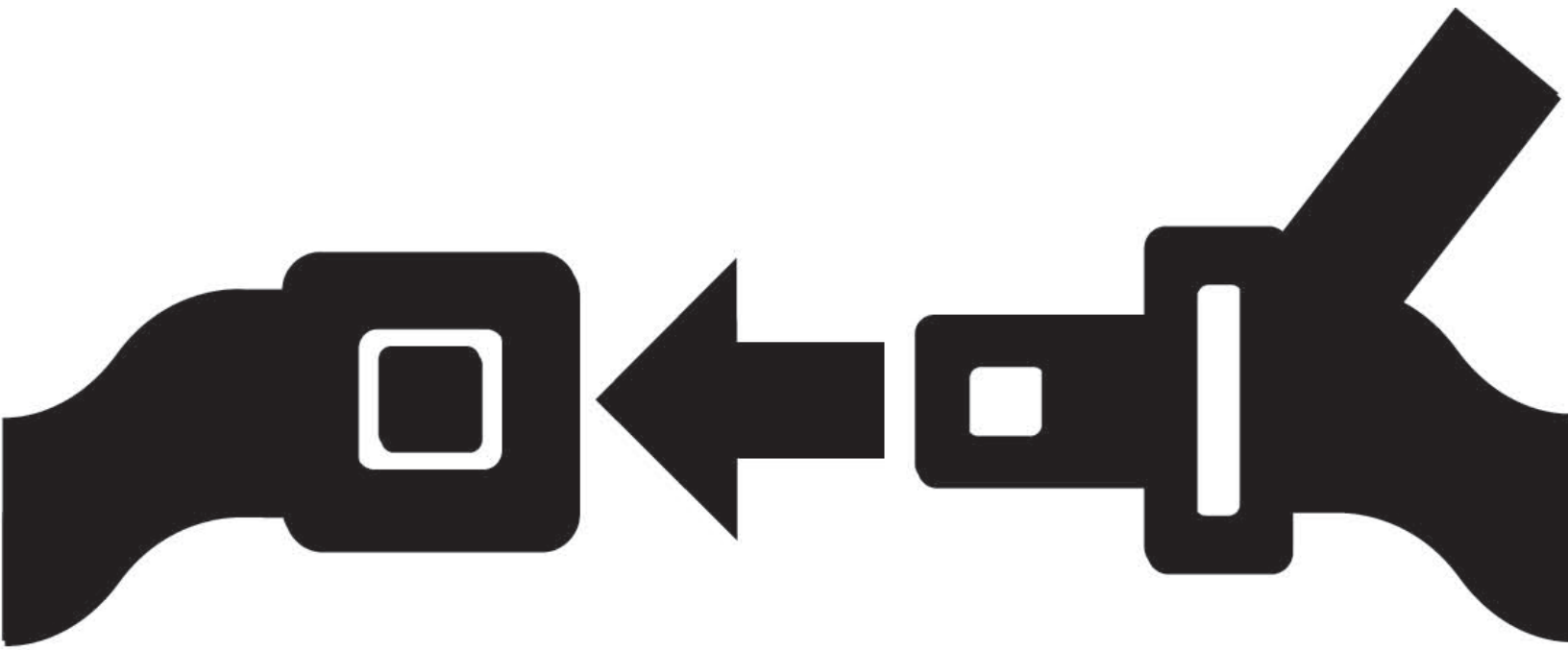


**BE READY.
BE BUCKLED.**



**A Guide to Running a
Successful Safety Belt Campaign for Truckers**

In recent years, one of the greatest achievements in American public safety has been the increased use of safety belts by motorists across the country. This accomplishment is due in part to finding the most effective way of motivating habitual non-seat belt users to buckle up. Through targeted research, studies have shown strong police enforcement of safety belt laws and a powerful public information campaign yield resounding results.

Combining police enforcement and public messaging is the foundation of the well-known Click It or Ticket (CIOT) program. In most states, this program takes place annually between May and November. Thanks to CIOT, more than 80% of motorists in the US now use safety belts, compared with just 58% a decade ago.

However, there is still a group of drivers who aren't buckling up nearly as much as everyone else—a group who ironically spends much more time on the road than the average motorist: commercial motor carrier operators, or tractor-trailer drivers. In fact, a national study commissioned by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and released in 2003 showed their rate of seat belt usage was just 48%. This staggering percentage got the attention of several groups, including the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMSCA); DRIVE SMART® Virginia, a non-profit private/public traffic safety organization; and the Virginia State Police Motor Carrier Unit, the group of troopers assigned to enforce laws pertaining to big rigs on interstates.

