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Scania Maintenance: Flexible plans lead to increased uptime

Scania has introduced the option for customers to have their vehicles serviced based on flexible maintenance plans. Instead of service based on set mileage or dates, vehicles are called in for service when the operating data indicate that maintenance is needed. This means the vehicle receives exactly the maintenance it needs and, in most cases, spends less time idle at the workshop. The oil change intervals can be up to 150,000 km. Scania has approximately 210,000 connected vehicles that can use the service.

“Flexible plans means we can take Scania Maintenance to an entirely new level,” says Claes Åkerlund, Head of Service Concepts at Scania. “This is new technology, and the fact that all of our vehicles sold in Europe today are connected has made the service possible. Maintenance plans that are based on how the vehicle is actually used increase both reliability and availability.”

Scania continuously monitors the vehicle’s operating data, which makes it possible to determine with a great deal of precision when various maintenance operations need to be carried out. It is also possible to efficiently combine various service operations and perform preventive maintenance in order to reduce the time that the vehicle is idle rather than being operative and producing revenue. Unplanned visits to the workshop between service appointments can be minimised, which also facilitates the work of transport planners.

“A service contract including flexible maintenance plans means that the operator does not have to keep track of when the vehicle needs to be serviced; instead, he or she is contacted by Scania when it is time,” says Claes Åkerlund. “Because the workshop has all of the essential information before the appointment and can prepare for it in detail, the ‘pit stop’ is very efficient.”

Scania is now finalising the process of rolling out all of the necessary technology at its 900 workshops in Europe. Norway has been one of the pilot markets, and so far customer feedback there has been extremely positive; the haulage companies appreciate Scania’s willingness to shoulder the responsibility for planning, and they also recognise that the number of workshop visits has decreased in general.

Isn't there a risk, for example, that heavily used vehicles will not receive the maintenance they need? And the opposite scenario: have some vehicles been serviced too frequently in the past?

“There is a very high degree of reliability, and we can determine the actual need for service with a great deal of precision,” says Claes Åkerlund. “The set maintenance plans resulted in vehicles being serviced too frequently or too infrequently. I believe we can all agree that the best scenario is when every vehicle receives the exact amount of maintenance it needs.”

Is it then possible to assert that a Scania Maintenance contract with flexible plans will always lead to longer distances between, say, oil changes? According to Claes Åkerlund, this is approaching the issue in the wrong way. It all depends on how the vehicle is used in practice – long-haulage with a 35-metric tonne GTW between Rotterdam and Bremen is probably not the same thing as driving the same distance with the same vehicle between Zagreb and Munich.

“In general terms, however, a vehicle travelling between Rotterdam and Bremen should absolutely be able to count on over 120,000 kilometres between engine oil changes, provided it runs on Scania’s LDF-3 oil, which was specially developed for our Euro 6 engines. But if the vehicle is frequently used for other types of assignments and under tougher conditions, we will quickly discover this and make sure that the customer’s vehicle is serviced appropriately.”

Scania’s aim is to offer maintenance contracts with flexible plans in all European markets over the course of 2016. The best type of maintenance plan for each vehicle and operating type is determined in consultation with Scania. Periodic maintenance at set intervals is still available to customers or for driving patterns for which this option is most suitable.

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Scania is a part of Volkswagen Truck & Bus GmbH and one of the world's leading manufacturers of trucks and buses for heavy transport applications. Scania is also leading provider of industrial and marine engines. Service-related products account for a growing proportion of the company's operations, assuring Scania customers of cost-effective transport solutions and maximum uptime. Scania also offers financial services. Employing some 44,000 people, the company operates in about 100 countries. Research and development activities are concentrated in Sweden, while production takes place in Europe and South America, with facilities for global interchange of both components and complete vehicles. In 2015, net sales totalled SEK 95 billion and net income amounted to SEK 6.8 billion. Scania press releases are available on www.scania.com