

CASE STUDY

How St. Joseph Plastics Built a 98-Scoring Fleet From Scratch


Company Description

St. Joseph Plastics is an 80-employee plastic recapture and repurposing company headquartered in St. Joseph, Missouri, with three facilities across the state. The company operates a fleet of 9 local drivers and outsources more than 800 long-haul loads per year, with a focus on compliance, safety, and responsible fleet operations.

The Challenge

In 2024, St. Joseph Plastics was operating without a documented driver safety program. With 25 years of transportation experience, Ivan Taff took over as Fleet Operations Manager and knew what a compliant, safety-first fleet looked like. Building one from scratch, while also winning over a skeptical team of drivers, was the task ahead.

Driver skepticism was immediate to the changes, including new cameras and monitoring technology; pushback was swift: fears of the unknown, complaints about being watched, and general frustration with the new telematic standards. Taff pushed through, committed to the belief that a proactive approach to safety was non-negotiable and the future of safety in the transportation industry.



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– Ivan Taff, Fleet Operations Manager
at St. Joseph Plastics

The Solution

St. Joseph Plastics discovered SambaSafety through a partner integration and quickly made it a cornerstone of their compliance program. Taff has come to rely on the platform in two primary ways: screening drivers at the point of hire and monitoring his active fleet on a continuous basis.

During the hiring process, SambaSafety gives Taff an immediate, comprehensive view of each candidate—driving history and medical card status all in one place.

As Taff explained, “A driver can come in and say a million things. Whereas SambaSafety has it all built in, everything is right there in one place.”

For his existing drivers, continuous monitoring means violations don’t go undetected. If a driver receives a citation or a DUI, Taff knows about it by the next day. Far from the weeks or months a violation could go unreported under the old system. That visibility allows him to address concerning behaviors early, before they become entrenched habits, and to have data-backed coaching conversations that feel collaborative, not personal.

The Results

A Safety Score Transformed

Prior to SambaSafety, St. Joseph Plastics fleet realized that it could greatly improve safety, exposing stop sign violations, hard braking, and unsafe following distances that had never been tracked before. Today, the fleet consistently scores between 97 and 98 out of 100. As Taff put it, “The things that were happening...the big things, have gone away. Now we’re looking at the little things as the new big things along with keeping behaviors from becoming habits.”

A Flawless Audit

St. Joseph Plastics recently completed an FMCSA audit and passed with flying colors. Auditors were immediately satisfied upon seeing SambaSafety in place, familiar with the platform’s reputation and the standard it represents.

Insurance Recognition

St. Joseph Plastics’ insurance broker, Lockton Insurance, is now actively advocating for premium reductions on their behalf. “Lockton came in and said, ‘You really have a great program. We’re going to do what we can to get reductions for you,’” Taff recalled. The team anticipates measurable cost savings when their renewal is finalized.

Time Back for What Matters

Beyond compliance wins, SambaSafety has given St. Joseph Plastic’s fleet operations team something equally valuable—time. Tasks that once took days, verifying medical certifications, pulling driving histories, preparing for annual driver reviews, now take minutes. “The thing that wows me the most is just the amount of work that I don’t have to do that SambaSafety will do for me,” Taff said. “It frees me up to focus on operations because it’s taking care of so much of the compliance.”



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