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Set up for success: How Conti360° Solutions adapts to its customers' needs



As one of the UK's largest providers of tyres and service solutions, Continental's Conti360° Solutions, has an enviable reputation for providing exceptional all-around service to its commercial fleet customers. From the initial development of a tyre policy to regular checks, condition reports and end-of-life management, the Conti360° Solutions team works tirelessly to help operators drive down overall driving costs for their fleet.

Key to the programme's success is the flexibility and adaptability afforded to each customer. Every client receives a bespoke tyre policy closely tailored to their unique fleet profile.

Tony Stapleton, Head of Fleet Sales at Continental Tyres UK and Ireland, explains the process behind onboarding and maintaining successful tyre management partnerships.

How do you build a new tyre management policy?

Our first step is always to establish the customer's needs. Essentially, getting a solid understanding of what they do and how they do it. We'll drill down into the fine details, often to a level that the customer simply isn't expecting. For example, that would involve understanding the scope of the business, location profiling of their regular clients, and any

plans for growth and expansion in the coming years. All are factors that influence the final tyre policy that we pull together.

The team will also perform a fleet profiling exercise to understand the diversity of the vehicles we're maintaining. Quite often, customers will have complex arrangements. They may own some of their fleet, while some may be on a lease. A few older trucks may be retained for occasional use during peak times. All could find their way back to a different depot every night. In those cases, it's as much an engineering strategy as it is a general service policy.

Once the profiling is complete, we can determine our key performance indicators. These are kept purposefully concise so that both the customer and our teams can regularly benchmark the performance of their tyre management policy.

The final task is to identify the best financial solution for the business. We're able to cater to the more traditional 'pay as you go' model and the increasingly popular 'price per kilometre' system, where each vehicle has an overall cost based on the mileage it's covered. However, a 'fixed budget' system, where we generate an annual cost budget for the business depending on their forecasted use, suits many operators and is our favoured solution. It's like the PPK, but instead, we look ahead rather in retrospect. It means that you can adapt in advance to changing variables, such as fleet expansion, and it helps to plan for any changes to overall costs year on year. This methodology is much like how you would budget at home for your utilities bill i.e. a budgeted monthly payment with a periodic reconciliation based on usage.



Tony Stapleton, Head of Fleet Sales at Continental Tyres UK and Ireland

What do customers seek from a Conti360° Solutions policy?

It's common for our clients to have three overarching objectives. Understandably, one of those is an overall cost-benefit.

As a company, we're keen to help our customers understand the need to not look solely at tyre and service prices. A tyre policy is most effective when the customer invests in the whole life cost approach. That is opting for the most suitable tyre, even if it isn't the cheapest on the market, in return benefiting from overall cost savings through reduced maintenance and higher fuel economy. Without adopting this mentality, a customer can lose a chunk of the value afforded by operating a tyre policy. We find that our clients are very mindful of this approach and work with us to maximise their overall savings. Ultimately, by taking a collaborative approach, we're able to deliver the lowest overall tyre maintenance costs for our customers.

The second consideration for Conti360° Solutions' customers is a service standard equal to or above that of an outgoing supplier. In addition to our policy promises, such as our ContiBreakdownService downtime guarantee and our in-depth reporting and analytics platform, we often exceed expectations by going above and beyond for our clients.

Day-to-day, there are 'out of standard' challenges, but it's very much a part of our role to accommodate a business' needs. We ask a lot of our Conti360° Solutions network partners to be flexible enough to offer an 'on the day' solution for issues that may arise. A problem on just one vehicle could have serious knock-on consequences for a customer, so it's rewarding when we can help them to avoid that scenario.

The final objective, contract sustainability, has become a greater priority for our customers in the last few years. Clients are looking for Continental to be aligned with its own environmental messaging. We offer a complete tyre management service, including end-of-life management and recycling of the rubber. Continental also manufactures ContiRe and Bandvulc retread tyres enabling us to build a tyre policy that utilises both new and retreaded tyres in most cases.



Are you continuing to refine and develop the Conti360° Solutions offer?

Evaluating our performance and looking at ways to improve is an activity we regularly undertake. We've got exceptional data and analytics capabilities that allow us to drill down into the specifics of our service and, consequently, pinpoint areas of development.

Product innovation is a critical area in which we can add value for our clients. That could be with the introduction of new products, such as when we launched our ContiPressureCheck tyre pressure monitoring system to help operators minimise damage. It could also be a more cohesive integration of technology into existing products, or a system upgrade, like our recently announced ContiConnect 2.0 tyre pressure monitoring system management tool that integrates kilometres travelled.

Continental is also investing in its own service capability through its in-house companies R&J Strang and Tyre Maintenance. This enables Continental, together with its Conti360° Solutions partners, to bring enhanced service levels to customers. One significant example is the ongoing investment in talent. We need a new generation of tyre fitters, and Continental's apprenticeship scheme, run through Tyre Maintenance, is helping to recruit them. Significant investment has also been made in Continental's in-house facility in Lutterworth offering both practical/workshop and classroom environment training.

For the wider Conti360° Solutions team, it's also about helping our customers get the best possible value from their policy. We're assisting the customers in monitoring their tyre pressures and reporting faults as soon as they appear to allow the tyres to fulfil their potential.

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Continental develops pioneering technologies and services for sustainable and connected mobility of people and their goods. Founded in 1871, the technology company offers safe, efficient, intelligent and affordable solutions for vehicles, machines, traffic and transportation. In 2021, Continental generated sales of €33.8 billion and currently employs more than 190,000 people in 58 countries and markets. On October 8, 2021, the company celebrated its 150th anniversary.

The Tyres group sector has 24 production and development locations worldwide. Continental is one of the leading tyre manufacturers with more than 57,000 employees and posted sales of €11.8 billion in 2021 in this group sector. Continental ranks among the technology leaders in tyre production and offers a broad product range for passenger cars, commercial and special-purpose vehicles as well as two-wheelers. Through continuous investment in research and development, Continental makes a major contribution to safe, cost effective and ecologically efficient mobility. The portfolio of the tyre business includes services for the tyre trade and fleet applications, as well as digital management systems for tyres.

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Press release

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