

Teens probably won't like self-driving cars, but their parents will

May 11 2015, by Sherry Stokes



The finalized prototype of Google self-driving car. Credit: Google

If consumers have their way, self-driving cars will enable parents to keep tighter reins on teen motorists. A survey conducted by the College of Engineering at Carnegie Mellon University reveals that people are soundly in favor of putting parental controls in high-tech cars of the future. One thousand people, aged 18 to 70, were polled to learn which freedom-foiling attribute they deemed most important.

Top Parental Controls

1. Control to set speed limit, curfew time and number of passengers (84 percent)
2. Control feature to limit the geographic range the car will travel (61 percent)
3. Parent text display to communicate with driver (60 percent)

Roughly 84 percent all respondents wanted to control: a car's speed, the number of friends who can pile into the car and the driver's curfew time. Women (87 percent) were strongly in support of this capability, as were 91 percent of people aged 66 to 70. Even 81 percent of the youngest polled, ages 18-24, favored these novel features.

Implementing these types of control technologies could save lives, prevent injuries and reduce costs associated with accidents. In 2013, 2,524 teenagers perished in motor vehicles crashes, making vehicle accidents the leading cause of death for teenagers. Compared to older drivers and miles driven, teen drivers are three times more likely to be in a fatal wreck. Young, inexperienced drivers tend to speed and drive too fast for road conditions. Further, teens are more likely to crash when they have teen passengers in the car.

When it comes to curtailing the distance [teen drivers](#) can travel, men (62 percent) and women (61 percent) closely align on this point. This notion, however, did not resonate well with 18- to 24-year-olds. Only 54 percent of them opted for this feature, whereas nearly 65 percent of drivers aged 36 to 45 would constrain a car's geographic range.

The one area where 18- to 24-year-olds outscored all other age groups was in their receptiveness to having a parental text display in the car. Surprisingly, 69 percent of the youngest respondents thought this was useful while only 53 percent of people aged 56 to 65 would consider this

option. Women (63 percent) tended to be more receptive than men (57 percent) to this communication feature.

About the survey: Carnegie Mellon, the birthplace of autonomous vehicle technology, has a 30-year history of advancing self-driving car technology for commercialization. The college polled 1,000 people to gain insight into what consumers are looking for in [self-driving cars](#). In the survey, a self-driving car was defined as having sensors and computing technology that allows the car to safely travel without a driver controlling the steering wheel, gas and brake pedal. The vehicle would automatically move at safe speeds, keep a safe distance from surrounding cars, change traffic lanes, obey traffic signals and follow GPS directions to destinations.

Provided by Carnegie Mellon University

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