

Using Best Practices Yields Dramatic Tire and Road Service Savings

DIAZ FOODS MOVES 3.5 MILLION POUNDS EACH WEEK



Diaz Foods of Atlanta is the leading marketer of Hispanic foods providing retail and food service establishments with the largest available selection in the United States. Most of the fleet's traffic lanes are

in the Southeast, but Diaz trucks also travel to states such as Ohio and Pennsylvania for a total of 27 states covered. This fleet was founded in 1980.

Diaz Foods offers its customers more than 5,000 different food items. Diaz customers have come to rely on a 98 percent fill ratio.

Raul Lozano, distribution director for Diaz Foods, said: "We move 3.5 million pounds of food on a weekly basis. Annually, our trucks travel 5.2 million miles."

About 50 percent of the Diaz customers are retail stores while the remainder is in the food service industry. Lozano said, "Regardless of the nature of their business our customers need just-in-time deliveries to meet their customers' needs."

The fleet's ability to deliver that premium level of service was greatly enhanced in the past year, with the implementation of a new comprehensive tire program.

Jairo Brand, Diaz's fleet manager, said: "We have 37 tractors, 45 trailers and 20 straight trucks. Well-maintained tires are critical to keeping our fleet rolling and delivering the level of service our customers have come to expect."

Brand has been with the fleet for the past six years. When his previous Bandag supplier switched to a competitive retread process about a year ago, Brand was open to looking at other options.

Bridgestone Bandag Tire Solutions territory sales manager, Johnny Murphy, said: "We first approached Brand with a sales call aimed at retaining the business. It was Atlanta Commercial Tire sales representative Dan Pereda's persistence that earned Brand's confidence with a well-planned tire program."

On Becoming Part of the Diaz Team

Brand said: "I let Dan in the door, allowing him an opportunity to show me what Atlanta Commercial Tire could do for our tire program. We really didn't give him any business for the first three or four months."

Just the opportunity to check the fleet's tires and make recommendations for improvements convinced Pereda that he could save Diaz Foods a lot of money if he could get them to adopt a few best practices.

A strong air pressure maintenance program headed that list.

Pereda and several other tire technicians are at the Diaz maintenance facility every other Saturday to air tires, match tires for wear, identify flats and pull tires which need to be taken out of service.

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Jairo Brand and Raul Lozano of Diaz Foods know that well-maintained air pressure program is critical to keeping their fleet rolling.



**The Team is:
Jairo Brand and
Raul Lozano, Diaz
Foods; Dan Pereda,
Atlanta Commercial
Tire; and Johnny
Murphy, Bridgestone
Bandag Tire Solutions.**

Pereda said: “Early on I literally accompanied Brand as we looked at every wheel position in the fleet and I identified every tire problem we encountered.

After we gained his trust, we just started providing him with a series of reports that give him that same information so he can make better use of his time in other maintenance functions.”

Those reports include a quarterly Bandag BASys Fleet Analyzer document, a monthly scrap tire analysis and weekly yard check reports.

Brand said: “Those reports have become extremely important in making the right tire management decisions. We also use the information from the reports to help us train our drivers. They now have a better awareness of how to prevent tire problems and help us get a better return on our tire assets. Dan has become such an integral part of our tire management effort; we now include him at all scheduled driver safety meetings.”

Diaz Foods has an additional 40 percent savings in the road service budget and has been able to invest those savings in purchasing better equipment and more driver training.

The best practices also include the best products. Pereda said: “We fit the steer-axle wheels with the Bridgestone R260F. The Bandag Ultra Drive™ design is the tire of choice for the drive-axle wheel positions and Bandag FCR™ Trailer design keeps Diaz trailers rolling on cost-effective rubber.”

Dramatic Improvements Yield More Opportunities

The bottom line is a most compelling story. Brand said: “We have seen a 35 percent reduction in our tire budget. The air pressure maintenance standards and the Atlanta Commercial Tire yard checks have resulted in a substantial reduction in tire-related road failures. As a result, we have seen an additional 40 percent savings in the road service budget.”

Brand said, “Diaz Foods has been able to invest those savings in purchasing better equipment and more driver training.”

Lozano added: “That increased uptime on the road is critical. We run 200 different routes. Operational readiness is imperative to our fleet. We have seen dramatic changes in equipment utilization since we started partnering with Atlanta Commercial Tire.”

Murphy concluded: “This joint effort between Diaz Foods, Atlanta Commercial Tire and Bridgestone Bandag Tire Solutions is a great example of a manufacturer working with a dealer; the dealer taking all his tools to the fleet; and the fleet accepting the dealer’s tire expertise to save money and improve uptime. It has been a big win for everyone.” •