

VIDEO-BASED SAFETY AND THE DRIVER EXPERIENCE

THE EVOLUTION OF DRIVER ACCEPTANCE

 SMARTDRIVE®





INTRODUCTION

It's natural that products evolve to meet consumer demands. It's also natural that consumer acceptance evolves to meet product availability. When this happens, the marketplace reaches a tipping point and products become an essential part of everyday life and spread like wildfire. Or, as Malcolm Gladwell says in his number one national best-selling book, *The Tipping Point*, "It's the moment of critical mass, the threshold, the boiling point. When it happens, ideas, products, messages and behaviors spread like viruses do."

It's been nearly 20 years since video-based safety became reality. Started as an outgrowth from a simple road-facing dashcam, the video safety industry has evolved to include multiple cameras, managed services, artificial intelligence, computer science, ADAS, and much more.

Although reluctant initially, most drivers are now accepting of the technology. See how these drivers have realized the benefit of a video-based safety program in their truck and why communication is key to acceptance and a successful rollout.



JOE POPPLE

Oakley Transport

Safety is always front and center with Joe. In addition to being a man of values and morals, he's a man of pride. This was very evident when talking about having cameras in his cab.

“When I initially heard about cameras, it was like you walked up and punched me right in the nose! I've driven for most of my life and now you're going to tell me how to drive? But, I can now say—with pride and honesty—it's made me a better driver. I've never let anything beat me in my life, so this became a challenge for me. As a result, I'm now more aware, have increased my following distance and am less aggressive on the road.”

Although he hates to admit it, Joe admits that the camera is a training tool. But, he's quick to add that the power of the program is not the camera itself, but the coaching session that results from triggering an event. “That's where I learn. I have respect for the people I work for—and they respect me. With that mutual respect comes the ability to accept coaching when it's done in a timely and professional manner. We all want the same thing—to be safe on the road.”

Joe encourages other drivers to accept cameras as their friend. “It’s not a loaded gun pointing back at you. The less accidents we—and the industry—have, the more opportunities they’ll have to reward you for your efforts of putting safety forward.”

Speaking of rewards, Joe also appreciates that the SmartDrive program provides him with the opportunity to earn a bonus. With data from the SmartDrive program, Oakley has created a bonus program that increases as a driver becomes safer—or maintains a safe driving record. “The safer I am, the larger bonus I can receive. It’s not something that Oakley is giving me; it’s something I’ve earned. And, as a result of my being safer, everybody wins. It’s a public win. It’s a company win. And it’s a personal win.”



**“It’s a public win.
It’s a company win.
And it’s a personal win.”**



JERRY BURKS

Transco Lines


“I love working for Transco—they’re a really good company and have always treated me extremely fair. As a result, I try to return the favor by doing a good job for them.”

In turn, Transco appreciates Jerry. According to Travis Cooper, Manager of the Safety Department, “Jerry is a class act when it comes to his professional driving career, as well as his character in both his personal and professional lives. Jerry’s dedication and resolve to not only his, but the motoring public’s safety, is unmatched. He embodies the spirit, level of professionalism and class that Transco Lines, Inc. (TLI) strives for day in and day out in everything we do as an organization from Safety to Customer Service.”

Jerry is quick to let you know that Transco is a very safe company. “They have a fantastic safety department, who has our backs. People are always watching, coaching and helping us do a safe job. In fact, SmartDrive was one way they proved their dedication to safety. I know that if there’s an accident, I’ve got actual video to show what happened. I really enjoy having it in my cab and am thankful it’s there.” It wasn’t long ago when some people, who had been driving in a car, accused Transco

of causing an accident. When they were told that everything was on video and the driver was doing everything right, they quickly changed their story. “I also appreciate that when I do something right to avoid an incident, someone from safety calls and thanks me for doing a good job. Once again, I’m simply doing my job.”

For those who are uncertain about having a camera in their cab, Jerry is quick to tell them to “Go for it. Put a camera in your truck. It’s well worth it.”



“ I also appreciate that when I do something right to avoid an accident, someone from safety calls and thanks me for doing a good job.”



