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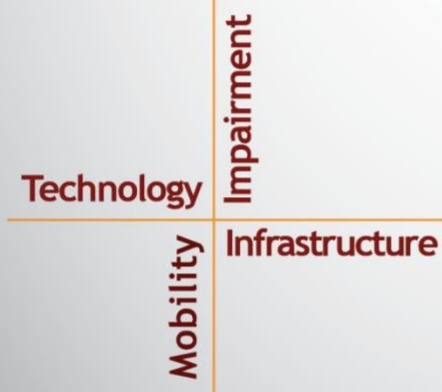
National Surface Transportation Safety Center for Excellence

Trucking Along: Safe Drives, Healthy Lives

Driving Healthy Update

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers face many challenges in their careers that can impact health. Long, lonely working hours in a sedentary position, a stressful work environment, and limited access to healthy food, exercise, and quality sleep can negatively impact a driver's short and long term physical and mental health. In 2010, Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI) researchers recognized the need to create an open-access website to serve as a resource in providing education and tools to help CMV drivers achieve and maintain good health. Following several years of neglect after funding expired, the current project was initiated to update, refresh, expand, and rebrand the *Driving Healthy* website and social media accounts into a comprehensive and inclusive healthy driving community platform: *Trucking Along: Safe Drives, Healthy Lives*.

To achieve these goals, the research team added information, resources, and tools to support healthy habits, both on and beyond the road. Topics covered now include healthy eating, exercise, sleep, mental health, equity and inclusion, and safety on the road, including bringing awareness to the issue of human trafficking and how CMV drivers can help at-risk individuals. The update also added a focus on content and resources for women CMV drivers, who represent a growing but often overlooked group within the trucking industry. The team added new information, including a section dedicated to bringing awareness to sexual harassment. In addition to targeted content for new, seasoned, and prospective CMV drivers, the *Trucking Along* community platform added information, resources, and tips for end users, who play a critical role in providing support and encouragement to drivers within their' social and workplace networks.

The overall goal of this project was to create a comprehensive and accessible resource that could be used by drivers, from various backgrounds and walks of life, at all stages in their career, to educate them on being happy, safe, and healthy in their trucking careers. Results from website and social media analytics support the success of this project in terms of engaging website users and social media followers across a wide range of topics related to physical and mental health. The team strives to continue growing and expanding the *Trucking Along* community platform to continue providing accurate, free, and relevant health information to CMV drivers from all backgrounds.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

CMV	commercial motor vehicle
CDL	commercial driver's license
DOT	Department of Transportation
FMCSA	Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
Bounce rate	Percentage of people who leave website after viewing one page
Direct	User came to the website on their own, by typing the URL
Pageviews	How many total pages were viewed by all users
New users	Number of new visitors to the site
Referral	User came to website to by clicking a link from another website
Search	User found site through a search engine (i.e. Google)
Session	Group of user interactions with website that take place within a short amount of time
Social	User came to site via a social media link
Users	Number of new and returning visitors to the site

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers are retiring from the industry at high rates, with the average age of a truck driver being about 55 (Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association [OOIDA], 2017.) Meanwhile, fewer young people are considering a career in trucking, and the overall interest in the industry has waned (Menziez, 2022.) This has led to a truck driver shortage that worsens as the U.S. experiences an increase in freight tonnage year after year. Delivery of everything, including essentials such as food, fuel, and medical supplies, can be affected by a driver shortage. Many trucking companies are exploring ways to recruit and retain new drivers, such as changing some previous industry standard practices: hiring drivers right out of commercial driver's license (CDL) school, changing pay and incentives, or offering family-focused solutions such as childcare or health and fitness programs to employees. Carriers are also increasing recruitment efforts for previously overlooked demographics such as women, people of color, and military veterans. Additionally, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) is conducting a 3-year CMV driver apprenticeship program¹ that will allow 18–20 year old truck drivers to drive across state lines. The hope is that this will entice recent high school graduates to enter the field (Smith, 2022.)

Compounding the issues of driver shortage, many studies have shown that CMV drivers' high-stress, mostly sedentary, lifestyles often lead to health issues and a shortening of both drivers' careers and potentially their lives (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016; OOIDA, 2022; Sieber, 2015.) The work schedule can often make it difficult for a CMV driver to get adequate water, food, and exercise breaks, and the vibrations from a running vehicle can disrupt healthy sleeping patterns. Unhealthy drivers may be fired or retire from truck driving because they cannot pass the Department of Transportation (DOT) physicals that are required to maintain a CDL (Perry, 2022.)

In 2010, the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI) created the *Driving Healthy* website to address many of these concerns and offer support and solutions to the problems facing most professional drivers (Trimble et al., 2013). After a few years, the VTTI project team determined that the site could use an overall refresh, as well as an expansion to include aspects of emerging relevance in the trucking community, such as women drivers, diversity and inclusion, and human trafficking. The team created a new name and website: *Trucking Along: Safe Drives, Healthy Lives*, new logos and branding, and added the new elements, plus some new resources and interactive elements. There are now interviews with women drivers, an interactive quiz to determine what type of trucking might be best for a new driver, and tips on what to look for and who to call if a driver sees signs of human trafficking, as well as other specialized sections of interest.

The team also updated and created a plan for a social media campaign across multiple platforms to increase interactions and user engagement, with tailored releases to timely events to keep followers interested and coming back.

¹ https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/sites/fmcsa.dot.gov/files/2023-05/fmcsa_SDAP_factsheet-508c_4%2014%2023.pdf

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

HEALTH CHALLENGES FOR DRIVERS

CMV drivers often struggle to maintain a healthy lifestyle due to the many demands of their job. Challenges they often face include living a sedentary lifestyle, difficulty accessing and preparing healthy foods, coping with mental stress, and having irregular work and sleep schedules (Hickman et al., 2020). Lincoln et al. (2018) examined 16 truck stops to identify the resources provided for CMV drivers to help promote their physical and mental well-being. They found that none of the truck stops provided exercise facilities for CMV drivers, most did not provide access to nearby healthcare, and many did not offer fresh fruits or vegetables. Other studies have found that CMV drivers often report feeling intense pressure to ensure their deliveries are on time, which is often detrimental to their sleep schedules and mental health (Shattell et al., 2010). Drivers report feeling lonely, bored, or isolated, which can lead to depressive symptoms (Shattell et al., 2010). In a study of more than 21,000 CMV drivers, Hickman et al. (2020) examined driver risk factors associated with safety, finding that more than 80% of drivers had average to poor eating habits and around 52% reported having an irregular or only sometimes regular sleep schedule. These difficult working conditions can negatively affect CMV drivers' physical and mental health.

Many drivers struggle with health issues, including obesity, cardiovascular disease (CVD), depression, obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) and other sleep disorders, and tobacco use (Hickman et al., 2020), all of which are more prevalent among CMV drivers than the general U.S. population (Hickman et al., 2020). Hickman et al. (2020) found that almost 60% of drivers were obese and another 28% of drivers were overweight (2020). Additionally, 63% of drivers self-reported tobacco use, 74% exercised three or fewer times a week, and 26% reported less than 7 hours of sleep a night. Commercial drivers also have a high prevalence of OSA—up to 28% of drivers have OSA—which is highly associated with obesity and is one of the most common causes of daytime sleepiness (Burks et al., 2016). Long and inconsistent work hours, as well as job stress, can also be a major source of daytime sleepiness and obesity in long-haul drivers (Hege et al., 2018). Drivers may have to work up to 14 hours a day and drive for at least 11 hours. A cross-sectional study by Hege et al. (2018) discovered that longer work hours can allow for less time for sleep and exercise, increasing long-haul drivers' chances of obesity and sleep deprivation.

IMPACTS OF HEALTH ON DRIVER SAFETY

Many of these health conditions go undiagnosed and/or untreated in CMV drivers due to a lack of time or busy schedules, the cost of medical care, and lacking or inadequate health insurance (Sieber et al., 2014). Furthermore, drivers are hesitant to be diagnosed with a medical condition that may disqualify them from driving, including untreated OSA, CVD, or diabetes. Both drivers and companies may be impacted by a driver's health and company risk factors such as long work hours, unpredictable schedules, and a lack of health-supported resources (Apostolopoulos et al., 2016). Burks et al. (2016) found that healthcare access and use was associated with safety. In a retrospective cohort analysis to evaluate the safety effects of an OSA program, CMV drivers who did not receive treatment for OSA were five times more likely to be in a serious large truck accident; however, drivers diagnosed with OSA who were compliant with treatment were as safe

as drivers without the sleep disorder (Burks et al., 2016). In addition to supporting the effectiveness and need for treatment in drivers with OSA, this study highlighted that it is lack of treatment, rather than the condition itself, that negatively impacts safety. Although OSA is a common medical cause of daytime sleepiness in CMV drivers (Burks et al., 2016), there are several additional risk factors for fatigued driving and vehicle crashes. CMV drivers who are overweight or obese have a greater risk of fatigued driving (Weigand et al., 2009) and drivers who have three or more medical conditions have an increased risk of preventable crashes (Thiese et al., 2017). It is estimated that up to 20% of all large truck crashes may involve driver fatigue (National Academies of Sciences, 2016). To combat driver fatigue and crash risk, researchers have found that drivers receiving effective treatment for their medical conditions, like OSA and hypertension, have a lower crash risk than untreated drivers, effectively making them as safe as healthy drivers without the medical condition (Hickman et al., 2020). A multivariate analysis study by Burks et al. (2016) found that CMV drivers with OSA who partially or fully adhered to OSA treatment had a similar risk exposure as participants who did not suffer from OSA.

HEALTH RESOURCES FOR CMV DRIVERS

While health programs are not in place industry-wide, several fleets are implementing health programs to improve driver health and safety, make healthcare affordable, and provide health insurance to retain more of their employees. However, many of these health programs aim to focus solely on company drivers or drivers with company health insurance and may not be an available resource for all (i.e., independent owner operators, contract drivers, etc.). The [CMV Driving Safety Website](#), an online resource for CMV drivers, provides educational and training modules about driver health, driver distraction, safety systems, and more (Tidwell et al., 2016). A case study by Mabry et al. (2013) examined a fleet-wide health and wellness program for CMV drivers implemented by Schneider National, Inc., a dedicated transportation, freight shipping, and logistics company, and Atlas Ergonomics, a third-party health program and service provider. The case study documented and detailed the Health and Wellness Program for CMV drivers and collected opinions and perceptions from drivers and staff about the program to inform best practices for the industry. The health and wellness program included health assessments, health coaching, group programs, and incentives for drivers. The majority of Schneider National drivers and staff were satisfied with the program, and valuable lessons were learned from their feedback (Mabry et al., 2013). Another online resource, the North American Fatigue Management Program ([NAFMP](#)), is a free e-learning platform that provides education and training modules to better understand factors that impact driver fatigue (Camden et al., 2021). The NAFMP provides targeted content for CMV drivers and includes training modules for fleet managers, drivers' families, and other people in the CMV community and drivers' support networks. Shattell et al. (2010) recommended that drivers should have more online resources available to educate themselves on how to be healthier, both mentally and physically.

