

A winning approach



DeCarolis Truck Rental continues to grow and prosper by finding ways to solve its customers' challenges

"The common goal for all of our customers is to have reliable equipment at a predictable cost," says Michael Margarone, president of Rochester, N.Y.-based DeCarolis Truck Rental, Inc., a family-owned business for more than 75 years. "Today, that challenge is more difficult because the entire industry is dealing with both a lack of technicians and with maintenance issues associated with new emissions compliant engines."

Today's vehicles are more efficient, but they're also more complex, according to Margarone. "In particular," he explains, "new engines are still plagued with maintenance issues and downtime so we've had to invest in technology to service them in house. That provides faster service for our customers while reducing substitute

vehicle costs. At the same time, we've added training so our staff is better able to diagnose and repair the latest vehicles in our fleet.

"We've also done a number of things to recruit technicians," Margarone continues, "from participating in job fairs, taking part in veterans outreach programs, meeting with tech schools and providing them with used equipment and offering bonuses to current employees who bring technicians to the company, to an apprentice program and advertising online. Once we find a new technician we also have senior technicians assigned to mentoring new hires so they transition into our operation more easily."

Resources and support

DeCarolis currently fields 700

trucks, 350 tractors and 700 trailers. Truck makes in the fleet include Freightliner, Hino and International, and tractor suppliers include Freightliner, International and Volvo. "Relationships with suppliers are key to our business," Margarone says. "We look for suppliers that partner with us and have the same values along with the resources to support and complement our business."

The variety of vehicles in the DeCarolis fleet reflects that approach, Margarone notes, as well as the availability of vendor networks in the different markets that the company serves. Customer preferences, price and reliability are considerations as well, he adds, because downtime is costly.

"Substitute vehicles are included in most of our lease agreements,"

Margarone continues. "We routinely measure costs and ROI. Using various management reports we review cost per mile for each VMRS category. In addition, exception reports alert us to vehicles that are not performing within the guidelines we set. When equipment nears the end of its planned life cycle in our fleet, we have an asset committee that reviews vehicle reports and plans their replacement."

Safety is also always a factor in specification and vehicle disposition decisions at DeCarolus, Margarone says. As a result, the fleet's latest units have collision avoidance and lane departure warning systems, hands-free communications capability, backup cameras and telematics.

"We're focused on fuel efficiency as well," Margarone adds. "We find that fuel economy doesn't vary that greatly between different makes, so we add things like automatic tire inflation systems and aerodynamic devices on trailers. Driver training programs are also in place to help ensure the vehicle is being operated at peak efficiency."

Full range of services

DeCarolus offers a full range of maintenance and repair services for trucks, tractors and trailers at seven branches in western and central New York, with shops equipped with up-to-date diagnostic technology. Contract maintenance is offered to lease and rental customers that also field company-owned vehicles. Those programs are tailored to each operation's needs and requirements and can include everything from full service

DeCarolus Truck Specifications

Model: Freightliner M2

Wheelbase: 270 in.
Engine: Cummins ISB
Transmission: Allison
Front Axle: Detroit FF1
Rear Axle: MS-17-14X R Series
Rear Suspension: Freightliner Airliner
Wheel Seals: SKF
Brakes & ABS: Meritor WABCO
Automatic Slack Adjusters: Meritor
Wheels: steel disc
Tires: 275/80R22.5
Air Cleaners: Donaldson
Fan Clutch: Horton
Starter: Delco 38MT
Alternator: 160 amp
Mirrors: Moto Mirror, heated
Lighting: LED
Seats: high-back, air
Fuel Tank: 80-gal., aluminum

Model: Hino 268A

Wheelbase: 271 in.
Engine: Hino J08E-WU
Transmission: Allison
Front Axle: Meritor MFS10
Rear Axle: Meritor RS19-145
Rear Suspension: Hendrickson
Wheels: Accuride, steel disc
Tires: 11R22.5
Starter: Denso
Alternator: Delco 130 amp
Block/Fuel Line/Tank Heater:
Mirrors: Moto Mirror, heated
Lighting: LED
Seats: high-back, air
Fuel Tank: 95-gal., aluminum

to a simple agreement for preventive maintenance and additional services as needed at a discounted rate.

A unique aspect of the DeCarolus Truck Rental operation is a parts

DeCarolus Tractor Specifications

Model: Freightliner CA125SLP

Wheelbase: 226 in.
Engine: Cummins ISX
Clutch: Eaton Solo
Transmission: Eaton FRO-15210C
Front Axle: Detroit DA-F-12.0-3
Power Steering: TRW THP-60
Rear Axle: Detroit DA-RT-40.0-4
Rear Suspension: Freightliner Airliner
Wheel Seals: SKF
Brakes & ABS: Meritor WABCO
Automatic Slack Adjusters: Meritor
Wheels: aluminum
Tires: Michelin
5th Wheel: Fontaine
Air Compressor: Cummins
Air Dryer: Bendix AD-9SI
Fan Clutch: Horton
Batteries: Alliance
Starter: Delco 39MT
Alternator: Leece-Neville, 270 amp
Mirrors: Moto Mirror, heated
Lighting: LED
Seats: high-back, air
Fuel Tanks: dual 120-gal., aluminum

Model: Volvo VNL64T630

Wheelbase: 227 in.
Engine: Volvo D13
Transmission: Volvo I-Shift
Front Axle: Volvo VF12
Power Steering: TRW THP-60
Rear Axle: Meritor MT-40-14X4C
Rear Suspension: Volvo, air
Wheel Seals: Stemco
Brakes: Meritor
ABS: Bendix
Automatic Slack Adjusters: Meritor
Wheels: Alcoa aluminum
Tires: Bridgestone
5th Wheel: Fontaine
Air Compressor: WABCO
Air Dryer: Meritor
Fan Clutch: CSI
Starter: Delco 39MTHD
Alternator: Delco, 165 amp
Mirrors: Moto Mirror, heated
Lighting: LED
Seats: National, air ride
Fuel Tanks: Dual 125-gal., aluminum



Fleet Profile & Specs

division that supplies all company locations as well as customers with in-house shops.

"Originally, we established the parts operation to ensure our own facilities were stocked at competitive prices,"

Margarone says, "but we soon realized we could use our purchasing power to support our fleet customers as well."

DeCarolis also derives support from its long-standing membership in AmeriQuest, the parent organization of the NationalLease full service truck leasing organization, which has more than 600 member locations.

"The advantages we realize stem from the buying programs available through AmeriQuest, which provides fleet management services for more than 700,000 vehicles," Margarone explains. "Additionally, through NationalLease, we can offer our customers a nationwide network of more than 600 road service locations.

From full service leasing to short- and long-term rentals, as well as a range of maintenance and safety services, DeCarolis Truck Rental is providing a highly beneficial set of programs to its customers, and helping solve the challenges they face so they can grow and remain successful. **///**



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