



DigiCore backs South African sport

As a proudly South African company, DigiCore is right behind South African sport – literally! The company sponsored a state-of-the-art monitoring system to watch over the medical emergency vehicle network in the Argus Pick 'n Pay Cycle Tour, held on March 13 this year. The gruelling 110 km race gets the better of many participants, and it is essential that emergency vehicles are constantly roaming the vast route to pick up those who fall foul of the hot and tiring conditions.

Using a computerised grid positioning system, DigiCore enabled the Argus venue operations centre (VOC) to track the progress of emergency vehicles, establishing exactly where they were every minute of the day, and ensuring that the thirst-quenchers and life-savers were indeed on patrol at all times.

While this sponsored system was of great benefit behind the scenes – particularly to those cyclists who crashed out at Suikerbossie or fell by the wayside between the widely spaced medical points – the initiative also aided DigiCore in developing a sophisticated new disaster management product for the South African market. “The cycle tour offered us a brilliant opportunity to test the system on a large and realistic scale,” reported Bruce Richards, marketing and sales director of DigiCore. “The number of people, and the logistics involved in this prestigious event, simulates the concentrated crowds, road closures and congestion that might be experienced in a major disaster. No other event could in fact prepare us better for disaster management than the cycle tour.”



More than 35 000 cyclists turn up annually for one of South Africa's most challenging cycle races – the Argus Pick 'n Pay Cycle Tour.



Winning British contestant Russell Downing had no need of medical attention, and Giro del Capo winner Tiaan Kannemeyer also kept out of harm's way, managing to win the Giro contest, of which the Argus formed the final stage. Many participants did indeed fall prey to the windswept route, though. Three-time winner of the Cape Giro, David George, came down in the final sprint, and South African road champion Ronel van Wyk suffered a puncture in another crash.

In the aggressive, every-man-for-himself world of competitive racing, it will always be a blessing to have the support of a well-organised guardian angel in the form of a dedicated medical team. If that angel happens to have the omniscient power of a fleet management system behind it, so much the better. DigiCore was proud to be the wind beneath the medics' wings.

Lieutenant Colonel Brad Geysler, commanding officer of the Cape Town Highlanders, heads up this monitoring aspect of the Argus Pick 'n Pay Cycle Tour in his private time. “For the past three years we have been using the DigiCore tracking system and it has been simply invaluable.

“If you look at the race in terms of logistics, there are 35 000 cyclists ranging from ages four to 94, who are all travelling along the 110 km route consecutively. We needed a system that would provide us with real-time tracking along every step of the course; that way we are able to use our emergency resources efficiently.

“Through the DigiCore monitoring system we are able to identify the spots where medical and emergency assistance will be the most beneficial,” continues Geysler. “We can actually go one step further and recognise patterns or trends and make the necessary adjustments in the following year. For instance, we will be able to categorise areas based on certain factors. On one section of the route, we may discover that the climatic factors are far more strenuous than on others and, as a result, set up more refreshment stations along that section.”

In fact, the sheer brilliance of the DigiCore system has met with some international interest. “We impressed some of the officials from Athens who were part of the Olympic planning team,” explains Geysler. “They were completely bowled over by the DigiCore system, and exclaimed their surprise that we used the system for an event as relatively small as a cycle tour. The DigiCore system has basically set us apart and, in the international sporting arena, DigiCore has set the benchmark.”



