

How One Fleet Greatly Reduced Distracted Driving Crashes



LifeSaver

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CASE STUDY

Ivey Mechanical uses fleet safety software to reduce mobile related driving distraction

Now that your business has adopted a corporate cell phone policy, here are 5 takeaways to consider when choosing a software solution to enforce your policy and reduce distracted driving crashes.

About the fleet: Ivey Mechanical at a glance

With 12 offices located across the Southeast, Ivey Mechanical Company is a nationally recognized mechanical contractor specializing in projects that demand the most exacting mechanical expertise. Ivey has approximately 1,000 management, office and field professionals with experience in all types of mechanical construction. With these industry veterans, Ivey has successfully completed projects across the country. As a full-service mechanical contracting firm, Ivey is organized around its construction, fabrication, and service groups with an annual volume of nearly \$200 million.



At-fault collisions increasing due to mobile distraction

Ivey has historically emphasized the safety of its employees at the office, on the jobsite and in transit. With hundreds of fleet drivers in multiple states, Ivey has long been concerned with how to reduce mobile-related distracted driving. Luther Burrell, Vice President of Administration & IT, noted that, “Around three years ago, we recognized an increase in annual accidents across our business units in multiple states. We believed a large number of these at-fault accidents were due to distracted driving.”

Like many companies with employees constantly on the road, Ivey was caught between the competing interests of (1) the need to keep drivers connected via cell phone and (2) the larger need to keep them safe on the road. “At the end of the day, we couldn’t ignore the data, which

clearly showed we were at risk of having an increasing number of accidents. We had to do something to change this trend,” Burrell says. “Most drivers do a good job following our corporate cell phone policy, but the temptation to look at their phone when receiving a text or email, or to make a call using the phone key pad or contact list rather than Bluetooth was sometimes too much for some to resist.”

The search for a viable solution

Researching solutions

With safety being a primary concern, Ivey started looking at the problem of fleet distracted driving from the early days of smartphones. In fact, Ivey was a pioneer in adopting a distracted driving solution back in 2013. Unfortunately, this early adoption was met with certain points of friction from drivers. First, because GPS is used to detect driving speed, drivers were concerned about privacy and the fact that “Big Brother” was watching. Second, the iPhone solution they initially adopted reported many false positives, even when they were not driving.

Driver concerns over privacy calmed over time, but the inaccurate reporting of phone use while driving was unacceptable. Ivey began to look for alternative iPhone solutions, focusing on non-Bluetooth driving detection accuracy while continuing to stick with the original philosophy of a software-only solution to keep costs and administration low. After their extensive review of the landscape, Ivey concluded that LifeSaver’s fleet solution met their key criteria:

- Accurate driving detection
- No hardware to buy and distribute
- Easy to deploy and update the solution to drivers
- Proactive identification of habitual distracted drivers
- Exception-based reporting and management dashboards
- Effective in changing distracted driving behavior

LifeSaver’s fleet solution was designed by fleets for fleets. The product supports multiple roles within the company starting with the overall program administrator, or corporate safety director at the top, followed by multiple business unit safety managers — each responsible for their own set of drivers.

Deploying the solution

Deploying any new software to an organization with 12 offices and drivers in multiple states can be complex, time-consuming, and difficult to manage. But in this case, Ivey was pleasantly surprised to see the solution rolled out to the majority of its driver population (10 groups, 250 drivers) over a period of 30 days. Ivey’s internal rollout team consisted of the program

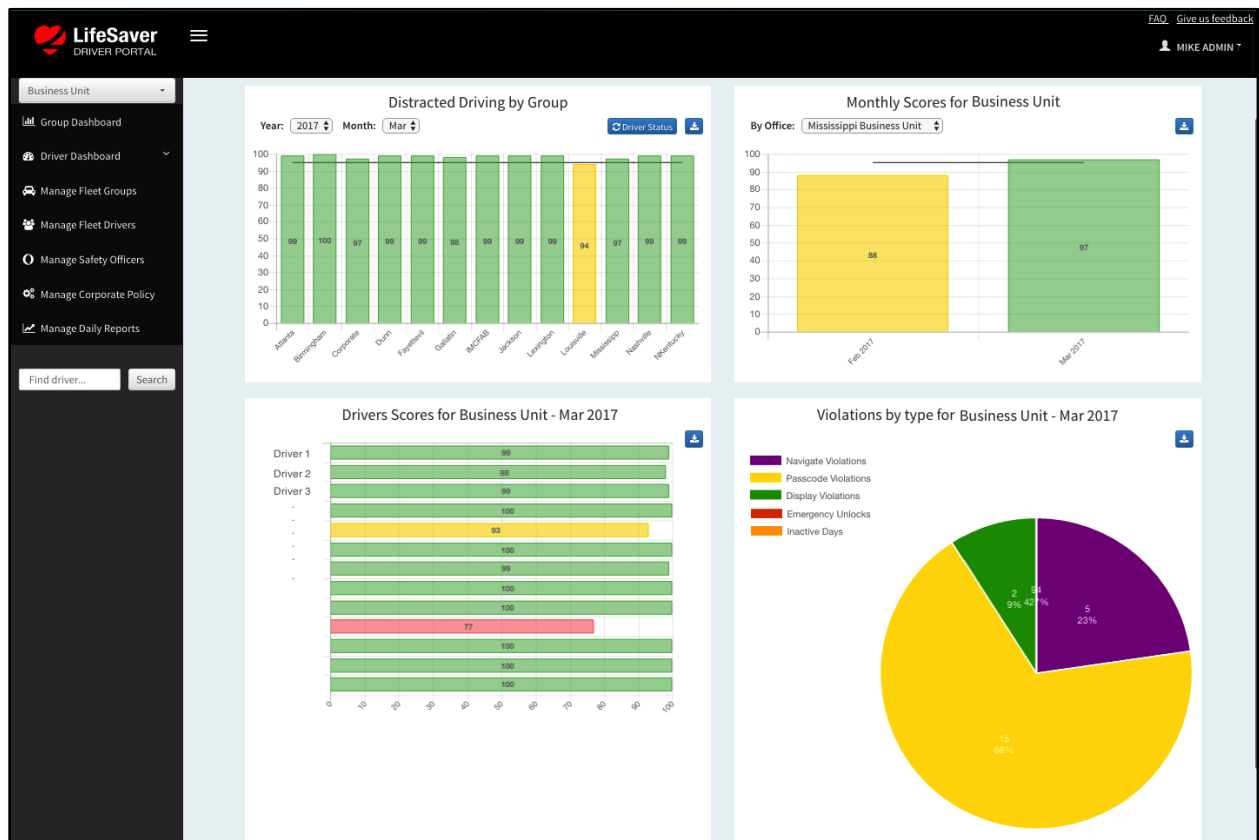
administrator (a combination of their IT Manager and Corporate Safety Director) plus the fleet business unit safety managers.

