

How Incorrect Tire Pressure Erases Fuel Savings and Shortens Tire Life



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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ **Tires rank among the top operating costs for fleets, yet many still lack the technology to get full value from that investment.** Running at the right pressure protects fuel economy, extends tire life and improves retreadability. Without proper inflation management, fleets lose the performance gains that tire manufacturers engineer into their products.
- ▶ **Fleets at TMC 2026 are focused on technologies that deliver fast, measurable results.** With a difficult freight market and thin margins, the conversations center on which solutions can show operational impact quickly, not which ones sound the most advanced.
- ▶ **Tire management technology makes technicians more efficient by replacing manual yard checks with targeted, data-driven service.** Instead of walking a yard with a gauge, technicians can be sent to specific tires that need attention, which is a better use of limited labor in an industry facing a persistent technician shortage.
- ▶ **The next generation of technicians expects mobile-first tools.** Giving younger workers information through apps and devices they already use every day makes adoption easier and helps fleets attract and retain talent in a competitive labor market.



Fleets at TMC's 2026 Annual Meeting in Nashville, Tenn., were asking a pointed question: Which technologies can make a measurable difference right now?



Ralph Dimenna

Chief Commercial Officer
Aperia Technologies



With a [down freight market](#) stretching into its fourth year and margins under pressure, the conversations were less about what sounds promising and more about what delivers.

[Ralph Dimenna](#), chief commercial officer for [Aperia Technologies](#), sat down with Seth Clevenger, Transport Topics' managing editor of features and multimedia, to discuss where tire management fits into that conversation and why it remains one of the most direct paths to cost reduction for fleet operations.

Fleets want technology that shows results fast

The TMC show floor is packed with new products and solutions competing for fleets' attention. Dimenna said the conversations he had with customers pointed in one direction: immediate, measurable impact.

“Anything you can do to help manage those tire programs better, get more life out of those very, very important assets ... that is a very direct impact on the bottom line.”

“What we’re talking about with our fleets is, ‘Hey, if we take this technology, we implement it, what’s that going to look like for us?’ Dimenna said. “How am I going to help the operations, and how fast am I going to start to see some of the results?”

In a tight-margin environment, fleets are not shopping for potential. They are looking for proof.

Tire costs are too high to leave unmanaged

Tires consistently rank among the [highest operating expenses](#) for trucking fleets. ATRI data shows tire costs reached 4.7 cents per mile in 2024, and that figure has been climbing steadily since 2021. Dimenna put tires “in the top three” behind fuel, insurance and equipment acquisition costs.

The problem, he said, is that many fleets still are not getting a full return on that investment.

“Anything you can do to help manage those tire programs better, get more life out of those very, very important assets, help them retread those assets more because they’ve been properly inflated over the life of the product, I think that is a very direct impact on the bottom line,” he said.

Proper inflation is the foundation. Dimenna pointed out that tire manufacturers invest heavily in improving rolling resistance to help fleets get better fuel economy.

“That all goes out the window if you’re not operating at the right pressure,” he said. “Operating at the right pressure to get what you’re buying. Do we have the right technology to get the most out of that investment?”



Tire technology makes technicians more effective

The technician shortage is one of the industry's most persistent challenges. Every hour a skilled technician spends on low-value tasks is an hour lost on work that actually requires their expertise. Dimenna said tire management technology directly addresses this problem.

“We're beyond the time when you should be sending a technician out into a yard to manually check tire pressures on track,” Dimenna said. Instead, fleets should be “armed with the information” to send technicians to specific tires that need service. “Go touch this tire and go fix this particular tire, to be very, very effective.”