In the spring of 2005, the FMSCA, DRIVE SMART® Virginia, and the Virginia State Police Motor Carrier Unit came together to work on a pilot project aimed at raising belt usage among commercial motor carrier drivers. The project took place along an 80-mile stretch of Virginia's Interstate 95 between Fredericksburg and Petersburg. The project's purpose was to see if tailoring the basic approach of Click It or Ticket to drivers of tractor-trailers would increase their safety belt usage rate by at least 10%. Could big rig drivers be motivated to wear their seat belts through a targeted program of stepped up law enforcement and public information outreach? The answer was yes.

Research showed that prior to the Virginia pilot project, just 58.5% of commercial truck drivers on I-95 between Fredericksburg and Petersburg wore safety belts. At the project's conclusion, their safety belt usage had skyrocketed to 70%—a percentage that far exceeded the project goal.

In this report, you will find a step-by-step guide to planning and executing a successful safety belt campaign for truckers. We are hoping our efforts will set a precedent for others and challenge truckers all over the country to **Be Ready. Be Buckled.**

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**10 Steps to Planning and Executing a
Successful Trucker Safety Belt Campaign**



STEP ONE

Establish Your Timeframe

Planning for this campaign should begin 3 to 6 months out. Since this is a multi-disciplinary project, make sure you have all of your major players at the table in the beginning when you're making planning decisions and setting critical campaign dates.

The FMCSA and DRIVE SMART® Virginia brought together our State Police Motor Carrier Unit, our public relations team, and our researchers to begin laying the ground work for campaign roll out. We knew our campaign should run simultaneously with the national Click It or Ticket (CIOT) mobilization, so our timeframe was selected within Virginia's CIOT window of May 9 to June 5, 2005.



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STEP TWO

Define Your Audience

To define your audience you need accurate research. This information is crucial in order to properly target your marketing and communications efforts.

Through our informal research that included approximately 400 hours of interaction with truckers at both the Flying J and Pilot Travel Centers, we learned that the trucking community is very diverse and the average trucker was:

- 80-90% Male
- Average age of 30-50, but all ages represented
- 50-70% White
- 30% African-American
- 6-10% Other ethnicities

In some instances, entire families were traveling, and there were a number of husband and wife teams. We also saw a large group of truckers traveling with dogs. In addition, we found many of the truckers from other countries such as Mexico, either did not speak English, or chose not to with us.

Another important fact to note is that a large number of truckers traveling in the project area could be assumed to be non-local, with trips originating and finishing in other states. Thus, many of them would not likely listen to, watch, or read any local media in the project area as they passed through. Therefore, we sought out innovative methods—beyond use of local media—to effectively communicate with our target.

3 STEP THREE

Site Research

Conduct scientific site research determining the percentage of tractor-trailer drivers using safety belts before, during and after the program. This information is essential to identifying results. The percentage you obtain prior to the project's launch is your benchmark; a measurement during the project's timeline determines immediate impact; and at the project's conclusion, you'll have a final number to gauge your success.

To ensure our safety belt research was scientifically sound, we placed it under the capable direction of an independent consultant, Charles Stokes. Mr. Stokes formed his consultancy after a distinguished career as Director of Virginia's Statewide Safety Belt Research. He is regarded as an expert on the measuring of seat belt usage.

In March of 2005, prior to the May start of the program, Mr. Stokes and his team visited the project area to identify survey sites. Since safety belt usage surveys are conducted observationally, meaning, research observers literally stand by the road and look at passing vehicles to determine whether drivers are wearing their safety belts, Mr. Stokes was initially concerned that it might be impossible to make visual observations of those behind the wheels of big rigs whizzing down I-95.

With his concerns in mind, the selection of observation sites was thus based upon three critical points:

- The site must be safe for the surveyor.
- The site must have a convenient place for the surveyor to park.
- The site must provide an excellent point of observation.

The most challenging for the surveyors was visibility. The vertical windshields, large sun visors, and small narrow side windows of the truck cabs challenged the surveyors and made it absolutely imperative that the selected site offer the greatest amount of visibility. Elevated sites became a priority, since they provided a better angle of observation.

