



# Here, There, and Beyond: Tracking Every Step of Your Trailer's Journey

Consider the trailers you use in your logistics and trucking operations. Consider the journey that they embark on to deliver goods to a final destination. Where do they stop between here and there? What unique challenges might they encounter at each stop or while in-transit? It's easy to regard each of these as their own problems and isolated checkpoints, but that doesn't mean that they can't be accounted for with a single, shared trailer tracking solution. Let's embark on a journey alongside your trailers and find out how Link Labs can help you maintain control and visibility at every step along the way.

## Trailer Tracking for Every Step of the Way...

It's easy to think of trailer and fleet tracking as being concerned with ensuring that cargo makes it from one place to another. Although this is a defining aspect of logistics tracking, it is inaccurate to claim that it's the only concern. Trucks and trailers don't just drive between two places and call it a day – there are a number of stops in between, tasks to fulfill at those stops, and often days of travel before they reach their final destination. The most effective trailer tracking solution not only acknowledges these steps, but seeks to provide benefits to smooth the journey and prevent disruptions before they occur. Let's walk through each step of a trailer's journey and

demonstrate how an effective trailer tracking solution provides benefits for each.

### Terminal Facility

A trailer's journey starts well before it's loaded with its cargo. Instead, it finds its beginnings at the terminal facility, where trailers are coupled and uncoupled with trucks. This means that many trailers are often at terminal facilities between instances of use. This is where the usefulness of trailer tracking begins. When trailers are not connected to trucks, they are often rendered invisible to operators, as they rely on a truck's telematics system to provide location information. This discounts what happens to a trailer when it is not currently attached to a truck. Tracking at this venture can help fleet managers remain apprised of utilization, providing records of which trailers have been sitting idle for too long and which should stay and receive maintenance. The needed visibility can be achieved by affixing a SuperTag to each trailer, which will report the trailer's location and movement history to create an accurate picture of its usage.

Trailer tracking also has a role to play when it comes to the coupling of trucks and trailers. By affixing asset tags with unique IDs to the trucks, the SuperTag can detect which truck is attaching to the trailer and provide a record of the coupling. This is triggered when the truck and trailer leave a pre-established geofence boundary around

the facility. The tags wake up and transmit information to the cloud to let operators know which truck is leaving with which trailer, as well as what tagged unloading and maintenance equipment the vehicles contain. This helps operators easily identify when a truck has retrieved the wrong trailer or left equipment behind. Instead of realizing the mix-up when someone comes for the trailer or when the driver makes a stop, the system can be used to verify immediately, saving time and fuel by preventing late-stage returns to the facility.

## Warehouse

The warehouse is where the trailer is then loaded with cargo, usually in units of pallets or other containers. By creating a geofence around the warehouse facility and setting up alerts for when the trailer enters, a trailer tracking system provides a record of how long the trailer has been on the road. Once it's within the facility's boundaries, you can also take advantage of tampering sensors that will alert you if the trailer's doors are opened outside of operational hours. This is especially important when the trailer is at the warehouse, as this is the stage where cargo and equipment theft is mostly likely to occur. When you receive the alerts, you can act quickly to figure out what happened and, if necessary, recover what was taken. This is facilitated by affixing tags to pallets, containers, or other product units. Like the tags on the truck and equipment, these communicate with the trailer's SuperTag to establish that they're traveling with them. Once a trailer leaves the facility, exiting the geofence will once again trigger a check of what's leaving with it to ensure that the correct cargo is onboard and that no equipment was left behind.

