

Fleet & Mobility

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Light Vehicle

Nissan Canada

Best Foot Forward



Medium-Duty

Electric Vans

Betting Big on Electric



Heavy Truck & Specialty

Chargepolo

High Performance Intelligent Electrification



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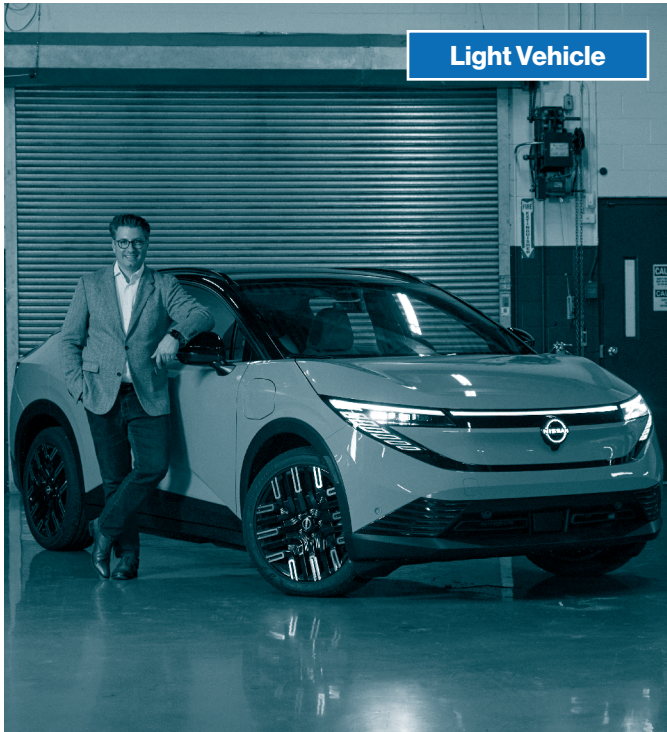
ABS

Airbags

Advanced Driver Assistance Systems

- Lane Departure Warning
- Forward Collision Mitigation
- Blind Spot Monitor
- Rear Cross Traffic Alert
- Adaptive Cruise Control
- Driver Attention Alert





Light Vehicle

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Heavy Truck & Specialty

Fear It or Embrace It?

Artificial intelligence is a controversial topic.

TEXT JACK KAZMIERSKI

As our team was preparing the layout of this issue of *Fleet&Mobility*, I was a bit surprised to see how many of the articles we're publishing include something about artificial intelligence (AI) and its impact on fleet.

All this talk about AI reminds me of the advent of the Internet—for those of us who are old enough to remember dial-up, the cumbersome process we had to go through just to connect a computer to the worldwide web, and how long it used to take to download a single webpage.

Back then, no one really knew how big an impact the Internet would have on both our personal and professional lives, and how much it would change the way we live our day-to-day lives and do business. The same can be said about where we are with AI right now.

Mixed feelings

Thinking back to the first years of the Internet, I recall how many of us had mixed feelings about this new technology. Some saw it as a godsend—a way for mankind to share know-

ledge and become more united as a species. At the other end of the thought spectrum, some saw the Internet as something more evil—a way to steal copyrighted materials (remember Napster?), and download lewd content.

I'm hearing the same thing today about AI: Some think it will take away our jobs, while others talk about how it will free up our time and make us more productive. Who is right? Only time will tell.

In the meantime, I like the balanced view Jarrod Phipps, Executive VP & CIO at Holman offered during the company's annual conference in Miami this year (see pages 24 & 25 of this issue). Phipps admitted that AI comes with risk, and suggested a more measured approach.

"Mistakes are possible, and AI is prone to bias," he said. "To mitigate risk, we're getting humans involved in the process. We're not leaving all the decision-making to AI."

Twenty years from now, we'll know for sure how AI changed our world. For now, I'm with Phipps: Use AI to help you better manage your fleet, but don't let it do all the thinking for you. [🔗](#)

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Nissan Canada

Best Foot Forward

Nissan is offering a range of exciting new vehicles for the new model year.

TEXT JACK KAZMIERSKI

Nissan recently made a number of product announcements, setting the stage for an exciting 2026 model year. With a choice of electric, gasoline and hybrid powertrains, Nissan has a wide range of appealing vehicles for a variety of fleet applications.

All-new LEAF

The biggest news for the 2026 model year is the debut of an all-new third-generation LEAF. Nissan's best-selling EV is now bigger, bolder and better than ever.

"There's more technology, more range and more quick charging options," says Louis-Philippe Rochefort, Senior Manager, Fleet & CPO Sales, Nissan Canada Inc. "With both J1772 Level 2 charging, and NACS charging capabilities, along with an included NACS to CCS adaptor, LEAF drivers have more charging options, including access to compatible Tesla Superchargers and the full NISSAN ENERGY charge network."

Built in Japan, and available now in Canada, the all-new 2026 LEAF boasts a range of up to 488 km and uses a new 75-kWh liquid-cooled lithium-ion battery. The new powertrain, which makes 214 hp and 261 lb.-ft. of instant torque was recently honoured with the Wards 10 Best Engines & Propulsion Systems award for 2025. >

Louis-Philippe Rochefort, Senior Manager, Fleet & CPO Sales at Nissan Canada Inc. says that Nissan is looking forward to what the new year will bring.



The completely-redesigned LEAF comes with an advanced 3-in-1 next-generation electric powertrain, which integrates the motor, inverter and reducer into a single compact unit. Not only does this design reduce weight and size, but it also improves energy efficiency while enhancing driving dynamics.

The LEAF has an impressive 150 kWh charging capacity, which means that the battery can go from 10-80% in as little as 35 minutes when plugged into a fast charger.

Thanks to dual charging ports, drivers can decide when and how to recharge their LEAF. The J1772 port on the driver's side can be used to plug in at home and at many Level 2 public chargers, while the NACS fast charge port on the passenger side can be used with compatible public chargers, including compatible Tesla Superchargers. In addition, Nissan Canada offers a NACS to CCS adaptor for free with the purchase of an all-new 2026 Nissan LEAF.

For winter driving, the new LEAF features an enhanced battery thermal management system. Not only is the battery pack sealed to keep cold air, snow and slush away, but the new LEAF is now able to capture wasted heat from the drive motor and on-board charger, and recycle it to keep the battery warm. This, in turn, boosts energy efficiency and driving range.

Inviting interior

The passenger cabin of the all-new LEAF is roomy, airy, and more inviting than ever. The redesigned seats offer new levels of comfort, and second-row passengers get more knee room, thanks to the larger interior.



The all-new 2026 LEAF boasts a range of up to 488 km.

The LEAF now offers up to 1,571 litres of cargo space behind the second row of seats, while an available dimming panoramic roof adds to the airiness of the passenger cabin, and can go from completely transparent to near-totally opaque at the press of a button.

All trims come with key technologies, including wireless Apple CarPlay, wireless Android Auto, a 3D Intelligent Around View Monitor with Moving Object Detection, Nissan's ProPILOT Assist, Rear Cross Traffic Alert, Pedestrian and Cyclist Automatic Emergency Braking, Lane Departure Warning and Prevention, Intelligent Blind Spot Warning and Intervention, Emergency Brake Assist, Intelligent Forward Collision Warning and much more.

ARIYA

Nissan Canada recently announced that they're putting the 2026



The all-new 2026 Sentra will be available in January, 2026.

“We strive to meet and exceed our customers' expectations.”

LOUIS-PHILIPPE ROCHEFORT SENIOR MANAGER,
FLEET & CPO SALES, NISSAN CANADA INC.



ARIYA “on sale” for the new model year, and that’s great news for fleet customers who want a larger EV with a more premium feel.

Nissan says that the pricing adjustment reflects their continued commitment to making EV mobility more attainable. With that in mind, the SL e-4ORCE, the entry point to ARIYA’s all-wheel-drive offering, is reduced by \$3,000 while SL front-wheel-drive trims (and higher) receive a \$4,600 reduction, compared to the 2025 model year.

The ARIYA is available with either a 63 or 87 kWh battery, and in both front-wheel and all-wheel drive configurations. Standard equipment includes ProPILOT Assist, NissanConnect EV & Services telematics, as well as wireless mobile device charging, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto.

Like the LEAF, the ARIYA is made in Japan, and available now.

All-new Sentra

Nissan recently took the wraps off the all-new 2026 Sentra, which will be available in January, 2026. Built in Mexico, this compact sedan boasts a new eye-pleasing design, a spacious trunk, and best-in-class front legroom.

The new Sentra comes with a long list of standard safety features including Intelligent Forward Collision Warning, Intelligent Emergency Braking with Pedestrian Detection, Blind Spot Warning and Intervention, Rear Cross Traffic Alert, Intelligent Driver Alertness, Lane Departure Warning with haptic steering wheel feedback, Lane Departure Prevention, Traffic Sign Recognition, and a lot more.

Available in three trims—S, SV and SR—all 2026 Sentra models come with the same fuel-efficient engine (7.1 - 7.2L / 100 km, combined) and front-wheel drive. The Sentra’s 2.0-litre inline-four engine delivers 149 hp, 146 lb.-ft. of torque, and comes with idle stop/start as standard equipment, designed to help save on fuel in city driving.

Kicks

Completely redesigned last year, the 2026 Kicks comes in three well-equipped trims: S, SV and SR. All trims are powered by the same fuel-efficient 141-hp four-cylinder engine, and the Kicks is available in both front- and all-wheel drive configurations. According to NRCAN, front-wheel drive models are rated at a combined 7.4L / 100km, while all-wheel drive models are rated at 7.8L / 100km, combined.

A 12.3-inch touchscreen display is standard on all trims, as is NissanConnect, featuring wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto. Naturally, a Bluetooth hands-free phone system is standard equipment, as is Siri Eyes Free for an added level of safety and security while on the road.

Built in Mexico, Kicks is available now.

Rogue

Nissan’s volume leader, the Rogue, is better than ever for 2026. The big news is that Nissan is now offering the Rogue as a Plug-In Hybrid. In fact, the 2026 Nissan Rogue PHEV is the brand’s first plug-in hybrid vehicle available in Canada.


With 61 km of all-electric driving range, 687 km of total range, and an estimated fuel economy of 3.6 Le/100 km, this fleet favourite is more appealing than ever. It also packs quite a punch, delivering 248 hp, 332 lb-ft of torque, as well as standard Intelligent All-Wheel Drive with seven drive modes, each designed to tackle a variety of road and weather conditions.

With three rows of seats and room for seven, the Rogue PHEV is a capable people mover with ample room for cargo.

For those who would like a Rogue, but don’t necessarily need a plug-in hybrid, Nissan continues to offer a “non-PHEV” Rogue equipped with a 1.5-litre three-cylinder engine that makes 201 hp and 225 lb-ft of torque. Available in four trims, the “regular” Rogue comes with all-wheel drive, room for five, and four drive modes. The fuel-friendly engine is rated at 7.6L / 100km (combined) by NRCAN for all trims except the hearty Rock Creek trim, which is rated at 8.0L / 100km.

The Rogue is made in Japan, and available now.

Whether your fleet selector includes sedans, crossovers or SUVs, Nissan has a vehicle that is sure to suit your needs. For 2026, Nissan puts their best foot forward with an array of vehicles, offering everything from fuel-efficient ICE engines to hybrid powertrains and full EVs.

“We strive to meet and exceed our customers’ expectations,” Rochefort says. “It’s an exciting time for us at Nissan, and we look forward to what the new year brings.” 

AI: Boom or Bust?

Can AI really help fleet managers make critical decisions?

