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Contacts:

Erin Keleher
Vlingo
617-283-2285
erin@vlingo.com

Beth Monaghan
InkHouse (for Vlingo)
781-916-9090 x801
Vlingo@inkhouse.net

Vlingo Highlights New Data From Driving While Texting Study as Regulators Consider Legal Action At Distracted Driving Summit

Data reveals strong consumer desire for safer hands-free alternatives

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (September 29, 2009) – Vlingo Corporation, maker of the world’s most popular mobile voice application, highlighted new data today from its second annual Vlingo Consumer Mobile Messaging Habits Report as regulators prepare for The Distracted Driving Summit (Sept. 30-Oct. 1). The Summit, organized by The U.S. Department of Transportation, will address the dangers of text-messaging and other distractions behind the wheel.

While Driving While Texting (DWT) has become a hot button for state legislatures, recent survey data indicates that there is little-to-no impact of DWT bans on driver behavior. Data from Vlingo’s Consumer Mobile Messaging Habits Report shows that two of the top five worst offending states (TN, NJ, AL, ID, OK) have some form of DWT/mobile phone ban in place or pending (one of which is focused solely on young drivers). Of the five states with the best records (AZ, VT, RI, OH, MI), only Rhode Island has a ban on DWT and it only applies to those under the age of 18. 36% of respondents did not know if they live in a state that currently has a ban on DWT.

“Legislative action is an important step but laws are hard to enforce,” said Dave Grannan, CEO of Vlingo. “As texting usage continues to increase, realistic hands-free solutions are needed to make the roads safer. Survey data shows that texting is gaining on sending/receiving calls as the primary use of mobile phones, with 35% of all respondents using their phones for texting more than for phone calls.”

Vlingo’s Consumer Mobile Messaging Habits Report also reveals a strong consumer desire for safer hands-free alternatives. Almost 70% of respondents would use voice recognition technology while driving instead of typing if they could speak text or email messages and have incoming messages read to them. Of teenage drivers (the more prolific texting group overall), 90% would use voice recognition while driving. “Insurance companies are taking note,” says Grannan. “We’ve been approached about offering safe driver discounts to their customers.”

One in four of all mobile phone users admit to DWT, yet there is general consensus that DWT should be legally banned. Slightly more than 83% of respondents think DWT should be illegal. However, with more safety precautions such as hands-free solutions that enable consumers to text without typing, 40% of respondents favor making DWT legal.

Methodology

The Vlingo Consumer Mobile Messaging Habits Report was fielded by independent panel research firm Toluna and responses were generated from a survey among 4,816 online opinion panel members (age 13 or older) living in the continental United States. The sample was matched to U.S. Census proportions on gender, age and ethnicity and included approximately 100 respondents from each of the 48 contiguous U.S. states. Respondents were also screened for mobile phone ownership and usage. The survey bears a statistical accuracy of +/- 1.41% for the total sample at the 95% confidence level.

The full report can be requested at <http://vlingo.com/habits>.

Follow Vlingo on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/vlingo> and on the Vlingo blog at <http://blog.vlingo.com> for regular news and updates.

About Vlingo

Vlingo lets people control their mobile phones with the power of voice. With Vlingo, people can simply speak to their phone to send a text or email message, call a friend, search the mobile Web, update their Facebook status, and a whole lot more. As the inventor of the mobile phone “voice user interface,” Vlingo is the only technology that allows people to open and use virtually any application on the phone simply by pressing a button and speaking to the phone. Founded in 2006, Vlingo is backed by Charles River Ventures, Sigma Partners, Yahoo! and AT&T and headquartered in Cambridge, Massachusetts. For more information, go to www.vlingo.com.

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