IMPACTING HEALTH THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media can be used to implement health education programs by allowing for two-way communication between information providers and consumers (Trimble et al., 2013). The implementation of health programs through social media has been found to be an effective and cost-effective way to provide information to drivers (Trimble et al., 2013). Social media allows drivers to connect and support each other, which can positively affect the effectiveness of online

health programs (Trimble et al., 2013). In 2011, VTTI launched the Driving Healthy platform to help CMV drivers and safety managers maintain a healthy lifestyle at home and when on the road. Driving Healthy was an online and social networking-based health effort to address the needs of CMV drivers. Trimble et al. (2013) found that from August 2011 to November 2011 the Driving Healthy platform had a growing interest, with the *Driving Healthy* website having 4,751 new site visits, 248 new likes on Facebook, and 370 new followers on Twitter. Driving Healthy was maintained and updated by VTTI research personnel until 2017, when funding sources expired. Despite the Driving Healthy platform being inactive and lacking new content, analytics for platform components monitored by the VTTI research team demonstrated that there was continued social media and website traffic, as well as user engagement. One aspect of modern trucking that the *Driving Healthy* website and social media accounts did not offer, but that warrants more attention, is diversity in trucking, particularly providing education, resources, content, and support for women truck drivers and people of color and diverse backgrounds entering the industry.

THE NEED AND BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY IN TRUCKING

In 2021, the truck driver shortage hit a historic high of more than 80,000 drivers (American Trucking Associations, 2021). According to the American Trucking Associations, low representation (only 7%) of female drivers in the workforce was a contributing primary factor to the driver shortage issue. Trucking companies are working to hire more female drivers to support an inclusive and diverse company profile and impact their number one priority, which is safety. A study by the American Transportation Research Institute showed that female drivers were 20% less likely to be involved in a crash, 45% less likely to participate in logbook violations, and 60% less likely to commit hours-of-service violations compared to their male counterparts (2019). Male truck drivers were more likely to engage in risky driving behaviors, including reckless driving (70% more likely), running a stoplight (73% more likely), having a seatbelt violation (78% more likely), and having a reckless or negligent driving conviction (88% more likely). Gendered marketing, recruitment strategies, and stigmas are initial barriers women face that discourage them from pursuing a trucking career (Women in Trucking, 2021). Standard training procedures may also deter women from pursuing driving careers, especially for over-the-road drivers who may be expected to share a sleeper or lodgings with a male trainer or counterpart during training. Concerns with work/life balance, discrimination, and sexual harassment may also dissuade women from entering the male-dominated trucking industry. According to a survey of 400 female drivers, 43% responded that they had experienced unwanted sexual advances at work, and 43% reported knowledge of a female driver who experienced harassment or assault because of sharing a cab with a male counterpart. One third of trucking companies do not have harassment policies in place (Women in Trucking, 2021).

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

To support the original mission of Driving Healthy, which was to create unique health and wellness resources for the CMV community that provide trusted and easy-to-understand information about a variety of relevant and timely topics on an accessible and user-friendly platform, the objectives of this project were approached in two phases.

The Phase I objectives were to:

- Update and refresh the *Driving Healthy* website and Facebook and Twitter accounts.
- Increase the scope and reach of the content and expand the target audience to include users in the support network of drivers.
- Expand the Driving Healthy social media presence and reach by creating Driving Healthy profiles and social media accounts on Instagram and LinkedIn to engage with users on multiple platforms.

To further expand the content, scope, and reach of Driving Healthy and support diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, the Phase II objectives were to:

- Expand the website and social media platforms to include content that all drivers and other industry users can apply “beyond the road.”
- Add a comprehensive Women in Trucking element to the website that includes topics and issues of importance to a valuable, but often overlooked, driver population group.
- Rebrand the *Driving Healthy* website and social media platforms to reflect a more inclusive and comprehensive driving community platform.
- Pursue new partnerships, collaborations, and sponsorships with organizations that support similar missions.

CHAPTER 3. PROGRAM REDESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

This project involved two primary phases to support the mission behind Driving Healthy, which is to create a unique health and wellness resource for the CMV community with trusted and easy-to-understand information about a variety of relevant and timely topics. Phase I focused on updating and modernizing the *Driving Healthy* website and social media accounts to improve their accessibility, increase reach of the content, expand the target audiences, and engage with users on multiple platforms. In Phase II, the team focused on adding elements to support diversity in trucking, particularly providing education, resources, content, and support for women truck drivers and people of color and diverse backgrounds entering the industry.

PHASE I: DRIVING HEALTHY UPDATE

The overall goal of Phase I was to provide updated, fresh, timely, and relevant content and resources, modernizing the look of the website for visual appeal, better organization, and easier navigation for website users.

Review and Update Existing Website Content

A key first step to update and refresh the *Driving Healthy* website was to review existing content, links, and resources, and to update, replace, or delete dated information. To find broken or dated links, each website page was reviewed in detail to identify every link. Each link was opened and vetted to ensure the link led to a reliable source with current information. Links that were dated, broken, or led to inaccurate or unsupported information were removed. Additional information and online resources replaced the removed information and links. All the updated information and websites were carefully examined to make certain that all content was reliable by becoming familiar with each website's sponsors, using many government- and research-backed resources (e.g., MyPlate and the Centers for Disease Control [CDC]) for health information and tips, and finding verified trucking resources and blogs that specifically cater to Driving Healthy's mission.

Content and Resource Outlines

An expanded outline was created to organize the new information into the updated website format. First, different themes and major topics were created to help guide the structure of the content. These themes were the major landing pages within the website and included eating healthy, exercise, sleep, general health tips, additional tips for life off the road, and trucking resources. Each theme was broken down into subthemes. For example, the eating healthy theme provides subthemes such as eating on the road, eating at home, and staying hydrated.

Next, the team expanded the outline by identifying relevant and focused content for each of these subthemes. For example, the topic "Eating on the Road" was expanded with focused sub-topics, including packing for the road, serving sizes and dining out, and additional tips for healthy eating while on the road.

Expand Scope and Reach

Another focus when refreshing the *Driving Healthy* website was to expand the scope and content to CMV drivers' networks and social support systems, including family, friends, managers, colleagues, and social and community networks. To reach multiple social and community networks, additional themes and subthemes were added to the website. Added themes included trucking resources with information for new and aspiring drivers, tips on managing a fleet, and safety, life, and entertainment tips for drivers. Another added theme was Health, which included tips and resources on better sleep, mental health, and substance abuse. New, inclusive subthemes offered tips on healthier eating habits as a family, exercising as a family, and the importance of hydration. The revised website has content that drivers can apply to their lives "Beyond the Road" as well as when driving. A "seasonal topics" landing page was also added and updated quarterly to highlight timely tips on driving safety and health related to the current season's typical weather and changes.

Update and Create Driving Healthy Social Media Accounts

In addition to updating the existing *Driving Healthy* Facebook and Twitter accounts, the research team created *Driving Healthy* Instagram and LinkedIn accounts in March 2022 and May 2022, respectively, to share daily content, posts, and engagement opportunities. Similar health and wellness content and information were shared across the four social media accounts, but posts were modified slightly and tailored to engage the unique target audience and follower profile for each social media platform. For example, Instagram is very photocentric, which makes it important that *Driving Healthy* posts engaging images to attract the target Instagram user. To this end, posts included more unique photos from VTTI and fewer stock photos to give the posts a unique feel. The research team created a "social media daily posts" spreadsheet that included 3 months of daily posts for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Each post was dated and created to consider seasonal or "hot" topics, as well as current news. The research team uses Hootsuite, a social channels and account manager, to automatically post daily content across all social media accounts at the same time each day. The Social Media Daily Posts spreadsheet was uploaded with 3 months of posts to Hootsuite and scheduled times for the content to post in advance. In addition to unique daily posts created by the research team, the *Driving Healthy* social media accounts also shared content from accounts followed by *Driving Healthy* (i.e., government-funded health and safety accounts, trucking industry profiles, etc.).

To continue providing relevant and trusted information, the *Driving Healthy* team closely monitored the social media and website analytics by examining website visits and interactions, as well as likes, comments, follower growth, and shares on the social media platforms. User profiles and demographics and returning users were also monitored to improve and update *Driving Healthy* social media and the website based on visitor information.

Continued Growth and Expansion

Additionally, the research team pursued partnerships, collaborations, and sponsorships to support continued maintenance and expansion of *Driving Healthy* beyond this project. The *Driving Healthy* project encourages interaction with the content, giving existing drivers and those considering the trucking industry the knowledge and resources they need. Settings on all social

media platforms are configured to receive direct messages, and the *Driving Healthy* website provides a “Contact Us” button in order to leave private and/or sensitive feedback. The research team receives several requests a week from companies, organizations, and informational websites (i.e., Slumber Yard, United Tires, Nursing License Map, and Addiction Group), requesting that Driving Healthy include their resources and information on the Driving Healthy platforms. Before sharing anything, new resources, content, links, etc., are carefully reviewed and vetted to ensure Driving Healthy only shares trustworthy and relevant information on all platforms. A spreadsheet is used to organize, review, and vet all new information sent to Driving Healthy by other companies. In this spreadsheet, a link and description of the website, information, or company is provided. After searching through the submitting requestor’s site, the Driving Healthy team decides whether a company and information would be well suited to be used on the *Driving Healthy* website or even for potential partnership. These decisions are made by investigating the website for the requestor’s sponsors, the sources of their information, and whether the requestor has similar goals to Driving Healthy.

PHASE II: TRUCKING ALONG

In Phase II, the team developed a comprehensive outline to add an inclusion and diversity element to the website and provide focused content specifically to women truck drivers, as they represent a largely outnumbered and overlooked group in the industry. This content included diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices in companies, things women drivers specifically need to know, and interviews and advice from women who are or have been truck drivers. Figure 1 illustrates the *Trucking Along* website landing page, which displays the primary topics and themes added to the website. Figure 2 displays the *Trucking Along* Equity and Inclusion landing page to illustrate the added DEI content. Partnerships were secured from trusted sources on women’s issues in trucking and DEI, and content was shared between VTTI and these organizations (Women in Trucking, Real Women in Trucking). These partnerships allowed the team to share content from these other organizations’ websites, which aided in bringing more visitors to all of the websites. The team also made use of a study funded by Women in Trucking to gauge the levels of sexual harassment and perceived bias against women in the trucking industry. This study was a key factor in the decision to rebrand to include a DEI and a women truck driver section to the website. The purpose of adding this content was to encourage women to consider a career in trucking, as well as to provide continued support for women already in the industry.

Expanding Scope and Reach

To improve the reach of the Driving Healthy resources, the research team met with VTTI’s social media account managers to discuss social media strategies to increase the site’s visibility and levels of engagement. Suggestions included revising the frequency of social media postings, including finding specific times and days of the week during which each of Driving Healthy’s social media platforms had the most followers active online.



Figure 1. Screenshot. Display of the new *Trucking Along* homepage with focused website content.