TEXT JACK KAZMIERSKI

Artificial intelligence (AI) is everywhere. Whether you embrace it or fear that it will take your job, it seems that AI is here to stay. Already in use in many industries, fleet professionals would be right to wonder if AI can help them make critical decisions when buying and selling vehicles.

"I think AI can assist the user to access information more quickly," says Basil Marcus, President of Foss National Leasing, "but you still need someone who understands the makeup of each vehicle. Building a vehicle is very custom, especially a commercial vehicle. We rely heavily on our account managers and vehicle specification specialists to get that fit-for-purpose vehicle for the customer."

Marcus says that currently, he doesn't see AI playing a big part in choosing vehicles for fleet professionals. "AI can certainly collect data, analyze it and drill down into it," he adds, "and that will help you with your decision making. I'd say that you don't look at AI as a thought leader, but as a thought partner. You're still going to need professionals to help you understand your needs—at least for now."

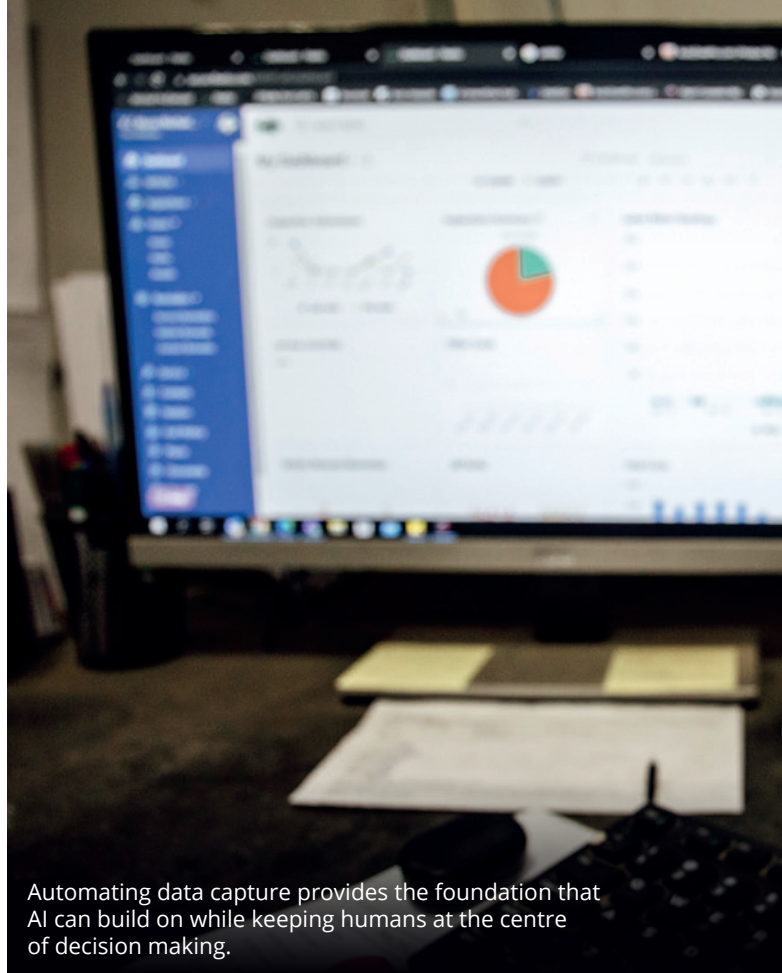
The need for quality data

Brianna Perry, Product Marketing Manager at Fleetio says that AI has potential, but only if it's grounded in a fleet's actual data. "Instead of broad assumptions, AI can ground recommendations in a fleet's unique data for routes, loads, and usage patterns so fleet managers can see the true lifetime cost and performance of each option," she explains. "If a fleet is evaluating EVs, AI could help a manager see if an EV would reduce costs, once they factor in charging times and electricity rates."

If a fleet is evaluating different makes and models, Perry adds, AI can help a fleet manager see where a lower cost, or more fuel-efficient model would do the job just as well as what

"Don't look at AI as a thought leader, but as a thought partner."

BASIL MARCUS PRESIDENT
FOSS NATIONAL LEASING



Automating data capture provides the foundation that AI can build on while keeping humans at the centre of decision making.

they have in their fleet currently. "Right now, a lot of fleet managers have to make those choices by stitching together data from different sources, or relying heavily on gut instinct and vendor claims," she says. "AI has the potential to change that by giving managers personalized recommendations based on their specific fleet history and operations. It doesn't replace their expertise, but it takes the burden of combing through every variable on their plate, and surfaces options that are already tailored to their unique context."

Bob Bradley, Vice President, Data Science & AI Engineering at Geotab points out that AI enables fleet managers to move beyond generic purchasing decisions by providing insights tailored to their specific operational needs.

"By analyzing insights, including historical driving patterns, payload requirements, route types, and environmental conditions, AI can help determine which vehicle specifications will deliver the best performance, and lowest total cost of ownership," he explains.

Bradley offers the example of a fleet that might be considering whether to transition certain routes to electric vehicles. "AI can analyze duty cycle data, such as average trip length,



number of stops, dwell times, and load weights, alongside external variables like local traffic congestion or weather,” he says. “From this, AI could reveal that half the fleet’s daily routes are under 120 km with long idle periods, making them ideal for EVs, while the other half exceed current EV range limitations, making hybrids or ICE vehicles a better fit.”

AI-assisted remarketing

At the other end of the lifecycle spectrum, is there a place for AI when fleet professionals are remarketing their vehicles? Fleetio’s Perry believes that AI can certainly help fleets decide the right time to cycle out a vehicle.

“Right now,” she says, “many managers lean on mileage thresholds or gut feel. A lot of fleet managers tasked with making these decisions know from experience when a vehicle is starting to become a headache. AI adds another layer by looking at, and identifying patterns. It can flag when the cost of keeping a vehicle likely outweighs the benefit of selling it.”

Where it gets interesting, she adds, “is not just the recommendation. It’s the world where once a fleet identifies a vehicle as a disposal candidate, a workflow kicks off that tags the vehicle accordingly, notifies the right person, and kicks off a checklist. Those pieces aren’t fully seamless in one solution yet. Over time though, we’ll likely see those layers blend more closely.”

Geotab’s Bradley agrees that AI can help fleet managers remarket their vehicles more effectively. “AI can play an important role in predictive replacement strategies,” he explains. “By analyzing data on vehicle utilization, operating costs, mileage, depreciation, and maintenance trends, AI can estimate the optimal time to cycle a vehicle out of the fleet.”

He offers an example: “If predictive analytics show that a truck’s maintenance costs will soon outpace its residual value, fleet managers can make informed decisions about remarketing before costs escalate. This helps maximize resale values, minimize downtime, and ensure fleets are operating at peak efficiency. Predictive replacement is particularly valuable for large fleets, where small timing adjustments can translate into significant cost savings over time.”

First steps and key considerations

While the power of AI certainly seems compelling, figuring out where and how to get started can be a daunting task. Fleetio’s Perry admits that AI can feel like an all or nothing leap, but she explains that the real first step is focusing on clean, consistent data and automating the basics.

“When odometer readings, service histories, and fuel transactions are automatically captured, fleet managers save admin time today, and set the foundation for accurate insights in the future,” she says. “It’s also worth remembering that AI won’t always get it right. Recommendations should be transparent, and reviewed in context. Managers bring the expertise to decide whether a suggestion makes sense for their business.”

While AI can help fleet professionals make procurement and remarketing decisions, Geotab’s Bradley says that AI can also make a difference in another key area of concern: driver safety.

“AI can analyze historical collision data, driver behaviour and road conditions to recommend vehicle technologies that improve safety outcomes,” he explains. For example, AI can help select vehicles with advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS), or AI can be incorporated into dash cams that provide real-time alerts for distracted or risky driving.

“Beyond preventing incidents, safety-focused procurement plays a direct role in retention,” Bradley adds. “Drivers who feel supported with safer, more reliable vehicles are more likely to stay with their employer, reducing turnover and its associated costs. AI-powered procurement is not only about managing vehicles, it’s about protecting people, enhancing operations, and ensuring fleets remain competitive for the long term.”

Light-Duty Pickups

Reporting for Duty

These workhorses can handle a variety of fleet jobs. Light-duty pickup trucks can be a backbone for a fleet, able to handle a wide variety of tasks from hauling and towing, to service, sales calls, and more.

TEXT JIL MCINTOSH

Chevrolet Silverado 1500

The Chevrolet Silverado is a mechanical twin to the GMC Sierra and comes with a choice of four engines, including a turbodiesel. Available configurations, depending on the trim, are a Regular Cab with standard or long bed; Double Cab with standard bed; and Crew Cab with short or standard bed. Choices include 4x2 or 4x4. Features on the entry trim include emergency front braking, corner bumper steps, 17-inch steel wheels, locking tailgate, 40/20/40 split-bench front seat, 7-inch touchscreen, and vinyl flooring. Upper trims can add a multi-function tailgate, towing mirrors, sunroof, blind-spot monitoring, and 13.4-inch infotainment screen. There's an all-electric Silverado EV, but it's an entirely different vehicle on its own platform.



THE SPECS

- **Engines:**
 - 2.7-litre I4 Turbo: 310 hp / 430 torque
 - 3.0-litre I6 Turbodiesel: 305 hp / 495 torque
 - 5.3-litre V8: 355 hp / 383 torque
 - 6.2-litre V8: 420 hp / 460 torque
- **Transmission:** 8-speed automatic (2.7); 10-speed automatic (all others)
- **Maximum Payload Capacity:** 1,520 lbs – 2,260 lbs
- **Maximum Towing Capacity:** 8,900 lbs – 13,300 lbs



THE SPECS

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 - 2.7-litre I4 Turbo: 310 hp / 430 torque
 - 3.0-litre I6 Turbodiesel: 305 hp / 495 torque
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- **Transmission:** 8-speed automatic (2.7); 10-speed automatic (all others)
- **Maximum Payload Capacity:** 1,520 lbs – 2,260 lbs
- **Maximum Towing Capacity:** 8,900 lbs – 13,300 lbs

GMC Sierra 1500

A mechanical twin to the Chevrolet Silverado, the GMC Sierra shares its four engines. It comes in Regular Cab with standard or long bed; Double Cab with standard bed; and Crew Cab with short or standard bed. It also shares the Silverado's 4x2 or 4x4 choices, with the exception of Crew Cab with standard bed, where it's 4x4-only on the Sierra. The Sierra comes in an entry trim similar to the Silverado's base model. But the GMC gets far more luxurious than the Chevy in its Denali and Denali Ultimate trims, which can include adaptive ride control, camera mirror, ventilated seats, and hands-free highway driving assist. There's also a Sierra EV, but it's unrelated to the conventional Sierra other than its name.

Ford F-150

Ford's F-150 offers four engine choices, one a full hybrid, along with an all-electric Lightning based on the conventional model. Gas-powered versions come in Regular Cab with standard or long bed; Super Cab with standard bed; or SuperCrew with short or standard bed. Most drivelines are 4x2 or 4x4, but the SuperCrew with standard bed is 4x4-only. The Lightning comes in five trim levels, all SuperCrew and 4x4, and depending on the battery size, has a rated range of 386 to 483 km on a charge. The "PowerBoost" hybrid model is self-charging and can drive on gasoline, electricity, or a combination, depending on driving conditions. Standard or available power outlets can run a variety of tools and appliances. Features on the entry gasoline XL include heated mirrors, 17-inch wheels, emergency front braking, 12-inch touchscreen, vinyl flooring, and 40/20/40 front bench seat. Upper trims can add a twin-panel sunroof, power-adjustable pedals, heated front and rear seats, upfitter switches, and rain-sensing wipers.



