

Doing The Right Thing Because It's The Right Thing To Do Is Not Always The Way Big Business Makes Decisions

Various company slogans point out things to be accomplished and things that should be avoided. A case in point has to do with the manufacturer of heavy trucks, wherein the two following slogans seem to be a way of life.

“Anything we can leave off won't cost anything and won't cause us any trouble.” The second slogan has a similar meaning with different words: **“If it ain't broken don't fix it.”**

The heavy vehicle industry, over the many years, has made amazing progress in advancing the state of the art in the function and reliability of their products. However, some of the progress where there is not a competitive advantage comes from mandatory government regulations. A mandatory government requirement usually depends on the development of new technology that has to do with highway safety. The problem with this arrangement is that historically the development of new technology usually happens when one of the heavy vehicle component suppliers recognizes the need for new technology that is overlooked, and decides to do something about it. A graphic example has to do with the lack of heavy vehicle directional stability that is the foremost cause of heavy vehicle driver fatigue and related catastrophic highway accidents.

A breakthrough in technology has been achieved that solves the long-standing lack of heavy vehicle directional stability that

is primarily responsible for excessive driver fatigue and many serious heavy vehicle accidents. Heavy over-the-road trucks and buses that are lacking in directional stability, require an inordinate amount of tedious driver steering corrections to maintain directional vehicle control. As the hours of repetitive driver steering corrections multiply, the heavy vehicle driver fatigue factor becomes a more serious highway safety issue. It has now been proven that heavy vehicles that are made to be directionally stable, track exceptionally straight without requiring the almost constant driver steering corrections to keep the vehicle directionally under control, thereby greatly reducing driving fatigue and related highway accidents. Considering the great technical strides that have been made in heavy vehicle manufacturing over the many years, it is somewhat difficult to understand why it has taken so long for the very creative heavy vehicle design community to solve the critical need to make heavy vehicles directionally stable and less fatiguing to drive. It can be reasoned that as the industry grew, the requirements for the larger more dependable heavy vehicles needed to satisfy consumer demands, were given more attention than the directionally unstable drivability problems that were

accepted throughout the industry as just the way heavy vehicles were expected to drive. For going on a century, as the size and weight of heavy over-the-road vehicles dramatically increased, it is rather obvious that the engineers that were responsible for product improvement were never directed to solve the critical lack of heavy vehicle directional stability. Therefore the countless billions of directionally unstable miles had to be dealt with by repetitive driver steering corrections from the heavy vehicle drivers. One can only imagine the untold amount of driving fatigue and related highway fatalities that were caused by the critical lack of heavy vehicle directional stability during the many years.

Some fifty years ago, heavy vehicle power steering was developed to reduce the excessive effort required to steer heavy

vehicles. Power steering soon became a required item to reduce the driver steering workload. However, it was not the design function of power steering to solve the lack of heavy vehicle directional stability that would have also reduced the driver's workload when going straight. To be directionally stable, a heavy vehicle must be designed so that the steer wheels track exceptionally straight without requiring excessive driver steering corrections to keep the vehicle directionally under control. The Howard Power Center Steering Technology was developed to work in harmony with power steering technology to greatly reduce driving fatigue, wherein each steering component complements the function of the other; power steering for turning and precision power center steering for going straight.

- The Amazing Benefits Of The Howard Precision Steer Wheel Control System is more than paid for by completely solving the long-standing costly steer wheel tire wear problem. Heavy vehicle operators using the system verify a 75,000 mile increase in steer wheel tire life.
- The Precision Steer Wheel Control System achieves an amazing level of steer wheel tire blowout controllability, verified by an impressive number of documented steer wheel blowouts, where drivers report easy straight line control without the customary steering control problems that are caused by a blown steer wheel tire.
- The Precision Steer Wheel Control System makes a dramatic improvement in crosswind driving by preventing the steer wheels from caster steering down-wind in response to the lateral wind gusts, thereby making a considerable reduction in crosswind driving fatigue and related highway safety issues.

Now that the Howard Precision Steer Wheel Control System has been tested by millions of in-service miles of heavy buses, trucks and large recreational vehicles, as well as the test conducted by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, the critical lack of heavy vehicle directional stability and related highway safety problems should not continue to be stonewalled by the heavy vehicle industry. It is time to do the right thing because it is the right thing to do.

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