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Caravan Logistics: Where Technology Drives Growth

High-performance Mobil lubricants at work since Day One

The qualities of Mobil Delvac 1300 Super that enable Caravan Logistics to save \$100,000 a year by extending oil drain intervals:

Caravan Logistics employs advanced technology to generate exceptional growth. The advanced technology of Mobil Delvac 1300 Super has played a key role in protecting equipment and promoting productivity through:

- Long oil life, long engine life and greater engine efficiency, all made possible by excellent soot-viscosity control;
- Reduced sludge and fewer deposits as a result of outstanding thermal and oxidative stability;
- Excellent oil consumption control, minimizing top-ups between oil drains;

- Greater wear protection, fewer maintenance problems and minimized risk of breakdown, thanks to stay-in-grade shear stability;
- Superb resistance to corrosive and abrasive wear.

Caravan Logistics also trusts the OEM-approved technology of Mobil-branded synthetic transmission fluid and gear oil.

"The long life of these lubricants is a big advantage," says Darius Borowski, Caravan's Manager, Fleet Maintenance. "Synthetics cost a little more but we change out our transmissions and differentials every 600,000 km.

"These products keep the temperature down, particularly in summer. Going from Northern Ontario to Florida, you're not affected by wide swings in temperature."

Mobil Delvac Synthetic Transmission Fluid 50

- Extends transmission life and reduces operating costs;
- Guards against deposit formation for longer seal-life and extended service intervals;
- Protects and extends the life of synchronizers;
- Delivers excellent wear control, a result of exceptional shear stability;
- Provides excellent cold weather performance through outstanding low-temperature fluidity.

Mobil Delvac Synthetic Gear Oil 75W-90

- Optimized friction reduction properties promote fuel economy and lower operating costs;
- Excellent deposit control for extended gear and bearing life;
- Outstanding protection against low-speed/high-torque wear and high-speed scoring;
- Exceptional shear stability to maintain film strength and prevent wear under severe conditions.



“Right from the start, we have believed in technology. It’s not always cheap, but it’s been a vital part of our success.” *John Iwaniura, President, Caravan Logistics Inc.*

The rise of Caravan Logistics Inc., from a standing start in 1997 to 200 trucks less than 15 years later, has been nothing short of an industry phenom. Against a backdrop of rising fuel and insurance costs, increased regulations and troubled economic conditions on both sides of the border, Caravan has grown by applying advanced technology to gain an edge in productivity whenever the opportunity arises.

The privately owned company, headquartered in Oakville, Ontario, recently opened a terminal in Vaudreuil-Dorion, Quebec, a first step in coast-to-coast expansion, reveals John Iwaniura, the President and one of three owners.

Says Mr. Iwaniura, “Technology helps us to be more competitive in cost saving. Labour costs about the same across the industry. So does fuel and insurance. But with technology, such as GPS and satellite tracking, we can monitor operations, track and trace, driver performance and idling. We can monitor our extended oil drain drain cycles. It all helps to drive costs down.”

The oil he’s referring to is Mobil Delvac 1300 Super, the only engine oil the company has used since it began.

Keeping ahead by keeping track.

“When I drove trucks,” Mr. Iwaniura recalls, “I would have to stop somewhere and find a fax machine. For our drivers today, the cab of the truck is like an office.” He says Caravan dispatchers can now give customers the precise location of their load along with estimated times of arrival. “We can pull information from the satellite that tells us exactly how each asset is performing, through information fed directly from the unit’s odometer and ECM – the electronic control manager of the engine.”

All systems are fully integrated, including operating, track and tracing, warehouse management and accounting. “And all this data,” says Mr. Iwaniura, “is analyzed on a daily basis.”



Caravan’s home base in Oakville, Ontario includes head office, a 2,320 sq. m (25,000 sq. ft.) warehouse and a state-of-the-art maintenance department, where Mobil Delvac 1300 Super enhances productivity by protecting engines and enabling oil drain intervals to be doubled: from 30,000 km to 60,000 km.



John Iwaniura, President of Caravan Logistics Inc., with one of the company’s 35 new trucks. In addition to GPS navigation, which speeds deliveries and minimizes wasted time and fuel, an in-cab scanner allows drivers to receive and send documents, such as bills of lading for Canada and U.S. Customs. Technology helps Caravan attract skilled drivers. Owner-operators appreciate access to Caravan’s Maintenance Department where Mobil Delvac 1300 Super is used exclusively.