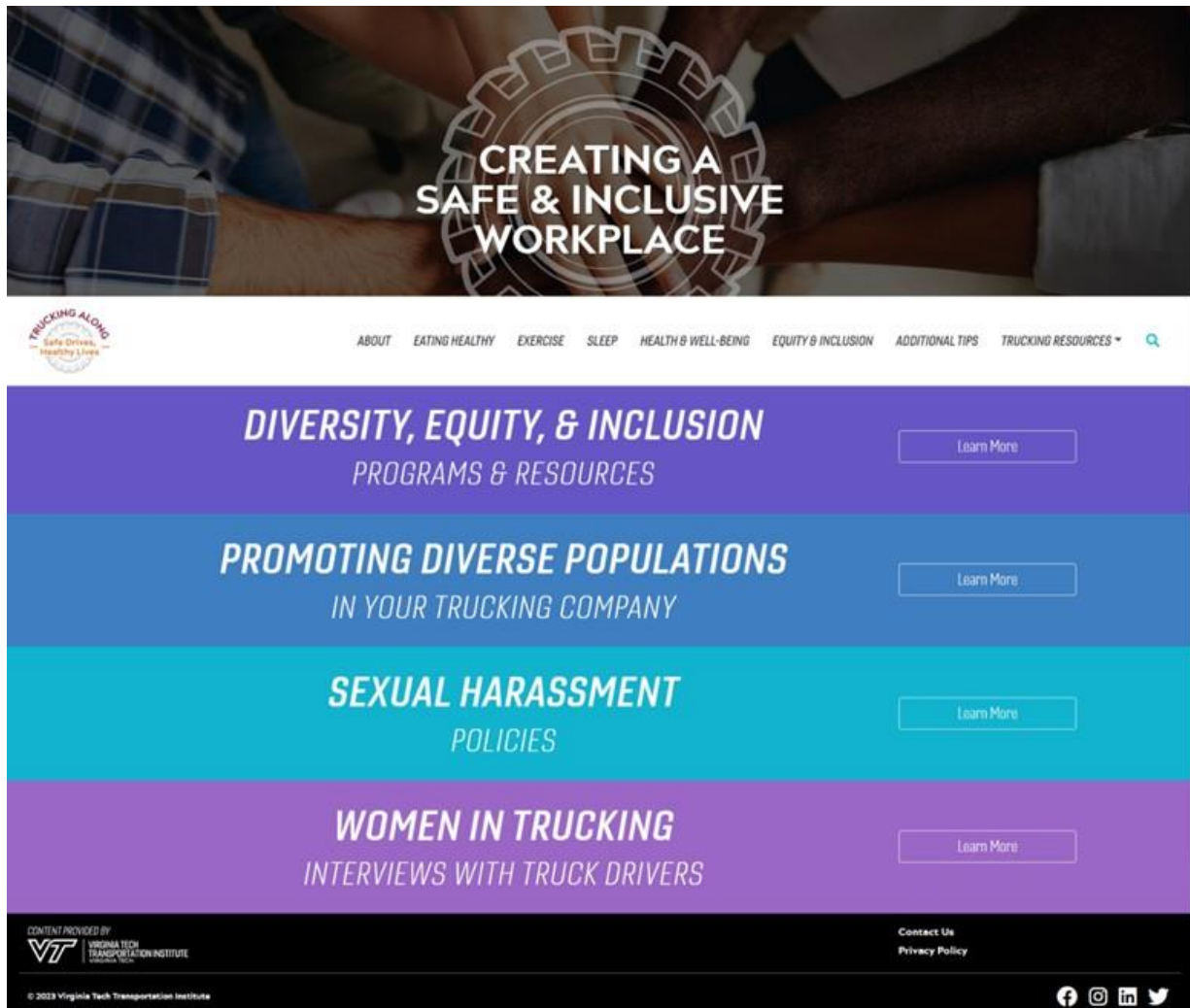


Figure 2. Screenshot. *Trucking Along* Equity and Inclusion landing page.

The expanded scope of the website beyond driver health-related content warranted the need for a new website name to reflect the additional DEI and women-focused content. The team ultimately decided on *Trucking Along: Safe Drives, Healthy Lives*. The team secured the URL truckingalong.org and began porting the website to the new URL. A link from drivinghealthy.org to truckingalong.org was used for several months following the rebrand to make users aware of the change in website name and location. New logos were created with the help of VTTI's graphics team. These featured truck motifs such as truck tires and dashboard gauge panels (Figure 3). As appropriate, stock photos on the old site were replaced with photos of VTTI staff and facilities to give the *Trucking Along* website a more authentic and personal feel.



Figure 3. Illustration. Trucking Along logos.

Interviews and Surveys with Women CMV Drivers

The team created two lists of interview questions: one for drivers and one for other trucking industry professionals (see Appendix A for an inclusive list of interview questions drivers could choose to answer). The interviewees were sent an instructional email describing the purpose of the interview and a press release form to sign and return (Appendices B and C.) The interviewees were instructed to look over the questions and pick five to seven from among them to be asked during a 10- to 20-minute interview. Interview questions asked about job history, experiences, opinions, and advice on being a woman driver in the trucking industry. Drivers could also submit relevant questions to be asked if they wished, though no interviewees chose this option. All

interviews were conducted on Microsoft Teams. Following the interviews, the team edited the videos to remove any mistakes or retakes.

To support the new content, the team recruited women drivers to participate in an interview or complete an online survey and provide responses on their experiences in the industry. This recruitment included handing out flyers at the Women in Trucking Accelerate! Conference in November 2022 (see Appendix D). This flyer described the website, proposed changes, and asked interested women to contact the team. This flyer was handed out to approximately 40 women at the conference, and business cards were collected, when possible, for further contact from interested parties. Additionally, a member of the research team facilitated a session at the conference about technology and its effects on drivers. The team contacted women truck drivers in its database of past research participants via emails and phone calls to introduce them to the project (see Appendix B). There were two recruitment efforts. The first effort involved contacting seven women drivers who were recently engaged in VTTI research and inviting them to contact the research team for an interview. This effort received no responses. The second effort involved contacting 37 women truck drivers via email with a link to the survey. The team received five responses, one of which was a request to do an interview and one from a former driver who forwarded the project information to her contacts. As of this report's publication date, two interviews have been conducted and the recordings posted to the *Trucking Along* website (Figure 4).

In addition to driver interviews, an online survey was created on Question Pro, using the same interview questions, to provide an alternative for women who wanted to share their experiences but preferred to not be interviewed. The survey allowed women to be completely anonymous, and all questions were optional. In addition to 15 questions related to job history, experiences, opinions, and advice related to being a woman driver in the trucking industry, the survey included questions about the responders' permission to share identifying information and to share their responses on the *Trucking Along* website (see Appendix A for the survey questions).

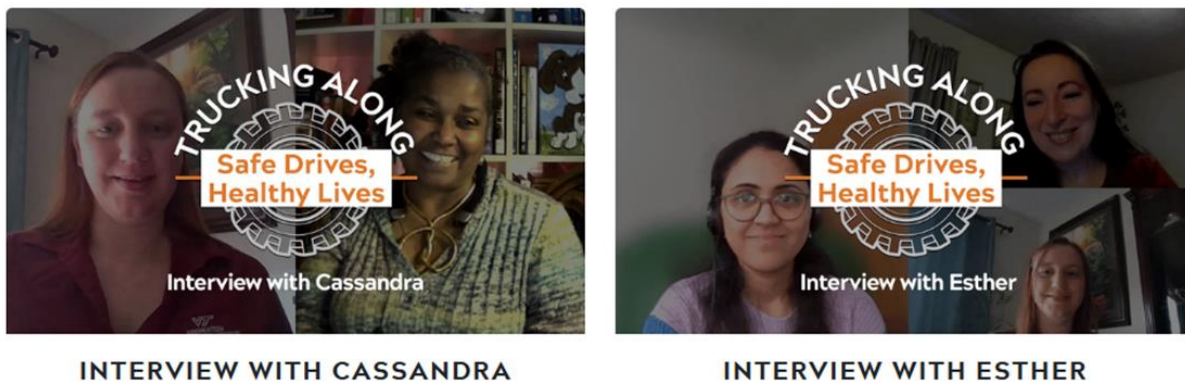


Figure 4. Screenshot. Women in Trucking interviews displayed on the website.

Optimizing Social Media Visibility

Finally, the team revisited the frequency and timing of social media posts with the VTTI media team. As a result, the research team began following calendars, such as the National Highway

Traffic Safety Administration’s communications calendar, to better gear *Trucking Along’s* social media posts toward current monthly and weekly observances or holidays related to driver health and safety. Additionally, the *Trucking Along* research team began posting twice a week, rather than daily, at optimal days and times for each social media platform. For example, according to data trends identified in Hootsuite analytics, *Trucking Along’s* Instagram followers are most active on Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m. and Fridays at 1:00 p.m., while *Trucking Along* Facebook followers are most active on Thursday at 1:00 p.m. and Saturday at 2:00 p.m. Twitter followers are most active on Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. and Saturdays at 2:00 p.m., while LinkedIn followers are most active on Fridays at 1:00 p.m. and Sundays at 1:00 p.m. To create more engaging images and content, the research team began using Canva, an online graphic design platform, to assist in the creation of social media posts. Screenshots of *Trucking Along’s* various social media accounts can be see in Figure 5 through Figure 8 below.



Figure 5. Screenshot. *Trucking Along* Facebook account.



Figure 6. Screenshot. *Trucking Along* Twitter account.



Figure 7. Screenshot. *Trucking Along* Instagram account.

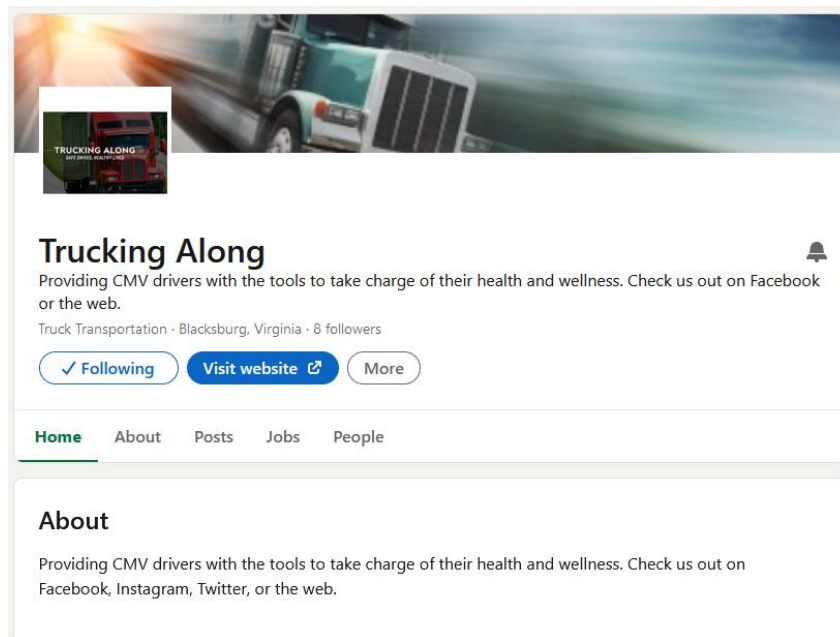


Figure 8. Screenshot. *Trucking Along* LinkedIn account.