THE SPECS

- **Engines:**
 - 2.7-litre V6 Turbo: 325 hp / 400 torque
 - 5.0-litre V8: 400 hp / 410 torque
 - 3.5-litre V6 Turbo: 400 hp / 500 torque
 - 3.5-litre V6 Turbo Hybrid: 430 hp / 570 torque
- **Transmission:** 10-speed automatic
- **Maximum Payload Capacity:** 1,405 – 2,440 lbs
- **Maximum Towing Capacity:** 8,200 – 13,500 lbs
- **F-150 Lightning Towing Capacity:** 7,700 – 10,000 lbs



THE SPECS

- **Engines:**
 - 3.6-litre V6: 305 hp / 271 torque
 - 5.7-litre V8: 395 hp / 410 torque
 - 3.0-litre I6 Turbo: 420 hp / 469 torque
 - 3.0-litre I6 Turbo High-Output: 540 hp / 521 torque
- **Transmission:** 8-speed automatic
- **Maximum Payload Capacity:** 1,390 – 2,360 lbs
- **Maximum Towing Capacity:** 6,340 – 11,610 lbs

Toyota Tundra

The Toyota Tundra comes in gas-only or as a hybrid. The gas engine, known as i-Force, is available in Double Cab with regular or long bed, and in 4x2 or 4x4. The i-Force also comes as a CrewMax with short or regular bed, and in 4x4 only, as does the hybrid, known as i-Force Max. The hybrid is self-charging and automatically switches between gasoline, electricity, or a combination, depending on driving conditions. Features on the entry trim include heated mirrors, 18-inch wheels, automatic climate control, manual headlight levelling, and emergency front braking. Upper trims can add rain-sensing wipers, 14-inch touchscreen, digital rearview mirror, and heated and ventilated front and rear seats.

Ram 1500

After discontinuing its 5.7-litre V8 for the 2025 model year, the Ram 1500 brings it back for 2026, joining the turbocharged inline six-cylinder engines that initially replaced it. The V8 and the entry V6 engine both use "eTorque," a self-charging mild-hybrid system, but the truck can't drive on electricity alone. Battery power is on its way, though, with the upcoming 2026 Ram 1500 REV, a plug-in electric truck with a V6 gasoline engine that acts as a generator to make more electricity when the stored battery charge depletes. Ram estimates up to 1,110 km on a full charge and full tank. The Ram 1500 comes in Quad Cab with standard bed, or Crew Cab with short or standard bed; and all trims are 4x4-only. The entry Tradesman trim includes a 40/20/40 front bench seat, emergency front braking, blind-spot monitoring, 18-inch wheels, and cruise control, while upper trims can add a dual-pane sunroof, 14.5-inch infotainment screen, and massaging seats.



THE SPECS

- **Engines:**
 - 3.5-litre V6 twin-turbo: 389 hp / 479 torque
 - 3.5-litre V6 twin-turbo hybrid: 437 hp / 583 torque
- **Transmission:** 10-speed automatic
- **Maximum Payload Capacity (Gas):** 1,576 – 1,940 lbs
- **Maximum Payload Capacity (Hybrid):** 1,488 – 1,653 lbs
- **Maximum Towing Capacity (Gas):** 8,289 – 11,199 lbs
- **Maximum Towing Capacity (Hybrid):** 10,340 – 11,171 lbs

2025 / 2026 Subaru Crosstrek

This award-winning small SUV is better than ever for the new model year.

TEXT JACK KAZMIERSKI

With an extensive list of standard safety features, decent fuel economy, and full-time all-wheel drive (for added peace-of-mind), the Subaru Crosstrek is a good fit for many fleet applications.

Moreover, the Crosstrek is a nine-time winner (including 2025) of the J.D. Power Canada ALG Residual Value Award in the “Small SUV” segment, and that’s certainly welcome news for fleet managers who are thinking ahead to remarketing time.

New powertrain options

We had the opportunity to test drive the 2025 Crosstrek earlier this fall, and are even more impressed with what Subaru has in store for the 2026 model year. For starters, while the 2025 Crosstrek was available with either a 2.0L 152-hp or a 2.5L 182-hp four-cylinder boxer engine, the powertrain options are much more exciting for the new model year.

For 2026, Subaru has dropped the 2.0L engine altogether, and now offers the Crosstrek with either a 2.5L 180-hp boxer engine or a hybrid version of the same powerplant. The latter makes 194 hp. The hybrid powertrain is only available on the e-Boxer Hybrid Limited model, which is the top trim in the Crosstrek lineup for the new model year.

Not only does the hybrid powertrain offer more power, as well as better acceleration and performance, but it also has better fuel economy figures. While the standard 2.5L powertrain promises a fuel economy of 9.0/7.1 L/100 km (city/hwy), the hybrid is rated at 6.5 L/100 km for both city and highway driving.

If you tried the Crosstrek in the past and felt that 152 hp simply wasn’t enough to make the most of this small SUV, you’re not alone. Depending on your driving style, you may have found that the 152-hp powertrain was lacking, especially when trying to execute more demanding maneuvers at highway speeds.

The 2025 model we had the opportunity to drive, on the other hand, was equipped with the more potent 182-hp engine, and it was a pleasure to pilot. Whether merging with traffic when getting on the highway, passing vehicles at high-



The Crosstrek is a nine-time winner of the J.D. Power Canada ALG Residual Value Award.

way speeds, or simply getting up to speed from a dead stop at a red light, this more capable engine delivered ample power and torque for day-to-day driving.

Looking ahead to the 2026 model year, we are sure that the new 194-hp electrified powertrain that’s under the hood of the e-Boxer Hybrid Limited model is sure to deliver an even more satisfying driving experience.

Safety first

One of the top priorities for most fleet professionals is safety. Getting fleet drivers home safe and sound at the end of every business day is a must and a daily concern. With that in mind, the 2026 Crosstrek offers an extra layer of peace-of-mind, thanks in part to the comprehensive list of standard safety features Subaru includes on all trims.

Besides a long list of passive and active safety systems, all Crosstrek trims come with Subaru’s EyeSight technology, which employs cameras behind the windshield that act like a second set of eyes for the driver, keeping an “eye” on the road ahead.

Updated in recent years, Subaru’s new EyeSight system includes an advanced wide-angle mono camera, which was recognized by the Automobile Journalists Association of Canada (AJAC) with the “Best Safety Innovation” award when it was first introduced.

Initially available only on Subaru’s top models, including the Outback, Legacy and Ascent, it made its debut in the Crosstrek



for the 2024 model year, and has been standard equipment ever since. How does adding a wide-angle mono camera to the EyeSight system boost safety? Basically, the new three-camera system is more effective at identifying and preventing collisions with pedestrians and cyclists in low-speed situations, including intersections and crosswalks.

Another key safety concern is traction and grip. That's why all Crosstrek models come with Subaru's all-wheel-drive system, which makes this small SUV more than capable of taking on almost any weather and road conditions, regardless of the season.

While we may think of AWD as a definite plus in winter conditions, it's also beneficial on wet roads, providing added traction in the kind of slippery conditions we often experience right after a rainfall. In addition to all-wheel traction, the Crosstrek boasts almost nine inches of ground clearance, which makes it especially capable of trekking through deeper snow or over rougher off-road terrain, if needed.

Impressive tech

While a seven-inch touch screen is standard equipment on the base Convenience trim for 2026, all other trims come with an impressive 11.6-inch tablet-style touchscreen, which controls a multitude of tasks and features.

Apple CarPlay and Android Auto are standard equipment, and all trims above the base Convenience trim get wireless functionality with both. The massive 11.6-inch screen is a de-

light to use, especially when Apple CarPlay or Android Auto display maps and navigation information.

All trims (above the base Convenience trim) also get access to the MySubaru suite of services, which includes automatic collision notification, roadside assistance, a service appointment scheduler, over-the-air firmware updates, and much more. With the MySubaru app, drivers can use their phones to remotely lock and unlock the Crosstrek's doors, start and stop the engine, control the horn and lights, unlock the tailgate and a lot more. In case of theft, or attempted theft/vandalism, MySubaru includes a remote vehicle locator, SOS emergency services, speed alert, stolen vehicle immobilizer, stolen vehicle recovery and alarm notification.

Comfort and convenience

The interior of the Crosstrek is both cozy and comfy. Rear legroom is adequate for average-sized adults, and the passenger cabin is nicely insulated from excessive outside noise.

Standard equipment includes automatic dual-zone climate control, heated front seats, manually-adjustable driver's and front passenger's seats, a four-speaker audio system, and cloth seats.

More creature comforts are standard (or available) on higher trims, including power-adjustable driver's and front passenger's seats, premium cloth or leather seats, a heated leather-wrapped steering wheel, and a six-speaker audio system (10-speaker Harmon Kardon system with subwoofer and amp are standard on the two top trims).

If your fleet needs a capable, fuel-efficient and well-equipped small SUV, then the Subaru Crosstrek should definitely be on your selector short list. [🔗](#)

Price and Specifications

Year Make Model Trim 2025 Subaru Crosstrek Onyx

Base Price \$34,495

Notable Options None

Price as Tested (including freight & PDI) \$36,790

Engine 2.5L 4-cylinder boxer engine

Transmission CVT

Horsepower 182 hp

Torque 178 lb-ft

LT Tires

Shifting Demands

Tariffs, economic pressures, climate and electrification are changing the way fleets look at tires.

TEXT JACK KAZMIERSKI

One of the biggest expenses fleet professionals have to manage is the cost of tires. How much they cost, and how often a fleet has to replace them, has a big impact on the bottom line. What makes the situation even more demanding as we start a new year, is the uncertainty fleets face with tariffs, and the resulting blow to the economy.

“Economic pressures are absolutely influencing how Canadian fleet managers buy tires,” says Jonathan Ainley, Sales Director, Hankook Canada. “With higher operating costs, tighter margins, and uncertainty around tariffs or import-related price fluctuations, fleets are becoming more selective and strategic in their purchasing behaviour. Rather than simply choosing the lowest upfront price, many are shifting toward tires that offer stronger long-term value, and help lower their overall cost of operation.”

Ainley notes that reliability and durability now carry even greater weight when fleet professionals make buying decisions, as they look at ways to reduce downtime, extend tire life, and control total cost of operation. He adds that warranty programs have become more powerful differentiators by offering added protection and lower financial risk.

“Managers want assurance that tires will perform consistently across seasons, hold up under heavy use, and are backed by a no-hassle warranty program from the manufacturer,” he says.

In challenging economic conditions, Ainley explains, “predictable performance, strong warranty coverage, and proven durability help fleets manage uncertainty and safeguard their operating budget.”

Balancing priorities

Andrew Pallotta, Senior Product Planner with Bridgestone Americas says that for fleet buyers, the purchasing decision



Trucks that work hard, need tires that can keep up.

boils down to reliability, which represents having the right balance between a long-lasting tire and keeping costs down. Fleet professionals also prioritize having the right capability for the job at hand.

“A great example of a tire that checks all these boxes is the Firestone Transforce HT3,” he adds, “which is commonly used by service trucks, and is engineered to deliver long-lasting, reliable wear and dependable wet traction, providing fleets with well-rounded performance and strong value at an acceptable price point.”

Fuel economy/improved range

Hankook’s Ainley says that light trucks continue to dominate commercial and last-mile delivery applications, driving strong demand for LT replacement products here in Canada.

“Fleet operators are focused more than ever on durability, tread life, winter performance, and total cost-per-kilometre, reflecting the need to minimize downtime,” he adds. “Larger rim sizes and more robust load rated tires are also on the rise as vehicles become heavier and load carrying capacities increase.”