Powering UP

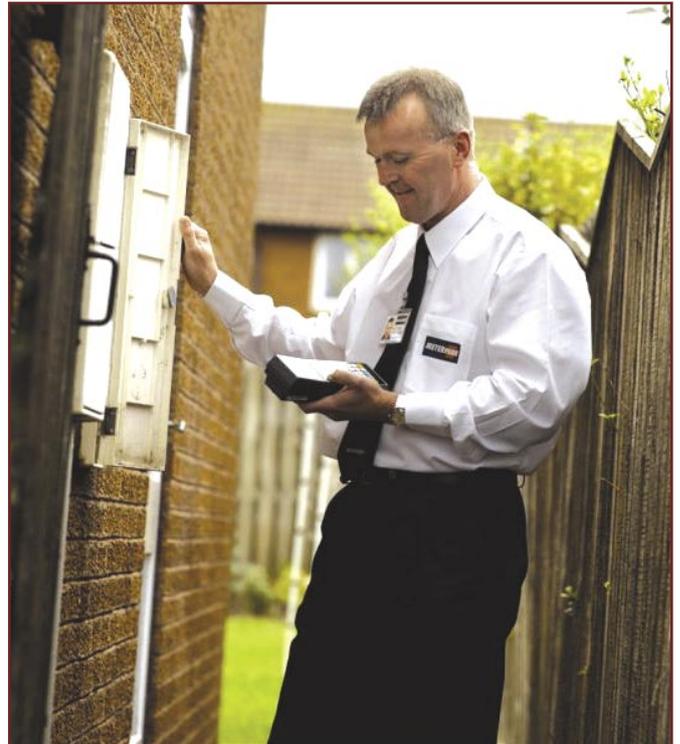


MeterPlus, the metering division of npower – one of the UK's leading energy suppliers – has commissioned DigiCore to install its C-track fleet management system in 300 vehicles that operate in the North East, North West, Yorkshire, and East Midlands regions.

Graham Jefferies, head of MeterPlus, comments, "The installation of the DigiCore solution will bring genuine benefits to our customers and employees, as well as creating operational efficiencies across our meter-installation vehicle fleet. The C-track system was selected ahead of other fleet management solutions because we felt that it best met our needs and offered the most value to our business."

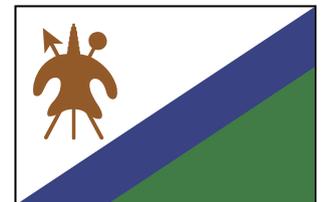
As an effective vehicle tracking tool, this telematics-based system provides increased fleet control, enhancing scheduling and planning to maximise productivity. In addition, it features added-value driver support. A fully integrated remote panic alarm enables employees to alert npower of any potential problems or incidents, while a portable satellite navigation facility offers detailed routing with turn-by-turn directions, voice guidance, and fast, automatic off-route and detour recalculation.

Nick Vlok, chief executive officer of DigiCore, says, "The tender awarded to us last year by Thames Water – the UK-based utility company – has given us credibility and exposure in the UK market. Our distributors in the UK are set to turn over at least R25 million for their first year with DigiCore."



One of the UK's leading energy suppliers has recently installed DigiCore's C-track in 300 of its vehicles.

An executive following



With a name like "Executive Transport", it goes without saying that this company demands the very best from its suppliers and provides the utmost to its clients. DigiCore is an integral part of that value offering.

Established in 1986, Executive Transport is a Lesotho-based carrier hauling general goods along routes to Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town. Significant clients are the textile industry, Lesotho Flour Mills and, most notably, the World Food Programme.

Lebona Lephema, MD of Executive Transport, turned to DigiCore after battling to locate a hijacked vehicle using another major fleet management service provider. "One of our vehicles was hijacked in Harrismith. We eventually found it in Johannesburg, but we really struggled to locate it using that service provider, which is actually one of the foremost providers in the country. I wasn't satisfied with the service that they provided and so I decided to change to DigiCore," Lephema reports.

After a year's experience with C-track, he has fortunately not had a repeat experience with crime, but can be more confident about the capabilities of the system – the proactive DigiCore system has a far higher recovery rate than that of the more passive beacon system that was previously fitted to the Executive fleet. DigiCore also offered far more in terms of fleet management. "There has

been a big change – now I always know where my drivers are," he adds. Pleased as he is with the product, Lephema is in the process of installing further systems. "Of our fleet of 35, ten or more are currently using C-track. However, I will be installing the system into every fleet vehicle as time goes on," he notes.