TIM CHELETTE

Big G Express

Tim has been driving since 2002, the last 15 years with Big G Express.

Tim appreciates all of the efforts Big G puts into promoting safety throughout the company. As a result, he's become a member of ATA's America's Road Team. America's Road Team is a national public outreach program led by a small group of professional truck drivers who share superior driving skills, remarkable safety records and a strong desire to spread the word about safety on the highway. Big G supports Tim's efforts in promoting safety and provides him with the time to do so.

Along with promoting general safety practices, America's Road Team provides Tim with the opportunity to promote the SmartDrive program, which he has in his truck.

"I love SmartDrive. It protects me. When I had a near-collision incident with a car on the highway, the camera showed it was the other guy's fault. If I hadn't had SmartDrive and hit him, I would have lost my job... and my livelihood as a driver. My feeling is that if you're doing what you're supposed to be doing, you don't have anything to worry about. If you aren't, then you shouldn't be behind the wheel."

Tim has driven almost two million safe miles and, in addition to his work on America's Road Team (2019-2020), Tim has been Big G's Driver of the Year (2016), a member of the Tennessee Road Team (2017-2018), and Tennessee Driver of the Year (2018).

Tim was the recent winner of Pilot Flying J's sixth annual Road Warrior Contest for his work raising more than \$30,000 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital through an annual motorcycle ride he created. Based on more than 13,000 combined online votes, Tim won the \$10,000 grand prize.



“I love **SmartDrive**. It protects me.”



MIKE BASS

Cypress Truck Line

As a 20+-year driver, Mike Bass did not have any moving violations or at-fault accidents. Three years ago his fleet, Cypress Truck Lines, installed the SmartDrive video safety program with road-facing and cab-facing cameras. For nearly two years after installation, Mike continually triggered the camera.

Mike admits to an aggressive personality. But, he slowly came to the realization that to change his habits, he needed to address the culture, environmental and biological influences that informed them.

“I admit I have an aggressive personality and, as it turns out, my driving reflected that fact. While I was, statistically, a safe driver, my ego, competitiveness and impatience threatened that reality. I soon began to realize there are more of ‘them’ than ‘me’ on the road so the path of least resistance was not to change them, but to change me.”

“The in-cab facing camera became a tool of accountability. Since it’s not my nature to be passive, I had to unlearn and relearn how to be intentional about not being an aggressive driver. The camera became my Agent of Change. It helped me learn to adjust

my driving so as not to trigger the camera. Over time, my obsessions with NOT triggering the camera changed the way I drove and as a result, it was no longer about the camera, but about driving safer”

“This endeavor is still a work in progress. But, I admit that the cab-facing camera has made me a better driver.”

Mike is one of nearly 500 drivers at Cypress Truck Lines. Within weeks of implementation, the company improved its safety score by 57% and saw reductions in speeding and distracted driving—58% and 48% respectively. In the three years since adopting the dual-camera configuration, and with steady, sustained progress, Cypress has improved its safety score by 80% overall, and the fleet has reduced instances of exceeding the maximum fleet speed by 100%.

“Road-facing cameras are a great start but if you don’t have an interior view, you’re cutting yourself short,” said Matthew Penland, Vice President, Risk Management, Cypress Truck Lines. “If you don’t have that and you have a driver who has a bad habit, how are you going to be able to help that person? The road facing camera really limits your view. You’re just seeing one side of what’s really going on.”



“The cab-facing camera has made me a better driver.”

DRIVER ADOPTION

Initially, fleets may be reluctant to install in-cab cameras due to driver pushback.

But, this is easily overcome when drivers learn that they are in control of when the camera activates an event and that it can exonerate them when they are not at fault in an accident. They quickly realize that cameras can save their lives, their CDL and their careers.

Watch the video and hear from Arnold Transportation, Conico Oil, Cypress Truck Lines, Davis Transfer, Fraley & Schilling Trucking, Golden State Foods, J. Grady Randolph, Loomis Armored, and Postal Fleet Services. Learn how they overcame driver pushback and successfully deployed a video-based safety program throughout their fleet.

