. To achieve these goals, it is necessary to track certain metrics, which is why the application has a monitoring feature capable of generating this data accurately while evaluating the behavior of active drivers.

Making tracking fun and competitive

The Liga na Estrada unifies the information received from the vehicle and sends it directly to the driver through the application itself. This ensures that the drivers have the necessary information about their performance and an understanding of the aspects that can be improved.

As an added incentive to the drivers to continuously monitor their performances, a gaming functionality was introduced to the application. This functionality allows drivers and their managers to create competitions and groups within the app itself.

The gaming approach not only kept the drivers engaged, but it also prompted them to pay more attention to the metrics obtained during the trips and make significant performance improvements, particularly

The Liga na Estrada, Portuguese for “on the road”, helps drivers and fleet owners reduce operating costs and accidents. Explore how this innovative application co-developed by T-Systems and Mercedes-Benz do Brasil works.

Author: Durga Godbole
addition to working with Fleetboard, Liga na Estrada was inserted into Mercedes-Benz do Brasil as well. In the outcome of this was that the trucks now needed fewer emergency repairs.

Benefits for company employees

The application benefited the employees of Mercedes-Benz do Brasil as well. In addition to working with Fleetboard, Liga na Estrada was inserted into Mercedes-Benz do Brasil’s intra-entrepreneurship program, the Incubator, to encourage company employees to think about new ideas to optimize internal processes and apply them in a startup modeling using Agile methodology, solving existing problems and identifying opportunities through innovation.

According to Isis Fioretti, T-Systems Account Manager for Mercedes-Benz do Brasil, the Agile Methodology advocates an approach that is not just limited to creating a certain solution to solve specific problems, but also understanding the user’s pain points to deliver value. “Working on the development of an app that has a lot of added value with the agile methodology has brought to T-Systems a very valuable growth and exchanges with Mercedes-Benz,” says Fioretti.

Both the Liga na Estrada app and the Incubator program reinforce Mercedes-Benz’s commitment to technology and digitalization to facilitate the drivers’ day-to-day life and ensure the quality of service provided by the fleet.

The customer leads the way

In order to be able to take the needs of future users into account right from the start, it was clear to both T-Systems and Mercedes-Benz that the customer should be on board from the very beginning of the joint project development. The Liga na Estrada development process involved Sprint models, and with each delivery, the project participants validated the results with customers to ensure the application is compliant with the proposal. According to Fioretti, “The development team embraced the cause and treated the project as if it were their child.”

The application received a positive response for its practicality during the performance analysis process. Since the platform is directly accessible by the drivers, it does not require any action by the manager, who previously had to print several reports and constantly share them with the reporters.

The close coordination with end customers helped ensure that all possible pain points were mapped during sprints, thus reducing rework and major post-launch modifications. As Luciano Abrahao, Digital Solutions Development Manager at Mercedes-Benz do Brasil, says, “We have to understand the customer and build the solution based on the customer’s pain.”

The next steps

Along with the communication established with customers, the constant interaction between the two partners ensured that the work was properly aligned. “There was a very productive interaction between all areas of Mercedes-Benz and T-Systems that was essential to the success of the project,” says Priscila Protásio, Sales Analyst at Mercedes-Benz do Brasil.

While the widespread acceptance of the app, the managers have now asked for access to not just the overall evaluation of their drivers, but also to their individual performances.

In addition to presenting a system with functions important to the customer, the application also ensures data protection (Vehicle Cyber Security), which occurs through the Data Protection approach (LGPD).