***MyCarDoesWhat* Blog Guidelines**

This document details the guidelines for the [*MyCarDoesWhat.org* blog](https://mycardoeswhat.org/news-research/).

## Audience

Generally, the audience of the *MyCarDoesWhat* blog includes any licensed driver in the United States aged 18 or older. We expect this audience to include a range of drivers in regard to skill level behind the wheel, type and age of car owned, and interest in car technologies.

This audience guides the blog in that topics should not be overly technical or specific to one type of driving experience. Additionally, an audience of licensed drivers also ensures that the blog’s readers already should have a basic understanding of driving safety. They also likely have interacted with at least one or two safety features, such as anti-lock brakes or tire pressure monitoring systems.

## General Topics

Some general blog topics include the following:

* How car safety features can improve traffic safety outcomes
* Drivers’ interactions with car safety features
* How car safety features function
* The campaign itself and updates on new materials
* The latest research from organizations

In general, the blog should **avoid** these types of topics or messages:

* Exploiting tragedies or assigning blame for a crash or type of crash
* Discussing autonomous vehicles only outside of the context of active safety features
* Focusing on only one car brand, organization or specific technology
* Highlighting negative industry news – such as hacking or litigation – without highlighting positive industry news or offering solutions
* Posts that are promotional or commercial in nature

## Authorship

There are two main types of blog posts.

* **Conventional posts** – These posts are written from the perspective of *MyCarDoesWhat*, and are bylined as originating from *MyCarDoesWhat*. Authors will include a variety of staff from the campaign. Copy editing is done by the campaign’s NSC director and copy editor, as well as the University of Iowa. Final approval is given by the University of Iowa.
* **Guest posts** – These posts are written from the perspective of a guest blogger, and bylined by their name and title. Guests include thought leaders or who are internal or external to NSC or the University of Iowa.

The *MyCarDoesWhat.org* blog does not endorse or promote products or companies with which NSC or the University of Iowa are not currently partnered.

## Artwork and Media

Whenever possible, a blog post will be accompanied by an image or embedded video link associated with the topic. For guest blog posts, a small image of the guest blogger will be included at the top of the blog post in a “widget” with a short description of the guest.

## Frequency

There will be about three-to-four blog posts a month on the *MyCarDoesWhat* blog, barring weeks with holidays. The majority of blogs will be posted midday on Wednesdays.

## Sharing and Social Media

Most blogs will be shared on Facebook and Twitter with a link and short preview. There also is the option to boost Facebook posts or Tweets that reference the blog entries. Users also may sign up for blog updates through MailChimp.

## Tagging and Searching

Tags are attached to posts based on the content and type of post (conventional or guest). The list of tags will grow throughout the life of the blog to reflect the topics. Some general tags include “Guest,” “Campaign” and “Updates.” Each car safety feature and safety feature category also will have its own tag so that users can quickly sort all the blog entries that reference that feature.

Blog entries are searchable by keyword through the website’s search navigation feature.

## Length and Style

The length of each blog post should match the content of the blog post. Considerations include the timeliness of the post, the subject matter, the guest to whom the post is associated, and relevance.

The following are editing and style guidelines for the two different types of posts.

* For in-house **conventional posts**, blog copy should be generally based on *AP Style*. Please consult the *MyCarDoesWhat.org Branding and Style* guide for more specific guidance on word usage, tone and other style considerations.
* For **guest posts**, we reserve the right proofread and correct them based on *AP Style* guidelines. If necessary, we also reserve the right to make non-substantive word usage changes to ensure the post complies with the branding and style of *MyCarDoesWhat.org*. These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis with respect that individual’s organizations’ own style and usage requirements. Finally, we reserve the right to not publish any submitted post if we deem the tone or content is to the contrary of the goals of *MyCarDoesWhat.*