Proposal

By Elijah Warren

Old Dominion University

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# Problem

In a world filled with technology, it’s no wonder why drivers today are constantly being bombarded with distractions. With the advancements we have, why haven’t we found a way to keep the driver’s attention on the road and off their phone. I propose that we come up with a solution to this problem that uses the technology we already have in the cars we have today to help drivers focus. Some car manufacturers today have tried implementing some safety measures to tackle these problems, but they don’t stop the driver from picking up their cellphone. Safety measures such as eye trackers, warning sounds and locked functionality of the entertainment screen help keep the distractions of the car itself down but the main source of distractions while driving is the cellphone.

When you look at the number of accidents that are caused by distracted drivers you will find that one out of every four is caused by texting while driving. This means that if we could get peoples hands off their phone and on the wheel, we could stop a quarter of the accidents in the United States. What I also found interesting is that you’re six times more likely cause an accident while texting than driving while intoxicated. So why haven't us a society done more to put an end to this? In my opinion, people don't believe that they could ever be the one that causes the wreck. "It happens to everyone else but not me" motto is what most people use when defending their actions. I'm a good driver and it's only one text what's the worst that could happen?

# The Solution

To solve this ever-increasing problem, we need to do more than ad campaigns and proposing laws. Most of the time, the laws are only applied after the accident has already happened and ad campaigns are only effective for the thirty seconds you’re watching it. What needs to be put in place is a restraint that keeps the car from moving unless the phone is placed away from the driver. Forcing the driver to place their phone in the glove box before putting the car in drive will make It much more difficult for someone to use it. This system would have to be able to tell if the phone is placed in the correct place and ensure that it a phone and not some other device. This method would also need to be able to stop the driver from grabbing their phone after they start moving. A locking mechanism when the car is in drive might help this. However, this also might cause issues in cases of emergency. If the mechanism is stuck in the case of a crash, the driver won’t be able to call for help.

# Barriers

The true issue with any solution to this problem is the willingness of the driver to cooperate with the system in place. The current laws in place are more of a slap on the wrist when it comes to punishment for texting while driving. Only receiving a small fine for texting and driving while those who drive under the influence will get a fine up to two thousand dollars and up to six months in jail. Fear plays a huge factor in what people are and are not willing to do. If you create a big enough reason for someone to not do something, most won’t be willing to take the risk.

# Assessment

On the topic of results, the solution could take a while to know whether it is effective or not. This new system would have to be implemented in new cars starting in 2020 so the flow of cars using this new technology could take years to reach the mass population. However, after ten years, you should be able to see a dramatic change in the number of accidents caused by distracted drivers. The number of accidents caused by texting and driving should plummet if people are willing to cooperate. Putting systems like this in place while also enacting organizations like mothers against drunk driving in order to raise awareness of issue would be needed to see an effect on the trend of car accidents. There will never be a solution that eliminates texting while driving while also keeping the freedoms that we have today. To completely get rid of cell phone usage while driving would involve putting a blanket coverage overall drivers and cars causing even the passengers' phones to be rendered useless on the road. This would cause a whole other slew of problems like emergency responding that would have to be solved.