



April 1, 2014

With "daydreaming" a top driving distraction, Erie Insurance asks bloggers if smartphone apps can help

Results are mixed as bloggers test apps aimed at improving safety and reducing distraction during National Distracted Driving Awareness Month

ERIE, Pa. (April 1, 2014) - Drivers should keep their hands on the wheel, their eyes on the road and their minds on what they're doing-anything else could become a deadly case of [distracted driving](#), according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Last year Erie Insurance analyzed the [top 10 driving distractions](#) involved in fatal crashes and found that-surprisingly-daydreaming was by far the most common distraction, involved in 62 percent of fatal crashes in which the driver was distracted, followed by cell phone use, involved in 12 percent. But despite the warnings, some drivers continue to use cell phones. With that in mind, ERIE asked some bloggers to test apps that could make driving safer.

"We haven't heard of any apps that can prevent daydreaming, but there are some designed to help avoid distracted driving," said Doug Smith, senior vice president of personal lines at ERIE. "There's no question that it would be better if people did not use their phones at all while driving but because we know they sometimes do, we thought it would be worthwhile to make people aware of tools that may help them do it more safely." A video of Doug Smith sharing the top distracted driving behavior, technology that may help reduce distractions and why texting is among the most dangerous distracted driving behaviors is available in [1080i](#) and [720P](#).

ERIE contacted the bloggers behind TechGuySmartBuy, Because I Said So, and RichMom and asked each to test a different app-DriveScribe, Canary and Vokul™, respectively. ERIE does not have a relationship with the bloggers or the app developer and is not promoting or discouraging the use of any app.

Below are the bloggers' top insights:

Blogger	App	What they liked most	What they liked least	Did it help reduce distraction?
TechGuySmartBuy	DriveScribe: provides real-time coaching on driving behaviors such as excessive speed, failure to stop at a stop sign and hard braking; earn gift cards for safe driving	Automatically blocks incoming texts and calls; real-time warnings about speed, hard braking, etc., increasing awareness of unsafe driving behaviors	Can't see driving information on the app—must go to the desktop app to review driving habits	Yes
BecauseISaidSo	Canary: Allows parents to tell when teens are texting, talking, speeding or using social media	Easy to install; great concept to monitor teens' use of phone and speed while driving	Can be turned off by teen; uses battery life; provides speed of car but not speed limit where car is located, so impossible to tell if teen is "speeding"	Somewhat
RichMom	Vokul: Hands-free voice control app enabling driver to dictate texts and emails, post to Facebook and Twitter, call contacts, and listen to music	Very easy to manage iTunes library and play music hands free; can listen to emails and social media feeds and post status	Couldn't respond to others' Facebook statuses; can't reply to email from new contact unless it's already in address book	Somewhat

The opinions expressed above are those of the individual bloggers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Erie Insurance.

According to A.M. Best Company, Erie Insurance Group, based in Erie, Pennsylvania, is the 14th largest homeowners insurer and 12th largest automobile insurer in the United States based on direct premiums written and the 18th largest property/casualty insurer in the United States based on total lines net premium written. The Group, rated A+ (Superior) by A.M. Best Company, has nearly 4.8 million policies in force and operates in 11 states and the District of Columbia. Erie Insurance Group is a FORTUNE 500 and Barron's 500 company and is proud to be recognized on the list of Ward's 50 Group of top performing insurance companies, which analyzes the financial performance of 3,000 property and casualty companies and recognizes the top performers for achieving outstanding results in safety, consistency and financial performance over a five-year period (2008-2012).

News releases and more information about Erie Insurance Group are available at www.erieinsurance.com.

CONTACT:

Leah Knapp, Erie Insurance
814/870-5758, leah.knapp@erieinsurance.com