Fuel efficiency is another major driver of purchase decisions, Ainley adds. “With increased volatility in fuel prices, and constant pressure to lower operating costs, fleets are adopting low rolling resistance tires to reduce consumption and extend vehicle range.”

Electric pick-ups

Ainley notes that electrification is accelerating the shift towards tires that can deliver better range/better fuel economy. “EV light-duty trucks require tires capable of supporting high torque and weight, while maintaining low



energy loss and long tread life,” he says. “At the same time, the market is demanding higher sustainability measures from the tire manufacturers.”

While the vast majority of fleets are still running gasoline- and diesel-powered pick-up trucks, we are seeing a growing number of electric trucks in use, and that’s changing the way both tire manufacturers and fleet professionals think about tires.

“Fleet electrification continues to grow, but not at a rate that is significantly altering buying habits,” says Bridgestone’s Pallotta. “Traditional gas-powered vehicles still make up a majority of Canada’s commercial fleet market, and will continue to do so until more infrastructure to support fleet EVs is put into place. Because of this, adoption is currently mostly limited to last-mile delivery applications.”

Hankook’s Ainley says that the rise of EV and hybrid electric pick-ups is beginning to influence fleet buying habits, even though EV adoption in commercial light truck segments is still emerging.

“EVs place significantly higher demands on tires due to the increased vehicle weight, instant torque, and the need to maximize driving range,” he adds. “As a result, fleets are paying close attention to tires engineered for a stronger load bearing capacity, improved traction, lower rolling resistance and low road noise.”

These factors are shifting fleet preferences toward EV-specific tires that can withstand heavier duty cycles while helping offset energy consumption, Ainley explains. Tires

that improve efficiency and extend range are becoming especially valuable, as they directly impact operating costs and route planning.

“To support this shift,” he adds, “Hankook has invested heavily in EV-focused tire technology. Products like the Hankook iON EVO AS are specifically designed for electric vehicles, delivering enhanced durability, optimized rolling resistance, and performance characteristics tailored to EV torque and weight. As demand for EV commercial pick-ups increases, demand for this new generation of tire technology will continue to grow.”

All-weather vs. winter tires

Here in Canada, winter weather makes it especially difficult for fleets to cut their tire costs, and some have turned to all-weather tires as an option to investing in two sets of tires—one for the winter and one for the other three seasons.

However, all-weather tires have their limitations, Bridgestone’s Pallotta explains. “It’s important to note that the all-weather LT segment is increasingly seen as being synonymous with All-Terrain (AT) tires that are Three-Peak Mountain Snowflake (3PMSF) certified,” he says. “While 3PMS certification allows for a very usable and confident level of snow and ice performance, a dedicated winter tire will be a better option for particularly difficult winter conditions.”

Canada has long been a significant market for winter tires due to the harsh climate and provincial regulations (in some areas), says Pallotta. “As a result, the demand for winter tires remains consistently high, and growing, among fleets,” he adds. “This is driven by the fact that service vehicles and last-mile delivery fleets are not able to shut down operations, and need the superior performance that only a dedicated winter tire can provide.”

This doesn’t mean that all-weather tires are a definite “no-go” for fleets. In fact, when fleets are trying to decide between all-weather and winter tires, Bridgestone recommends that businesses analyze their typical workday and the environment in which they operate.

“For example,” Pallotta concludes, “if a fleet operates in an area where it snows substantially and they cannot delay operations, a winter tire is definitely recommended.”

“Economic pressures are absolutely influencing how Canadian fleet managers buy tires.”

JONATHAN AINLEY
SALES DIRECTOR, HANKOOK CANADA

Time to Break the Ice

AI can help fleet managers with their safety, maintenance and sustainability goals.

TEXT KATE VIGNEAU

Where are you in your understanding of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its application to fleet operation?



The potential is astronomical, and the hurdles are relatively low when it comes to introducing AI in your daily fleet operations. The following are a few ideas to break the ice and start using AI to enhance your safety, maintenance and sustainability.

Safety and risk management

This is a good place to start, as we owe it to our drivers and employees to use all means to improve road safety. At the same time, we have regulatory obligations that must be observed. AI can assist with both areas:

- One in five crashes are linked to distracted driving. AI increases road safety by changing human behaviour through hazard identification, real-time feedback to drivers, and targeted intervention. In fact, users of the Motive AI fleet safety platform experienced a decrease of 80% in crashes within one year of deployment of their dash cam system. The use of the Geotab GO Focus Plus AI dash cam in trials has had similar results. Cell phone use while driving decreased 95%.
- The fleet regulatory environment is complex and can vary across regions. AI automates compliance checks, documentation, and reporting in the areas of driver licensing, hours of service or environmental compliance. This can reduce the risk of fines, and save hours of manual effort for fleet managers.

Maintenance

What if you could know when your vehicles are going to fail, and could schedule a convenient time to fix them and avoid unscheduled downtime? AI can be used to analyze vehicle con-

dition, identify breakdown patterns and schedule the vehicle for predictive maintenance at an opportune time. Kitchener, Ontario has engaged TextGenetic to pilot an AI-powered platform to improve municipal fleet operations. The system offers predictive maintenance, real-time analytics and environmental tracking to help reduce costs and minimize vehicle downtime.

Fuel and sustainability

A fleet is more sustainable if it decreases the amount of negative fleet emissions, either through a reduction in fuel use, or a move to greener alternatives. AI can assist with reducing Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT), as well as with the identification of vehicles suitable for electrification.

- Route optimization is enabled by the real-time evaluation of traffic, weather and road conditions, and can reduce the amount of fuel used. UPS has used the ORION (On-Road Integrated Optimization and Navigation) platform to save over 10 million gallons of fuel, and reduce emissions by 100,000 metric tons annually, resulting in over \$300 million in annual savings.
- Many fleets are introducing alternative fuels, including electric vehicles. AI can assist in identifying vehicles that are good candidates for transition to an electric vehicle (EV), based on their use profile. They can also monitor the battery life in existing units, and develop charging schedules to maximize efficiency in a fleet. Another way that AI can assist in sustainability is by helping energy companies serve customers who own EVs. Hydro One implemented AI-powered analytics to scan meter data to identify their EV customers. AI identified ten times more customers than manual survey methods uncovered.

Even without advanced platforms and investing in expensive add-ons, fleet managers can use AI to improve the identification and resolution of fleet problems, and discover ways to optimize performance. [O](#)



Kate Vigneau, CAFM, is Vice President MCG Consulting Solutions (Canada) and Matrix Consulting Group (U.S.)



Rethinking Tariffs

Working with Chinese manufacturers could make EVs more affordable for Canadians.

TEXT CHRIS HILL

The debate about removing the 100% tariff on Chinese electric vehicles imported to Canada is ongoing. EV enthusiasts see this as critical to getting more affordable EVs and increasing market penetration. The auto industry, particularly the Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association says that this will severely harm existing auto businesses. The same debate is going on in Germany and France, both of which have large auto manufacturing sectors. That said, I think I may have heard of a compromise that works for both sides.

How it started

In 2024 U.S. President Joe Biden asked Canada to impose tariffs of 100% on Chinese EVs. China responded with tariffs on Canadian canola. There are almost no new EVs for sale in Canada for less than \$35,000 except the Chevrolet Bolt.

In a 2025 webinar, Dr. Ian Lee of Carleton University quoted recent research by TD Economics, which shows that Chinese EVs have about the same battery range as their competitors, but they charge faster and are priced lower. That's two out of the top three attributes that EV buyers look for.

A 2025 McKinsey study found that 65% of people in the U.S. consider an EV for a future purchase or lease, maybe after one more ICE for about half of them. It is more than likely that Canadians have a similar mindset.

Existing OEM partnerships

U.S. and Japanese manufacturers make many EV models in China. In partnership with SAIC, GM makes the Electra LG7 mid-sized range-extended electric sedan, and the Electra E5 4-door crossover. Electra is a long-standing GM brand well known in Canada and an apt name for an EV.

Ford makes the Bronco EV with Jiangling Motors, which may be exported to Southeast Asia and Australia according to Electrek, a news and commentary site. Stellantis has a 20% stake in Leapmotor, a Chinese EV startup. Leapmotor plans to build the B10 electric SUV in Spain to avoid the European Union's 30.7% tariff. Honda has three EV brands made in China: Ye, Lingxe and e:N. Toyota plans to build Lexus EVs starting in 2027 at a factory in Shanghai, according to an article on CarNewsChina.com.

A win-win solution

All of these companies assemble vehicles in Ontario that are under pressure from the current U.S. administration. I will turn to David Booth, who writes the Motor Mouth column on the driving.ca website. When I first met Booth many years ago, he was skeptical of EVs, but now has a better opinion of them.

In a recent column, Booth suggested a remission of duty for Chinese EVs, if the same company manufactures cars or trucks in Canada. In return, China should reduce tariffs on Canadian canola and other food products.

China exported 1.2 million EVs in 2024, and has 65% EV market share in Mexico, 25% in Australia and 15% in New Zealand, according to TD Economics. If they can find a market in Canada approaching this, it should be seen as a worthwhile opportunity.

Allowing affordable EVs from China to be sold in Canada while ensuring the continuation of existing vehicle production here seems like a win for everyone. [👉](#)



Chris Hill has been a fleet manager and consultant with some of Canada's best-known companies and several municipalities. He is currently working for the City of Waterloo, Ontario.

Fleet Management Serving Growth

Englobe has been expanding at an impressive pace, and now employs more than 3,400 team members across Canada.

TEXT ISABELLE HAVASY

Englobe, which specializes in engineering and environmental services, continues to grow through a steady stream of acquisitions.

A centralized fleet management strategy became essential to support that expansion. “When you bring in a new company, you also bring in its culture and its fleet,” says Stéphane Bisailon, Corporate Fleet Manager, Real Estate Management and Procurement at Englobe. Bisailon joined the company four years ago, at the same time Englobe created a department dedicated to managing the roughly 350 vehicles operating across the country. His arrival also marked the start of a five-year replacement plan aimed at reducing breakdowns, improving fuel efficiency, increasing reliability and limiting downtime. The plan, based on a 20 % annual renewal rate, and a target ownership period of five to seven years, was developed jointly with Finance, Legal, Human Resources and Operations, and is now close to adoption.

Previously overseen by the operations branch, the logistics of the entire fleet now rest with a team of two. Bisailon, supported by Nancy Mercier, Corporate Coordinator, was tasked

Englobe, one of Canada’s six largest engineering and environmental services firms, carries out more than 25,000 projects every year.



Preparing for a major refresh

Because the company lacked a structured approach in the past, several divisions, or operational centres (OCs), are still

“When you bring in a new company,
you also bring in its culture and its fleet.”

STÉPHANE BISAILLON
CORPORATE FLEET MANAGER |
REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT AND PROCUREMENT, ENGLOBE

with building a structure that would, “allow internal clients to spend as little time as possible on fleet administration. My job is to implement policies, establish guidelines, support employees, give them the tools they need and guide them toward a unified corporate culture,” Bisailon explains, “instead of having everyone manage their vehicles on their own.”

using vehicles that are 10 or even 11 years old, with 200,000 to 300,000 kilometres on the odometer. Without a replacement plan, they keep breaking down, and progress becomes impossible. Regular replacement, along with newer technologies, quickly results in fuel savings and a reduced environmental footprint.



Starting from what he describes as an “almost” blank page, Bisailon has been working to “review and simplify processes” by centralizing operations related to these essential tools that support project delivery. He also ensures that each operational unit receives the vehicle or vehicles best suited to its activities. That requires careful analysis, as the company operates across multiple sectors, including transportation, building, environmental services, energy and water.

