

'Talking' Power Equipment Coming to You Soon



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What if your power equipment could talk to you – tell you when it was operated, how long it ran and at what level? Would that be valuable to you?

I saw a demonstration of a system that allows your power equipment to tell you what it's doing, and I was impressed. Think of it similarly to fleet tracking, that many of you have on your service trucks. The system, being developed by [Husqvarna](#), is called [Fleet Services](#), and I got my first look at it at during [Husqvarna's "Silent City North America"](#) press event in Miami, Florida.

I saw a lot of other neat things at the event, too – [a video of a drone delivering parts to a worker on the job](#), a robotic mower named "Bob" and lots of professional-grade, battery-powered landscape equipment – but the 'talking' gear really piqued my interest.

I'll start by confessing that the system, now in beta testing, doesn't talk to you in the sense that you can hear it. It communicates to you via sensors placed on each piece of your gasoline or battery-powered production equipment – mowers, string trimmers, blowers, whatever.

The sensors collect data from your equipment and record precisely when the equipment is on or off, how long it is on, when it is idling and when it is actually working, including what level of power it is being used. The data from each piece of your equipment is uploaded to the cloud at day's end where you can access and review it via a dashboard on your computer or tablet.

Think about how you might use the information that your gear is telling you. You will be able to tell exactly how many hours and at what level your equipment is being used, which will allow you to more accurately perform equipment maintenance.

You will be better able to match equipment size and power to specific production tasks. For example, if you determine, after reviewing the data, that one of your operators is using a powerful, battery-powered backpack blower sparingly on smaller job sites, wouldn't a more economical unit work just as well on these sites?

Similarly, if the data shows you that some of your service personnel are allowing their equipment to idle more than you feel it should, you can use that information for a short employee training exercise.

As mentioned previously, Fleet Services, which will be a subscription service, is now in beta testing. We will let you know more about it when it becomes commercially available.