Lephema enjoys the ability to keep track of a vehicle's location. "Executive Transport has always been lucky as far as drivers are concerned. Our drivers are loyal and professional, so I have only seen a slight improvement in driver behaviour since the introduction of C-track. It is very useful to be constantly aware of the location of each driver, though. On one occasion we were struggling to contact a driver whose cellphone was switched off, but after locating him on the system we were able to send someone in the local area to his exact position in order to check the status quo," he notes.

Executive Transport has experienced no problems with the C-track system, and Lephema is spreading the word. "A lot of companies are willing to get connected now," confirms Lephema, "I have recommended DigiCore to plenty of operators in the Lesotho area."

EXTRA secure

Extrasec, an alarm installation and armed response company, keeps a watchful eye on the city of Rustenburg and its surrounds. But, in turn, DigiCore keeps an eye out for the Extrasec fleet.

Despite being a young company, Extrasec has become the market leader in its region, serving the security needs of industrial, commercial and residential clients with its fleet of 12 Ford Bantams. Bill Thwaites, the managing director, is a C-track enthusiast of the highest order.

"Nine of our vehicles are fitted with C-track, and the remaining three will be fitted with the system when they are replaced in two to three months' time. No vehicle of ours will ever leave the factory without C-track again," he declares. Next to wages, the cost of vehicles and fuel is the greatest expense the company faces. Each vehicle travels between 12 000 and 15 000 km per month, and handles 40 to 50 stop-starts per day. "Initially, when we were running six vehicles without the tracking system, we were spending R20 000 a month on fuel. In the first month after installing C-track – and we were running nine vehicles by that time – the cost was reduced to R16 000. The C-track system pays for itself in fuel savings alone," he enthuses. That is not the only improvement Extrasec has seen. "Before C-track, we struggled to

get 12 000 km out of our brake shoes. Now, we are getting 55 000 to 60 000 km out of them. It was a similar case with tyres. Our ability to track driver behaviour has had significant results in terms of the costs of vehicle abuse," Thwaites continues.

"Drivers don't race around the place anymore; where we used to have one accident a month, we have not had a single collision since the installation of C-track in mid-2004," says Thwaites. He has not been afraid to take the drastic action made possible by the system. "Our control room is linked directly to the vehicles. When one of our supervisors decided to ignore the control room's repeated instructions to stop speeding, I took the decision to use the immobilising function from my cellphone. That particular employee had to walk home from his stationary vehicle. Needless to say that arrogance has subsided," he adds. "Of course, we offer bonuses for good driving behaviour, and the longer one stays on top of the situation, the quicker the system becomes self-managing. There is no doubt in my mind that C-track will be installed in every vehicle I ever buy."

Partners in CRIME

Bras Trucking is a satisfied customer – and so are its clients, thanks to C-track Secure.

Bras Trucking, an eight-year-old tile and sanitary-ware transporter, has something to celebrate this year – the four-year anniversary of its successful partnership with DigiCore's C-track product.

Based in Derdepoort, Tshwane, Bras Trucking has grown in leaps and bounds since 2001, when it installed C-track into its entire fleet of 15 vehicles. The company's vehicle complement has since increased to 45 trucks, and DigiCore has been with them all the way.

"Out of our 45 vehicles, 43 are fitted with C-track – and that is only because the remaining two vehicles are currently on order," says Chris Huysamen, load co-ordinator at Bras. The company is more than satisfied with the results. "Before installing the systems, we were aware that there was some unauthorised driver behaviour, such as vehicles being driven into dangerous areas, or drivers stopping off at home on the way to or from deliveries. Since we installed C-track, we have been able to control that behaviour, which has increased our service levels and customer satisfaction," he adds, noting that the monitoring of vehicle speed has also reduced fines.

Another bonus has been vehicle recovery. "We did experience a hijacking, and, thanks to C-track, we were able to determine where the cargo was offloaded, and later recovered both the vehicle and the load," confirms a satisfied Huysamen.