According to Donald Thurman, Ivey's IT Manager, the steps to deploy the solution were simple and straightforward:

1. Upload fleet driver info to the LifeSaver Driver Portal
2. Use the portal to send invites to drivers to install the LifeSaver app
3. When the drivers install the app, they are automatically linked to the Driver Portal

LifeSaver changes distracted driving behavior through deterrence (the smartphone app available on iPhone and Android discourages visual and manual interaction with the phone while driving) and driver accountability.

Thurman goes on to note that, "Once the drivers are linked to the Driver Portal, the solution allows us to view driver compliance through daily email reports and/or the Group Dashboard view in the portal. With very little training, LifeSaver allows us to decentralize the management of different groups in the company and focus by exception on the drivers with the biggest problem. Over time, we have seen a steady decrease in mobile distraction events, demonstrating the positive impact this solution is having on our driver safety."



LifeSaver Group Dashboard

“It was not hard to justify our need to invest in a distracted driving solution,” Burrell concluded. “Quite the opposite, we know the cost of doing nothing not only impacts our insurance costs, but also raises huge liability concerns for our drivers and our business. Moreover, we didn’t want any of our employees to be the cause of any personal pain or loss to themselves or to others in our communities. As we’ve seen all too many times, even a single distracted driving collision can have a devastating impact on many lives.”

Key takeaways and lessons learned

As an early adopter of fleet distracted driving solutions, Ivey has become a “best practices” business and a leader in this area. According to Burrell, here are some key takeaways and lessons learned to help other fleet companies embarking on this important journey.

1. **Understand your employee’s need for privacy** and the need for any solution to absolutely ‘stay out the way’ when not driving. You will never make all drivers happy, but our deployment of the LifeSaver solution is proof that you can change the culture and create a critical mass.
2. **Incorporate a solution across your entire business.** Everyone at Ivey, including most of the executive team, is using LifeSaver. The fleet drivers will be more willing to accept this solution if top management is using it as well.
3. **Pick a solution that can adjust to your most important needs.** For Ivey, we needed a solution that supports route navigation, Bluetooth calls, and hands-free voice activation.
4. **Be wary of any solution saying they can do it all.** Any app-based solution provider will be working within the constraints imposed by mobile operating systems. Choose a provider with strengths that match up to your most important criteria, and then work with them to improve the product as the operating systems evolve. For Ivey, we chose LifeSaver because it’s great at driving detection and deploys easily without hardware.
5. **Keep your eye on the prize.** At Ivey, our co-workers are our most important asset. While we strive for a measurable ROI showing an overall decrease in auto accidents, we realize being proactive to reduce distracted driving accidents is important to our co-workers, the general public and the customers we serve.

Looking ahead

For Ivey Mechanical, combating distracted driving is an ongoing concern just like other driver safety issues such as reckless driving, speeding or drowsy driving. The National Safety Council estimates that cell phone distracted driving is causing over 25% of all collisions on our roadways. By taking a proactive step with LifeSaver’s fleet solution, Ivey has been able to make substantial progress in raising awareness with its drivers, resulting in a change in their distracted driving behavior. Burrell concludes, “Our analysis of the data shows a significant reduction in at-fault auto accidents since we implemented a fleet distracted driving solution. We attribute this reduction to a combination of training, awareness, and most importantly, the right technology.”

About LifeSaver

Having protected millions of miles of driving and counting, LifeSaver is an app-based, data-driven software solution that provides families, fleets and auto insurers with the tools they need to reduce mobile phone-related distracted driving, an epidemic responsible for more than 25% of US auto collisions and annual US insurance claims more than US\$33B. LifeSaver is based in Silicon Valley, California, USA.

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