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Social Media Analysis: U.S. Public Increasingly Positive Toward Vehicle Safety Features

Acceptance and understanding of driver assistance technologies is rising

ITASCA, Ill. and IOWA CITY, Iowa – November 14, 2016 – New social media analysis from [MyCarDoesWhat](http://MyCarDoesWhat.org) – an initiative of the [National Safety Council](http://NationalSafetyCouncil.org) and the [University of Iowa](http://UniversityofIowa.edu) – found the U.S. public’s attitudes toward vehicle safety features have become increasingly more positive within the past year-and-a-half. The research also shows an increase in awareness of life-saving vehicle safety technologies among social media users.

The research examined nearly 50,000 on-topic social media posts from Twitter, Facebook and Google+ over a 32-month period – the 16 months prior to the launch of *MyCarDoesWhat* in April 2015 and the 16 month time period afterward. The analysis identified a 21 percent increase in social media posts about advanced driver assistance systems and vehicle safety technologies, with a 27 percent increase in positive conversations.

The increase parallels upticks in educational efforts, not only through campaigns such as *MyCarDoesWhat*, but also those of federal government agencies that are trying to help drivers understand what the recent proliferation of new technologies means for their driving experience.

“We have always known that education is a critical part of behavior change,” said Kelly Nantel, vice president of Communications and Advocacy at the National Safety Council. “Helping drivers understand the technology in their vehicles will prepare them not only for their next trip to the dealership, but also for the advancements that lie ahead. This research demonstrates that we are headed in the right direction.”

Analysis highlights include identified shifts in opinion in the following areas:

Positive:

1. Celebrating and anticipating future benefits **(+43%)**
2. Impressed with technology **(+24%)**
3. Excitement over personal and economic status gains **(+21%)**
4. Praising safety or convenience value **(+18%)**

Negative:

1. Questioning necessity and novelty value **(-5%)**
2. Systems are not meeting expectations **(-15%)**

3. Hacking and theft concerns (-22%)
4. Fears on privacy, government mandates and “Big Brother” (-76%)

[MyCarDoesWhat](#) is aimed at educating consumers about new safety technologies and how they work. The campaign website, [MyCarDoesWhat.org](#) includes educational videos and other information about safety features that help drivers avoid or reduce the severity of a crash. The data-driven campaign includes academic and consumer research, videos, graphics, animation, social media, a game, an app and advertising to educate drivers.

“Such analyses of social media offer another lens to view the changing trends of driver knowledge. MyCarDoesWhat has been able to capture these trends to provide valuable insight to our campaign,” said Prof. Daniel McGehee, the MyCarDoesWhat principal investigator and Director of the National Advanced Driving Simulator at the University of Iowa.

For more information on automotive safety technologies go to [MyCarDoesWhat.org](#). Follow *MyCarDoesWhat* on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

MyCarDoesWhat used Crimson Hexagon’s social media listening software to conduct the analyses in this report through the company’s Social Impact Program. For more information about the study and its methodology, the full report can be downloaded [here](#).

About the University of Iowa

The National Advanced Driving Simulator at the University of Iowa works to improve technology design through a better understanding of how drivers perform and behave in crash situations. Their research-driven program includes a suite of world-class driving simulators, on-road instrumented vehicles, and world known staff expertise in transportation and vehicle safety. Their program works at the intersection of vehicle and transportation safety and public policy. The program’s areas of research include: human factors and human behavior, simulation and on-road data collection, advanced driver assistance systems, driver distraction, teen driving, crash analysis, connected and automated vehicle policy.

About the National Safety Council

Founded in 1913 and chartered by Congress, the National Safety Council, [nsc.org](#), is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to save lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes and communities, and on the road through leadership, research, education and advocacy. NSC advances this mission by partnering with businesses, government agencies, elected officials and the public in areas where we can make the most impact – distracted driving, teen driving, workplace safety, prescription drug overdoses and Safe Communities.

For more information visit [MyCarDoesWhat.org](#) and follow *MyCarDoesWhat* on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).