

Let the Car Do the Driving

The business forecasters and advisors at *Kiplinger* frequently weigh in on innovation and what research developments of today will become realities in the years ahead. Their prediction: Cars that drive themselves will be for sale in 2020, if not earlier.

Already in application: cameras, radar sensors and tiny computers that allow new models to park themselves, brake automatically when traffic slows down or take the wheel if drivers stray from their lanes. In the works: Laser headlights that will better gauge following distances and identify obstacles, as well as software with artificial intelligence to anticipate other drivers' decisions.



According to *Kiplinger*, "Automation will benefit highway driving first by spelling drivers on long trips where traffic patterns are simple and speeds are fairly steady. Think of it as cruise control that also steers and applies brakes."

Human error is responsible for most crashes, including the ones that still kill 30,000 people each year on U.S. roads. Safety advocates believe the self-driving cars will be safer as the systems don't become tired or get distracted the way drivers do.

A big beneficiary could be the trucking industry and its ongoing challenge to find qualified drivers. "Eventually, self-driving trucks, whether partially or fully automated, will allow freight carriers to move more cargo over greater distances faster, requiring fewer hours of seat time from skilled drivers."

RESOURCE: Kiplinger at www.kiplinger.com

Power of the Ports

The impact of effectively moving goods cannot be overestimated. One transportation method, United States seaports (including the Port of Indiana-Burns Harbor), accounted for a \$4.6 trillion economic impact in 2014.

Burns Harbor handles more ocean-going cargo than any Great Lakes port and 15% of the U.S. steel trade with Europe, according to the Ports of Indiana. (The Jeffersonville and Mount Vernon facilities in Indiana are not part of the seaport system).

Pennsylvania-based Martin Associates last evaluated the nation's seaports in 2007. Among the gains since then:

- Overall economic impact: up 43%
- Jobs: 74% increase to 23.1 million
- Tax revenues (federal, state and local) from port and importer/exporter revenues: rose 51% to \$321.1 billion
- Personal wages related to the port sector: jumped from \$649 billion to \$1.1 trillion. The average annual salary of those directly employed by port-related businesses was \$53,723

Report author John Martin notes, "The growth in jobs and economic importance of America's seaports reflects the fact that the value of international cargo handled at these ports increased by \$400

RESOURCE: American Association of Port Authorities at www.aapa-ports.org

Driving Details: AAA Has Them

AAA are three letters synonymous with highway travel. Now, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, in combination with the Urban Institute, has released the inaugural American Driving Survey.

Among the results:

- On average, Americans drive 29.2 miles per day or 10,658 miles per year
- Motorists between the ages of 30 and 49 drive the most – more than 13,100 miles annually. Not surprisingly, teens and seniors over the age of 75 drive the least
- Education matters. Those without a high school diploma drive an average of 32 minutes and less than 20 miles daily, while the same numbers for college graduates are 58 minutes and 37.2 miles
- The busiest motorists are in the South (11,826 miles a year), while those in the Northeast drive the least (8,468 miles annually)
- Women take more driving trips, but men spend 25% more time behind the wheel and drive 35% more miles
- People drive more on Tuesdays (32.9 miles) and Wednesdays (32.0 miles) than any other days of the week
- The average number of household vehicles (2.1) is larger than the average number of drivers in households (1.8)

The survey effort is ongoing. The first-year results were collected from May 2013 through May 2014 and released earlier this year.

RESOURCE: American Driving Survey at www.aaafoundation.org

billion since 2007, reaching about \$1.8 trillion in 2014. "The key growth in our international trade was in U.S. exports, which saw a 60% increase in value over the past seven years."

Martin adds that the overall growth came despite the Great Recession that severely hampered cargo activity at ports between 2008 and 2012.

Activity continues to increase at the Burns Harbor port.



By Tom Schuman