

Solution to Texting and Driving

Texting while driving is a serious problem. It is the source of thousands of accidents and thousands of injuries every year. It is very difficult for law enforcement to enforce laws prohibiting texting and education hasn't been working. The car and phone manufacturers need to address this issue for the good of the public. Since eliminating texting is unlikely, both car and phone manufacturers need to work together to develop more extensive and effective voice commands and hands-free controls to allow for communications without the need to take your eyes off the road. Instead of trying to punish the scofflaw, the solution for texting and driving is the further implementation of safer voice commands/hands-free controls and phone interference; they are proven to work, are easy to use, and can prevent the problem altogether.

Voice commands are proven to work when alternatives do not. According to EWeek magazine and contrary to popular belief, a headset cell phone is not substantially safer than using a hand-held phone because the primary risk associated with both tasks is answering, dialing, and other tasks that require drivers to take their eyes off the road and thus increases risk of crashing. Voice commands, however, are shown to be safer as found in a study conducted by the the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute. The study states that voice activated systems are the least risky way to communicate while driving.

Voice commands are extremely easy to use and have been implemented in many devices already. Some of the most common examples are the Amazon Echo with the assistant Alexa, Siri on Apple devices, and Ok Google on android phones. On both Siri and Ok Google, you can reply to the message you receive without even looking down at your phone. With Alexa, you can turn on lights or change the temperature on some thermostats. According to Corey Fedde, "A virtual assistant can control your car, or at least tell it to pull out of the garage," in reference to the Alexa assistant. According to Christopher Lampton, you can now use voice commands to change the temperature in some cars as well. Hands free assistants have proven to be effective in many daily applications and should be implemented into vehicles in order to keep drivers' eyes on the road.

In order to reduce the risk, eliminate it altogether help mitigate texting while driving, there are a number of apps currently being developed to do exactly that. According to Targeted News Service, one of the apps allows users to temporarily block and save the messages that might distract the driver. It also automatically replies with a message telling the person on the other end they are driving and they will message them later. This reduces the distractions and even stops the other end from texting the driver. "Texting while driving is a deadly habit that makes you twenty-three times more likely to be involved in a crash," said AT&T Chairman & CEO Randall Stephenson. If you can cut the texting out as a whole, you will be much safer.

Texting and driving has become a huge problem that plagues people all over the world. We need to eliminate/ reduce the risk associated with it because the current toll on society is too high. An optimal solution would be for car manufacturers and phone developers to broadly implement counter measures like hands free assistants or text preventing apps. If we don't get texting and driving under control, we are going to lose many more lives to stupid mistakes that can easily be avoided.