Kenworth T680 Day Cabs Make a Big Impression

New Features Have Drivers and Fleet Managers Smiling

KIRKLAND, Wash. – “The Kenworth T680 is everything I expected – and more.”

When Orville White made that statement about Kenworth’s new T680 Day Cab, it summed up his high regard for Kenworth’s latest model. “That really does say it all,” said White, who serves as vice president of equipment and safety for Sentinel Transportation, the trucking arm for Phillips 66 and DuPont. “One of the biggest attributes is how the cab fits drivers of all sizes. We have 625 drivers operating 430 trucks in our fleet – a mix of Kenworth T800s, T600s and T660s, and now two T680 Day Cabs. Our drivers range in size from small to large – our tallest driver is 6’9”. We’ve never had a truck that could comfortably seat all our drivers. This one does.”

Orville White, vice president of equipment and safety for Sentinel Transportation, with one of the fleet’s Kenworth T680 Day Cabs.

That’s music to the ears of the Kenworth engineers who designed the Kenworth T680 from the ground up. “We had a ‘driver-first’ mentality, and our goal was to optimize comfort, usability and visibility for a wide range of driver types and sizes,” said Wally Peltola, Kenworth’s design director. “Based on our research, we started with the ‘Driver’s Space,’ creating the ideal position for the pedal package, the optimal seating position and steering wheel location.

“The air-assisted hydraulic clutch we designed only requires half the pressure of a traditional clutch, plus less travel, so it’s very easy to engage. It allows a woman in the 5th percentile of size, as well as a male in the 95th percentile to have easy clutch control. That is a major leap forward in accommodating drivers,” Peltola noted.

The Kenworth T680’s door also impressed White. “I saw the doors being tested in a test cell at the PACCAR Technical Center,” said White. “I couldn’t believe the doors could close as easily as they do. It’s just amazing. Kenworth designed the doors in a fitted position, so it’s likely that the doors will never have to be adjusted, even in the rough applications that our crude oil trucks encounter.”

While driver comfort has been an immediate benefit, other measurable benefits will soon follow suit. The T680 represents a new high mark in Kenworth aerodynamics and is Kenworth’s most aerodynamic truck ever.

“If the fuel economy numbers come in as expected, we’ll be extremely happy,” said White, who noted that the trucks have completed two months of service and are still being broken in.

In Canada, Stotesbury Transfer, a milk hauler based in Kitchener, Ont., operates a Kenworth T680 Day Cab equipped with a PACCAR MX engine rated at 465 hp. The T680 pulls a tri-axle trailer grossing out at 118,000 pounds GCW. The engine, plus the T680’s design and insulation package, helps reduce noise levels by 40 percent.

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“If you look at a truck designed 20 years ago, the difference in quietness with the new T680 is absolutely amazing, said Doug Caley, Kenworth’s senior engineering manager. “Kenworth has long been known for having one of the quietest cabs in the industry. We analyzed and determined areas where noise could enter the cab and sleeper and put in a unique noise suppressant to dampen noise. That, coupled with a new door design, featuring triple seals, really created an excellent and quiet driving environment.”

From left are Bryan and Bruce Stotesbury of Stotesbury Transfer in Kitchener, Ont., with their Kenworth T680 Day Cab.

“The DNA of Kenworth has always been its phenomenal doors,” agreed Bryan Stotesbury, co-owner of Stotesbury Transfer. “But, Kenworth really took its doors to a new level on the T680. You can shut the door with your fingertips and it shuts tight and solid like a luxury automobile.

“And the clutch assist is just great,” continued Stotesbury. “Our drivers make multiple stops on each delivery run so they’re clutching all the time. This takes all the effort. Our drivers couldn’t be more pleased with how the trucks perform and how comfortable they are. I’ve been in the truck as well and it reminds me of the feeling you get when you sit in your favorite chair at home.”

Length of service was one last area that Stotesbury mentioned. “I went to the Kenworth plant in Chillicothe, Ohio, and saw how the T680 is made,” Stotesbury said. “It was so impressive and the tolerances were so close that you could tell how well built those trucks were. The T680 is 100 percent perfect in my opinion.”

Elwood “Woody” Moshier, who has driven trucks since 1978 and for Stotesbury since 2004, said he, too, is excited about the Kenworth T680.

“Kenworth has shown a lot of attention to detail,” Moshier said. “With the aerodynamic front hood and the larger windshield, the visibility on the T680 is great. I’m in and out of the truck all day and the door on the T680 is so much easier to open and close.”

Moshier said his 60-year-old knees also enjoy the T680’s air-assisted hydraulic clutch. “It took a little bit getting used to, but the clutch is 100 percent better. I am an older guy and I find that it makes driving the truck so much easier and less tiring,” he said.

“I think the T680 is really a great truck,” Moshier concluded.

Kenworth Truck Company is the manufacturer of The World’s Best® heavy and medium duty trucks. Kenworth is an industry leader in providing fuel-saving technology solutions that help increase fuel efficiency and reduce emissions. The company’s dedication to the green fleet includes aerodynamic trucks, compressed and liquefied natural gas trucks, and medium duty diesel-electric hybrids. Kenworth is the only truck manufacturer to receive the Environmental Protection Agency’s Clean Air Excellence award in recognition of its environmentally friendly products. In addition, the fuel-efficient Kenworth T700 equipped with the low-emission PACCAR MX engine was named the 2011 Heavy Duty Commercial Truck of the Year by the American Truck Dealers. Kenworth also achieved the “Highest in Customer Satisfaction with Heavy Duty Truck Dealer Service, Two Years in a Row”, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2011-2012 Heavy Duty Truck Customer Satisfaction StudiesSM. Kenworth's Internet home page is at www.kenworth.com. Kenworth. A PACCAR Company.