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transporting data to a location, which used to be a dollar years ago, is now pennies.”

#### **GPS IS MOVING ON UP, INDOORS THAT IS**

Although the devices that support GPS technology are viewed by the industry as staple equipment, recent improvements make the application even more practical for the end user.

“Antenna technology is opening the door to broader applications,” Driscoll said. “In some cases, GPS is more appropriate alone and in others they (GPS and RFID) may be coupled together.”

GPS technology is glamorous in the way it tracks and locates—yet there are still kinks in the tracking technology that need to be ironed out.

“Traditionally, the technology has had limitations, for example, it doesn’t work indoors,” Goehring said.

However, Guardian Mobile Monitoring Services will introduce technology later this year that it hopes will spark momentum and bring the technology inside.

“The beacons will be self-contained, have built-in antennas, rechargeable batteries and the ability to be partially used indoors,” Goehring said about the new asset tracking technology.

The company tested the technology in a variety of applications including in a basement with concrete walls, where the system worked, said Goehring.

Although, the technology works in a basement environment noted Goehring, “it will not always work one hundred percent of the time in other environments.”

The beacon will be locatable, within some degree of accuracy, wherever there is cell coverage,” he said.

#### **ALL IN THE FAMILY**

As GPS is on the map and strengthens, so does the relationship between the user, dealer and central station.

“This is best of both worlds—tracking. It’s very cost effective for clients,” said Comeaux. “It’s now at a price range people can stomach.”

Not only is the price right for many applications, alarm dealers are also able to further solidify relationships with their clients by adding GPS tracking to their vehicles, added Comeaux.

Acadian On Watch started personal mobile services years ago when the central station had a niche in the emergency services market. “But back then it was a basic RF device sending a digital message,” he said. The central station now

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offers fleet monitoring.

Comeaux said commercial businesses and governments are adding GPS to their fleets because it's an economical addition.

"There is a crunch these days," he said. "Towns and businesses just don't have all the money to spend."

Which is why more businesses are keeping watch of their commercial fleets by incorporating GPS. This marriage of management and security is a driving force for monitoring stations to offer GPS positioning as a service.

Now, as technology surges, so does the capability of GPS tracking. Some monitoring stations are discovering typical fleet GPS monitoring isn't the only thing that needs to be monitored.

Comeaux's central station in Lafayette, La., works with an agency whose trucks spray pesticide. In this application, GPS positioning tracks where the trucks have been. But, "this system also tracks when the sprayer is on or off, and shows the exact route, both visual and raw data," he said. It time and data stamps each position to create a log of where the agency sprayed. The data is archived

to keep track of locations and the amount of spray used, he added.

GPS technology might be considered a thriving technology because it helps central stations become more competitive when providing additional services to existing accounts.

Don Maden, vice president of COPS Monitoring in Williamstown, N.J., began beta testing fleet GPS tracking late last year and in January added it to the central station's lineup for its dealers. Maden noted monitoring stations could show dealers the value and return on investment of GPS positioning.

But frequently, the client introduces the technology to the central station.

Pro-Tec Monitoring Solutions, a central station in Calgary, Alberta, recently added GPS monitoring after dealers and end users suggested the station begin offering the technology.

"For us, it's just another alarm signal and is now part of our business model," said Wayne Demofsky, vice president of operations of Pro-Tec Monitoring Solutions. "We were pushed by our clients." SSM