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CHALLENGING THE  
UNFAIR (AND UNTRUE)  
PERCEPTIONS OF  
PROFESSIONAL  
DRIVERS AND  
THE INDUSTRY.

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The trucking industry faces a host of challenges in attracting newcomers to fill the role of professional truck driver. A low national unemployment rate, competition from other blue-collar industries, and barriers to entry based on age are some of the key obstacles to bridging the driver shortage gap, which is currently estimated at 50,000 and could balloon to 174,000 in a decade. The industry must also contend with negative stereotypes about truck drivers.

A quick Google search of the term "truck driver" pulled up top news stories about truck driver fatalities related to fatigue, truck drivers falling asleep at the wheel, an accident article referencing a "confused" driver striking a bridge his truck was too tall to fit under, and a video of a truck driver angrily confronting another motorist. Candidly, drivers are often considered rude, dangerous, angry, accident prone, unhealthy, and unintelligent, to name a few.

Those employed within the trucking industry know otherwise—that truck drivers are smart, considerate professionals. We understand that some trucks are governed at speeds lower than speed limits for fuel efficiency and safety purposes,

## DRIVER DEFICIT

50K  174K

◀ 2018 ----- 2030 ▶

which can sometimes make it a slow process for one truck to pass another. We know that professional truck drivers receive more driving training more frequently than other motorists. We are proud of the hundreds of thousands of drivers who make an effort to walk or exercise during stops and pick from among the few healthy items available at truck stops and fast food restaurants. We are aware of the myriad of regulations with which truckers must comply—as well as the advanced tools and technology systems installed on trucks and in cabs to help drivers be safe.

Finally, we know without doubt that truck drivers are one of the resources most taken for granted in our country. They do their jobs behind the scenes, hauling goods at all hours of the day—away from their families—so that store shelves are stocked when the rest of us need groceries, clothes, medical supplies—everything that consumers and other industries touch is first touched by a truck driver.

Statistics show the majority of accidents—80 percent, according to the American Trucking Associations (ATA)—are caused by other motorists, not truck drivers. According to data released by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), there were 4,761 fatalities involving large trucks in 2017, compared to all fatalities, which numbered 37,133. Regardless, the accidents and road rage incidents that do involve trucks are often sensationalized. A few bad apples unfortunately shape the narrative about all truckers.

So what can the industry do to flip the narrative? How can we educate the public about the many desirable jobs within the trucking industry?

## ALL IN

First and foremost, the industry must come together to promote itself. The ATA is leading the way with its Trucking Moves America Forward (TMAF) movement. The mission of TMAF is to establish a long-term, industry-wide effort to create a positive image for the industry, to ensure that policymakers and the public understand the importance of the trucking industry to the nation's economy, and to build the political and grassroots support necessary to strengthen and grow the industry in the future.

“By telling our story—educating the public and working with policymakers at the state and federal level—we can ensure that the trucking industry remains the thriving industry it is today,” the TMAF website reads.

Education is the movement's key priority. Working with state trucking associations and individual carriers, TMAF uses video, social media, billboards, editorial placements, trailer wraps, and many other platforms to convey key messages in support of the industry. They include:

## TRUCKING MATTERS

Trucks drive economic growth and jobs in America—currently employing nearly 7 million people, 3.5 million of which are professional drivers. And, trucks stimulate economic activity in every sector of the American economy—including health care, fuel and transportation, waste removal, retail, food and agriculture, manufacturing, banking and finance, and many

others. Without trucks to haul the goods necessary for other industries to prosper, little would get accomplished.

## TRUE PROFESSIONALS

The professional drivers selected to drive heavy-duty trucks are just that—professionals. They

must meet strict requirements to obtain and maintain a commercial driver's license. They get regular physicals to prove they are healthy enough to reliably operate large equipment, and they submit to mandated random drug and alcohol screens. They are subject to a wide array of stringent state and federal regulations, company rules, and customer requirements. And,

## TRUCKING EMPLOYS

7M  3.5M  
OF WHICH ARE PROFESSIONAL TRUCK DRIVERS

professional drivers attend regular and ongoing training to enhance skills and focus on seasonal trends. What's more, data collected from truck technology is reported to trucking managers, which means drivers are often coached on potentially risky behavior, like hard braking or following too closely. Compared to regular motorists, those are pretty steep requirements.

In trucking, the actions of truck drivers are highly visible and noticeable—and they play an important role in elevating the image of the industry. “The men and women that are behind the wheel of the truck are the true ambassadors of the industry and have the ability every day to either enhance the image of their profession or destroy it. Every day the driver is out there on the road, how they behave, how they react, how they perform will ultimately determine how the industry is perceived,” said Brenda Neville, president and CEO of the Iowa Motor Truck Association. “The drivers that accept and understand this responsibility are not only successful as drivers, but also critical in helping us sustain a positive image of the industry.”