## Fuel and Truck Stops

Along the journey, trucks require fuel and drivers require rest. As a result, most journeys include multiple stops at fuel and truck stops. The key benefit that trailer tracking provides at these stops is an accurate report of dwell time. These stops are necessary, but if a truck stops too long, their journey will be delayed and the company will lose money from other deliveries that time could have been used to make. Our trailer tracking system provides insight to dwell time through integrated movement sensors, which can tell

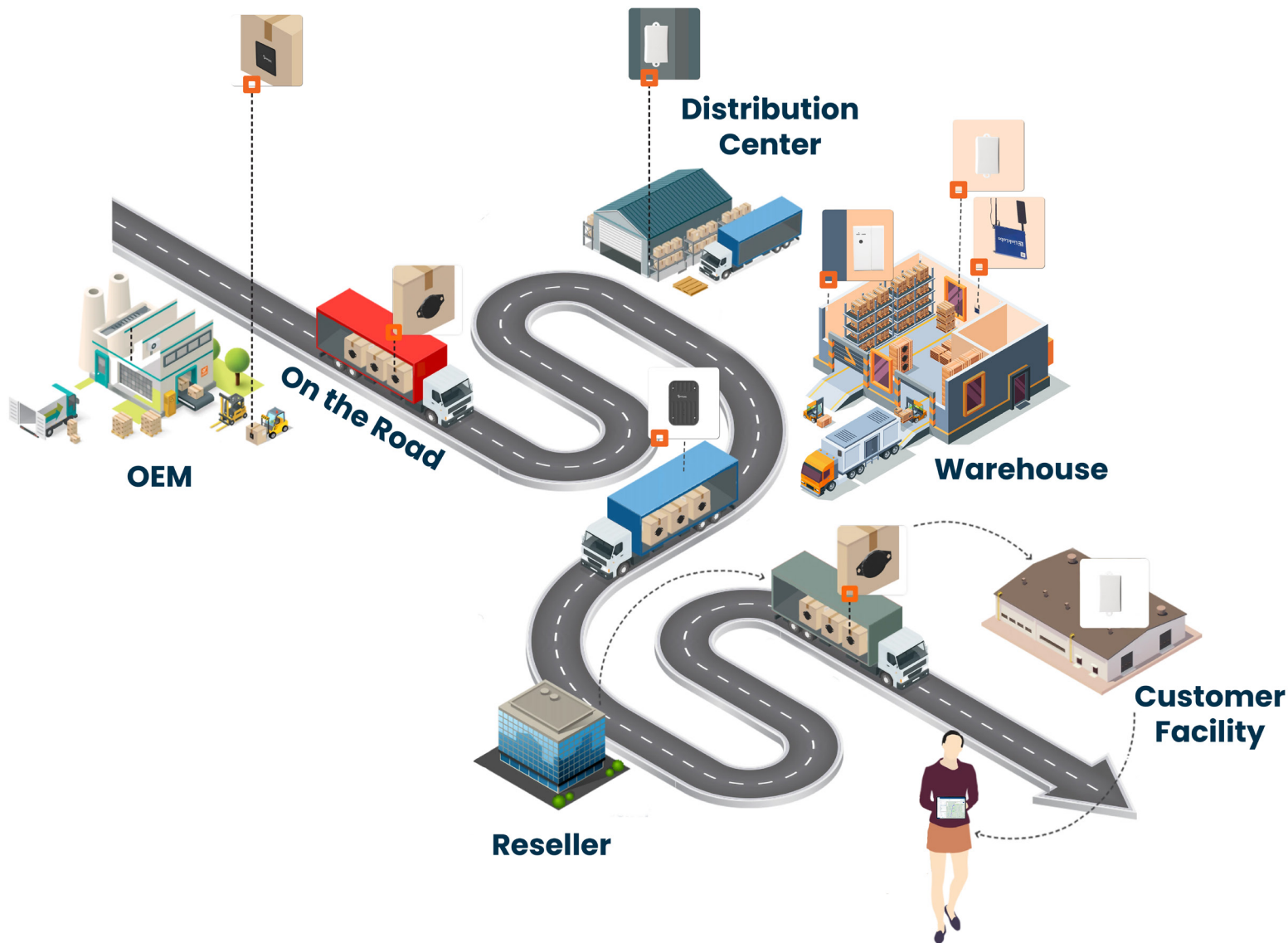
whether or not a trailer is in transit. By reviewing records of last movements, fleet managers have direct access to how long their trailers are staying in one place, and they can take action if they spend too much time without moving.

