

IoT CONNECTIVITY BUYER'S GUIDE FLEET MANAGEMENT EDITION



THE CHALLENGE:

Rapidly Deploying & Scaling Winning Fleet Telematics Products

As a product manager in charge of a fleet management product or solution, it's vital that you have the support you need from your business partners, especially your connectivity provider. In the competitive market for fleet management solutions, quick innovation—especially as you scale—is the key to standing out, beating the competition to market, and winning more customers. However, scaling can come with challenges, including:



More frequent and hard-to-diagnose connection issues



Compounding and difficult-to-manage overage charges



Evolving product requirements that go beyond your current cellular provider's abilities



Increased data output that makes it tough to distinguish between normal and abnormal device behaviour

Not every connectivity provider is equipped to help you tackle these challenges. Making matters more complicated, it can be difficult to determine exactly what each connectivity provider can and can't do. However, by knowing precisely what questions to ask prospective providers during your research phase, you can make the wisest selection for your fleet management solution.

THE FIRST THREE THINGS YOU'LL NEED

Even if you're not quite yet in the scaling phase, it's beneficial to have a long-term plan and select a connectivity provider that can handle your scaling needs when the time comes.

A capable connectivity partner should be able to help you navigate these three foundational pieces:



1

Coverage:

Whether you're scaling across state lines or international borders, it's important to consider not only the number of carriers your provider makes available, but also how they prioritise access to them (based on signal strength or just costs?). Factors such as international roaming and the availability (or lack thereof) of cellular technologies like LTE-M may affect your decision.



2

Quality of Service:

When you're operating numerous products in multiple locations using many different types of hardware and networks, monitoring and diagnostics will become more complex, requiring analysis of far more data from more devices supporting more applications.



3

Costs:

As you expand to tens or hundreds of thousands of devices, even small overages can translate into significant, unnecessary expenses, while large overages can destroy your business. Beyond rate plans that match your actual usage patterns, tools to automatically optimise costs across the entire device lifecycle become more important.

COMMON REQUIREMENTS & VETTING QUESTIONS: BASIC FLEET TRACKING



How To Find a Provider That Meets Your Requirements

Whether the solution you're working on is for vehicle tracking, stolen vehicle recovery, trailer tracking, or another fleet management application, innovation will differentiate you from your competition. Speed to market is a critical factor in innovation. Issues that aren't quickly solved can delay your solution's release to the point where it's no longer innovative.

It's important to ensure that your connectivity provider gives you more than just a menu of features. They should offer a custom solution and smart advice, all while meeting your existing and future coverage, support, and cost control needs. When researching a new connectivity provider, have detailed conversations that get to the bottom of how they'll help you maintain consistent coverage, solve any delays, and keep your spending at a reasonable level. You can check if a connectivity provider has the crucial features to meet all of your requirements by asking these specific questions:

Requirement

Reliable Global Coverage

High Quality of Service

Crucial Features

Performance-optimised 2G, 3G, 4G and LTE-M coverage from numerous carriers around the world

Self-service tools that allow you to see the entire connection history for each device, and take action to diagnose and resolve issues anywhere in your system in near-real time

Questions to Ask

1. How many carriers do you have in each country where I expect to deploy devices?
 2. Can you provide test results that show if there is coverage where I need it?
 3. If my devices are mobile and routinely operate in remote areas, can you help me select carriers on the fly to ensure coverage everywhere?
1. Do you provide complete visibility into my deployment from device through the cloud?
 2. How quickly can I see if a problem exists with my device, the network, or my application?
 3. Can you help me determine the cause of an SMS delivery failure?



Proactive Support

Regulatory Compliance

Best-in-Class Security

Flexible Rate Plans and Billing

Cost Control

Quick and consistent access to technical experts who are proactively monitoring your solution and can diagnose and resolve any issues

Dependable connectivity to ensure data is accurately and consistently collected for various regulations, whether they are relevant to you (GDPR) or your end-users (driving time restrictions)

Multi-layer security, including password management, dedicated IP addresses, and endpoint pre-authorization

Customisable rate plans, such as fixed bundles, pay-as-you-go, and pre-paid
Option to pool data across devices or pick high data plans for video applications

Capabilities that substantially reduce connectivity costs by preventing connection failures, overages, and retries, and enabling near real-time rate plan optimisation

1. Which time zones does your support department work in?
2. How is your support team structured? Who answers the phone? Who actually solves customer tickets?
3. What is your average response time?
4. What is your average resolution time?