Stokes also experimented with survey transits, spotting scopes and binoculars. He found the field of view using this method was too narrow to obtain accurate data. With all of these factors in mind, it took Stokes 3 days to identify approximately 40 tentative sites.

The sites were revisited and narrowed down to a total of twelve. These were presented to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, who made the following selections:

- Route 602 Overpass – I-95
- Route 639 Overpass – I-95
- Carmel Church / Ruther Glen exit – I-95

Stokes also opted to conduct a survey at the Carson Weigh Station, a State-run facility where truckers must pull in to have their loads weighed. This facility is manned both by State employees who handle the weighing as well as State police who keep an eye out for infractions, such as expired paperwork.

The purpose in surveying here, as well as on the open road, was to determine whether truckers who would normally drive unbelted would purposely put their seat belts on upon pulling into the weigh station, knowing that they were in the presence of state police and state employees.

Site visibility is one method of site selection. Other ways to pick survey sites include traffic volume, random, or a sampling of predetermined criteria. The data gathered can be based upon a fixed number of vehicles or upon a timeframe. Stokes opted to use a one-hour observation period for the purposes of this survey.

Mr. Stokes designed the survey to observe trucks by category to determine if there was a noticeable difference in safety belt usage by truck type. In particular, observations were made of:

- Tractor-Trailer (standard van type, in which a cab pulls a van unit)
- Tanker Truck
- Other (including flatbeds)

Tractor-trailers were selected because they are the most common in the field and tankers because they generally represent some of the most skilled drivers on the road.

One final element that was important to the success of the surveys was ensuring the surveyors were focused, well trained and understanding of the importance of accurate data collection. Each surveyor was also tested for inter-rater reliability. The training program included instruction on using the counter board, where and at what angle to stand and how to look for the belt. An experienced, independent two-person team conducted all of our surveying observations.

Having established the research methodology, project organizers set the surveying schedule, as follows:

April 27 (pre-program survey to establish the benchmark rate)

- Carson Motor Carrier Service Center: 9 – 10 a.m.
- Route 602 overpass: 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
- Carmel Church/Ruther Glen exit: 2 – 3 p.m.
- Route 639 overpass: 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

June 1 (mid-program survey)

- Carson Motor Carrier Service Center: 9 – 10 a.m.
- Route 602 overpass: 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
- Carmel Church/Ruther Glen exit: 2 – 3 p.m.
- Route 639 overpass: 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

June 8 (post-program survey to establish the project's outcome)

- Carson Motor Carrier Service Center: 9 – 10 a.m.
- Route 602 overpass: 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
- Carmel Church/Ruther Glen exit: 2 – 3 p.m.
- Route 639 overpass: 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Note: Toward the end of the grant period, two additional survey dates were added: August 10 and September 7.

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STEP FOUR

Marketing/Public Relations Research

The success of any public relations/marketing plan rests in good research.

In order to have information that would most effectively communicate with the trucking community, FMCSA and DRIVE SMART® Virginia used three tactics. First, we reviewed existing research and literature on seat belt safety usage around the country. Second, we sent out an e-mail attitude survey to members of a specialty truck group. Lastly, we visited a major truck stop to intercept truck drivers and ask them one-on-one questions like where their trips originated and finished, their attitude regarding seat belts, as well as their usage of seat belts.

Review existing research and literature

There were also other essential elements to compiling our research data, like finding out what kind of seat belt usage measurements had been performed for truck drivers in other geographical areas, as well as media habits of truck drivers. Their habits of obtaining items like traffic information became key in deciding what methods would be effective in communicating the importance of wearing safety belts.

In order to answer these questions, we sought out and studied literature available from various sources, such as truck industry associations. We also conducted phone interviews with a variety of people in the industry, including executives with the trade associations and the co-owner of a trucking company.

We found that while seat belt usage among automobile drivers and passengers has been systematically studied throughout the United States at the Federal and State level for many years, only one research project had been conducted regarding safety belt usage among commercial truck drivers. This study, which was commissioned by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, was released in 2003. Its findings were based on data gathered on truck driver belt usage in 12 States around the U.S in 2002. It concluded that just 48% of truck drivers across the country use safety belts—significantly lower than the 79% seat belt usage rate of the general public that same year.