## Weigh Stations

Depending on their clearances, not all trucks and trailers have to stop at every single weigh station. However, most have to stop at a few, at the very least to verify that the truck and trailer are in working order or to address any issues that may have arisen while on the road. At these stations, trucks and trailers undergo inspections to ensure their safety and functionality so that necessary repairs can be called in before they cause an accident. Depending on the level of inspection needed for a given issue, a truck and its trailer will remain there for a longer period of time. While these extended stops are all in the name of safety, it's important to have a record of this dwell time so that customers can be kept up-to-date. Trailer tracking can help with this much the same way it helps monitor dwell times at fuel and truck stops, providing a record of the trailer's last movement. If a truck or trailer is delayed for an extended period, fleet managers can verify what's going on, inform customers of the reason for the delay, and make alternate arrangements for transport and delivery when necessary.

## Unplanned Stops

Unexpected stops are just as important to consider as expected stops. These unplanned stops might occur as a result of a breakdown, obstructive traffic, or law enforcement. Most of the time, what's important is that these unplanned stops are logged so that the customer can be informed, similar to stops at weigh stations. Effective trailer tracking helps in the exact same way, providing a record of last movement and letting fleet managers take whatever action is necessary to move forward. It is also, however, simply important for operators to know when trucks and trailers have stopped and where they have stopped. When the truck is turned off, they only have access to its last known location, whenever the last checkin occurred. But the trailer tracking system remains on even when the truck isn't, letting them know when trailers have made an unusual stop. It is important to



keep track of this as a matter of safety, as the potential for illicit smuggling and human trafficking is an underlying threat logistics and trucking companies face. Trailer tracking systems can provide further assurance with their door sensors. If a trailer has stopped in the middle of nowhere and the doors have been opened, fleet managers can take action to find out what's going on, even if their driver has simply been stopped for a routine check by law enforcement.

## Final Destination

Finally, it's time to consider what happens at your trailer's final destination. At this venture, the goal of your trailer tracking system should be to prove that everything has arrived safely at its intended destination. This can be completed, once again, by creating a geofence around the facility. When the trailer enters the boundary, the

appropriate information can be sent to operators to inform them of which trailer has arrived with what cargo and what equipment. They can also view condition data about the cargo from across the journey in order to verify its quality. When the truck leaves the boundary after unloading, they can check what is still associated with the trailer to ensure all cargo has been unloaded and that equipment has been returned to the trailer. As with leaving the warehouse, this prevents unnecessary backtracking and ensures that the intended task is completed.

## ...And Every Moment Between!

Between each of the steps listed above is a period of transit time, where the truck and the attached trailer are on the road, embarking on the long journey toward their final destination. Although there are many uniquely compelling



benefits to investing in a trailer tracking system to be found at each stop, there are just as many to be found on the road itself.

When your trailer's SuperTag and the connected assets are in transit, you can choose to set up periodic alerts informing you of their location, condition, movement, and more. Location lets you track how far on its journey the trailer is, while movement can be used to determine speeds and projected arrival times. Condition monitoring is especially important for cargo, as special embedded sensors allow you to ensure that the product being transported remains of high quality and is not damaged. Depending on your needs, these sensors can be used to deliver reports on temperature, humidity, shock, and more at the level of the pallet or container. If something falls out of range or you receive a shock alert, drivers can be informed so they can figure out what the issue is before the product sustains lasting damage and has to be written off as a loss. This helps companies reduce financial losses and maintain a reputation for quality and care. Our location monitoring also operates on a mixture of GPS, WiFi sniffing, and cellular, allowing for complete visibility and battery optimization at every stage of your journey.



## Embark on Your Link Labs Journey

With Link Labs' AirFinder Everywhere system, we can help you account for every stage of your trailers' journey. Whether you want to know what happens in-transit or at any of the stops between start and finish, we provide a trailer-as-a-platform model that helps you keep track of what's with your trailer and how your assets are doing at any stage of the transportation process. We work with you to identify your company's trailer and fleet tracking goals and help you find the solution that works best for your needs without breaking the bank. Much like deliveries, finding the right trailer tracking solution is a journey, and Link Labs is there to help every step of the way. [Visit our website to learn more about our trailer tracking solutions](#) and how we can provide complete visibility over your logistics operations.