Despite the wide range of conditions the fleet operates in, Bisailon maintains that it is, “relatively easy to manage.” About 85 % of Englobe’s units are Ford pickups, including the F-150, F-250, Ranger and Maverick. Only a small proportion are SUVs and full-size vans. “A key challenge is that many vehicles do not operate in urban areas, or keep regular daytime schedules,” he says. “Some can even be on the road for two or three weeks at a time.”

Given these realities, full electrification is not a viable option at the moment. “Once we have 1,000 kilometres of battery

range, we will be able to deploy EVs throughout the company without operational constraints,” Bisailon says. For now, he estimates the electric potential at 50 vehicles, with just over half of them (26) suitable as fully electric models. As a result, the company is currently turning to hybrid powertrains.

An essential assessment tool

Bisailon relies on the Electric Vehicle Sustainability Assessment (EVSA) to evaluate potential. This tool compiles the data collected over the past twelve months through the integrated management system, which includes vehicle telematics. Bisailon notes that working with the company’s fleet management partner, Holman, also reduces labour requirements. Without that support, his department would need at least five additional staff members to maintain the current workload.

Total Cost of Ownership (TCO), Right Sizing and shorter life cycles are key factors in procurement planning. TCO is, “an indi-



Stéphane Bisailon, Corporate Fleet Manager, Real Estate Management and Procurement; and Nancy Mercier, Corporate Coordinator at Englobe.

cator that motivates me," he says. "It's a great tool because it allows me to challenge people's assumptions about operations. When you show them the numbers, those facts speak for themselves." Each vehicle must demonstrate value and support the fleet's operational needs. To meet that objective, Bisailon sometimes relies on seasonal or short-term rentals, from six to

24 months. At the moment, about 50 units, or roughly 14 % of the fleet, are managed this way. Fleet management is too often overlooked, even though it directly affects efficiency, operating costs and profitability. For Bisailon, it is time to recognize fleet management for what it is: a strategic tool that supports day-to-day operations, and helps improve energy efficiency. [🔗](#)



Ford pickups are the most common across Englobe's fleet.

Partnerships at the Heart of Fleet Electrification

Fleet electrification goes well past simply replacing fuel with electricity. It involves a deep transformation of infrastructures, technologies, and business models.

TEXT **GUILLAUME BROSSARD**

In this rapidly-evolving ecosystem, one thing is clear: No company can succeed on its own. Partnerships have become essential to accelerating innovation and overcoming challenges.

Innovation and integration

Technological and commercial collaborations enable the pooling of expertise, reduce costs, and accelerate time to market. For example, energy providers are joining forces with vehicle manufacturers to test advanced features, such as vehicle-to-grid energy transfer. This is the case with PG&E and GM in the United States.

As Joel Levin, Executive Director of Plug In America points out, “Vehicle manufacturers and energy providers are now partners until the end of time, whether they like it or not. Decisions made by vehicle manufacturers have a huge impact on energy providers, and vice versa.”

Examples of collaborations in the EV ecosystem

These partnerships bring together complementary players around a shared goal: making electric mobility more accessible, reliable, and profitable.

Examples of partnership models:

- Charging providers and vehicle manufacturers: ChargePoint and Mercedes-Benz have joined forces to deliver a fast, reliable, premium charging experience across North America.
- Vehicle manufacturers and energy providers: Ford Pro and Southern Company collaborated to reduce fleet charging costs and ease pressure on the grid.
- Charging providers and home battery manufacturers: Dcbel and LG Energy Solution have partnered to offer a bi-



Polara has partnered with IVÉO and InCharge to deploy Canada's first municipal vehicle-to-everything (V2X) charging station in Victoriaville, QC.


directional energy solution that connects EVs with home battery storage.

Tangible impacts

For fleet managers, these partnerships deliver real advantages. By operating within a collaborative ecosystem, fleets gain access to more integrated solutions, improved interoperability between vehicles, chargers and software, and ongoing support throughout their energy transition. It also helps anticipate regulatory and technological changes, and control operating costs.

Partnerships as a driver for change

The future of electric mobility will hinge on collaboration, not isolation. Its success rests on the ability of manufacturers, energy providers, fleet managers, and technology partners to co-create integrated, scalable and resilient solutions. In the context of an accelerated energy transition, partnerships stand as both a strategic priority and a catalyst for progress.

Through these collaborative dynamics, fleet managers are not simply adopting a new technology. They are becoming the architects of a more sustainable future. By leveraging collective intelligence and complementary expertise, electrification can fully realize its potential, benefiting businesses, communities, and the environment. Because that potential extends far beyond reducing GHG emissions, it also enables optimal energy valorization within an agile, intelligent energy management ecosystem. 



As Vice President of Marketing at Polara, Guillaume has over 20 years of experience in marketing, developing major infrastructure projects in the energy, maritime and real estate sectors, as well as in commercial law.

Drive25

Holman Talks Tech at Miami Event

This FMC is poised to tackle an unpredictable future.

TEXT JACK KAZMIERSKI

Holman's annual fleet conference, Drive25, took place in Miami Beach, Florida from Nov. 4-6, with the biggest turnout of fleet professionals to date from all over North America.

Holman CEO Chris Conroy kicked off the company's annual fleet conference with a major announcement about the launch of the company's newest business vertical: Holman Robotics.

"You many not think that robotics affects your business," Conroy told the audience, "but it does." He explained that automation and robotics are driving businesses today due to both a lack of skilled labour, and the boost in efficiencies that are only possible with automation.

"We understand that our role is to help companies run their businesses better, and not just their fleets better," he added, noting that Holman Robotics will benefit fleet customers, as well as other businesses.

Uncertain future

Conroy said that Holman Robotics is the company's eighth vertical, and admitted that no one is really sure how robots and automation will change the world, simply because things are changing so quickly.

He sees Holman's role in this ever-changing world as a trusted advisor that can help fleet professionals navigate and manage all the possibilities. "We want to help you figure out what to use, how to set it up, how to manage the robots, as well as how to get the most out of the data that your robots will collect in order to find areas that need improvement," Conroy explained.

He was joined on stage by Joe Foster, VP of Holman Robotics, and by a surprise guest, Holman's very own dog-like robot. Foster explained that the canine robot was currently equipped with a camera that would allow it to "see" and report back with



Joe Foster, VP of Holman Robotics (L) and Holman CEO, Chris Conroy explain how Holman Robotics will benefit fleet professionals.

information about a given area that it has been told to patrol. However, that same robot can be equipped with a variety of sensors that would allow it to detect radiation, chemicals and other substances.

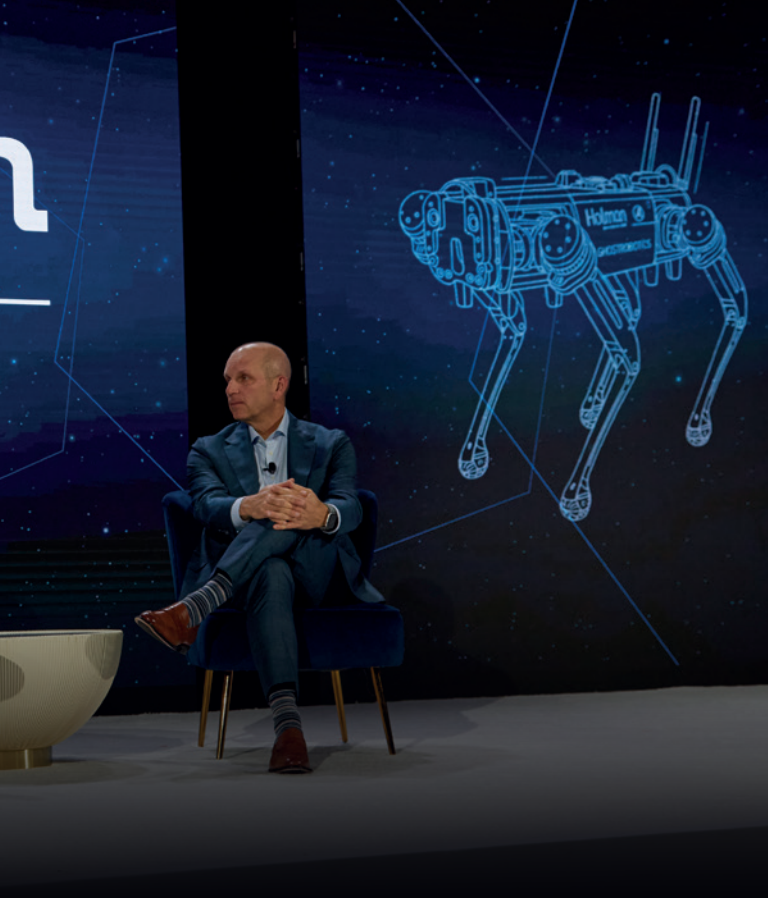
Foster explained that instead of taking jobs away from humans, he believes that robots will take over assignments that humans either don't want to do, or shouldn't be asked to do, because they're too dangerous. "We're not trying to replace fleet drivers with robots," he added. "Instead, we see robots doing the dull, dirty and dangerous jobs. That's what they're for."

Economic outlook

Jeremy Robb, Senior Director of Economic and Industry Insights at Cox Automotive offered an overview of the U.S. economy, with a focus on how tariffs are changing the economic landscape. He explained that although Americans are seeing lower interest rates, lower taxes and less regulation in the U.S., "real tariff costs are not yet baked into product decisions."

Robb said that as far as the automotive industry is concerned, tariffs are lowering overall sales volumes. "Tariffs are real, and they're not going away," he added.

According to Robb, tariffs are adding USD \$5,500 to the cost of a vehicle sold in the U.S., if it's imported from abroad; USD \$4,900, if it's imported from Canada or Mexico; and USD \$1,000 if it's assembled in the U.S.A. This translates into an average of 4-8% increase in the price of a vehicle, whether new or used.



Currently, U.S. dealers seem to be eating that cost, Robb explained, which has resulted in lower profits per vehicle for retailers. This means that tariffs are not hitting consumers as

risks. "I'm less scared about the technology than the rapid pace of adoption," Phipps added. "Mistakes are possible, and AI is prone to bias. To mitigate risk, we're getting humans involved in the process. We're not leaving all the decision-making to AI."

Gregory Allen, VP of Information Management at Holman explained that it's important to view data differently when using AI. For instance, we can no longer think of data as numbers on a spreadsheet that we feed into a computer, because in addition to analyzing that kind of hard data, AI can read our emails and access files on our computers. It then takes all that information into account when answering our questions.

Industry mega trends

A panel discussion moderated by Craig Pierce, Senior VP of Sales at Holman looked at key trends in the industry. The panel agreed that vehicle prices are going up and that affordability is a key concern for fleets. Ed Powell, Director of Consulting Services at Holman explained that vehicle prices are never going to go down. "Vehicles aren't going to get cheaper," he said, adding that fleet professionals need to communicate this fact with management. "They must also understand that the cost to repair vehicles, if they want to keep them longer, isn't going to go down either," he added.

"You many not think that robotics affects your business, but it does. We understand that our role is to help companies run their businesses better, and not just their fleets better."

CHRIS CONROY CEO, HOLMAN

hard as they would have, had dealers passed the costs on to the end user. Even so, Robb explained that the new vehicle average transaction price rose above USD \$50,000 for the first time ever in the U.S., which means that affordability is a major concern.

Tech insights

A panel discussion moderated by Peter Nogalo, Manager, Industry Relations at Holman tackled the challenging topic of artificial intelligence (AI). One of the panelists, Jarrod Phipps, Executive VP & CIO Holman said that AI will improve productivity and efficiency.

