

# Case Study



## Greater Customer Service is Now on Tap at Wil Fischer with Roadnet

As beer aficionados will tell you, fast, efficient delivery is essential to a fresh, peak-flavored brew reaching the store and the customer in a timely way. When Wil Fischer pumped up its dedication to top-level service with logistics tools from Roadnet Technologies, they increased their overall efficiency—and ended up saving thousands in fuel costs during the first year alone.

Founded in 1966, Wil Fischer is a wholesaler and distributor for Anheuser-Busch. The company is dedicated to providing the freshest, highest quality products to their customers, and maintains a strong customer focus based on the understanding that “service sells beer.” In its first year, the company’s staff of

five employees sold 211,000 cases. In 1985, the company sold a million cases for the first time, then doubled that benchmark by 2000 with two million cases sold.

Today, the company has 75 employees covering six counties in Missouri. The company is part of Anheuser-Busch Wholesalers, and works closely with 12 breweries and a vast network of refrigerated warehouses, computer-based inventory systems, and shippers to provide the most extensive and effective distribution network in the brewing industry.

Wil Fischer supports 13 delivery routes in the winter, and 15 routes in the summer, the company’s busy season, which account for 60% of revenues. Wil Fischer delivers both the Anheuser-Busch beverages themselves, and the freestanding

point-of-purchase displays that contain and promote the products in the customers’ stores.

“Every six months we look over the routing system and completely revise it,” says Jeffrey Gower, Wil Fischer’s Executive Vice President. “We normally add routes during the summer, which is our busy season.” He notes that in the past, using the company’s longstanding manual system made the semi-annual rerouting approach impossible. “In the past we were tempted to put off creating new routes, looking to make changes every other year because it’s so tedious by hand. It can take literally days or weeks to create balanced routes.”

The company reached a turning point in 2003 when it turned to Roadnet Technologies to automate their

## Quick Facts

### WIL FISCHER COMPANIES

#### Location

Springfield, MO

#### Industry

Beer Distributor

#### Service Area

Six counties in Missouri

#### Delivery Method

Bulk and Bay Delivery  
Combination Trucks

#### Vehicles

16 Trucks  
30 Vans

#### Solutions

Roadnet®  
Territory Planner®  
FleetLoader®  
MobileCast®

#### Results

- \$75,000 savings in fuel costs
- Reduction in number of routes during peak season from 17 to 14





routing process. The firm's leaders were already open to the idea of a computer-based solution, since Dr. Jeff Gower, Wil Fischer's CEO, was an "early adopter" of logistics technology who chaired the Technology Committee on Anheuser-Busch's wholesalers' panel.

Jeffrey Gower had first learned about the Roadnet® Transportation Suite at a National Beer Wholesaler's Trade Association show. "I was impressed with this solution's ease of use, and how its tools can simplify such an important part of our business," he recalls. "With Territory Planner®, the whole rerouting process can be completed in a matter of hours."

Wil Fischer purchased the Roadnet Technologies suite—including Territory Planner, Roadnet®, and FleetLoader®—in 2003. In generating new routing territories, the company

saw measurable return on investment almost immediately. "When measuring the impact of the products, we quantify our savings in terms of fuel costs," says Gower. "In that context, we saved \$75,000 the first year alone."

FleetLoader, a special tactical loading tool designed for the beverage industry, also improved the speed and efficiency of Wil Fischer's deliveries. "We load driver-friendly, and to do that we need an order sheet for the warehouse workers who prepare the orders by stop," says Gower. "We pull the data into FleetLoader, and then forward it to the warehouses. FleetLoader creates pick sheets with big, bold text that our pickers appreciate."

In addition, Roadnet has made driving for Wil Fischer a more rewarding enterprise, cutting drivers'

road time without cutting their profits. "With Roadnet, we can create more balanced routes that can make the drivers' workdays shorter," says Gower. "They can get a more manageable workload with the same earnings."

Wil Fischer continues to adopt Roadnet Technologies' solutions, with the installation of MobileCast®. This module will make the delivery ETAs transparent and trackable in real time. MobileCast will also make it easy for the company to route merchandisers so they better coincide with product deliveries.

"Even with the necessary technological support and culture change on our end," says Gower, "there's no doubt—you can see a return on investment very quickly with these solutions."

**"Even with the necessary technological support and culture change on our end, there's no doubt - you can see a return on investment very quickly with these solutions."**

Jeffrey Gower  
Executive Vice President  
Wil Fischer



For more information:

**Roadnet Technologies, Inc.**  
849 Fairmount Avenue, Suite 400  
Baltimore, MD 21286

410.847.1900  
800.762.3638 toll free  
[www.roadnet.com](http://www.roadnet.com)

© Copyright 2011 Roadnet Technologies, Inc.  
All rights reserved. MKT30 A