Using this data, organizers of Virginia's I-95 program knew they could anticipate the truck driver seat belt usage rate in the project area would be low, but they also knew they needed to conduct specific safety belt research to set benchmarks and measure program results.

Organizers found little had been written on the topic of truck drivers and safety belt usage. The preponderance of traffic safety information regarding truck drivers centered on driver fatigue, rather than seat belt usage and attitudes toward safety belts.

While our research suggested that truckers' preferred formats for non-satellite radio were primarily talk and secondary country, we found the actual demographic of the trucker to be much different than we had expected.

E-mail survey to specialty truck group

To help gain insights into attitudes of truck drivers toward safety belts and safety belt enforcement, organizers conducted a survey by e-mail of participants in a special truck driver group facilitated through the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. This group was comprised of drivers that tow oversized loads. Although these drivers were not the precise targets of the I-95 program, organizers felt their input would be helpful in formulating the program's message. The following questions were asked in the electronic survey:

- Do you use your safety belt when driving your truck?
- If you don't, why not?
- What do you consider the benefits of safety belt usage to be? (For example, preventing ejection from the cab, maintaining control of the vehicle, etc.)
- Do you know any truck driver who has been injured or killed because he or she did not wear a safety belt? If so, please describe what happened.
- Do you feel you should set an example for your family by wearing your safety belt while driving your truck?
- Are there ever occasions that you do not use your safety belt while driving your truck? If so, why?
- Have you ever been cited or given a warning for not wearing a safety belt?
- Are there any other thoughts on this subject that you would like to provide?

One-on-one interviews

To quiz truck drivers one-on-one about their safety belt usage, their attitudes toward seat belts, their media habits, and how they obtain traffic information, organizers visited several truck stops. There, we approached drivers and asked them questions as they did things like filled their tanks, sat in their cabs doing paperwork, and crossed the lot. The following questions were asked:

- Where are you from and where are you going?
- What do you listen to while you are driving?
- Do you use CB radio? (If yes) What do you use it for?
- Do you have a cell phone? What do you use it for?
- How do you get traffic information?
- Do you use your safety belt?



Several key findings emerged from these inquiries. One was that none of the drivers interviewed at any of the locations were from the State of Virginia; all were simply passing through as part of trips that originated and ended elsewhere. Additionally, while some drivers tuned into local radio stations along their routes for local traffic updates, others eschewed them in favor of satellite radio or CBs. Also, despite the advent of cell phones, the majority of drivers still had CB radios in their trucks. For these truckers, the CB was their primary source of traffic information.

CB radio remains the only way truckers can communicate among each other as a group to share information on current and developing traffic situations, including activities of law enforcement. These findings would prove to be essential to the program's success, as described below.

Standard media, such as radio, could be effective in reaching a small segment of truckers, but not enough to bring about real change. However, radio would be significant enough to be a part of the plan. Broadcast television, closed circuit television in truck stops, cable television and print were judged unsuitable for a variety of reasons, but mainly because the cost to reach a very small segment of truck drivers was prohibitive. Thinking back to the research, organizers began to question whether there was a way to reach truck drivers through CB radio.

The research revealed that a majority of truck drivers still use traditional CB radio to convey and receive information about traffic and police activities along their routes. It became clear to program organizers that CBs could be an essential tool in the program if there was a way to broadcast the program's message on CB radio to truck drivers in the project area. Due to the high volume of truck traffic moving through the project area, a method had to be devised to convey the message over CB repeatedly, over a four-week period, so that all truckers with CBs who were traveling through the area would likely hear it.

After identifying radio stations that fit the program's needs, we then examined outdoor advertising. We found there were very few outdoor boards along I-95 in the project area, and of them, only three would be available for the short time-frame of the program. However, after driving along I-95 to observe them, program organizers rejected the boards because of poor visibility.

The FMCSA and DRIVE SMART® Virginia examined placing placard signs along the Interstate, but found that Federal regulations prevented it. We also inquired about using State-owned variable message signs along I-95 to convey the program message, but found that this would not be permitted. Additionally, we investigated whether it would be possible to place signs along interstate exits and entrances, which are on land controlled by cities and counties. However, it turned out that all of the cities and counties in the project area banned that kind of signage through local ordinances. In the end, one signage idea did work—the State approved placing two 6' X 12' signs, one each facing south and north, on the weigh scales at the I-95 weigh station south of Richmond. The signs clearly conveyed the message, "Trucker Alert. Safety Belt Enforcement Next 50 Miles."