## TOP TECHNOLOGY

In 2017, the U.S. trucking industry generated more than \$700 billion in revenue, accounting for 79.3 percent of overall U.S. freight revenue and 70.2 percent of tonnage—and that volume increased 6.6 percent in 2018, the largest year-over-year increase in 20 years. So it's no surprise that the technology that governs heavy-duty trucks has seen rapid advancements in recent years to keep up with the rising demand. New trucks are equipped with advanced technology designed to assist the driver in avoiding accidents—either by

## LARGE TRUCKS WERE INVOLVED IN

4,761

OF

37,133

## TOTAL FATALITIES

OR JUST UNDER

13%

activating controls on the truck or allowing fleets to coach drivers on certain risky behaviors. While companies continue to focus on continuous training for their drivers, even the safest fleets and drivers can have accidents, often caused by members of the motoring public. Truck safety technology is helping to reduce those accidents.

### SUSTAINABILITY

TMAF also touts the efforts the industry is making to protect the environment, stating, "Many companies have participated in a sustainability program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 1 billion tons and fuel consumption by 86 billion gallons over 10 years," according to TMAF. And, truck manufacturers are embracing green technologies — like electric engines, renewable fuels, aerodynamics, and auxiliary power units, to name a few — that reduce idling time and air pollution.

### COMMUNITY IMPACT

Trucking companies are in a unique position to help those in need. From donating transportation services to local food drives and providing natural disaster relief, truckers are there for their communities. They deliver — usually for no charge — food, housing relief materials, and first aid supplies, plus they haul away debris. And when the immediate crisis is over, trucks deliver the essentials to rebuild those communities. During the 2018 hurricane season, hundreds of drivers donated their time to be away from their families, navigating flooded roadways, to get life-saving items to those who needed them desperately.

### BOTTOM LINE

Trucks and truck drivers are immeasurably important to our nation's economy. We do not have enough of these road warriors, and the shortage is going to get even worse as demand stays strong and the aging population of professional drivers retires. The industry, led by efforts and messages from Trucking Moves America Forward, is participating in an aggressive public relations campaign to showcase the importance of trucking and the desirability of trucking jobs. Carriers and shippers are working diligently to optimize routes and reevaluate regional distribution center locations to get drivers home more often, preferably daily. Shippers are changing processes to reduce detention time to increase driver productivity — and lower the amount of time they sit waiting to

load or unload. Carriers are investing in late-model equipment equipped with the latest safety tools and technology to enhance safety and environmental performance. Driver pay is increasing, and benefits are highly competitive. Many carriers offer wellness reimbursements for exercise facilities and smoking cessation programs — plus education about how to stay fit on the road.

With continued education, the industry is working hard to shift the public's perception of trucking and truck drivers. This strategy, coupled with ongoing efforts to provide hours-of-service flexibility, attract and legalize younger drivers, and widen driver demographics will allow the trucking industry to rise to the challenge of hauling the rising volume of freight that consumers demand.

If the industry fails, leaving store shelves to sit empty, the men and women who move America forward behind the scenes will no longer be taken for granted.

### THE RUAN APPROACH

At Ruan, we know professional drivers are the backbone of our company and our industry. Heck, we were founded by our first driver 86 years ago — and we never forget that legacy.

We want our professional drivers to be safe, healthy, and home with their families. Our Megasafe Safety Program provides drivers quarterly training, coaching, and top-notch driver safety assistance systems in late-model equipment. We recognize drivers for safe driving and exceptional customer service in our Driver of the Year program and Megasafe Awards and Recognition Program. And the industry's National Truck Driver Appreciation Week is celebrated at all of our 300-plus operations across the country. It is important for us to acknowledge and thank drivers for the work they do that allows the rest of us to be employed in the industry.

As an industry-leading asset-based 3PL specializing in Dedicated Contract Transportation, 80 percent of our drivers are home daily. Others are home two to three times per week. All have predictable schedules. They drive the same routes and serve the same customers each week, allowing for familiarity and opportunities to make continuous improvement suggestions.

### REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS

# 1 BILLION TONS

+

### FUEL CONSUMPTION BY

# 86

### BILLION GALLONS

## NAME VS NUMBER

We stand behind our recruiting message — Name vs. Number: Nothing compares to the respect you get driving for Ruan. We ensure that our on-site managers provide our drivers the same level of customer service as they do to our shipper customers. They empower drivers to be the Captain of the Ship — to make decisions about continuing to drive in inclement weather conditions or if feeling ill. And in an industry with a 98 percent turnover rate, we retain 70 percent of our professional drivers. Professional drivers are the backbone of our company, our industry, and our nation's economy.

### 300 OPERATIONS NATIONWIDE

# 80%

### OF OUR DRIVERS ARE HOME DAILY

### OTHERS ARE HOME 2<sup>TO</sup> 3 TIMES PER WEEK

+

### PREDICTABLE SCHEDULES

### WE RETAIN 70% OF OUR DRIVERS