By extending drain intervals from 30,000 km to 60,000 km, Caravan Logistics saves over \$100,000 a year on oil, filters and maintenance.

“We’ve done well because we watch the business every day,” says Steve Merena, Vice-President and one of Caravan Logistics’ three owners. “All three partners are very hands-on.” Much of the success has come about by acquiring – and retaining – major accounts. “Canada Post, Procter & Gamble, Home Depot, these are big customers and their requirements are very specific. When you deliver to them you have to be there within very specific time frames.” With Caravan’s satellite-based GPS tracking system, customers large and small can go online and check the location – and arrival time – of their incoming delivery.

Precisely timed deliveries demand reliability, an objective that guides key decisions at Caravan Logistics. “We buy brand new trucks and we keep them about five years,” says Mr. Merena. “We use Mobil lubricants because of the quality. We’ve never had a problem.” Performance of Mobil Delvac 1300 Super has been so problem-free that Caravan recently approached their Mobil supplier, NOCO Lubricants Company, to discuss extending oil drain intervals. “We started on a few Freightliners,” says Mr. Merena. “We took oil samples, ran analyses and began extending drain intervals in stages.”

Caravan moved gradually from 30,000 km to 60,000 km, saving more than \$100,000 a year on oil, filters and maintenance. They continue to sample and analyze used oil. So well integrated are Caravan Logistics’ systems that dispatchers are automatically prevented from sending a truck out if an oil change is due.



Caravan Logistics Vice-President Steve Merena (on the right) with Vince Ros, Senior Accounts Manager of NOCO Lubricants Company, the regional distributor of Mobil products. Says Mr. Ros, “As a Mobil distributor, our job goes beyond supplying customers with first-class lubricants. We’re also committed to helping customers achieve maximum value from those lubricants – for example, by helping Caravan Logistics to safely extend oil drain intervals with Mobil Delvac 1300 Super.”

“Technology helps make our service more reliable and our business more productive. We have used Mobil lubricants since Day One.”

Steve Merena, Vice-President, Caravan Logistics Inc.



From one truck in 1997, Caravan Logistics has taken advantage of technology at every turn and today runs 200 power units and 500 trailers on routes across North America. New trucks are equipped with fuel efficient tires and energy-saving skirts. Efficiency is also enhanced by Mobil Delvac Synthetic Gear Oil and Mobil Delvac Synthetic Transmission Fluid. Both are used across the fleet, along with Mobil Delvac 1300 Super engine oil.

“Before they decide to join us, the great majority of owner-operators ask if we use Mobil lubricants.”

Darius Borowski, Manager, Fleet Maintenance

Caravan Logistics’ passion for safety and reliability reaches beyond its own drivers to the owner-operators who run their own equipment under the Caravan banner. “We have a program of regular inspections for owner-operators,” says Darius (Darek) Borowski, Manager, Fleet Maintenance. “They can have them done in our shop or elsewhere – but they have to show proof that the inspections have been done.”

The great majority of owner-operators choose the facilities of Caravan Logistics for inspections and maintenance. The use of Mobil lubricants is a definite attraction for owner-operators, says Mr. Borowski, who uses Mobil Delvac 1300 Super in his own diesel-powered car.

Does he believe Mobil Delvac lives up to its claim as ‘The Million Mile Oil’? “We usually sell our trucks after five years and buy new ones,” he says. “But we have about half a dozen in the fleet that are six or seven years old. They are million mile trucks and still running great!”



Vice-President Steve Merena (left) with Darius Borowski, Caravan’s Manager of Fleet Maintenance. Mr. Borowski, who started with the company as a driver, is a strong believer in Mobil lubricants and buys Mobil Delvac 1300 Super for his personal diesel-powered vehicle.

“We are leading the way in getting truckers involved in social media. It’s helped to raise our profile and the morale of the drivers.”

Sonia Merena, Marketing Coordinator

While leading-edge technology – including the use of Mobil lubricants – has always driven growth at Caravan Logistics, the company knows that the human element is also key to future success. Not surprisingly, technology is hard at work on that front as well.

Sonia Merena, Marketing Coordinator, uses social media, including Facebook and Twitter, to reach out to potential recruits and to inform (and frequently entertain) company drivers. A ‘Caravan Contest’ has attracted photos of scenes across North America, many of them including Caravan equipment. “The trucking industry has not exactly been a leader in using social media,” says Ms. Merena.



“We have no one to learn from. So we’ve been leading the way.” Those who know the story of Caravan Logistics will not be surprised to hear that.