

BETWEEN THE LINES

KELLY ANDERSON GROUP - MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Autonomous Trucking

Have you ever seen a movie where cars drive themselves? Well, this aspect of cinema may just become reality one day. Autonomous trucks - trucks driven by a computer system rather than a human - are beginning to roll out on the roads as both anticipation and hesitation float around them.

Autonomous trucks are being drawn up, built and tested by companies dedicated to providing solutions and innovation to the trucking industry. Such companies include TORC, Daimler Truck and Einride. According to Forbes, currently, the main focus of this development would be on mid-mile distances and Class 8 trucks. A general idea for this plan is that human drivers would handle the more difficult, crowded parts of the routes while a fully-computerized truck would drive the longer, straightforward parts with no one in the driver's seat. With drivers earning their CDLs, training to be driver trainers and so forth, this could be an intimidating concept.

One of the positives though of autonomous trucking would be the decrease in costs regarding maintenance and fuel, based off of Forbes. Especially in the climate of today's economy, people could use a decrease in costs. Those in support of these futuristic trucks suggest another positive: real drivers will still be required along the way, as Wiley Deck states in an article from Venture Beat. "If nobody is in the cab, who puts out a fire on the trailer?" Deck asked, who is the Vice President of Government Affairs and Public Policy for Plus. "Who puts out the triangles or flares when a truck is disabled on the side of the highway?" Many with this thought process are emphasizing that emergency scenarios still call for a human presence accompanied with the truck. However, despite these statements, a lot of truck drivers and the public remain hesitant of the idea of automated trucks altogether.

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Even though some believe these computer-driven trucks will provide job opportunities, others believe they will have the opposite effect: taking away driving positions that people are skilled in. Questions also arise regarding various computer software's capabilities, such as reaction time to unforeseen circumstances, as Matrack points out. This risk could include an accident that might occur immediately in front of the vehicle or someone running across the road. Although, it appears the majority of companies pushing automated trucks see these issues and are working on solutions.

Due to these technical difficulties, as well as liability issues, most autonomous trucks are not expected to be *fully* integrated into the industry until 2030, as considered by Martin Daum, the Chairman of the Board of Management at Daimler Truck. Companies like TORC and Daimler are taking extreme precautions to ensure the roads and world are ready for such delivery vehicles. However, in a recent press release, Einride, a Swedish trucking company, announced they have been approved by the National Highway Safety Administration to start operating their artificial intelligence (AI), electric-ran vehicles on U.S. roads by late this year. They are past the testing phase and are stepping into official use. Einride's trucks have a futuristic look that could be straight out of Robocop, Blade Runner, Star Wars or almost any Syfy movie. They appeal to the modern society that is ever approaching.

This particular future of the transportation world may just be moving at a faster pace than the public anticipated or desired. However, there are still many obstacles and unknowns slowing down the process of the full integration of autonomous trucking. Society will not know for certain the validity of the different sides of this topic until more AI trucks are on the road.



Photo credit to Einride & Yahoo.

"We know the autonomous and electric technology of our pod will not only revolutionize transportation but also create thousands of jobs and help America stay competitive."

ROBERT FALCK
EINRIDE FOUNDER AND CEO



Photo by Sky Seaman of Kelly Anderson Group.

TRIVIA

When was the idea of driverless vehicles first introduced?



Arkansas Trucking Championship

Sweat drips off of concentrated brows, truck doors slam shut, conversations are heard, laughter echoes and the sun beats down from above on the exhausted but thrilled drivers below at the Arkansas Trucking Championship (ATC) of 2022.

Due to COVID-19 hitting in 2020, the ATC has not been held for two years, making this year its return. It was held at the Convention Center in Rogers, AK this year with the Arkansas Trucking Association hosting it as it does annually. The summer sun heat may not have made it the most comfortable time, but truckers "trucked" on with their pre-trip inspections, technician tests, skill courses and written exams.

Water bottles, electrolyte-filled drinks, snacks and cooling towels were passed out to attendees and participants to ensure everyone was hydrated and healthy. Despite the heat, spirits were high. Tom Merrill, a veteran truck driver in the business for 42 years and a third-time participant at the ATC, loves competitions and looks forward to them every year. "I love to compete. I'll outrun you to the office if you want," Merrill said with a grin, despite just finishing his pre-trip inspection in the energy-draining heat. Merrill is an example of what this competition means to drivers...

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Photo by Sky Seaman of Kelly Anderson Group.

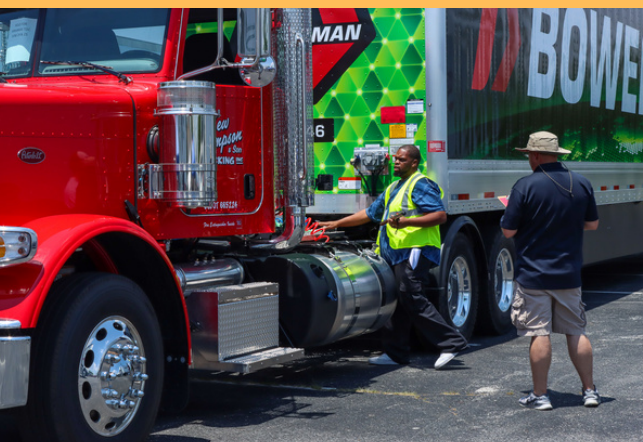


Photo by Sky Seaman of Kelly Anderson Group.

"I love this here. I'm doing everything I can to make sure I get back here."

TOM MERRILL
ATC WALMART DRIVER



Photo by Sky Seaman of Kelly Anderson Group.



Company Updates

- Be sure to check out our July 26th Press Release on social media for a special announcement!
- Service Providers, be sure to sign up your trainers for Qualification Certification before your peak season! Our Impact Solutions Safety Trainer Program can help get your drivers qualified!

Team Member Spotlight

Toni Evey



Position: Accounting Assistant

Length at company: 11 months

Quote About Job: "I love my team! Every day is something new and it's a privilege to work for a great company."

QUIZ ANSWER: The idea of automated - or driverless cars - was first introduced by General Motors in 1939 at an exhibit!



Photo by Sky Seaman of Kelly Anderson Group.



If you have any questions about these topics or how *Kelly Anderson Group* can help your business, please contact:

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