"Humans get tired, but AI doesn't," Phipps said. "That means it can analyze data and get answers much faster." He compared AI to an exoskeleton, like an Ironman suit, that improves a human's ability, but doesn't replace them. He admitted that AI comes with

Ted Davis, Senior VP of Upfitting at Holman suggested one way fleets can keep costs down: "Understand the purpose of the vehicles in your fleet and ask yourself what you can do to make sure those vehicles aren't overbuilt, but built for purpose."

The program concluded with a keynote presentation by B.C. native, Eric Termuende, author and co-founder of NoW of Work. He explained that although no one knows what the future holds, the key to success is not to focus on what the next month or next year will bring. Instead, organizations need to focus on building a team that will succeed, no matter what the future looks like. ○

Fleet&Mobility

A LONGER VERSION OF THIS ARTICLE IS AVAILABLE





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Electric Vans

Betting Big on Electric

Shipping giants, Amazon and FedEx are investing heavily in electric delivery vans.

TEXT JACK KAZMIERSKI

Earlier this year, General Motors announced that they're discontinuing production of the Chevrolet BrightDrop electric delivery van. As a fleet manager, this may have left you wondering if electric delivery vans are a dying breed, or if they have a future that's worth investing in.

Two newcomers to the Canadian market are betting that electric delivery vans definitely have a future in our country: Rivian and Harbinger. In October of this year, Rivian announced that their first electric delivery vans arrived in Canada as Amazon put 50 of their vehicles in service on Vancouver streets.

"The vans that Amazon ordered were built with safety, sustainability and comfort in mind," says Erica Tsy-pin, Director of B2B Sales and Partnerships at Rivian. "These vans come with a number of really wonderful software features that are very intuitive and easy to use, when you consider how extremely advanced this piece of technology is."

Rivian's vans offer 360-degree visibility and proximity awareness (sensors that detect obstacles in all directions), which makes these rather large vans easy to operate.

"It doesn't feel as big, once you're behind the wheel," Tsy-pin adds, "because you have all this technology that brings awareness to your surroundings. So if the driver gets too close to a bush, another vehicle, or anything else, they'll know it, and they'll be able to avoid hitting it." >

Amazon has placed an order for 100,000 Rivian trucks.



Tsypin says that Amazon has placed an order for 100,000 Rivian trucks (globally), to be delivered by 2030, which is why Rivian has been able to accommodate Amazon's request for, "a very bespoke software that fully integrates Amazon's delivery workflows within the vehicle, and gives drivers seamless access to routing, navigation, driver support, package organization, and other information."

Two great choices

Rivian offers their electric commercial van in two versions—Delivery 500 and Delivery 700—and Tsypin says that Amazon has ordered both for their fleet. The Delivery 500 has 487 cubic feet of cargo space, while the Delivery 700 has 652. The former has a payload capacity of 2,663 lbs (1,208 kg) while the latter can haul as much as 2,258 lbs (1,024 kg).

The electric powertrain is the same for both models: single-motor, front-wheel drive, 320 hp and 299 lb.-ft. of torque. The range for both models is roughly 260 km, and both come with a CCS Type 1 charging connector, able to accept as much as 100 kW or power when connected to a DC fast charger (also capable of AC charging at 11 kW).

Purchasing and servicing Rivian trucks

Rivian has service centres in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto and Montreal—a total of four across Canada. "Our service works a bit differently than what you might be used to with traditional OEMs," Tsypin says. "We sell directly to the end user or to their fleet management company. We have our own service centres with our own Rivian technicians, as well as a third-party service network."

These third-party providers, including collision repair facilities, have access to Rivian's service portal, which provides the tools and the training necessary to fix and maintain Rivian trucks. Fleets that prefer to service and repair their vehicles in-house can also take advantage of this portal.

"The service portal gives them access to service manuals, diagnostic tools, online training, and the ability to order parts," Tsypin says. "We also offer in-person training courses for more heavy-duty or high-voltage repairs."

Harbinger delivery vans

Electric truck manufacturer Harbinger started selling their medium-duty trucks in Canada through Safetek Specialty Vehicles in October of this year. Harbinger's electric vehicle chassis can be upfitted to suit a variety of fleet applications, including walk-in vans, box trucks, delivery vans, emergency and disaster



Harbinger's electric delivery van is especially well-equipped to deal with Canadian winters.

response vehicles, and more. In fact, earlier this year, Entegra Coach took the wraps off the world's first range extended electric Class A motorhome, built on Harbinger's EV chassis.

Harbinger started offering their electric trucks for sale at the start of 2025, but according to company Co-Founder and CEO John Harris they were working with key customers long before that in order to determine what fleets were looking for, and how the product could be improved and refined.

Harris believes that his company is able to fill a need that others simply couldn't. "Customers looking for medium-duty vehicles, electric or not, have been stuck in the stone ages with what the OEMs are willing to build," he says.

He argues that the automotive world has changed dramatically over the past 100 years, with many advancements in technology. The same can be said for long-haul trucking, with advancements in safety features, telematics and other technologies. "But medium-duty is very different," he explains. "When you look at a leading medium-duty vehicle on the road today in the U.S., chances are it was designed in the 1970s, and that's atrocious."

Harris recalls one of his customers telling him that there's no reason why his medium-duty drivers don't deserve every opportunity to get home safely at night, the same way his light-duty and long-haul truck drivers do. "But the comfort features, the safety features—they're decades behind," Harris adds.

Harbinger is trying to change that, Harris explains, by bringing industry-leading technologies and manufacturing approaches into the medium-duty segment.



Challenging Canadian market

Harris is well aware of the challenges he faces as he introduces electric delivery vans to Canada, including our harsh winter climate. “The Canadian market is a particularly tough place for EVs,” he admits. “People have been very disappointed with EVs because the range they enjoy on a warm sunny day can be cut drastically when they operate their EV in subzero temperatures.”

This is a key concern that Harris and his team set out to address, and during cold-weather testing, Harbinger’s trucks saw a drop in range of only 10-15%.

“We were able to accomplish this because we built a multi-zone heat pump architecture to provide cabin heating,” Harris explains. “So in a typical combustion vehicle, you don’t have any real impact on fuel economy when you’re running the heater because all that heat is free. The engine produces a lot of heat, and we just take some of that heat and send it into the cabin.”

In EVs, that hasn’t been the approach, he adds. Heating the passenger cabin meant stealing power from the battery that would have otherwise been used to power the vehicle, thereby reducing range.

“In our vehicles, we collect the waste heat from the motor to heat the cabin,” Harris says. “Harbinger makes the only commercial vehicle available that uses that kind of thermal architecture in an EV.”

That said, Harris notes that when temperatures plummet, and extra heat is needed, an auxiliary heater kicks in to augment what the waste heat from the motor can supply.

Maintenance and service

Currently, Harbinger sells and services their vans through Safetek, and they also offer customer training for fleets that prefer to service and repair their vehicles in-house.

The Harbinger van is available in three different wheelbase lengths, four different GVWRs, and three different battery pack options. Customers can order four, five or six battery packs offering a range of roughly 225, 280 and 336 km, respectively.

FedEx investment

Harbinger recently announced that FedEx has not only invested in the company, but has also placed an initial order for 53 Harbinger electric vehicles, which will be delivered ready for upfit by the end of this calendar year.

“These vehicles—a mix of Class 5 and Class 6 models—reflect the shipping giant’s ongoing network transformation and resulting need for larger-capacity pickup and delivery vehicles as it continues to optimize its network and routes,” Harbinger said in a statement.

While not every delivery van can be (or should be) electric, there’s a place for electric delivery vans in the fleet ecosystem. Companies like Amazon and FedEx are investing heavily in these technologies, paving the way for smaller fleets to follow suit, whenever doing so makes business sense. [🔗](#)



Moving Towards Better Transport Optimization

Telematics may still be a relatively young field in road transport, but its evolution has been nothing short of impressive.

TEXT **CLAUDE BOUCHER**

In just three decades, simple tracking systems, once limited to blinking dots on a map, have evolved into sophisticated fleet management platforms. Their role now extends far beyond compliance and visibility. They form the technological backbone for strategic decision-making, safety, maintenance, and day-to-day operational optimization. And today, artificial intelligence is opening the door to a new era of route optimization.

Behind this rapid progress lies a paradox that continues to challenge system and service providers. Technology is advancing faster than carriers can integrate it. Combined with limited internal resources, this widening gap places support and partnership at the heart of the value proposition.

Technological complexity

Conversations with several major technology providers across the transport sector reveal the same reality. Fleets neither have the time nor the internal expertise to keep up. Innovations arrive at a rapid pace, new features roll out each month, and fleet managers are simply trying to keep daily operations running smoothly.

Anthony Mainville, CEO of Attrix, sums up the situation clearly. "I think all the providers in the industry are deploying amazing new features. But the issue is that customers do not always have the time to step back, take advantage of them, or use them. We can push technology all we want, but customers won't use it to its full potential if no one guides them."

Moreover, these tools need to address real operational needs, says Guillaume Poudrier from Geothentic.

"Drivers want to improve how they work as well. AI gives them the ability to be more efficient and safer."

JAIME WILLIAMS DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY, ATTRIX



Artificial intelligence is a powerful tool for optimizing delivery routes.

"The end goal has to stay simple so that people can make proper use of the information being gathered. It has to be adapted and flexible based on what a customer is looking for. It is great to collect information, but you have to do something with it.

"A large percentage of customers still only need the basics, which means knowing where their vehicles are and what data they need to manage their maintenance properly."

Jacques DeLarochellière, CEO of ISAAC Instruments reinforces

the idea that value no longer lies in the abundance of features, but in simplicity and automation. The technology is already there. What fleets lack is the time and availability required to adopt it.

"Telematics capabilities are growing faster than adoption. The average fleet is doing far more than five years ago, yet the solutions can do much more," says DeLarochellière.

The consequence is predictable. Tools are underused, data is underexploited, and decisions remain intuitive, even though they could be far more informed.

An industry that keeps accelerating

In this shifting landscape, Jaime Williams, recently appointed Director of Strategy at Attrix, offers the insight of someone who witnessed the industry's early days.

"I have been in this field for 30 years, going back to the days of satellite tracking and the first Qualcomm solutions," says Williams. "Those were the early days of telematics. To-



day, everything evolves constantly. It is no longer just dots on a map. It is about unlocking the full value of a truck, a trailer, and a driver.”

His perspective highlights a major shift: the evolution from tracking to prediction. Predictive analytics and AI are the next major step. In practical terms, this means:

- knowing when a truck should be taken off the road ahead of time
- forecasting revenue opportunities for a driver
- avoiding downtime that drains fleet productivity
- continuously optimizing routes, fuel usage, and travel planning

Williams stresses that these tools are not just for managers. “Drivers want to improve how they work as well. AI gives them the ability to be more efficient and safer.”

A shared conclusion: support is essential

Telematics providers may approach technology differently, but their conclusions all point in the same direction: Data only creates value when the right resources are there to support it.

“People often think telematics is a magic solution that lets them solve whatever issues they face,” says Poudrier from Geothentic. “But the information collected needs to be managed and used, and that means changes at the organizational level. You need resources to make it happen.”

The 2025 ISAAC Horizon conference made this point clear. The industry is going through a difficult cycle marked by historically high costs, and carriers are searching for practical ways to remain competitive. Partnership, the central theme of the event, is far more than a marketing message. It has become a necessity.

AttriX’s approach is grounded in real-world operations. The company emphasizes its hands-on expertise, and relies on a team of specialists to guide customers. Training, automated audits, ELD analytics, proprietary tools integrated into Geotab, and personalized support show that this is much more than a sales relationship.