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STEP FIVE

Implement Your Marketing/Public Relations Campaign

Use the marketing/public relations research findings and craft your marketing/public relations campaign.

Establish your network

Work with likely partners, such as your statewide trucking association, to build relationships within which to disseminate information. This project was discussed in e-mail and newsletter communications to the trucking community nationally. In addition, we attended meetings and conferences where there would be a large trucking presence. The key was to generate a buzz. We were also fortunate that one of the American Trucking Associations "America's Road Team" members lived in Virginia and was very helpful in joining us at outreach events and in granting radio interviews. If a Road Team member were in your State, they would be a great addition to any campaign.

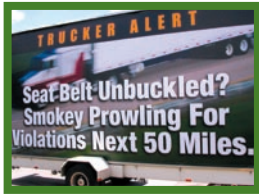
Build a relationship with key truck stops

Visiting truck stops during a high volume time, such as between 12:00 to 2:00 pm, will help give you a feel for what truck stops are the busiest. Since a large part of our outreach involved giving away free promotional items, the truck stops were delighted to have us there. While we conducted radio remotes at three different truck stops, we do not recommend them. For safety reasons, most of the remotes were setup in an area that was not convenient to the truckers. Additionally, the effectiveness of a remote depends on the assumption that the truckers are listening to a particular station. Due to the diversity of the trucker population, we found that an investment in one targeted station was not the best use of funds. On the other hand, we did find that the mobile billboard was quite effective. The truck stops were very helpful in letting us park the truck in a prominent overnight location for maximum visibility.

Identify your message

Creating the right audio message was crucial to the success of the program. A tough enforcement message has been proven to be key in getting drivers to buckle up. Research by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration showed that a major concern of big rig drivers is the possibility of losing control of their trucks if they have to make a quick maneuver while driving. Seat belts serve an important role in this issue; if a driver isn't belted and his rig begins to swerve, he is knocked around in the cab. Conversely, a belted driver is anchored to his seat, which allows him to better regain control of his vehicle. We decided to highlight that issue in conjunction with the tough enforcement message in the radio spot that was written and produced. All other media pushed the enforcement message...that police were cracking down on violators.

One other key element was taken into account when crafting the radio and mobile billboard signs: truck drivers have a language of their own. It was important to use their language in communicating with them. In the one-on-one research conducted with truck drivers, program coordinators found that they still call state police “smokey”. So, the mobile billboard message was written to read:



TRUCKER ALERT

Seat Belt Unbuckled? Smokey Prowling For Violations Next 50 Miles.

Careful analysis should be undertaken to determine the effectiveness of local radio advertising, and should include signal strength in order to make sure that the message can be heard throughout the campaign target area.

Use the CB Wizard

The CB Wizard is a CB transceiver that allows users to record three messages up to 18 seconds long. These recorded messages can then be automatically broadcast at intervals of up to 90 seconds, rotating across various CB channels and providing a range of up to four miles.

While there was no documentation indicating that the CB Wizard had ever been used for a safety belt program, its impact on truck drivers had been proven. For example, a study by the Texas Department of Transportation showed that when a CB Wizard was placed near a work zone and programmed to broadcast messages telling truckers to change lanes because of construction—nearly 80% did so. In comparison, just 55% of truckers in a control group that received the same message via signage moved over. Research by other states showed similar positive results for the CB Wizard.

The CB Wizard proved to be the most effective way that we could communicate directly with the truckers traveling through the project area. We determined to use a female voice, as it would grab the attention of the drivers. The three individual messages that would be broadcasted were recorded.

Message One:

This is a message on behalf of the Virginia State Police. As part of the Click It or Ticket program, Virginia State Police are strictly enforcing the safety belt law for commercial truckers with special emphasis on I-95 between Petersburg and Fredericksburg. Put your safety belt on right now and keep it on. Be ready, be buckled. Click It or Ticket.

Message Two:

This message is on behalf of the Virginia State Police. Virginia State Police are participating in the Click It or Ticket program and they are strictly enforcing the safety belt law for commercial truckers with special emphasis on I-95 between Petersburg and Fredericksburg. Put your safety belt on now and keep it on. Be Ready. Be Buckled. Click It or Ticket!