CHAPTER 4. PROGRAM UTILIZATION AND REACH

To achieve the primary objectives of the Driving Healthy and Women in Trucking projects, the project websites and social media accounts deliver regularly scheduled health content through multiple channels and media formats to maximize reach and exposure to end users. The program website provides information and resources on a wide breadth of topics related to CMV driver health and wellness. Social media resources, including Facebook and Twitter, encourage engagement and two-way communication opportunities between account holders and followers, while LinkedIn is a way to view and share more professional and career-driven content. Instagram engages the more visual/creative user through its sharing of photo- and video-centric content.

A summary of key analytics for the program websites and associated social media platforms is provided below. The Driving Healthy Project phase (i.e., Phase I) occurred between May 1, 2021, and April 30, 2022. The updated *Driving Healthy* website launched in December 2021, with Facebook and Twitter social media accounts updating and rebranding soon thereafter. The *Driving Healthy* Instagram account was created and launched in March 2022. The *Trucking Along* phase (i.e., Phase II) covers May 1, 2022, through April 30, 2023. In addition to updating, expanding, and rebranding the *Driving Healthy* website and social media accounts (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn) to the current *Trucking Along: Safe Drives, Healthy Lives* platform in January 2023, the team also created a LinkedIn profile in May 2022 to share information on a more professional platform to maximize reach. During the Phase II effort, the team began utilizing Hootsuite to help with efficiency and consistency of sharing information across multiple social media accounts. Therefore, metrics may be presented differently between phases for some analyses.

PHASE I ANALYTICS: MAY 2021–APRIL 2022

Website Analytics

The following is a summary of www.drivinghealthy.org website activity from May 1, 2021, through April 30, 2022, obtained through the Google Analytics web service. Figure 9 illustrates the total number of website visitors, both users and page views, during the Phase I activity period. Users and page views peaked in June 2021, followed by a decline between June and December 2021 when the original *Driving Healthy* website was stagnant and had not yet been updated. Page views increased following the December 2021 launch of the new *Driving Healthy* website, while users remained somewhat consistent.

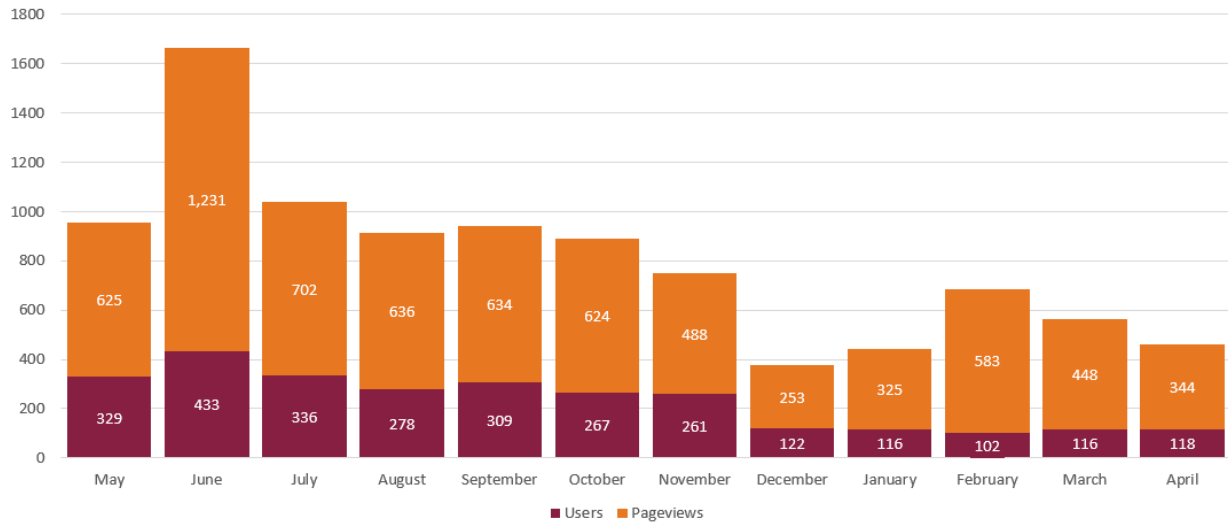


Figure 9. Chart. Total website visitors (users and pageviews) from May 1, 2021–April 30, 2022 (Phase I).

Ten countries worldwide were represented among *Driving Healthy* users ($n = 2,632$), with the United States representing 73.7% of all users, followed by Canada, representing 5.3% of users (Table 1). Table 2 illustrates the U.S. cities most represented by *Driving Healthy* users; these include Los Angeles, California (16.5%), Columbus, Ohio (4.6%), and Ashburn, Virginia (3.9%).

Table 1. Countries represented by Driving Healthy users during Phase I.

Country	Users
United States	1,941
Canada	139
India	113
China	110
Philippines	103
Indonesia	97
United Kingdom	56
Japan	26
Australia	25
Hong Kong	22

Table 2. U.S. cities represented by Driving Healthy users during Phase I.

Cities	Users
Los Angeles, CA	321
Columbus, OH	89
Ashburn, VA	76
Blacksburg, VA	39
Houston, TX	34
New York, NY	33
Dallas, TX	32
Atlanta, GA	30
Washington, D.C.	30
Chicago, IL	28

Most *Driving Healthy* website users (41%) found the site through a search engine, while 39% found the site on their own by typing in a URL (Figure 10). Referrals, or users who came to the *Driving Healthy* website by clicking a link from another website, represent 17% of all user acquisitions. Only 3% of users found the site from a social media link.

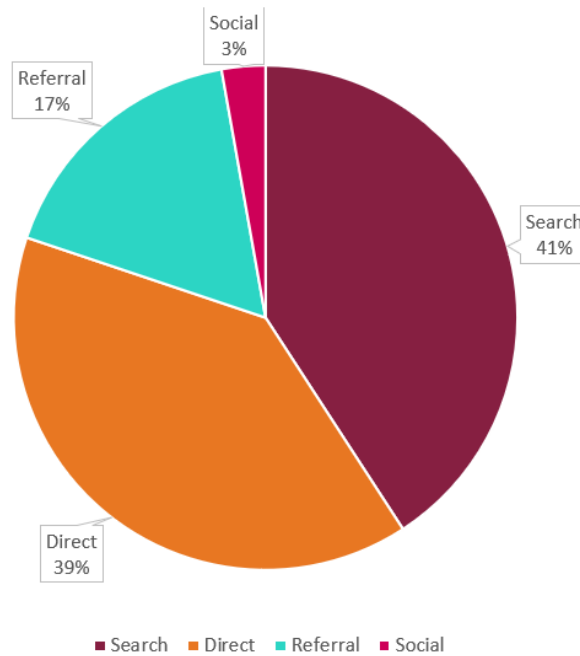


Figure 10. Chart. *Driving Healthy* website user acquisition.

The most popular *Driving Healthy* website pages and landing pages are presented in Table 3 and Table 4, respectively. These tables reflect website activity after the *Driving Healthy* website was updated and went live on March 9, 2022, through the end of the project period on April 30, 2022

(i.e., approximately 6 weeks of activity). Not surprisingly, the *Driving Healthy* homepage was visited the most (31.3% of page views) and was the most frequent landing page (69.4% of sessions). Following the homepage, the Eating Healthy and Health and Well-being pages were visited most frequently, at 8.9% and 6.2% of sessions, respectively (Table 3).

Table 3. Most popular *Driving Healthy* website pages (March 9, 2022–April 30, 2022).

Page Title	Page Path	Pageviews	Percentage of Total
Home	/index.html	207	31.27%
Eating Healthy	/eating-healthy/index.html	59	8.91%
Health & Well-being	/health/index.html	41	6.19%
About	/about.html	38	5.74%
Trucking Resources	/trucking-resources/index.html	34	5.14%
Exercise	/exercise/index.html	31	4.68%
Tips	/tips/index.html	30	4.53%
Eating Healthy on the Road	/eating-healthy/road.html	29	4.38%
Sleep	/sleep/index.html	25	3.78%
Exercise on the Road	/exercise/road.html	18	2.72%

Table 4. Top *Driving Healthy* website landing pages (March 9, 2022–April 30, 2022).

Page Title	Page Path	Sessions	Percentage of Total
Home	/index.html	172	69.35%
Contact	/contact.html	5	2.02%
Mental Health	/health/mental.html	5	2.02%
Eating Healthy	/eating-healthy/index.html	4	1.61%
News	/trucking-resources/news.html	4	1.61%
About	/about.html	3	1.21%
Eating Healthy on the Road	/eating-healthy/road.html	3	1.21%
Exercise on the Road	/exercise/road.html	3	1.21%
Health Resources	/health/resources.html	3	1.21%
Privacy Policy	/privacy.html	3	1.21%

Among all users visiting the *Driving Healthy* website, the average session duration was 1 minute and 6 seconds, with a session being defined as a group of user interactions with the website that take place within a short period of time. The percentage of people who left the website after viewing one page (the bounce rate) was 65%. The average of pages visited per session was 1.9, and the average number of sessions per user was 1.14.

Facebook Analytics

The following is a summary of the *Driving Healthy* Facebook Page activity from May 1, 2021, through April 30, 2022 (www.facebook.com/drivinghealthy). Tracking the number of individuals who “like” the Facebook page is a good measure of participation and the effectiveness of the page. The “like” feature allows Facebook users to show their support for specific posts, statuses, pictures, and comments. The total number of unique users who liked the *Driving Healthy* Facebook page during the Phase I period was 822. Men comprised 65.7% of unique users who liked the page, while women comprised 32.1%, and 2.2% were unknown. Men ages 45–54 years accounted for the most Facebook page likes among all gender and age groups (18.5%). A summary of the sex and ages of users who liked the *Driving Healthy* Facebook page is presented in Figure 11. Facebook users who liked the page were predominately from the United States (84.5%) followed by Canada (3.8%) and Mexico (1.8%). English was the primary language for 89.8% of users who liked the *Driving Healthy* Facebook page.