Both companies agree: Without the right level of support, carriers tend to abandon innovation as soon as day-to-day pressures take over.

Intelligent route optimization: AI changes the rules

The new frontier in telematics is the intelligent optimization of routes.

For years, route optimization meant avoiding detours and construction zones, reducing fuel consumption, and finding the most affordable fuel stop.

Today, AI combines hundreds of real-time inputs, including:

- anticipated mechanical condition of the vehicle
- weight and nature of the cargo
- customer-specific constraints
- driver availability
- weather and congestion levels
- safety considerations
- fuel optimization
- historical route performance

The outcome is faster, more economical, and safer routes that often differ significantly from what human intuition would suggest. The goals remain the same: to reduce costs, make better use of assets, make a driver’s work easier, more enjoyable, and more profitable.

Too much technology, not enough time

The evolution of telematics, combined with the rapid rise of AI, offers immense potential for road transport. Yet this potential only translates into real results when carriers receive proper support. This applies to every telematics provider in the market.

Technology is moving at full speed. Fleets are simply trying to continue to move forward. In this environment, the true competitive advantage is no longer the tool, nor the price, not even the feature set. It is the provider’s ability to walk alongside the carrier, understand their day-to-day challenges, simplify usage, and turn a complex solution into a measurable result.

And although artificial intelligence now plays a defining role in how solutions are developed and used, the future of telematics is not only about AI. It is about human relationships, support, and mutual understanding. [🔗](#)



Chargepoly

High-Performance Intelligent Electrification

Heavy-duty charging solutions
for today's trucks, buses and beyond.

«

TEXT MICHEL BEAUNOYER

Quebec's move toward heavy-duty electrification is already gaining momentum across logistics fleets, urban transit agencies, and school transportation operators. Chargepoly Canada, based in Granby, has become a key partner for fleet managers undertaking the shift to electrification.

Founded in France in 2019, this manufacturer of ultra-fast charging stations and software solutions began its North American expansion with the opening of a Seattle branch in 2022. Jean Nicolas Dupéré, already active in transportation electrification and commercial charging, discovered the company, and became its sole representative in Quebec, before taking on the role of National Director. He quickly built a team of specialists, including Sylvain Cabanetos, formerly with Cléo, a subsidiary of Hydro-Québec. ➔

Sylvain Cabanetos and Jean Nicolas Dupéré,
in front of Chargepoly's facilities in Granby, Quebec.

Made in Canada

The company's early months in Quebec were spent learning about the needs of local carriers, as well as the operational and environmental realities in the province. At the same time, Chargepoly's Canadian division developed a local design and certified the product to meet Canadian standards.

To secure its supply chain, the company partnered with regional players. The enclosures are built by Produits Métalliques Roy in the Quebec City area, and the equipment is assembled locally by Électrotech, in a workshop next to Chargepoly's Granby offices.

"Our products carry the 'Made in Quebec' certification mark. The next step is to build the entire unit right here," says Cabanetos. For him, recognition as a locally-made product matters, but above all, the cabinets and chargers have been tested to meet the needs of Quebec carriers, and to withstand Canada's demanding weather conditions.

Companies that turn to Chargepoly want equipment that is simple to use and reliable.

"That's our vision," says Dupéré. "Touchscreens or decorative add-ons are optional. Our priority is resilience. These are transport operators who want robust equipment that is easy to run and maintain. Above all, they want efficiency."

Chargepoly's charging solution is built around a power cabinet capable of delivering between 30 and 400 kilowatts per connector, depending on configuration and vehicle capacity. In practical terms, this means a Volvo VNR Electric tractor can charge from 0 to 100% in about two hours. One major advantage is the system's ability to deliver consistent charging power, eliminating the frustration that comes when a station's output drops sharply.

Beyond equipment performance, Chargepoly stands out for its after-sales service. With staff based in Quebec, and equipment built locally, questions or issues are resolved quickly. Responses and support are immediate, available in both official languages, and replacement parts can be supplied without delay.

Guidance, advice, and problem-solving

Customer support begins right from the first point of contact. "There's a huge amount of information out there on commercial and heavy-duty charging, which makes it difficult for fleet managers to know where to start," explains Cabanetos. "People often focus on the technology, before taking the time to understand what the business actually needs. Fleet managers working on electrification often overestimate the power



The Chargepoly team stands out for its customer proximity, responsiveness, and high level of expertise.

and charging capacity required, which leads to unnecessary costs. It's important to have a clear picture of your needs so that the infrastructure is properly sized, and you're not placing excessive demand on the distribution network. Solutions like ours can be scaled over time, allowing companies to expand in stages as their requirements grow."

Cabanetos notes that an assessment of current and future requirements for an electric truck fleet will help managers determine which equipment is truly necessary. Early planning also speeds up connection requests with local utility suppliers, a process that can take more than a year. The team can also identify available funding programs to support these investments.

A refined approach

Chargepoly is a strong example of what smart charging can look like. A business with a power cabinet can connect as many charging points as its fleet requires. Will all trucks charge at the same time, or do some need priority? Either way, the system



Significant Achievements

Although Chargepolo is still a newcomer to Canada's commercial charging market, the company has already delivered a substantial number of projects. These initiatives cover three main areas: long- and short-haul freight, school transportation, and public transit. The Société de transport de Trois-Rivières turned to Chargepolo for their bus electrification program, as did Autobus G. Séguin for school transportation, and Relais Petit for heavy-duty charging operations.

adapts. The company's charging-management platform lets supervisors build an optimal, customized charging plan.

When a truck arrives back at the facility for the night, it plugs into an available station, which recognizes the vehicle, and starts charging at the right time and at the right power level so it can head out again the next morning. In urgent situations, the system can prioritize a vehicle and deliver the maximum power the vehicle can accept for a quick turnaround.

"We want operators to take full advantage of the flexibility of our technology," says Dupéré. "Supervisors can track charging in real time from their workstation, and adjust parameters as fleet operations or business requirements change. It's all very intuitive."

Charging points not used at certain times of the day can be made available to other users. A neighbouring company could send its electric trucks to charge there at a preferential rate. It is an excellent way to maximize the return on investment while helping advance electrification within the business community.

Positioning fleets for success

Chargepolo helps fleet managers select the equipment that best fits their needs, and works with certified master electricians to ensure proper installation. The team then reviews equipment performance and recommends updates or upgrades, when needed.

"We're here to deliver charging expertise," says Cabanetos. "When a driver returns to the facility at the end of the day, all they have to do is plug their truck into the first available charger. The station recognizes the vehicle and delivers the required power according to the preset parameters. It's that simple for the driver."

However, both specialists emphasize the importance of fleet managers supporting this transition internally. Ongoing training on best practices for operating electric vehicles is essential.

"Even with constant political and economic shifts, electrification of transport remains a reality in Quebec. Our businesses have committed to it, and are not looking back. We're aligned with that commitment, and want to support our fleet managers by providing simple, efficient solutions tailored to their real needs," concludes Dupéré. [🔗](#)

Safe Heavy-Duty Driving A Shared Responsibility

Recent months have brought road safety sharply back into focus.

TEXT **CLAUDE BOUCHER**

Collisions involving heavy vehicles keep piling up, and all too often, the same underlying problem reappears: low-cost drivers, the so-called “Driver Inc.” brought in at minimal expense, poorly trained or barely supervised. Beyond this issue, which raises both economic and safety concerns, some long-standing industry practices need to be re-examined.

The Driver Inc. scheme skirts labour rules, weakens training, undermines safety standards and exposes drivers, road users and fleet operators to unnecessary risks. In response, Quebec is making a major shift. As of December 15, 2025, obtaining a Class 1 licence will require 125 hours of mandatory training. This aligns the province with Mandatory Entry Level Training (MELT) programs used in Ontario and Alberta.

But unlike those provinces, Quebec is not starting from scratch. For decades, it has benefited from a strong public training network built around two specialized centres, the CFTR and CFTC. Their rigorous approach is recognized across the country. They shaped the backbone of the sector, long before minimum standards appeared elsewhere.

This new requirement, therefore, brings consistency to a system that already had a head start. It also addresses persistent concerns in an industry worried about the risks created by unregulated recruiting practices. For Michel Beaulac, group leader at the CFTR with 25 years of professional training experience, this reform had become unavoidable.

Technology and distraction

Today’s safety challenges are nothing like they were twenty years ago. The job has changed, sometimes because of innovation, sometimes in spite of it. Michel Beaulac, who has been teaching at the CFTR for 17 years, sums up the evolution well.

“Back then, the good old CB played an important safety role. Drivers warned each other about obstacles, accidents and road conditions. Today, the CB has been replaced by the cellphone, which does not foster the same sense of commun-



After two decades of teaching heavy truck driving, Michel Beaulac has observed an increase in driver distraction, caused in part by cell phones and other technologies.

ity among drivers.” Heavy-duty vehicles have seen a steady influx of the communication tools we all use daily, even when they have no place in a truck cabin. Headphones worn continuously, endless calls, movies playing on tablets, constant notifications. Touchscreens, telematics systems and new digital mirrors keep multiplying, sometimes with little preparation. This cognitive overload has contributed to an increase in incidents. Fleet managers are seeing the results:

- Loss of attention
- Delayed reactions
- Greater distraction caused by in-cab interfaces
- Difficulty adapting to different vehicles

Another issue adds to the challenge: advanced driver assistance systems. Adaptive cruise control, lane departure warnings, multiple sensors. These tools are valuable, yet they can foster overconfidence. Beaulac notes that technology can support drivers, but it never replaces human judgment. All of these systems require training, ongoing follow-up and proper supervision.

Restoring order in daily practices

For fleets, mandatory training is only part of the solution. Safety depends on several factors that are not regulated by the government.



First, familiarization with new vehicles needs to become standard procedure. Carriers often teach fuel-efficient driving, but spend less time explaining in-cab systems. As a result, drivers become familiar with the truck's systems only after they are already on the road.

“Back then, the good old CB played an important safety role. Drivers warned each other about obstacles, accidents and road conditions. Today, the CB has been replaced by the cellphone, which does not foster the same sense of community among drivers.”

MICHEL BEAULAC TEACHING, CFTR

The second factor is compensation. The long-standing pay-per-mile or pay-per-trip model pushes drivers to speed up, make up delays and skip breaks. In some cases, a single late delivery can cost up to one thousand dollars, a penalty often charged to the driver. This model distorts behaviour and weakens safety.

According to Beaulac, hourly pay should be the standard whenever the job does not involve mandatory rest time in a sleeper berth. In other words, when the work can be completed in a single shift, mileage or trip-based pay should not be

used. This approach would ease pressure and support more preventive driving. Internal policies must also evolve. Some carriers have adopted strict measures:

- Total ban on communication while driving
- In-cab cameras to monitor behaviour
- Mandatory stops before answering a call

These initiatives may be controversial, yet they have a measurable impact on risk.

A shared responsibility

Road safety no longer rests solely on the driver, as Beaulac points out.

“We cannot place all the responsibility on the driver. Safety is a collective effort.”

This is perhaps the most important lesson of this regulatory turning point. It involves:

- Fleet managers, who oversee policies, pay models and technology use
- Shippers, who must adjust timelines and expectations
- Trainers, who need to keep pace with the rapid evolution of the job
- Government bodies, which set standards and provide structure
- Carriers, which must promote a culture where caution takes precedence over raw performance

Above all, Beaulac adds, it requires effective enforcement by police forces and organizations such as Contrôle routier.