Building SUCCESS

Wilson Bayley Holmes undertakes construction and civil engineering projects from Cape Town to Ghana, and the company has been building its success story with the help of DigiCore.

Of Wilson Bayley Holmes' impressive fleet of 800 vehicles, 400 cars, trucks and LDVs are fitted with C-track. After six years of assistance from DigiCore, the company can confidently declare its satisfaction with the system.

"We have recovered two or three vehicles, even from across the border in Maputo," reports Dawson Brits, technical manager at Wilson Bayley Holmes. "However, the main benefit has been the management function. We use



Wilson Bayley Holmes has fitted 400 cars, trucks and LDVs with DigiCore's C-track system.

the system to confirm employees' overtime hours – staff are not paid if the C-track report does not confirm their overtime claims. We have made definite savings, because before we installed the system we had to take employees at their word – we had no way of confirming whether they left work at 9 pm or 11 pm. Since the installation of C-track, overtime has dropped, which confirms that there was certainly some cheating in the past!"





DigiCore
FLEET MANAGEMENT

Watershed

Deploying a substantial fleet of 120 bakkies, Magalies Water ensures the purity of water supplies in four South African provinces. But with such a large vehicle complement, a tight rein on management is a must.

If you live in Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Northern or North West Province, the chances are that the water pouring from your taps has been purified by Magalies Water. As a water provider operating in a drought-sensitive country like South Africa, it is imperative that the company prevent water wastage and leaks – a task to which Magalies Water dedicates a fleet of over 100 service vehicles. This large fleet burdens the company with high running costs, and this is where C-track came in. “If I look at the figures before and after we installed C-track, I can see the difference,” reports Gert Nel, transport officer at Magalies Water. “We have far better control over the vehicles, and fuel consumption has gone down because drivers are now careful not to exceed the speed limit. Our running costs are definitely lower,” he adds.



A supplier to four South African provinces, Magalies Water has reduced its costs by using the DigiCore C-track system.

Another benefit is that stranded vehicles can be easily traced, and appropriate assistance sent out. Although the fleet has been lucky enough to evade the effects of crime thus far, Nel is reassured by C-track's backup: “The vehicles have a panic button, which means I can immobilise a bakkie if it is hijacked. That's a big benefit, in my view.”

All of the company's 31 new vehicles have been fitted with the system, and C-track is set to

accompany all replacement vehicles as the older models are removed from service. “When we call DigiCore, the operators are always very helpful. We are very satisfied with both the product and the service we have received”, concludes Nel.

EUREKA! it's DigiCore!

With 27 years' experience under its belt, Eureka Vervoer, an agricultural transporter, has seen plenty of changes in the industry. Best of all, it has witnessed a revolution in productivity within its own ranks since installing C-track.

In 1978 it was livestock; now it is crops and general goods. Way back then, its premises could be found in the sleepy, tucked-away Eastern Cape town of Barkly East; now it is located in the bustling city of Bloemfontein, and transports agricultural goods to markets in Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth, Durban and Cape Town.

“At the time that we acquired vehicle tracking and monitoring systems for our vehicles, DigiCore was the most cost-effective system, and the South African product best suited to our needs,” says Johan Engelbrecht, financial director of Eureka. “Of the 20 C-track units that were installed at the time, 14 are still going strong today, and we are extremely happy with the product. As our fleet has grown, we have continued installing C-track, and I like the fact that the newer software is easy to use as well as being more compact.”

Eureka Vervoer had a wealth of experience by the time it installed C-track in 1999 – more than enough to paint lucid before and after pictures of its operation. “Knowing where the vehicles are at all times provides peace of mind, and productivity has improved dramatically because our drivers don't take chances anymore. The efficiency and speed of deliveries has increased, and we are able to trust that our drivers are getting the job done in the right way,” reports Engelbrecht. “The system works for the business and our clients, as well as safeguarding the driver. Wherever I go, I recommend C-track,” he adds.

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