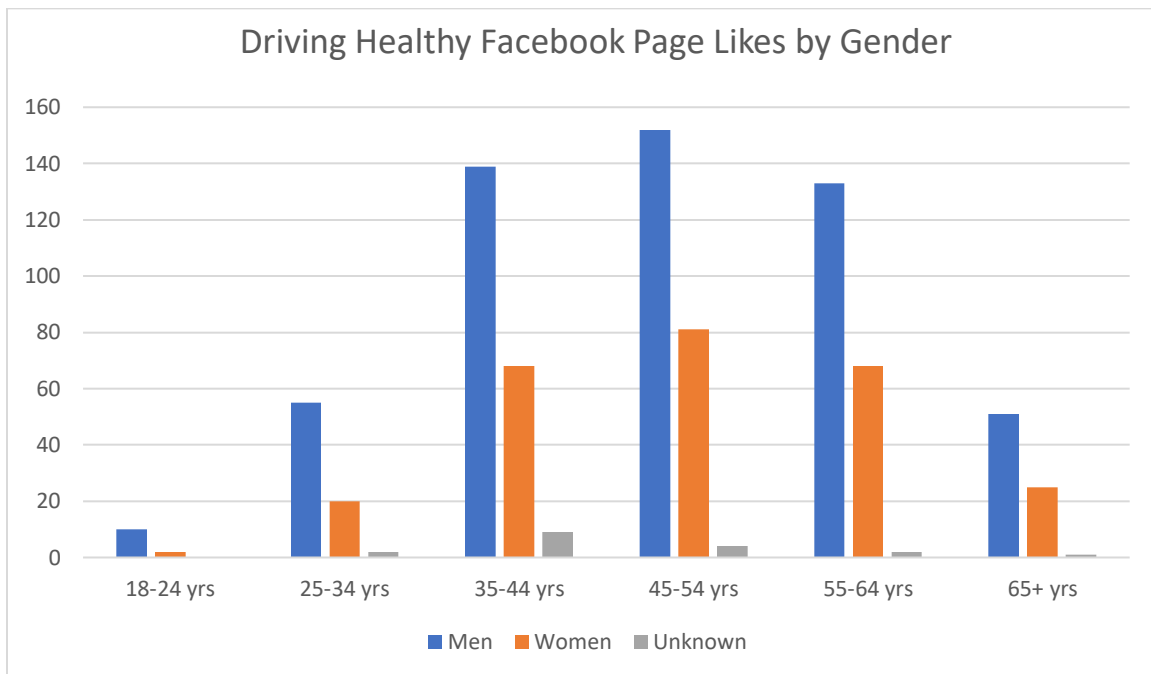


Figure 11. Chart. Driving Healthy Facebook “likes” by gender during Phase I.

Engagement, reach, and impressions are additional metrics that give insight into user participation and the effectiveness of the page. Engagement includes any click or story created by unique users. Reach refers to the number of unique users who had any content (including posts, check-ins, ads, and social information from users) from the page or about the page enter their screen, while impressions includes the number of times content from the *Driving Healthy* Facebook page or about the page appeared on a person’s screen. Following the December 2021 launch of the new *Driving Healthy* website, the *Driving Healthy* Facebook page experienced a sharp increase in activity (Figure 12). March 2022 showed the greatest engagement, reach, and impressions, with *Driving Health* content engaging 34 unique users, reaching 837 unique users, and making 1,353 impressions during the month (Figure 12). The top Facebook post was on St. Patrick’s Day:

- *Happy St. Patrick’s Day! If you decide to have a drink, make sure to drink in moderation and have a designated driver*

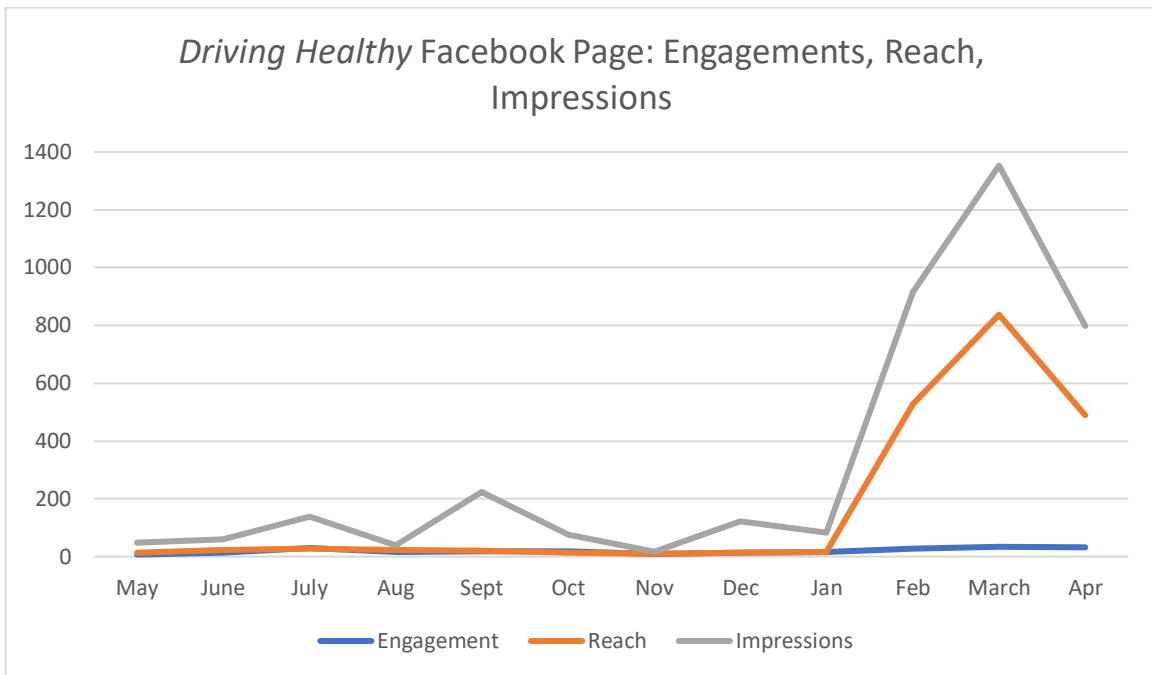


Figure 12. Chart. Engagements, reach, and impressions of the *Driving Healthy* Facebook page during Phase I.

Twitter Analytics

The *Driving Healthy* Twitter account was created after the *Driving Healthy* website and Facebook page went live and thus was only active for 3 months during the Phase I study period (February to April 2022). *Driving Healthy* tweeted for the first time on February 2, 2022, generating 81 impressions with the first post. Impressions, a count of the times the Tweet was seen, is an indicator of profile presence. Engagements include any way a user interacts with a Tweet, including retweets, clicks, and likes. Finally, likes are a simple form of engaging and indicating support on Twitter. Impressions, engagements, and likes during the Phase I activity period are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5. Impressions, engagements, and likes of the *Driving Healthy* Twitter account during Phase I.

2022	Impressions	Engagements	Likes
February	1408	27	4
March	1636	25	5
April	1417	30	8

At end of Phase I (April 30, 2022), there were 91 posts to the *Driving Healthy* Twitter account, five of which were retweeted (i.e., shared) by other Twitter users. The top three Twitter posts, in terms of those with the most engagement, were:

- *Happy St. Patrick's Day! If you decide to have a drink, make sure to drink in moderation and have a designated driver! <https://t.co/kYnKBAsmgQ> (6 engagements)*
- *In the winter, drive slower than you usually do, keep a safe following distance, and watch out for black ice! <https://t.co/ulXJtXn04G> (6 engagements)*
- *Happy Valentine's Day! Give your loved ones the best gift by buckling up and staying safe! <https://t.co/hHIudk11q>; (4 engagements)*

Instagram Analytics

The *Driving Healthy* Instagram account shared its first post on March 13, 2022. At the end of the Phase I period, the *Driving Healthy* Instagram account had 18 followers.

PHASE II ANALYTICS: MAY 2022–APRIL 2023

Website Analytics

The following is a summary of *Driving Healthy* (www.drivinghealthy.org) and *Trucking Along* (www.truckingalong.org) website activity from May 1, 2022, through April 30, 2023, obtained through the Google Analytics web service. It is important to note that in January 2023, the website URL changed from drivinghealthy.org to truckingalong.org. Any attempts to visit www.drivinghealthy.org after January 2023 were automatically redirected to the *Trucking Along* website.

Figure 13 illustrates the total number of website visitors, both users and page views, during the Phase II activity period. Users and page views fluctuated over the 12-month activity period, with the highest peak in activity occurring in April 2023. This peak aligns with when several improvements were made to the website, including updated logos and branding, and new content being posted. This peak also aligns with targeted efforts to increase social media engagement, which may have had trickle-down results benefiting the website.

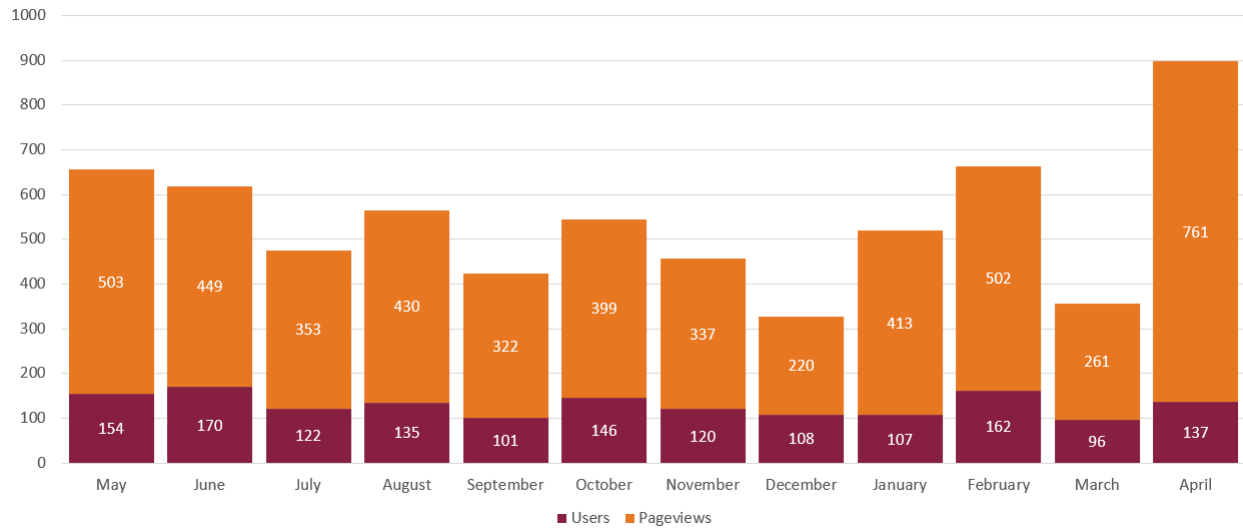


Figure 13. Chart. Total website visitors (users and pageviews) from May 1, 2022 through April 30, 2023 (Phase II).

Ten countries worldwide were represented among *Driving Healthy* and *Trucking Along* website users ($n = 1,429$), with the United States representing 86.9% of all users, followed by China, representing 4.1% of users (Table 6). The U.S. cities most represented by *Driving Healthy* and *Trucking Along* users, shown in Table 7, included Ashburn, Virginia (13.7%) and Columbus, Ohio (9.8%).

Table 6. *Driving Healthy* and *Trucking Along* website users by country during Phase II.

Country	Users
United States	1,242
China	59
Philippines	38
Netherlands	23
Canada	17
India	16
United Kingdom	11
France	8
South Africa	8
Japan	7

Table 7. *Driving Healthy* and *Trucking Along* website users by U.S. city during Phase II.

Cities	Users
(not set)	351
Ashburn	170
Columbus	122
Blacksburg	64
New York	26
San Antonio	18
Des Moines	15
Houston	14
Chicago	13
Christiansburg	11

Most *Driving Healthy* and *Trucking Along* website users (69%) found the site on their own, by typing in a URL, while 19% found the site through a search engine (Figure 14). Referrals, or users who came to the website by clicking a link from another website, represented 9% of all user acquisitions, and only 3% of users found the site from a social media link.