“We didn’t lose a single driver. Not one driver decided he was going to up and leave because cameras were going in. Not one driver quit because of the camera systems.”

DRIVERS BECOME
BELIEVERS



A woman with long brown hair, smiling, stands in a parking lot. She is wearing a khaki short-sleeved button-down shirt and blue jeans with a brown belt. Her hands are on her hips. In the background, several white vans are parked, slightly out of focus.

**COMMUNICATION IS
KEY TO DRIVER
ACCEPTANCE**



SELLING SAFETY INITIATIVES TO DRIVERS—THE GREAT AMERICAN RULE!

By Don Osterberg, Transportation Industry Expert

During my many years in the trucking industry, I found most commercial drivers are dedicated, conscientious professionals, who take their responsibility to operate safely very seriously. I've also determined that the best way to communicate with professional drivers is in a frank, honest and transparent way. They want and deserve to know, not only what is being proposed, but WHY.

The Great American Rule

I had a boss many years ago, while I was in the military, who espoused what he called “The Great American Rule” when referring to our soldiers. He explained that all of our soldiers (and their leaders) are Great Americans, dedicated to doing the best job they can for our country. I've observed that commercial drivers are the same. They understand the role they play in our economy and they do their very best to conscientiously and safely do their job. My boss often explained that while “Great Americans” may disagree from time-to-time, generally when we disagree, it's because:



- They know something I don't know...
- I know something they don't know OR...
- Something got garbled in our communication

Said another way, our disagreements are normally communication breakdowns, NOT philosophical differences.

When contemplating new safety initiatives, carrier safety leaders and executives have access to fleet performance data that paints a pretty clear picture of what the safety issues and opportunities are. They perform data analytics to determine causal factors for crashes and they have access to safety programs and/or technologies that have demonstrated effectiveness in addressing the issues (and opportunities) they see.

Drivers, on the other hand, only see what can be seen from the seat of their truck (but they see it with great regularity and clarity). They too, develop a sense for safety issues and crash causation. In short, carrier executives know something their drivers don't know and their drivers know something they don't know. As a result, disagreements may occur.



A Safety Collaboration

Achieving sustainable safety excellence is a collaboration between leaders and drivers. It's not a top-down, shut-up-and-color command. By opening the lines of communications and actively listening to my drivers' perspectives and then explaining in detail my perspective, disagreement morphed into support. Bottom line, a relationship based upon mutual respect and open, transparent communications is preconditional to alignment between conscientious, professional drivers and caring leaders.

I've learned throughout my professional career that leadership is leadership. Soldiers and professional drivers expect and deserve the same things from their leaders: open, honest, transparent communications and credibility earned through mutual respect based on consistency between words and actions.

Don Osterberg, safety advisor, formerly served as senior vice president of safety, security and driver training for Schneider. His distinguished career in commercial transportation spans several decades, and he is a recognized authority on carrier safety, having held leadership roles with organizations including the National Safety Council, FMCSA Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee, American Trucking Association's Safety Policy Committee and American Transportation Research Institute's Research Advisory Committee.



CONCLUSION

The tide is turning as our industry evolves. With cameras nearly everywhere—in stores and truck stops, at intersections and on the road—drivers are more open to the idea of having a camera in their cab. They hear stories of their colleagues being exonerated when blamed for an incident that was not their fault. They see drivers' CDLs saved by video that showed they didn't do anything wrong. And, they see drivers being recognized (and paid) for improving their safety. What started as a rumor in one or two fleets is now standard operating procedure in many fleets across the country.

Drivers now understand how video can make them a better, safer driver—helping them get home to their family, earn more pay and ensure their driving careers. Now is the best time to obtain greater safety and operational results with a video-based safety program. Contact SmartDrive today.



We put our customers first.

We deliver video in minutes, not days.

We safeguard your drivers and business in every collision.

We protect your investment with a solution you won't outgrow.

We will save you the most money in the shortest time.



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SmartDrive Systems is an industry innovator, delivering driving performance solutions and transportation intelligence that transform fleet safety and operational efficiency. Our video analysis, predictive analytics and personalized performance programme improves driving skills, lowers costs and provides immediate ROI.

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