

MAXPower Weekly

Maxwell's blog on power, energy, and the future of ultracapacitor technology



Rail Yard Driver Overcomes Starting Challenges With The Maxwell Engine Start Module

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Jump-starts were a ritual for professional driver Mike Deffely during the fall and winter seasons. When dead batteries left Mike stranded on his local delivery route, he'd shell out fifty to one hundred dollars for a jump-start. He'd miss the cash, but that didn't bother him nearly as much as the pressure of making his delivery on time and staying on track with his logbook.

"I used to kid and say, 'I think I have gremlins in my truck,'" says Mike, as he recalls the multiple times he had to wait for his mechanics to give his truck a jump-start or troubleshoot the cause of the starting problems. After multiple break-downs, Mike searched for a solution. He tuned in to Kevin Rutherford's Let's Truck SiriusXM radio program and learned about the Engine Start Module (ESM) by Maxwell Technologies.

"When I heard about the ESM, I was like, alright that sounds like what I need," Mike says. "As soon as I installed the ESM, I didn't have to worry about it anymore. I have absolutely no fear of my truck not starting whatsoever."



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Don't get stuck in the yard lane

Mike drives a 2002 Freightliner Columbia and averages 120,000 miles a year. His work takes him to the CSX rail yard in North Baltimore, Ohio, where containers are offloaded from the arriving trains and picked up by drivers on tight schedules to make customer deliveries. When working intermodal, Mike shuts off his truck 30 to 40 times a day.

"You don't want to get stuck with people behind you," says Mike, but that's exactly what happened one day when his truck wouldn't start and Mike was holding up a long line of drivers. When he considered the stress, downtime, battery replacement and jump-start costs, plus the impact on his schedule and logbook, Mike decided it was time to try the Maxwell ESM in hopes that it would prevent scenarios like this one from happening again.

Instant power

To retrofit his 2002 Freightliner Columbia with new starting power, Mike pulled out one battery from his truck's four battery system and replaced it with one Maxwell ESM. Since the ESM is connected directly to the starter, it takes over the starting function, leaving the batteries to power onboard loads. When Mike turned on the truck, the first thing he noticed was "how quick it starts. It's instant power," he describes.



Now, Mike is confident that he can shut down and start up his truck as many times as he needs to and that cold winter climate won't affect his starting ability.

"When it gets colder, the batteries aren't cranking hard enough," Mike recalls of the days he depended on the batteries for starting. "Usually you have to wait at least a half hour to charge everything up or enough to a point where you can start, and then, once you've got it started, you cannot shut the truck off. It was a pain."

"Of all the things to worry about," he adds, "getting bills, the weather, traffic, and just being safe driving down the road—whether or not my truck will start is not something I need to be worrying about. Hands down the ESM is the best thing anybody can do, especially during the winter time."



START STRONG

with Maxwell's Engine Start Module

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A business man driving a truck

A year after retrofitting his truck with the ESM, Mike asserts that it was the most cost-efficient decision to keep him

in business.

"I think of myself not so much as a truck driver but as a business man driving a truck," he says. "The ESM is by far one of the best purchases I've made."

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When thinking about his return on investment, Mike considers what he's saved on batteries alone. "Now that I've got the ESM, I have yet to buy any new batteries," Mike says, pointing out that batteries can cost \$200 apiece. Mike feels confident that the ESM has saved him at least \$500 in the past year. "That includes batteries and calling somebody out to jump-start."



Dependable starting with the Maxwell ESM has resulted in fuel savings for Mike as well—he says he no longer has to resort to idling all day just to ensure his truck stays running. "I've always focused on fuel mileage. I cannot control how long I might be sitting at the rail yard, so I turn my motor off." The ESM also proved to be a good choice for keeping his older truck in business. "The Maxwell ESM makes it easier to maintain the older truck," says Mike, "because I know when I turn the key, I'm going to have 1,800 cold cranking amps."

Before the ESM, starting problems were the norm for Mike. Now, whenever he hears drivers complaining about starting issues, Mike's response is a satisfied, "Yeah, I got rid of that problem!" It seems the gremlins in Mike's truck skipped out and moved on to plague other drivers.



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