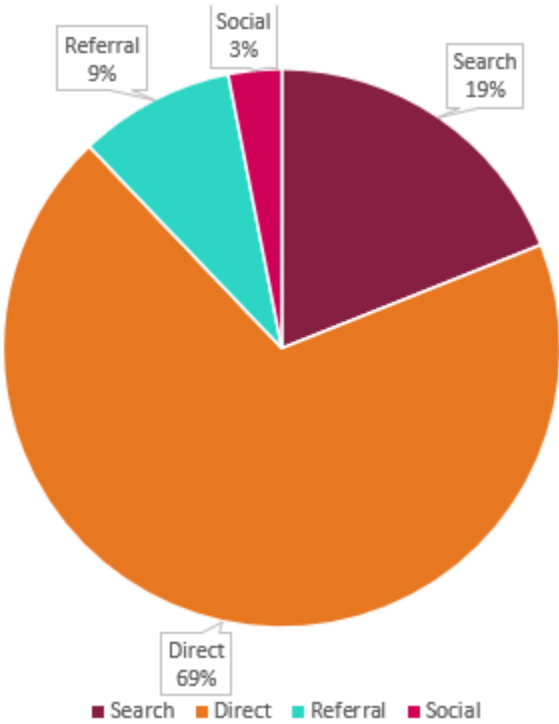


Figure 14. Chart. *Driving Healthy* and *Trucking Along* website user acquisition.

The most popular *Driving Healthy* and *Trucking Along* website pages and landing pages are presented in Tables 8 and 9, respectively. Not surprisingly, the homepage was visited the most (34.1% of sessions). Following the homepage, the Eating Healthy and Health and Well-being pages were visited most frequently, at 6.8% and 6.1% of sessions, respectively (Table 8). Despite not being published on the website until April, visits to the Women in Trucking Interviews landing page were popular, accounting for 2.8% of total page visits (Table 9).

Table 8. Most popular *Driving Healthy/Trucking Along* website pages during Phase II.

Page Title	Page Path	Sessions	Percentage of Total
Home	/index.html	1,180	34.14%
Eating Healthy	/eating-healthy/index.html	236	6.82%
Health & Well-being	/health/index.html	210	6.07%
About	/about.html	202	5.84%
Trucking Resources	/trucking-resources/index.html	175	5.06%
Exercise	/exercise/index.html	167	4.83%
Tips	/tips/index.html	127	3.67%
Sleep	/sleep/index.html	122	3.53%
Eating Healthy on the Road	/eating-healthy/road.html	99	2.86%
Inclusion	/inclusion/index.html	85	2.46%

Table 9. Top *Driving Healthy/Trucking Along* website landing pages during Phase II.

Page Title	Page Path	Page Visits	Percentage of Total
Home	/index.html	974	85.51%
About	/about.html	37	3.25%
Women in Trucking Interviews	/inclusion/women.html	32	2.81%
Trucking Resources	/trucking-resources/index.html	14	1.23%
Eating Healthy	/eating-healthy/index.html	13	1.14%
Exercise	/exercise/index.html	12	1.05%
Health & Well-being	/health/index.html	12	1.05%
Mental Health	/health/mental.html	11	0.97%
Medical Resources	/health/resources.html	11	0.97%
Sleep	/sleep/index.html	8	0.70%

An overview of keywords used in navigating to the *Driving Healthy* and *Trucking Along* websites is presented in Table 10. Metrics, including clicks, impressions, and click through ratio, provide insight into performance. Clicks refers to how often a user clicked a link from Google to the *Driving Healthy* website. Impressions is how often a user saw a link to the *Driving Healthy* website on Google. Click through rate refers to the ratio of clicks to impressions. In terms of

clicks, truck driver health and wellness was the most popular search query, accounting for 32 clicks and 259 impressions (Table 10).

Table 10. Top search queries used to find and visit *Driving Healthy/Trucking Along* websites during Phase II.

Query	Clicks	Impressions	Click through Ratio
truck driver health and wellness	32	259	12.36%
healthy driving	7	146	4.79%
driving health	5	118	4.24%
driver health	3	411	0.73%
driver wellness	3	203	1.48%
driver health and fitness	3	195	1.54%
driving healthing	1	68	1.47%
trucking wellness	1	10	10%
truck driver wellness	1	4	25%
trucking podcasts	0	949	0%

Facebook Analytics

Due to a change in the reporting and analytics system, some variables that were reported for Phase I were not available for Phase II. Similarly, some variables reported for Phase II were not available or reported for the Phase I period.

As of the end of the Phase II period (April 30, 2023), the *Trucking Along* Facebook page had 1,076 followers. This represents an increase of 258 users since April 2022. The number of people who liked the *Trucking Along* Facebook page, or fans, was 963. Figure 15 displays the monthly growth of the *Trucking Along* fan base over the Phase II reporting period. Worth noting is the increase in fans in January 2023, which aligns with the *Trucking Along* rebranding and content update.

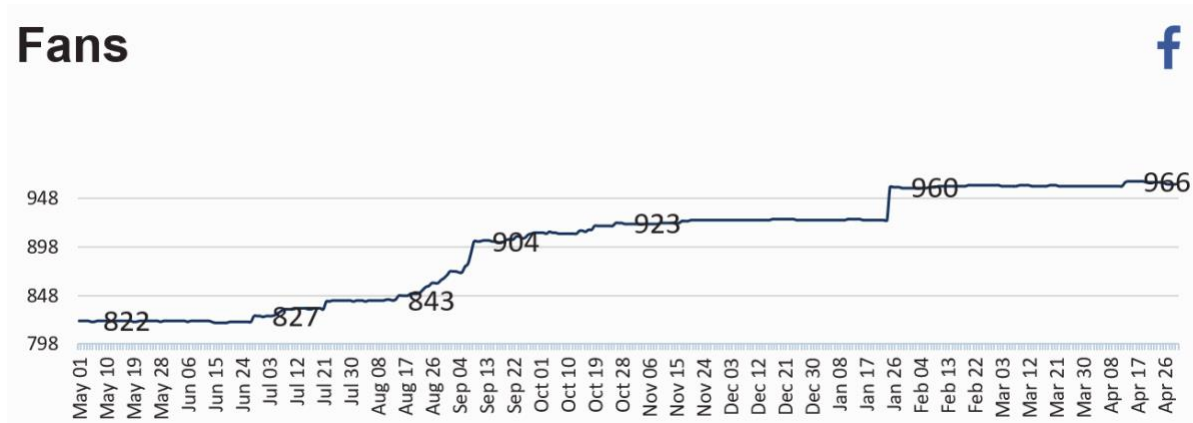


Figure 15. Chart. *Driving Healthy/Trucking Along* Facebook fan growth during Phase II.

During the Phase II period, 362 Facebook posts were shared, resulting in 63 engagements (i.e., reactions, comments, and shares received from *Trucking Along* posts). The *Trucking Along* Facebook page received 34 shares, 27 reactions, and 2 comments during the Phase II period. The Facebook page received 78 content clicks and 17 post clicks during the Phase II period.

Figure 16 displays the *Trucking Along* Facebook post impressions over the Phase II period. Impressions peaked on September 21, 2022 (540 impressions), October 1, 2022 (551 impressions), November 11, 2022 (483 impressions), and November 23, 2022 (488 impressions)

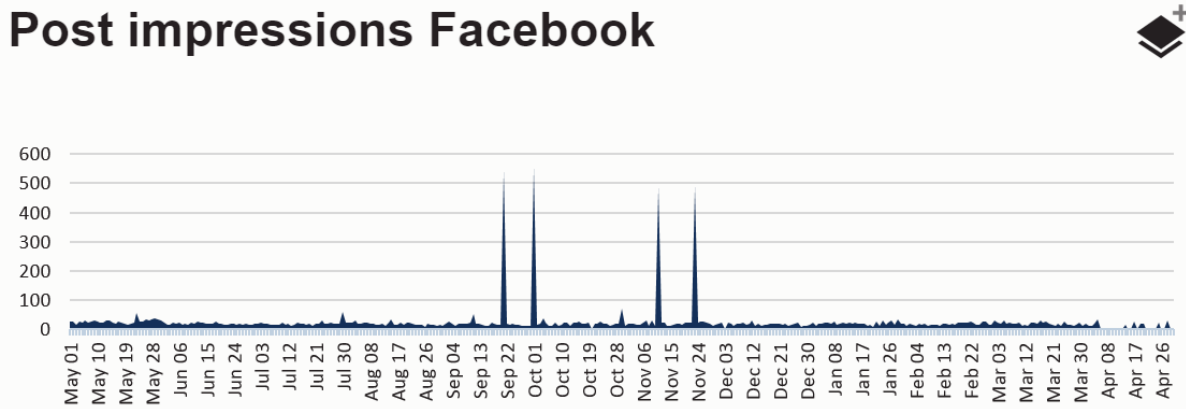


Figure 16. Chart. *Trucking Along* Facebook post impressions: May 2022–April 2023.

Twitter Analytics

As of the end of the Phase II period (April 30, 2023), the *Trucking Along* Twitter account had 3,062 followers. Figure 17 displays the monthly growth of *Trucking Along* followers during the Phase II reporting period.

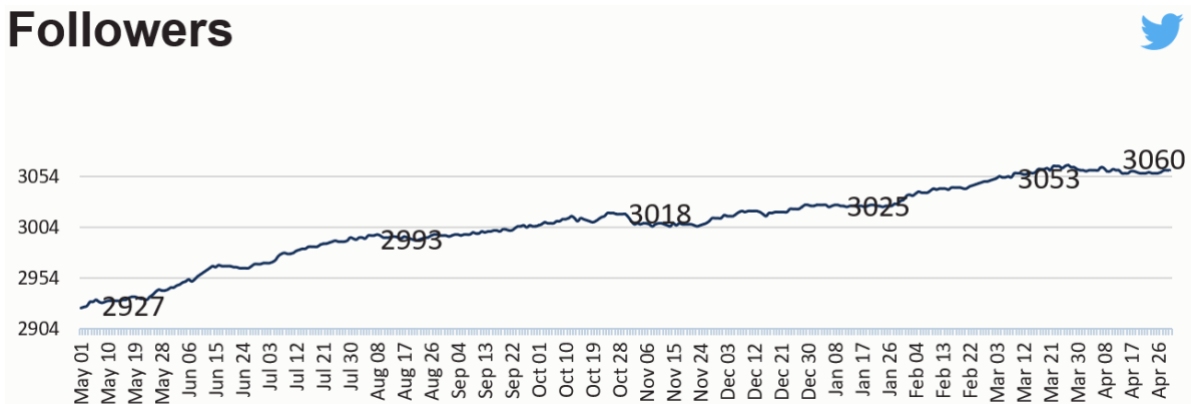


Figure 17. Chart. *Trucking Along* Twitter follower growth: May 2022–April 2023.