Message Three:

This message is on behalf of the Virginia State Police. Virginia State Police are strictly enforcing the safety belt law for commercial truckers as part of the Click It or Ticket program with special emphasis on I-95 between Petersburg and Fredericksburg. Put your safety belt on now and keep it on. Be ready. Be buckled. Click it or Ticket.

The CB Wizard was plugged in at the Carson Weigh Station and turned on, and a member of the project team drove north and south on I-95 to test its range. She found that it could be heard clearly via CB for the CB Wizard's maximum range of four miles. The CB Wizard was turned on and began broadcasting on the first day of the program.

Use outdoor signage

Well-placed billboards are a great way to communicate with the truckers. In our case, there were no billboards that were available within the timeframe needed, so we were forced to think of alternatives. Thus, the mobile billboard! This is essentially a cab and trailer truck with the trailer holding two standard back-lighted outdoor signs mounted back-to-back. The plan was to have two mobile billboard trucks travel I-95 in the project corridor in a circuit, eight hours a day. While one truck went south, the other would go north, each making a circuit in about two hours. A mobile media company was found in Raleigh, North Carolina that had the trucks needed to make the project work and a contract was negotiated. As part of the contract, it was agreed that the trucks would park overnight at truck centers, with lights shining onto their billboards, so that truckers stopping there would see them.

The truck drivers provided feedback that they got a very positive reception from truckers, who would communicate by honking or waving with a thumbs-up as if to say "I am buckled." The trucks were also novel enough that we got excellent media coverage from them.

Outreach is crucial

The final aspect of our marketing effort is about our truck stop outreach. While staff worked initial outreach activities, we found such success that we decided to hire temporary workers to work the site full-time for a one-month timeframe. Due to the intensity of the work, workers were only permitted to work one five-hour shift daily. The shifts were from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm, and from 1:00 to 6:00 pm. We made sure that our workers represented the diversity of the trucking community and that they could relate to the truckers. We did find that some truckers tried to avoid our table, as they thought we were trying to sell something. Your outreach will be much more successful if you have a sign that says "Free Traffic Safety Items," or just "Free Stuff." We had the following items:

- o CD Visor Holder
- o Notebook
- o Log Book Ruler
- o Tape Measure
- o Koozies
- o T-shirts
- o Patriotic Writing Pen
- o Patriotic Carabineer
- o Child Traffic Safety Coloring Books

Each of these items carried the message, "Be Ready. Be Buckled." We may have been a bit naive with the purchase of the koozies that were intended to keep truckers' drinks cool as they are cruising. What we found is that truckers have a huge cooler in which they carry their beverages, so while the koozie is somewhat useful, it did not serve the purpose we intended. While the T-shirts were the most popular item we had, the visor holders, writing pens, and carabineers were also popular.

The coloring books were very popular for truckers with children, as were the carabineers. During conversations with the truckers, many of them said "I never buckled up until my kid started asking me why I didn't." Children are a great way to get our message across.

Media Relations

Media activities began in mid-March, with compilation of the target media list. This list included local media in the project area, as well as the trucker channels on XM and SIRIUS satellite radio and trucking online and print trade media. In mid-April, the media relations team drafted and finalized the press release announcing the program. The press release included a quote from a retired truck driver, "Sarge" Garrett, speaking in support of the initiative. He said, "I figure if you're driving a truck, you better have control. And if you're not buckled up, you'll be bounding around all over the place. Wearing a seat belt gives you better control. If you're not wearing a seat belt, don't drive."

The team began distributing and following up on that release in May, several days before the start of the program, with the goal of generating early publicity about it. Throughout the program, we were in constant contact with the news media to encourage them to report on the project. This effort yielded both traditional news story placements in broadcast and print news media, as well as on-air banter about the program by personalities on the XM satellite radio truck channels and stories in trucker trade online media.

The final step in the media relations program was the writing and distribution of a wrap-up press release summarizing the success of the project.

Regarding the local media program: Richmond, Virginia is the largest city on I-95 between Petersburg and Fredericksburg. We decided to place media buys on two Richmond-area stations that meet the demographics the research had identified as those of the majority of truckers (white males, 35-54 years old.) These stations were WRVA, talk/news station (note: research had also shown talk radio as a preferred format for truckers), and WKHK, which has a country format (also a preferred truck driver format.) Because tractor-trailer drivers are on the road at all times of day and night, all day parts were purchased, with special emphasis on sponsoring traffic reports.