1. What kind of regulations have you helped your clients navigate?
2. What back up measures do you have in place to ensure that we won't lose our data in the event of a connection failure?

1. What options do you provide for securing the connection to my data centre or cloud provider?
2. How do you ensure that my devices only communicate with authorised endpoints?
3. What tools do you provide to help my operations team detect suspicious activity?
4. What can you do if one of my devices becomes compromised?

1. How can your rate plans support my devices—from manufacturing, to global deployment, to end-of-device life?
2. What contract options and rate plans do you offer, and how customisable are they?
3. Do you give customers detailed usage data, and if so, how often?

1. What tools do you provide to detect and block cost overages?
2. How quickly do overage alerts get triggered? What is the lag time between data transmission and usage reporting?
3. Will you allow me to apply mid-month rate plan changes?
4. In what ways do you help me lower my operational costs?



COMMON REQUIREMENTS & VETTING QUESTIONS: UBI & DASH CAMS

Depending on the products in your portfolio, you might have to overcome additional complexities.

For example, if you're creating a UBI solution or a dash cam solution, it will be even more crucial for you to make sure that your connectivity provider will be able to help you rapidly get to market while providing flexible contract terms, affordable rate plans, and hands-on support. Ask your potential connectivity provider thorough questions to triple check that they have the capabilities that will put you at an advantage over your competition.

If you're working on a UBI solution, you may or may not need large data plans, depending on how frequently your clients are using their vehicles. For instance, maybe you have a customer whose end users are active for only part of the year. If you don't have a flexible, customisable rate plan arranged with your connectivity provider, you could easily find yourself needing to cover the cost of unused data.

If you're working on a dash cam solution, keep in mind that dash cams process a lot of data (given that they rely on video). Not all connectivity providers are able to provide high data plans at affordable rates. Additionally, to fulfill their purpose, dash cams need to be on at crucial moments. If connectivity drops, there's a chance that potential accidents won't be recorded.

If your products involve UBI or dash cams, here's what to look for from a connectivity provider:



Requirement	Speed to Market	Flexible Contract Terms for UBI	Data Usage Management for Dash Cams
<p>Crucial Features</p>	<p>Hands-on support: easy and regular access to technical experts with relevant prior experience and a mission to help you make decisions, solve technical challenges and launch quickly</p>	<p>Pay-as-you-go rate plans</p>	<p>More data, higher throughput, and lower latency without being cost-prohibitive</p>
<p>Questions to Ask</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are examples of some fleet management products or solutions you've helped quickly get to market? 2. Can you assist me with device certification as well as device configuration and testing? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you offer pay-as-you-go rate plans? 2. How long are your contracts and how customisable are they? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you offer discounted, pooled rate plans for high usage applications? 2. Can you provide device configuration and testing assistance to ensure low latency?

HOW AERIS CAN HELP

At Aeris, we go beyond covering just the basics. We provide tailored solutions, expert advice, and hands-on support to help fleet management solution providers achieve cutting-edge results:



Axon Telematics:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this UBI provider needed to quickly transition to a self-install method. They leveraged our white-glove onboarding service and automated SIM lifecycle management to get a turnkey, self-install UBI product to market in two weeks.



Redtail:

This global UBI provider switched to our pay-as-you-go, month-to-month rate plan, which meant they only had to pay for the data they used each month. The result? 35% saved.



Video Fleet Telematics Solution Provider:

After struggling with high latency incident footage uploads, which led to product delays, this company came to Aeris. Our best practices in device configuration for LTE network timing shaved 70% off their upload time.



Global Fleet Management Company:

Our monitoring and support teams helped this company pinpoint the root cause of a sudden, massive spike across 500k devices, sparing millions of dollars in overage charges.



FleetUp:

This fleet management solution provider came to Aeris to get assistance with compliance and device management. By working with us, FleetUp was able to reduce their time to market while lowering the cost of ownership and maintenance. They also streamlined their business operations.

[Learn more](#) about how Aeris can help you manage and scale your fleet management solution.

Ready to get started? [Contact us.](#)

Europe Contact:

EU_info@aeris.net or +44 118 315 0614