During the Phase II period, 343 tweets were shared, resulting in 455 engagements (i.e., retweets, replies, quotes, and likes). The *Trucking Along* Twitter account generated 220 retweets, 214 likes, 17 quote tweets, and 4 replies during the Phase II period.

Figure 18 displays the *Trucking Along* Twitter post impressions over the Phase II period. Post impressions peaked on May 23, 2022 (277 impressions), July 5, 2022 (498 impressions), August 16, 2022 (403 impressions), November 15, 2022 (262 impressions), and January 23, 2023 (414 impressions). The top three Twitter posts, in terms of those with the most engagement, were:

- *Did you know that if you buckle up, your chances of dying in an accident are 25 times lower? Buckle up and stay safe! #safety #health #driver #travel* (498 impressions)
- *January is Teen Drivers Awareness Month. Understanding and teaching the additional risks that young drivers carry when on the road. The link below explains what puts teenagers and their passengers at risk. #health #safety #driving #travel #teen* (414 impressions)
- *Stiff after driving all day? Here are 8 essential stretches to help you loosen up after driving all day. #health #stretch #driver #travel #work* (403 impressions)

Post impressions Twitter

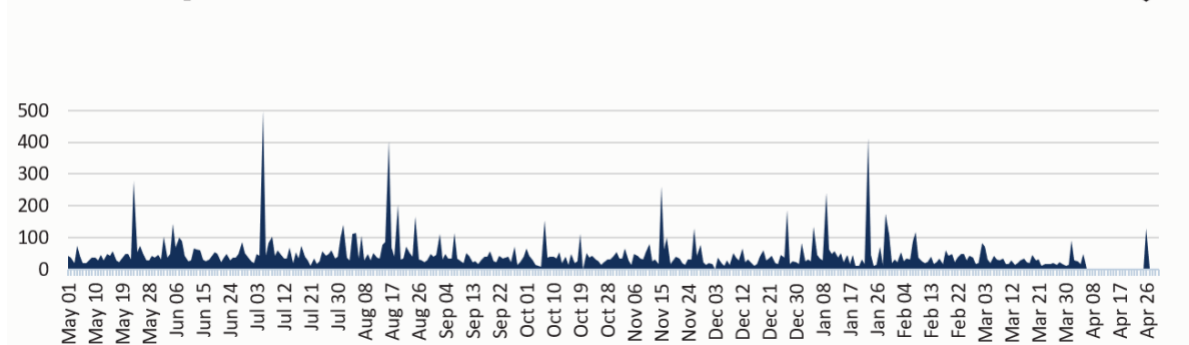


Figure 18. Chart. *Trucking Along* Twitter post impressions during Phase II.

Instagram Analytics

At the end of the Phase II period (April 30, 2023), the *Trucking Along* Instagram account had 59 followers. Figure 19 displays the monthly growth of *Trucking Along* Instagram followers during the Phase II reporting period.

Followers

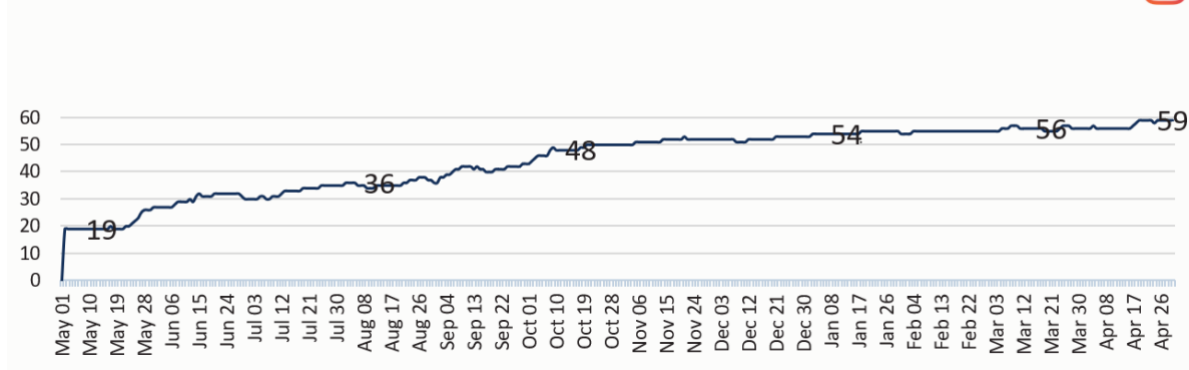


Figure 19. Chart. *Trucking Along* Instagram follower growth during Phase II.

During the Phase II period, 344 Instagram posts were published; these received 928 engagements (i.e., likes, comments, and saves). The *Trucking Along* Instagram account generated 919 photo engagements, 6 Carousel album engagements, and 3 Reel engagements.

Figure 20 displays the *Trucking Along* Instagram post impressions over the Phase II period. Spikes in impressions were observed on November 14, 2022 (30 impressions), December 29, 2022 (28 impressions), and March 8, 2023 (30 impressions).

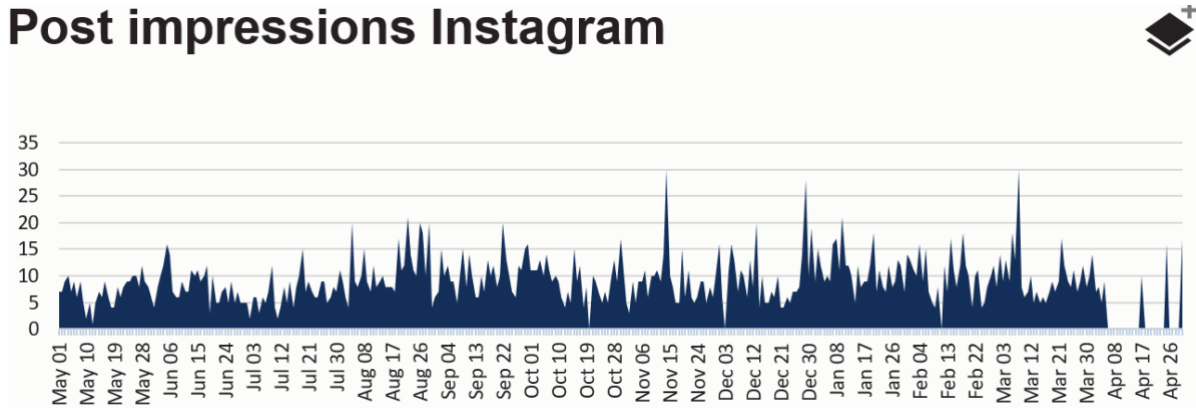


Figure 20. Chart. *Trucking Along* Instagram post impressions: May 2022–April 2023.

LinkedIn Analytics

The *Trucking Along* LinkedIn account was created in May 2022. As of the end of the Phase II period (April 30, 2023), the *Trucking Along* LinkedIn account had seven followers. Figure 21 displays the monthly growth of *Trucking Along* LinkedIn followers during the Phase II reporting period.

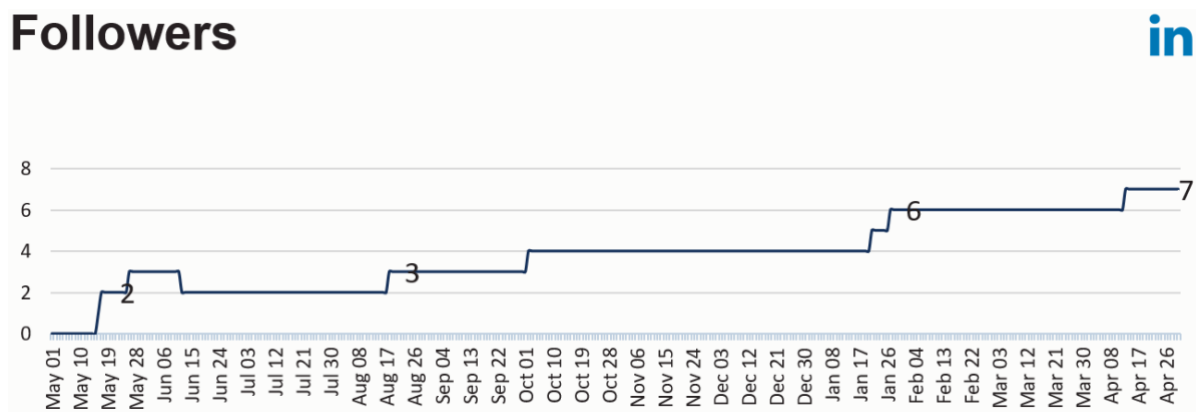


Figure 21. Chart. *Trucking Along* LinkedIn follower growth: May 2022–April 2023.

During the Phase II period, 327 LinkedIn posts were published; these received 15 engagements (i.e., likes, comments, and shares). The *Trucking Along* LinkedIn account generated 22 post clicks, 14 Reaction engagements and 1 comment during the Phase II reporting period.

Figure 22 displays the *Trucking Along* LinkedIn post impressions over the Phase II period. A peak of 182 impressions was observed on August 18, 2022.

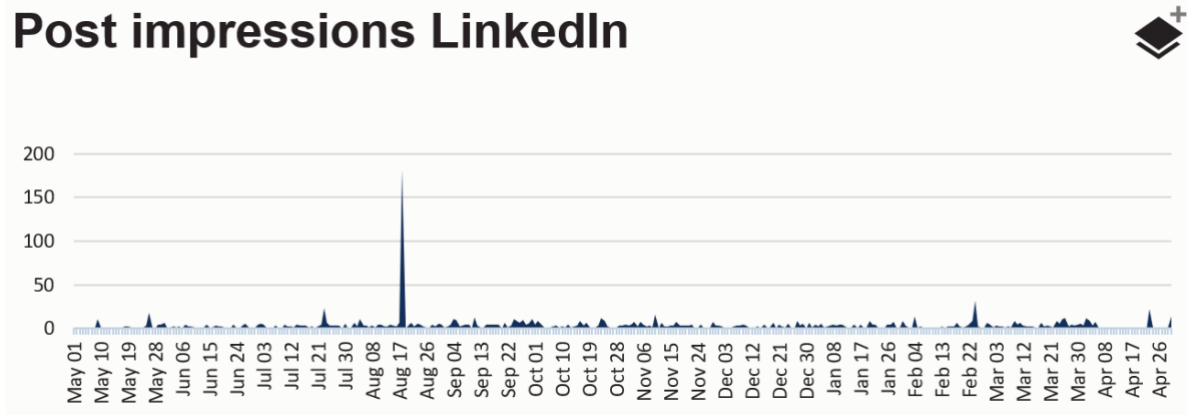


Figure 22. Chart. *Trucking Along* LinkedIn post impressions during Phase II.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION

CMV drivers face many challenges to maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Long and/or irregular work hours that may disrupt sleep patterns, limited access to healthy food options, and working in a sedentary and isolated environment with daily stressors are common, often accepted, components of truck drivers' work environments. Add to this the year-over-year increase in freight haul tonnage, and it is easy to see why many drivers do not seek regular medical attention and are often one of the poorest working populations in terms of overall health (CDC, 2018). This project was designed to offer knowledge and support to drivers to encourage CMV drivers to lead healthier, happier, well-balanced lives.