Highlights of the radio media purchase:

WRVA-AM		WKHK-FM		WCLM-AM Big John Trimble	
60 second radio spots	234	60 second radio spots	124	60 second radio spots	75
15 second traffic sponsorships	100	Live traffic sponsorships	13	Live Show	1
15 second PSA	96	Live remote promo liners	15	Net cost: \$2,375	
Remotes	2	Live remotes	2		
Net cost: \$14,900		Net cost: \$10,800			

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STEP SIX

Campaign Roll-Out

Step up law enforcement. Collect data. Implement your public relations/marketing campaign.

Execution of our program was handled in three primary ways:

- The Virginia State Police Motor Carrier Unit scheduled its manpower to step-up enforcement in the project area during the 2-week enforcement period.
- We went into data collection mode with the implementation of our surveys by consultants to determine the safety belt usage rate by big rig drivers in the project area before, during, and after the program.
- We worked with a public relations firm to coordinate all aspects of the public information and marketing campaign.

April 27	Pre-Campaign Survey
May 9	Press Release Announcing Campaign
May 16 to June 5	CB Wizard Goes Live Mobile Billboards Local Radio Media Blitz Truck Stop Outreach and Radio Remotes
June 1	Mid-Campaign Survey
June 8	Post-Campaign Survey
June 23	Press Release Announcing Results
August 10	2-Month Post-Campaign Survey
August 22 to September 16	Truck Stop Outreach
September 7	3-Month Post-Campaign Survey

STEP SEVEN

Data Analysis

Collect data on a regular basis. Develop key findings. Note what is working and why.

There are two ways that data was retrieved. First, from the Virginia State Police Motor Carrier Unit, who reported that with the stepped up enforcement they were pleased to not write any more tickets for safety belt violations than usual. This means that with more stops taking place, the relative number of violators was lessened.

Second, a total of five surveys were conducted to measure the usage rate at different points before, during and following the campaign.

Here are those results:

The overall rates, based on all site observation locations, were as follows:

April 27 (pre-campaign survey to establish the benchmark rate)

Wearing seat belts:	58.5%
Not wearing seat belts:	41.5%

June 1 (mid-campaign survey)

Wearing seat belts:	68.1%
Not wearing seat belts:	31.9%

June 8 (post-campaign survey to establish the project's outcome)

Wearing seat belts:	70.0%
Not wearing seat belts:	30.0%

August 10 (2 month post-campaign survey to determine retention)

Wearing seat belts:	63.1%
Not wearing seat belts:	36.9%

September 7 (3 month post-campaign survey during outreach activity)

Wearing seat belts:	69.9%
Not wearing seat belts:	30.1%



Here are some specific findings:

- As expected, the usage rate for tankers was consistently higher than any other type of truck. Because of the hazardous material many tankers carry, these drivers tend to be very safety conscious.
- We now have established a safety belt rate for CMV traveling on Interstate 95 through Virginia. Based upon the final survey, that rate would be 69.9%.
- We observed that the use rate at the weigh station was about 10-20 points higher than any other observation point.
- After the education/media blitz, the use rate increased by 19.7%. This proves communication really works.
- There are some individuals who just will not buckle up. Knowing that law enforcement would be present at the weigh station did not motivate more than 10% of truckers to buckle up.
- We know that our data shows that belt use can be positively impacted by media and enforcement efforts, but that these results are short-lived in the absence of continuous activity.



STEP EIGHT

Debrief Your Workers

Your on-site workers will provide you with valuable information.
They are the ones working with truckers every day.

When being debriefed, here are some of the key comments our contract workers shared with us:

- One of the keys in interacting and communicating effectively with the truckers is to get them to come to the table. Once there, they will accept the free giveaways. T-shirts are a great giveaway because they are so easily recognizable. Truckers eagerly approached the table for them. In fact, about one in five took a T-shirt and put it on immediately after their shower. Hats were also a good item and were more visible because they were worn more frequently and for greater timeframes.