Quebec's new mandatory training requirement, similar to those in Ontario and Alberta, sets the minimum standard. What happens above that will depend on the choices fleets make, including ongoing training, clear internal policies, fairer compensation models, and thoughtful integration of technology.

A safer road network and better coexistence between motorists and truck drivers are within reach. It starts with a shared understanding. Safe driving is, and will remain, a shared responsibility. [🔗](#)



AttriX Keeps Its Compass Steady

AttriX, the telematics and technology solutions provider, is marking its tenth anniversary this year. The milestone was celebrated during the company's annual user conference in October in Mont-Tremblant.

TEXT **CLAUDE BOUCHER**

Built around the Cap Nord theme, the AttriX annual conference gave fleet managers the opportunity to explore new developments and share best practices.

AttriX has long been recognized for integrating Geotab telematics, and for developing complementary tools that fit directly into Geotab's open ecosystem. The company initially gained traction among smaller fleets, but its expertise eventually led major organizations, including Groupe Robert, Hydro-Québec, and Quebec's Ministry of Transport and Sustainable Mobility to entrust it with full telematics integration. For CEO Anthony Mainville, the Cap Nord theme was a reminder to stay grounded in the values that have shaped the company since it launched in 2015.

"Technology companies often lose sight of their original values," Mainville said. "That is one of the reasons we are trying to slow our growth, to reconnect with what made us successful. The relationships that built our reputation early on still matter. We need to protect them, strengthen them, and develop that same kind of relationship with our larger clients."

Renewed emphasis on support

Looking back at the past decade, Mainville is proud of what his team has accomplished. Their work has produced several new tools, including GoRoute and the Lighthouse control centre. Still, like many telematics providers, AttriX frequently finds that customers underuse the technology available to them.

"Across the entire tech landscape," he says, "new features are emerging faster than ever, particularly with AI. Providers across the industry are rolling out incredible capabilities. The challenge is that clients rarely have the time to step back, explore them, and put them to full use. Developing technology is one thing, but clients will not adopt it unless someone is there

to support them, guide them and show them how these tools can actually enhance their operations."


Strategy for national growth

AttriX recently strengthened their leadership team with the addition of telematics pioneer Jaime Williams, who joined the company as Chief Strategy Officer. He has more than three decades of experience, including senior roles with major industry players and the founding of PeopleNet Canada in 2000.

"Anthony has a vision of where he wants to take the company, to expand it outside the province of Quebec, focusing primarily on Ontario and the West, as well as Atlantic Canada," Williams said. "So we are in the process of developing a strategy to make that happen. We hired people in Ontario and will eventually start expanding into the rest of Canada."

Williams' arrival is a major advantage for AttriX, said Mainville. "He is highly analytical and very steady. He brings an extraordinary amount of experience. He was part of the group that helped build the technology we use today."

For Williams, AttriX is well positioned to succeed outside Quebec, not only because of their technical expertise with Geotab integrations, but also because of their understanding of the industry itself.

AttriX's competitive advantage is their customer service and their deep, very specific industry knowledge. AttriX understands safety, compliance, and the day-to-day operations of a trucking company. That is a huge advantage. They have the people who can train their clients' staff effectively and who can advise on compliance issues. They are compliance experts in-house. Training is essential. A true partnership between the telematics provider and the fleet means making the product as easy as possible for everyone in the organization to use. 

ISAAC Horizon 2025 Conference

Partnership, Innovation and Recognition

ISAAC Instruments' Annual User Conference, held on November 4 & 5 at the company's newly expanded headquarters in Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville, brought together more than 200 participants and placed a strong emphasis on partnership.

TEXT CLAUDE BOUCHER

It was a theme that defined not only the two days of discussion, but also an entire year for an industry facing one of the toughest economic cycles in decades.

CEO Jacques DeLarochellière began by noting that many carriers are currently operating at a loss, pressured by historic costs and a U.S. market that has yet to recover. He emphasized the need for strong partnerships, and for tools that help fleets remain resilient long enough to weather the cycle.

A key moment of the conference was the announcement of a strategic partnership with Daimler Truck North America. The manufacturer's engineering teams plan to incorporate ISAAC's technology directly into the next generation of trucks, a significant endorsement for a Quebec-based SME that has become an important player in North American telematics.

Throughout the presentations, ISAAC unveiled several major innovations. These included a new generation of AI camera features, a completely redesigned Safety Score, advancements to the open platform, smoother Android integrations, and data analysis tools that help turn raw information into concrete action. Specialized workshops gave users the opportunity to explore eco-driving, trailer identification, developments in ISAAC Connect, fuel analysis, and the latest enhancements to the InRealTime solution.

Jacques DeLarochellière and Jean-Sébastien Bouchard emphasized a recurring issue: the gap between the speed of technological progress and fleet adoption. They stressed that the real value comes from simplicity and automation. Their message was clear: The tools already exist, and fleets now need to put them to work to reap the benefits.



Jacques DeLarochellière, ISAAC Instruments CEO

The ISAAC HORIZON 2025 conference presented at the company's headquarters in Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville followed a similar event held in October in Charlotte, North Carolina. The annual gathering also provided ISAAC with an opportunity to welcome users into their newly-expanded 14,000 square-foot facilities. As in previous years, the conference concluded with the ISAAC Customer Recognition Awards Banquet, a highlight of the event. Six recipients stood out for their exemplary practices.

- **Driver of the Year Award.** Jean-Marie Lachance, Transport Transbo (Olymel), honoured for more than 40 years of impeccable driving and a perfect ISAAC Coach score.
- **Eco-Efficiency Award.** MV Express and VTL Express, recognized for their environmentally-responsible initiatives supported by exemplary use of the platform.
- **Safety and Compliance Improvement Award, fleets up to 100 trucks.** Transport Stéphane Ross.
- **Safety and Compliance Improvement Award, fleets of more than 100 trucks.** Groupe Morneau, adding this award to a series of distinctions earned in 2025.
- **Driver Happiness Award.** A1 Intermodal, for completing both an ISAAC implementation and a TMS transition while keeping the driver experience front-and-centre.

After two days of discussions, one point became clear. Despite difficult market conditions, carriers are looking for practical solutions, and ISAAC intends to support them. With smarter tools, deeper integrations and an engaged user community, this company is focusing on collaboration to help move the industry forward...one kilometre at a time. [👉](#)

Heavy Truck Towing Calls for Caution With Electric Models

Electric trucks may still be rare on Canadian roads, but they are now part of the landscape.

TEXT ISABELLE HAVASY

Like any vehicle, EVs can break down or run into trouble. Towing them, however, calls for a specialized approach because the process can be very complex.

At present, heavy electric vehicles represent only a very small share of the calls handled by Remorquage Meteor, explains Serge Landry, co-owner and trainer for the Association des Professionnels du Dépannage du Québec (APDQ) and WreckMaster. The family business operates 54 tow trucks and covers a wide territory stretching from Quebec to the United States and across Ontario. Their units, equipped with rear-mounted lifting systems, usually haul between 40 and 50 tonnes.

Even so, the few trucks equipped with this “extremely rare” powertrain require tow operators to be especially vigilant. To help prevent errors, Landry teaches the SCENE method. S stands for scanning the area to assess the situation. C involves calculating the resistance and the actual capacity of the tow truck. E highlights the need to explain the procedure to everyone involved. N, meaning “no-nos,” refers to careful verification of attachment points. The final E stands for execution, once everything is secure.

As with passenger vehicles, electric trucks should ideally be lifted onto a flatbed so that the wheels stay off the ground, and the electrical components are protected. The problem is that no flatbed tow trucks



Buses are the most common type of electric heavy vehicle.



“At present, heavy electric vehicles represent only a very small share of the calls handled by Remorquage Meteor.”

SERGE LANDRY CO-OWNER AND TRAINER,
ASSOCIATION DES PROFESSIONNELS DU DÉPANNAGE
DU QUÉBEC (APDQ) AND WRECKMASTER

are available for heavy vehicles. “They could theoretically be loaded onto a lowboy trailer, although their deflectors make them far too tall. They will not clear the bridges,” says Landry. When transporting them is not an option, towing becomes the only solution.

A high-voltage procedure

While easier and quicker to perform, rear towing is not suitable for all trucks, and is not recommended for electric models. Forward towing, however, involves additional steps to protect the drive motors. First, air needs to be supplied to the vehicle that has broken down so that the brakes can be released.

This step requires some adjustment, “because once again, just as in the passenger vehicle segment, the way to select neutral differs from one model to another,” says Landry. This



lack of standardization has implications for operator safety, because tow professionals sometimes have to carry out maneuvers they are not accustomed to. He gives the example of 2025 Volvo models, where the air supply is connected directly to the air dryer located under the truck. The procedure instantly releases the brakes without anyone needing to climb into the cab to press the button normally used for that task. It is therefore essential to block the wheels with chocks, since the vehicle could move when the air returns. Depending on the truck model and the type of differential, the tow operator will then need to remove the driveshaft or the axles.

When it comes to personal protective equipment, it is largely the same as what would be used with EVs, despite the higher voltage of heavy vehicles. “Grade zero gloves are obviously required,” explains Yves Racette, Director of Program Development at NAPA and Traction, because, “there is no way of knowing whether the vehicle has lost insulation.” Safety glasses are essential when removing the cab extensions. Since these parts are “not necessarily solid,” Landry recommends removing them when the truck is being towed from the rear. He adds that it is also possible to try securing the cab extensions

instead. Otherwise, like an open parachute, they create drag, risk getting damaged, and the tow truck will burn more fuel to counter this effect. That is money straight out of the operator’s pocket, stresses Landry.

Constraints and challenges

The procedure becomes even more complex when a truck ends up in a ditch or is involved in a collision. In such situations, the operator must take the time to understand the vehicle’s mechanical layout before intervening. “One of the first things to do, even before arriving on site, is to consult the manufacturer’s emergency response guide to understand how to partially disable the electrical system, or even how to proceed with towing,” explains Stéphane Ruel, Training Advisor, Road Operations, CAA-Québec.

This practice, not yet standard among towing professionals, is just as relevant in the trucking world, he believes. Some vehicles also require a mandatory waiting period before any handling. Ruel adds that communication with first responders is essential to secure the area, share information and minimize risks for everyone. ➔



Other challenges add to these constraints. There are still uncertainties regarding thermal runaway risks during storage, and the vulnerable impact areas on these vehicles. On electric trucks, the batteries often occupy the space where the fuel tank used to be. "In a jackknife, everything ends up pressing into that area," notes the co-owner of Remorquage Meteor.

The growing complexity of vehicles and the rapid pace of technological change require tow operators in Canada to

then be expanded through programs offered by CAA-Québec, the APDQ or WreckMaster.

Racette points out that the value of preventive maintenance should not be underestimated. He believes a large portion of breakdowns results from insufficient follow-up. "We now have access to data that allows us to address certain issues," and thereby reduce the risk of downtime. He considers the Preventive Maintenance Program a solid foundation, although he questions the depth of current inspections on electric trucks,



"One of the first things to do, even before arriving on site, is to consult the manufacturer's emergency response guide to understand how to partially disable the electrical system or even how to proceed with towing,"

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keep their training up to date. "We can no longer tow the way we did 20 years ago. It is not the same game anymore," says Ruel. Although the industry does not have a formal curriculum, the Centre de formation en transport de Charlesbourg (CFTC) and the Centre de formation du transport routier de Saint-Jérôme teach the basics of the trade. These skills can

especially regarding high-voltage systems. Even though their numbers are marginal, electric heavy trucks bring their share of challenges. Interventions require more preparation, more knowledge and greater caution. Tow operators now work in an evolving environment, and with technologies that require an even higher level of expertise. [🔗](#)

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