

Case Study

Gielow Pickles, Lexington, MI

PRIMARY BUSINESS: Food Mfg. (Pickles and Peppers)



Gielow Pickles, based in Lexington, Michigan, has been making pickles since the early 1900s. Five generations of Gielows have worked in the business, starting as Aunt Jane's pickles and growing the company into

one of the largest suppliers of refrigerated pickles to the food service industry. Today, Gielow Pickles manufactures numerous pickled cucumber and pepper products from produce grown throughout the United States. Their Cool Crisp™ brand can be found in meals at restaurants like Subway, Buffalo Wild Wings, and Cheddars.

Gielow Pickles operates a fleet of 15 tractors and 17 trailers to move produce to the plant and finished products to its customers. At any given moment, that's almost 300 tires on the road. Craig Gielow, the fourth generation owner of the company, and Randy Grout, Gielow's Maintenance Supervisor, needed a way to get the most out of their tire investment.

"With tire prices climbing seemingly every month, blowouts and accelerated tire wear were beginning to really affect performance in our transportation group," said Mr. Gielow. "We knew our drivers weren't watching their tire pressures, and we needed a way to hold them accountable."

"Then we saw the AirBAT TPMS system displayed on the back of one of their training trucks. It looked so simple – a flashing light visible on the wheel end lets you know if a tire is low. When you're on the road, a flashing light in the cab tells the driver a tire is low. We were interested, until we learned about the 'low tire log' feature. That's when we knew we had to test the system."

"It didn't take long for the test to prove itself. A driver blew out three tires on the same side of the vehicle. He told us he had no idea how that happened, and that his tire pressures were good. We used the HandBAT reader to look at the low tire logs on the wheel ends that blew out, and they showed that he had run for two days on tires as low as 60 psi. He doesn't drive for us now."



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"It wasn't long before our drivers were asking when they could get the system on their tractors and trailers. It's so easy for them to check the tires. We also use the system to check the tire pressures on the weekend. What once took someone a couple of hours with a tire gauge and a pad and paper is now done in about 20 minutes with the HandBAT reader."

Gielow Pickles has since installed the BatRF system on their entire fleet. Says Mr. Gielow, "You don't really know when a blowout doesn't happen because you caught a leak in time to avoid it, but I'm comfortable saying that our tire costs are in much better shape now that our drivers have this simple tool to help them keep their tires properly inflated."

The right information at the right time.SM

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