

Survey Shows Urgent Need for Action Of Commercial Vehicle Fleets for Sustainable Transformation



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BY [CONTINENTAL AG](#)

Survey of 850 fleet operators in Germany, France, the UK, and the USA

- Biggest challenges: increasing costs, crisis-related risks, and CO₂ reduction

- Full survey results are available in Continental's "The Future of Fleets" report

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Our digital tire management solutions provide our customers with a valuable asset in this transition. With ContiConnect, fleets can operate more cost-effectively and sustainably, supporting their competitiveness,

says Clarisa Doval, Head of Digital Solutions at Continental Tires

Hanover, Germany, November 21, 2024. Nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of fleet managers recognize a need for substantial changes within their fleets to meet current industry challenges. This finding comes from a survey conducted by the market research company Dataforce on behalf of Continental, polling 850 fleet managers in Germany, France, the UK and the USA. Key challenges identified by respondents include rising costs (76 percent), economic uncertainties due to crises (46 percent), and the pressure to reduce CO₂ emissions (40 percent). The survey was conducted online between June and July 2024.

Survey results highlight that cost pressure is the greatest challenge for fleet operators. Low margins, rising costs, and

stricter emissions standards are reducing investment capacity, while wage developments and labor shortages add further strain,

explains Clarisa Doval, Head of Digital Solutions at Continental Tires.

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Survey reveals regional differences in challenges and priorities

Rising costs and economic pressures are global issues. However, the survey highlights that certain challenges differ considerably by region. For instance, 58 percent of German fleet managers view the transition to electric mobility as a hurdle, compared to only 23 percent of their U.S. counterparts. Additionally, 48 percent of German fleet managers report staffing shortages, versus a global average of 34 percent.

Over half (56 percent) of all surveyed fleet managers worry they will lose competitiveness within five years if they fail to adapt to changing conditions like rising costs, crisis-related challenges, or emissions regulations. This concern is particularly high in the U.S., where 81 percent of respondents expressed this sentiment, compared to only 22 percent in Germany.

Readiness to invest and innovate

To ensure fleets are prepared for the future, openness to change and the adoption of new technologies are essential. Globally, nearly 25 percent of survey respondents identify as early adopters, actively seeking and implementing innovations at an early stage. About 44 percent are pragmatists, adopting new technologies only once they are well-established in the market, while approximately 32 percent consider themselves laggards, implementing modern technologies only after a delay or not at all.

The primary barriers to adopting new technologies, as reported by respondents, include high costs (63 percent), unclear return on investment (ROI) (29 percent), and the lack of a clear strategy (28 percent). Key factors that support technology adoption include ease of implementation (56 percent), user-friendliness (44 percent), and

compatibility with existing systems (39 percent).

USA as a leader in technology adoption

Data shows that U.S. fleet managers are generally more open to transformation and new technology adoption. In the U.S., 63 percent of respondents identify as early adopters, compared to an average of only around 20 percent in European markets. Engagement in the U.S. is especially strong in digital tire management, with 62 percent having already invested or planning to do so soon – versus only about 19 percent in Europe.

Intense competition in logistics, which is being further intensified by climate change and ongoing global crises, makes adaptability and resilience a decisive factor for success,

says Clarisa Doval.

At Continental, we create innovative solutions to enhance fleet efficiency, reduce costs, and promote sustainability. Tires are a key factor in total operating expenses, and our digital tools for tire condition monitoring deliver substantial long-term savings.

E-mobility and digitalization as key future technologies for the industry

Electric mobility is considered a key future technology across industries: 41 percent of respondents have already invested or are in the process of implementing it, with the figure particularly high in Germany at 50 percent. Across all survey participants, another 24 percent plan to invest in electric mobility within the next one to two years.

Fleet management software is also gaining prominence: 34 percent of respondents worldwide have already invested or are currently building this capability, with the U.S. leading at 67 percent. Other technologies on the horizon include advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS), which are already part of the strategy for 27 percent of managers. Currently, artificial intelligence (AI) and autonomous driving are lower priorities, with only 17 percent and 11 percent of managers investing in these areas, respectively.

Cost efficiency, safety and sustainability as primary goals

Companies have clear objectives in modernizing their fleets: cost reduction is the top priority for 65 percent of respondents, followed by enhancing safety for drivers and other road users (44 percent) and improving sustainability through emissions reduction (43 percent). Reliability and minimizing downtime (41 percent) are also key, as is compliance with regulatory requirements (35 percent).

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