The overall objective of this two-phase, National Surface Transportation Safety Center for Excellence-funded project was to update, modernize, and rebrand the outdated *Driving Healthy* website to provide timely and relevant information to a diverse population of drivers and trucking end users. In Phase I, the research team updated the content, look, and navigation of the *Driving Healthy* website to make it timely and relevant for drivers, as well as more visually appealing and user friendly. Phase I involved removing outdated content and non-working links to give the team a fresh canvas to build and expand on new and relevant content. Phase I also involved broadening the scope of both content and targeted end users to share information and resources for not only drivers but also the important work (i.e., managers, dispatchers) and social networks (i.e., friends, family, co-workers) of drivers who are integral in supporting them daily. Phase II further expanded the content, scope, breadth, and reach of the *Driving Healthy* website and social media accounts by including more inclusive lifestyle and career topics for drivers, particularly demographics often overlooked in the trucking industry, and rebranding the website and social media accounts to reflect a more comprehensive and inclusive Driving Healthy community.

The new website, *Trucking Along: Safe Drives, Healthy Lives*, provides new, seasoned, and prospective truck drivers a trustworthy and non-biased resource to inform and provide discussion regarding many aspects of the industry that influence work and non-work activities. The website has expanded content that includes current "hot topics" of relevance, such as human trafficking, mental health, and DEI, notably adding elements specifically targeting women in trucking. By disseminating information on the *Trucking Along* website, in conjunction with the *Trucking Along* social media sites that cater to different target users (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter), this information campaign will reach a larger and more diverse audience. Themed and timely posts on the *Trucking Along* social media platforms engage and inform users with snapshots of information linked to the *Trucking Along* website to provide more detailed content and resources. In addition to a new name and URL, the *Trucking Along* rebranding was accompanied by new website graphics and creative logos to clearly communicate the messaging and intent of the new *Trucking Along* website and social media platforms: the intersection of physical and mental health, overall well-being, and equity and inclusion results in safe drives and healthy lives for truck drivers.

Overall website and social media analytics were encouraging, demonstrating slow, yet steady, user growth in *Driving Healthy/Trucking Along* website and social media accounts over this two-phase, 2-year project. However, a more impactful and applicable study result can be found in anecdotal interactions, conversations, and interviews with drivers and others who have used the

website and followed the social media accounts, which indicate that drivers appreciate and are engaged with the health aspect of the website. Drivers who participated in the *Trucking Along* interviews said they appreciated that the website was hosted by a neutral party that was providing statistically backed information rather than a company trying to sell them something. They liked the easy-to-navigate design and said that they could find the information they were looking for very quickly. One driver, Cassandra, loved the health tips the site provided and talked about the need for drivers to have a health plan. When asked what she wishes she had known at the beginning of her career, she said:

Health, Health, Health. That includes proper hydration, proper diet, proper sleep. Whatever your health is today. Picture yourself 10 years from today. Are you gonna be as healthy? So a lot of those convenience things that they sell, making other choices, like maybe going to Walmart and getting something from the salad premade as opposed to a premade sandwich. Drinking more water than other things such as coffee, Mountain Dew, Stay Awake, Octane, whatever that is. So just making sure that every time you go to get your DOT physical, you don't have to look to see what they are writing. That is the most important thing.

In addition to the *Trucking Along* interviews, conversations with female drivers during the Accelerate! Conference revealed that they appreciated the focus on safety and women in a very male-driven industry. Many women in the trucking industry, drivers included, said they have felt like they had to fight to be respected in their career, and websites like this one serve to highlight that not only can women do the job, but that they are doing the job, safely and successfully.

NEXT STEPS

The *Trucking Along: Safe Drives Healthy Lives* final deliverables included a more comprehensive, cohesive, visually appealing website that is easy to navigate and offers a wide variety of information and well vetted resources for drivers at all stages of their careers. *Trucking Along* Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn accounts support the parent website by disseminating targeted information from social media platforms among a variety of users and followers to further broaden the outreach initiative. End-user responses to the new site and social media activities have been positive, with increases in website users and pageviews, as well as social media engagements, that trend with website and social media launches and activities to drive engagements.

With continued support and funding, the team can continue to update and add to existing *Trucking Along* content, interview more women drivers and trucking professionals, and further expand the platform to offer more resources for the trucking community. With more interviews, the team would create a *Trucking Along* YouTube channel to provide convenient access to interview videos and other video content as it is developed. The team would also like to continue established partnerships and forge new partnerships with trucking podcasters, truck safety and wellness groups, driver advocacy groups, and groups that are doing DEI research and helping marginalized groups get a foothold into the trucking industry.

One aspect of the *Trucking Along* rebrand and launch of additional social media pages that fell short of expectations and seemed lacking was the user following on LinkedIn. This could be

because drivers do not use the LinkedIn platform to network as much as other trucking professionals (dispatch, managers, etc.) might. LinkedIn is a more career-driven and professional social media platform compared to other social media sites that are more social-centric. This may explain the lack of interest and engagement with the *Trucking Along* LinkedIn account. Drivers do not use the LinkedIn platform to network as much as other trucking professionals (dispatch, managers, etc.) might. Further research with continued funding to support and expand *Trucking Along* would investigate why the LinkedIn platform received so little engagement and would explore what steps or pivots may address this shortcoming.

Looking ahead, the team aims to expand the scope of the website to address and highlight important issues that affect the trucking industry. While the current scope focuses on commercial driver health and safety, *Trucking Along* could serve as a platform to bring attention to issues faced by the industry and the country as a whole. Topics might include a comprehensive guide for drivers on steps to take when facing a hazmat leak, changes to Code of Federal Regulation CDL requirements, electronic logging device training changes, or many other important topics that impact both driver and public health and safety.

Further, as the issue of human trafficking gains worldwide attention, the *Trucking Along* platform could expand to provide more resources, tips, and safeguards to address this growing issue. The website could provide resources, links, and contacts for the appropriate person to contact if a driver or manager sees something suspicious, or a forum where drivers and others could anonymously report people who look vulnerable or individuals who seem suspicious. The website and social media accounts could highlight missing persons who are suspected victims of trafficking and provide information on disappearances and advice for website visitors on who to contact if they see one of these individuals while over the road.

APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW AND SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR BOTH DRIVERS AND MANAGERS

Questions to Choose from:

1. Please tell us your background. How long have you been in trucking?
2. What initially drew you to trucking as a career?
3. Have you done any other jobs in the trucking industry other than driving?
4. What is your favorite thing about your job?
5. What is your biggest challenge in your job/career?
6. What 3 things would you tell a woman who is just getting started in trucking?
7. What are some things you wish you had known at the beginning of your career?
8. What tips do you have for balancing career and family?
9. What tips do you have for work-life balance?
10. What expectations do you have for your carrier/fleet/business?
11. Can you talk about respect and tolerance both in the workplace and on the road?
12. What do you do to continue improving your skills or adding to your training?
13. How do you weather the ups and downs of the trucking industry?
14. How do you adapt to new technologies in the trucks?
15. What is your view on the future of the trucking industry?
16. Is there anything you would change about your career path or the training you received?

And here are the questions for Dispatchers/Managers/Etc.:

1. Please tell us your background. How long have you been working in the trucking industry?
2. What brought you to a career in the trucking industry?
3. Have you done any other jobs in the trucking industry, such as driving? What did you like/not like about those jobs?
4. What is your favorite thing about your job?
5. What is your biggest challenge in your job/career?
6. Do you have any advice for women who are just starting a career in trucking? What are 3 things would you tell them?
7. What are some things you wish you had known at the beginning of your career?
8. What tips do you have for balancing career and family? How does your fleet support this?
9. What expectations do you have for the carrier/fleet/business that you work for?
10. How does your carrier/fleet support women truck drivers and women in the trucking industry?
11. What is your fleet doing to increase diversity in your workforce?
12. Does your fleet/carrier have a DEI program?
13. What is your view on the future of the trucking industry?
14. Is there anything you would change about your career path or the training you received?

APPENDIX B. EMAIL AND PHONE SCRIPT

Hello,

This is the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute. We are conducting interviews with women in the trucking industry to get your thoughts and perspectives on the industry, as well as advice you would give to someone thinking of a career in trucking.

This interview would be 10-15 minutes and could either be by Zoom (Video call) or by phone.

For more information, please contact Kary Meissner at:

kmeissner@vtti.vt.edu or

540-660-9268

APPENDIX C. PRESS RELEASE FORM



Image and Interview Release

For valuable consideration received, the undersigned hereby irrevocably consents to and authorizes the use by Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University ("Virginia Tech") of the undersigned's name, image, voice and/or likeness as follows: Virginia Tech shall have the right to publish, re-publish, adapt, exhibit, perform, reproduce, edit, modify, make derivative works, distribute, display or otherwise use or re-use the undersigned's name, image, voice and/or likeness in connection with any product or service in all markets, media or technology now known or hereafter developed in perpetuity throughout the universe including advertising, promoting and merchandising the product or service. Virginia Tech may exercise any of these rights itself or through any successors, transferees, licensees, distributors or other parties, commercial or nonprofit.

Please indicate your agreement to the foregoing by signing below.

ACCEPTED AND AGREED:

By: _____

Print Name: _____

If the subject is under eighteen (18) years of age, subject's parent or guardian must sign below:

ACCEPTED AND AGREED:

Parent/Guardian: _____

Print Name: _____

On behalf of Minor Name (Print): _____

APPENDIX D. THE RECRUITMENT FLYER HANDED OUT AT THE ACCELERATE CONFERENCE IN NOVEMBER, 2022.


VT VIRGINIA TECH
TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE
VIRGINIA TECH.

DIVISION OF
FREIGHT, TRANSIT, & HEAVY VEHICLE SAFETY





DHVY

VIRGINIA TECH TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE

DrivingHealthy.org
DRIVING HEALTHY
Health & Wellness Information
for Commercial Truck Drivers

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**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO TAKE PART
IN THIS WEBSITE, PLEASE CONTACT:**
Kary Meissner, Senior Research Specialist
• kmeissner@vtti.vt.edu • 540-231-2040

 facebook.com/drivinghealthy
 instagram.com/drivinghealthyvtti/
 linkedin.com/company/driving-healthy
 twitter.com/drivinghealthy

APPENDIX E. INTERVIEW INSTRUCTIONS

This interview will be conducted by online meeting room with video and audio and may be edited for clarity or time. The interviewee will also be able to see the interview prior to it's going live on the website to approve the final cut of the interview.

We ask that the interviewee not use any profane language and not speak negatively about a specific company. They could say "My past experiences at certain fleets were...." instead of "Company XYZ did this wrong and were terrible." We also ask that they not use this interview as a platform to advertise for their current company. They may mention the name of the company they work for, but Virginia Tech and the internet content it provides must be neutral and not advertise or advocate for one company over another.

The interviewee may pick 5-7 of the questions below (not all may be asked given time constraints.) they can also email Kary (kmeissner@vtti.vt.edu) to request we cover a topic or question not listed below. We request that this interview remain about women in the field of trucking.

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