When truckers were asked to “buckle-up”, feedback included:

- o “Knew of a trucker who was killed in a crash because he was trapped in the rig and either burned or drowned.” (Common response.)
- o “Tankers are riskier to drive, more prone to explode. I don’t buckle up because I don’t want to be trapped in the cab.”
- o “You should be giving this information to the four-wheelers. Can you make brochures geared toward the four-wheelers?”
- o “I am horrified to be on this road in the summer when all of the RV’s are on the road. Not only are most of them seniors, but also a lot of them are female drivers.”
- o “Putting restrictions on lane closings creates unsafe situations.”
- o “North Carolina or Tennessee did a great PSA campaign educating the public about truckers. You could see the impact it had.”
- o “My safety belt is uncomfortable. It cuts into me.”
- o “I buckle up for my kids.”
- o “My company makes me buckle up.”
- o “Nobody gives a ---- about safety. Just pick up your ---- and go home.”
- o “If there is not a law for bicyclists or motorcyclists to wear helmets, then why should we wear safety belts?”
- o “Let me take that tape measure and measure your -----.”
- o “The diagonal belt is dangerous because you can break your neck. I would wear a five-point harness.”
- o “All I need is a Volvo truck. They have five-point harnesses and a smart seat that moves with impact.”

- In general, the Pilot Travel Center was a better venue. It had a better set up and was busier.
- The truckers were very appreciative of the free goodies. Apparently people are constantly trying to sell things to them.
- An effective brochure or video communications piece would include interviews and photos of actual truckers telling their stories.
- The truckers found the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) information very helpful (lane closings, etc). It would be good to have more of this accessible to them.
- The need for trucker safety should be a year-round message. Truck stops have wireless. If we could find a way to capture truckers' e-mail addresses, it would be great to send them an e-mail newsletter. The newsletter should be a service to the truckers. You could interview truckers. Provide food reviews of local stops. Provide tips about what you need to know about Virginia when traveling through.
- We felt like we made a very big difference to the truckers we met. They appreciated the special attention.
- Provide air fresheners with a safety message, or free overnight toiletry bags for when they stop for showers.

9 STEP NINE

Tell Your Story

Once the campaign is complete, make sure you record your success and tell your story both nationally and locally. You will find the general public is very interested in matters related to the trucking industry. Although the four-wheel community is very intimidated by truckers, the trucking community is a vital part of our national infrastructure.

The primary evaluation question for this project was whether the program achieved its goal of raising the safety belt usage rate among commercial truck drivers in the project area of I-95 between Fredericksburg and Petersburg, Virginia by at least 10%.

Yes. The program in fact increased the rate by well over 10%. Specifically, the usage rate rose from 58.5% to 70%. This was an impressive increase of 11.5 percentage points, or 19.7%.

Additional elements were used in evaluating the return on investment of the program and deeming it a success, including:

- Added value was negotiated in the media buy in the form of four free radio remote broadcasts at truck plazas along with giveaway items from the radio stations to use at the broadcasts.
- Strong news media coverage of the program was obtained, including coverage by the Richmond Times-Dispatch, WTVR-TV, WRVA-AM, WFLS-FM, XM satellite radio, Metro Networks, Truck.Net, The Trucker, and other media.
- The program has paved the way for potentially larger similar initiatives on the regional or statewide level.

10 STEP TEN

Build Upon Your Success

Once you have built relationships with trucking-related industries, it is important to not lose that momentum by walking away from the project. If funding is an issue, find ways to continue to share and communicate in order to affect change.

In conducting your campaign, you will learn from the various entities involved about other ways to work with the trucking community in improving roadway safety. For example, the FMCSA and DRIVE SMART® Virginia have had suggestions regarding bilingual communications, work on other interstate locations, communications for four-wheelers, education for RV drivers, etc.

In Virginia, the implementation of this ten-step campaign resulted in significant improvements in the rate of safety belt use among truckers. Using our tried and proven method, your state will achieve equal success. Our long-term goal is to leverage this learning to increase the national belt usage rate among truckers. This in turn will do its part to help make our roadways safer for all vehicles. Good luck and remember:

Be Ready. Be Buckled.



BUDGET

Mobile Billboard	26,460
Radio Talent/Advertising	42,560
Print Advertising	9,182
Promotional Items	17,498
Printing	1,340
Signage/posters	1,090
Graphics Development	1,375
Consulting – PR and Media	37,869
Salaries	24,571
Consulting – Survey	6,962
Outreach Team	5,051
Travel	2,450
Equipment	4,140
Supplies	180
Long Distance Phone Charges	110
Postage and Shipping of Materials	234
Administrative Fee of 10%	18,124
Total Budget	\$199,196



FOR MORE INFORMATION
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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