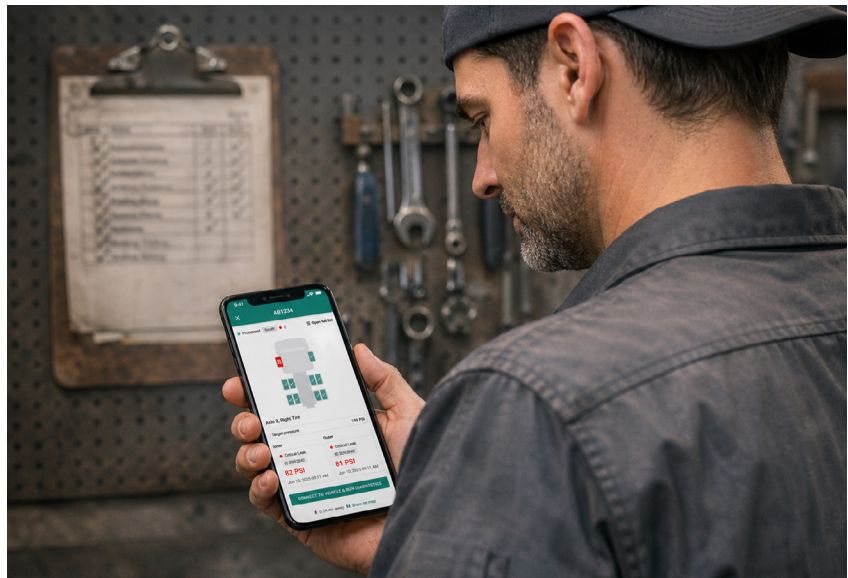
Targeted service replaces blanket inspections. That shift turns tire maintenance from a time-consuming sweep into a focused, data-driven task. For fleets struggling to find and keep [qualified technicians](#), getting more value from each hour of labor is not optional.

The next generation expects mobile-first tools

Dimenna raised a point about workforce expectations that goes beyond tires. The next generation of technicians has grown up with smartphones. Giving them tools that match how they already interact with information makes adoption easier.



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“Everybody that’s under 30 has grown up with a phone in their hand,” Dimenna said. “To the extent that we can give them an application, give them information in the device that they’re used to using every day of their life for everything, it’s very intuitive for them.”

He contrasted that with older methods. “Giving them the tools and the technology that allows them to be as good as they can be, and as effective as they can be, is a lot better than maybe a clip or a pencil.”

Meeting younger workers where they are is a retention advantage. Fleets that equip their shops with modern, mobile-friendly tools are more likely to attract and keep the technicians they need.

Integration and user experience are moving fast

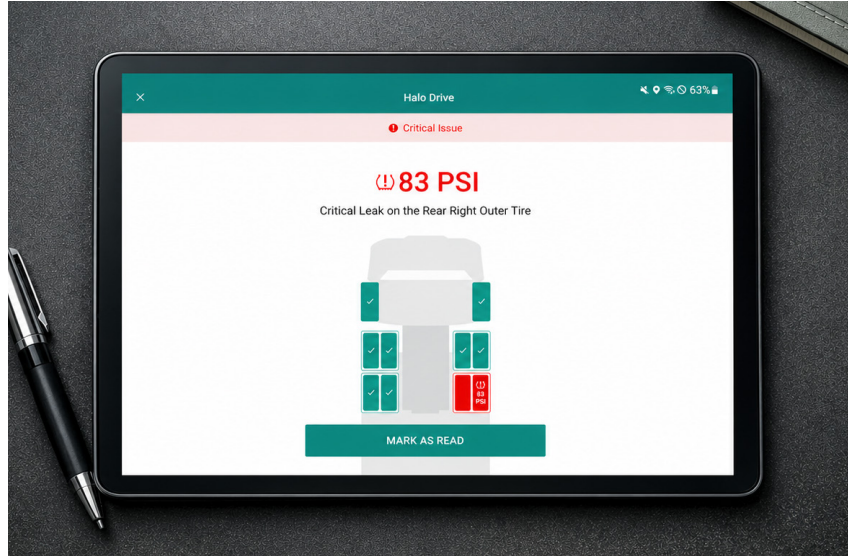
Dimenna said he was looking forward to walking the TMC exhibit floor to see how integration partners are evolving. Aperia works with telematics platforms such as Geotab and Samsara, and Dimenna said the pace of innovation on those platforms is worth watching.

“The pace of innovation that they’re going through on those technologies, taking some inspiration from what they’re thinking about in terms of user interfaces and how they communicate, whether that be to drivers or through their fleet maintenance side, that is always really interesting,” he said.

He added that seeing how other companies present information often sparks ideas for Aperia. “Hey, why don’t we think about presenting information in this way? Or is this not another way to engage with our

customers that they might be either more used to or might be new and innovative.”

The best technology only works if people actually use it. How information is presented matters as much as what information is collected.



Bottom line: Get what you're paying for

Tires are expensive. Fuel is expensive. Technician time is expensive. Tire management technology connects all three. Fleets that run at the right pressure get better fuel economy, longer tire life, higher retread rates and more efficient use of their maintenance teams.

In a market where every cent per mile counts, tire management is one of the most direct levers fleets can pull.



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This article is based on an episode of RoadSigns, a podcast exploring the trends and technologies that are shaping the future of trucking. Check out the website to catch past and future episodes.

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