

Delivering on a Commitment to Customer Service:

The \$25 Plumbing Story



Company Name:

\$25 Plumbing

Location:

Upland, CA

Industry:

Plumbing

Fleet Size:

8

Customer Since:

2006

\$25 Plumbing, a residential and light commercial contractor operating all throughout the “inland empire” of Southern California, sets a lofty goal for itself with its company motto: “Total Commitment to Quality Service.” Barry Berg, president and co-owner of the company, explains what he believes is the reason for their continued growth and success: “That ‘total commitment’ mindset permeates everything we do. We try to be responsive, we try to be personable, and we try to be thorough. And it’s my job to do whatever I can to make sure we stay that way.”

Several years ago, Berg and his colleagues realized that GPS tracking was a technology that could potentially help them to do just that. They purchased a passive GPS system, which meant that they could collect information about vehicle activities throughout the day, but would have to download and gain access to that data at days’ end – they could not track their fleet in real-time on a map. Then Berg’s brother introduced him to Navtrak’s real-time vehicle tracking and reporting capabilities, and Berg understood that the system was just what \$25 Plumbing needed.

“The real-time capability is essential, but Navtrak’s maps are nice and detailed as well,” Berg said. “They came in and were able to show us very quickly how to operate the system. And that’s what we liked about it. Even though I don’t use it as much as I should because of time, I still know how to track vehicles, run reports and do the basic things you need to do to use the system. It’s very easy to work with – which makes it easy to train others on it as well.”

Navtrak has helped \$25 Plumbing become a more efficient, more productive operation in many ways, improving inventory management, employee safety, operational costs and the company’s reputation. But most important to Berg is how it helps them respond to customers: from settling disputes about billing and service times to exceeding expectations by knowing exactly how far away a technician is from a problem, Navtrak is helping \$25 Plumbing consistently deliver that “total commitment” promised by their company motto.

“I love being able to turn an angry customer into a happy one,” says Berg. “We can call up reports and know exactly how long our guys have been at a location. There’s no more ‘Your guy was only here for 15 minutes!’ And you know what, if our guy did leave before he should have... well, we’re an honest company. You’ve got it coming back to you. But at least we know the real score. That’s what Navtrak brings to the table: it puts us in the know.”

Business challenges \$25 Plumbing faced:

- **Lost profits due to difficulty tracking costs/times** – Berg was well aware of the time and money he was losing by trying to keep track of fuel costs and usage, hours actually spent working on job sites vs. getting to them, etc. without real-time information. “I personally spent a lot of time comparing fuel receipts to drivers’ mileage tickets, or trying to get guys on the phone to find out when they arrived at a job site – and not only was that time wasted, but I could never be sure the information was 100% accurate. I knew we were losing money, and decided there had to be a better way.”
- **The occasional lapse in productivity** – Because \$25 Plumbing’s field technicians are paid a straight commission and not by the hour, occasionally there would be a tendency for guys take longer than needed for jobs towards the end of the week – which would not only cost the company money, but also lead to bad will in customers waiting for service. “It’s inevitable – sometimes I would have to say to one of our guys, ‘You were there for 3 hours but you only brought back \$100?’” Berg recalled. “They would claim they were there the whole time, but we had no way to verify that. So we’d end up making less money.”

“You have 8 trucks worth anywhere from \$50,000 to \$80,000 each, depending on what’s loaded on them. That’s a half million dollars either sitting out in the lot or running around... sure you need to know where this stuff is at any given time. It’s costing you money not to know. But you can’t put a price on peace of mind. And that’s what Navtrak gives you.”

- Barry Berg

Owner/President
\$25 Plumbing



Driving Business Success

Success Story

- **No protection for stolen or missing equipment** – Berg calculates, “We had 7 or 8 trucks worth anywhere from \$50,000 to \$80,000 each, depending on what’s loaded on them... doing the math, this means we’ve got half a million dollars either sitting out in the lot or running around, and no means of protecting that investment.” With most of their business dependent on work done in the field, they realized that being able to account for the locations and activities of their vehicles and equipment was crucial for success.
- **Safety and liability concerns** – Like any business owner with a mobile workforce, Berg was concerned with how his employees were driving and where they were going with company property. “The further out my guys went, the more I’d be lost about whether things were getting done as they should... and as the owner, I can’t be in the dark! I need to know. My company’s reputation is on the line.”

Benefits Navtrak has delivered:

- **ROI on payroll and fuel savings alone** – According to Berg, the savings \$25 Plumbing has experienced in terms of payroll and fuel costs alone has easily covered the cost of the Navtrak system. “We used to pay 8-10 hours per job on average, but when we started using Navtrak we realized we were getting only 6-7 hours of actual work time (because we don’t pay for travel time)... we immediately saved an average of \$60 a day, times six days a week. That’s over \$1,400 per month.”
- **Immediate resolution of customer issues** – Navtrak gives \$25 Plumbing the ability to immediately defuse tense customer situations with accurate, specific vehicle activity information. “About three months after purchasing the system, we had a client call up – we were out at his house cleaning a sewer line – and he says, ‘Your guy couldn’t wait for 16 minutes for me to come home, and so he went to my neighbor and made him pay for the job. I am very upset.’ We called up our Navtrak report and said, ‘No Mr. Smith, from the time he pulled up to the time he moved away it was 42 minutes and 34 seconds exactly. He waited as long as he could, but we have other jobs to do.’ It provides us with recourse whereas before, we had none.”
- **Vastly improved inventory management** – When people think of GPS tracking they don’t necessarily think of its impact on other business processes besides field service. But Berg quickly understood the ways in which Navtrak could help \$25 Plumbing manage their inventory – a significant competitive advantage in the plumbing industry. “Customers don’t want our guys coming and going because of not having the right parts on the truck. They know that’s going on their bill in some way. And we don’t want that either, with fuel at \$3.50 a gallon in California! Fortunately, Navtrak allows us to identify patterns in how often our guys are going for parts, and from that, we can deduce what is needed on our trucks, and in our store here, on a regular basis. So it’s a much more powerful tool than you might think.”
- **Improved productivity, increased bottom line** – Berg sums it all up nicely: “The bottom line is, if a guy can jump in one of my trucks and go run an errand for whatever he plans on doing later, off company time... that’s time, that’s gas, and that’s vehicle wear and tear I can’t get back. You only get so many miles on a tank of gas, and so many miles on a set of tires. If they’re using them for personal stuff, that means we didn’t get to utilize it for that time for making money. With Navtrak, everything’s above board. I get maximum productivity from all of my guys – and then I’m free to let them do the personal trips and such, if they need to. It just doesn’t make good business sense anymore to go without GPS.”

Navtrak: The Proven Remedy for Mobile Workforce Headaches

All organizations with mobile workforces contend with “headaches” that limit productivity and reduce profits. If any of the following pain points is an issue for your business, be sure to read the corresponding case study (available at www.navtrak.net) to learn how Navtrak provides the cure!

- Excessive overtime costs:
The Bug Doctor story
- Insufficient knowledge of vehicle location/activity:
The Sunshine Paving story
- Inaccurate dispatching:
The Dove Pointe story
- Security and liability concerns:
The J.H. Peterson story
- Inaccurate tracking of vehicles:
The Boucher Real Estate story
- Inefficient delivery practices:
The Somerset Food Service story

For more information on how Navtrak can “heal” your mobile workforce headaches, contact your local Navtrak salesperson today, or email us at sales@navtrak.net.

GPS-Based Management Tools for Businesses with **Mobile Workforces**