

# Want to Boost Your Forecourt's Profitability? Here are Five Things Every Fuel Retailer Should Know.

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As a convenience store or travel center retailer today, there are many challenges impacting your overall profitability. Savvy operators can gain more control by reducing or eliminating some of the factors affecting their bottom-line. Having the right applications and user tools in place for corporate and store staff can go a long way toward decreasing the impact of many “controllables,” such as meters giving away or holding back product, delivery shortages, fuel theft, and slowing or dormant dispenser flow. The data available from site tank gauges and dispenser controllers is immense. Used properly, curated forecourt analytics can provide your compliance, maintenance, supply, and accounting teams with the information they need to drive higher cost controls.

Here are a few areas to focus upon in order to drive more profitability to your bottom-line:

## **1. The weights and measures inspector protects your customer – not necessarily your fuel inventory.**

A state inspector can give your store a “thumbs up” in terms of meeting dispenser meter tolerances, even though you may be losing hundreds of gallons of product due to controllable meter drift. Making better use of available meter

drift technology protects you, your fuel inventory, and your customers by identifying meters that are drifting away from strike and holding back or giving away product. Meter drift analysis reports for each dispenser position associated with a product can help you identify a meter error's impact on your profitability.

## **2. You may not always receive the delivery amounts you pay for.**

Terminals, carriers, and drivers will all push back hard if you question a delivery amount and claim a delivery shortfall. Using continual reconciliation data, including actual calculated delivery amounts, you could have the information and evidence you need to pursue claims of fuel shortages. Today's remote diagnostic applications can identify the gross and net amounts of product delivered to the tank system, which is critical information because deliveries to retail facilities are not metered when product is introduced. A calculated delivery audit can provide a reliable measure of the actual amount of product delivered versus the bills of lading using precise delivery calculation factors such as temperature, tank geometry, and elapsed sales. ►



### 3. Want to attract business from the forecourt into the store? Don't ignore slow flow rates that irritate customers.

Restoring a dispenser to its proper flow rate will increase sales at the position by up to 20% and help increase your store traffic. Today's remote diagnostic software can calculate dispenser flow rates for each position associated with a particular product, and identify issues such as clogged filters, defective flow arrestors, and inadequate turbine pump capacity — all of which can affect how quickly product is delivered to your customer. Flow rate diagnostic reports can help you to improve efficiency and profitability and ensure a positive customer experience.

### 4. Fuel theft is a persistent issue.

Even at dispensing positions outfitted with anti-theft kits or intrusion detection devices, skilled fuel thieves can find ways to circumvent your defenses. A dispenser can be altered so that it will not record actual amounts of product withdrawn. An advanced use of technology can identify and alert you to such incidents by date, time, and amount.

### 5. Investigating fuel losses can be daunting for a technician without proper guidance.

Sending technicians to investigate fuel losses can be futile if they don't know where to look. In addition, during a dispenser or automatic tank gauge repair at a facility, service help desks can assess whether the repairs were effective or if additional work is needed. This ability to verify that a repair has been made and inform you that performance has been restored — in real-time — eliminates repair call-backs, increases efficiency, and saves you money.

In summary, used properly, curated forecourt analytics can provide your compliance, maintenance, supply, and accounting teams with the information they need to drive higher cost controls and improve your bottom-line profitability. Taking the necessary steps today to add technology to your operation can pay off for years to come in a big way. ★



**Tony Caputo** has worked in the fuel, convenience, and grocery industry for over thirty years, holding a variety of corporate and division leadership positions at The Kroger Co., Kroger SPG & Convenience Group, and EG America. He has extensive background and experience in marketing, merchandising,

risk management, fuel management, environmental compliance, and operations. In prior roles, Tony was pivotal in the startup and implementation of The Kroger Co.'s 1,600 location fuel program, including the introduction of the Shell affiliate program and leadership of their national fuel merchandising and on-site marketing programs. Transitioning to EG America, Tony oversaw EG's US corporate risk and environmental programs for 1,100 convenience locations.

Tony joined the Warren Rogers' team in 2020 and supports the growth of Warren Rogers and lending insight into the continued development of their advanced wet-stock management tools. Tony enjoys helping fuel operators better understand ways to improve their overall efficiency in the forecourt and assist corporate staff in streamlining their compliance, maintenance, and supply roles.

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