

Vacu-Lug and MMCC Improve Customer Support and Environmental Performance with New Online System for Commercial Vehicle Tyre Management.

Vacu-Lug, Europe's largest independent retreader of commercial and industrial vehicle tyres has enhanced its online Tyre Management System (VFM) to provide better management information to its customers and help reduce waste. The system has been developed by the company's IT consultants, MMCC of Milton Keynes as part of a bespoke project valued at £120,000.

VFM is an Internet-based service that enables Vacu-Lug to provide operators with compliant, comprehensive and economic fleet tyre management records. The system plays a major part in controlling the costs of both Vacu-Lug's own contracts and those of its clients. This ensures compliance with customers' agreed tyre policies and monitors and controls tyre usage more closely than ever before. This allows vehicle operators to minimize expenditure and reduce their effect on the environment.

In 2007, MMCC took over the day-to-day support of the system for Vacu-Lug and, in May last year improved its web reporting functionality and integrated the company's vehicle inspection data into VFM. This had the effect of providing vitally important data, such as tread depths for each tyre in a fleet, available through a secure portal for all Vacu-Lug customers to see. By combining this information with the work authorization process and tracking of invoices from customers and suppliers, the new VFM system provides a level of visibility and management information to customers that was not achievable in the past. For example, the system can easily identify if tyres have been swapped since the last inspection or if there is an uneven wear pattern that might signify a mechanical fault.

Commenting on the project, Ian Woodfinden, Sales and Commercial Director for Vacu-Lug said that MMCC had worked proactively throughout the specification, design and implementation phases of the project. "I can't praise them enough," he said. "They communicate well; keep you informed and made a number of suggestions that have brought significant benefit and value to the project."

Ian went on to explain that he had been involved in a number of similar projects over the last 15 years. "I have to say MMCC have delivered above and beyond what I have previously experienced as the norm. The project, delivered in stages, was both on time and to budget. We have now completed the initial piece of work, and find ourselves now in a position where we are looking to develop it further, to ensure we stay ahead of the competition and continue to give our clients a first class service. MMCC's patience and professionalism ensured we achieved the most out of every member of our Internal Project Team. I can't thank them enough."

Operational features/benefits

- Work managed on behalf of Vacu-Lug is validated by the system and authorised within the VFM office
- VFM issues unique system-generated order numbers to help ensure accurate, timely and clean invoicing

- Invoices from third-party service providers can be automatically cross-referenced and validated
- The system ensures invoice queries rest between Vacu-Lug and its service providers until resolution

Reporting features/benefits

- Web reporting provides customers with access to their data 24/7 via the secure Vacu-Lug portal.
- Costs across a fleet can be analysed in both high and low level detail
- The system can determine costs by location or by vehicle
- Online fleet inspection report provides a variety of information, including:
 - Vehicles not inspected easily identified
 - Vehicle monthly inspection dates recorded
 - Remaining tread depth (mm) for each wheel position on the vehicle

The VFM system contains the fleet data for all of Vacu-Lug's customers and all associated product, policy and pricing information, along with information relating to the Vacu-Lug network of 800 approved service providers.

Fleet inspections with VFM

Fleet inspection information is controlled via Vacu-Lug's Inspector Link system.

Inspection details are recorded and captured using a handheld unit and automatically uploaded directly to VFM upon completion. These handheld units are used by Vacu-Lug's own fleet audit team and service providers alike.

A unique feature of the system is that Vacu-Lug is able to interface its VFM Inspector Link with other service provider's own fleet inspection systems. Data captured in this way is imported directly to VFM where it is merged and fed back to the customer in a single report-format.

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Photo caption: MMCC Programmer



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About MMCC Consultants

MMCC Consultants is an independent software developer providing business management systems for back-office and mobile applications. Its service includes: consultancy to determine business needs; software development using the right blend of off-the-shelf and bespoke products for optimum functionality, efficacy and cost; and on-going system support. The company started in 1998 and is based in Milton Keynes.

About Vacu-Lug

Founded in 1950 by Grantham, Lincolnshire entrepreneur Louis Morley, Vacu-Lug Traction Tyres Limited is a family-owned business which is still based on its original site in Gonerby Hill Foot on the outskirts of town. The company is involved in the manufacture of retread tyres and the administration of a comprehensive range of tyre management contracts. Vacu-Lug today is a £30m p.a. turnover business distributing approximately 200,000 tyres annually. This figure includes Vacu-Lug's own products as well as new Yokohama commercial vehicle tyres, for which Vacu-Lug is the sole GB distributor, and industrial and earthmover tyres. Vacu-Lug also manufactures the Pirelli Novateck range of retreaded tyres.