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DWD (Driving While Distracted)

This project was designed to determine if being distracted while driving increases a driver's actual operating errors in simulated driving conditions. The experimental variable in these tests was the distraction (i.e. texting on a cell phone, talking on a cell phone, or using a cell phone in speaker phone feature). Our hypothesis was that texting would have the highest effect on driver errors in our simulated driving conditions. We tested this problem using twenty human subjects, representing a variety of ages, genders, and skill levels. The subjects completed a simulated driving test, using a consistent video game course. Each subject performed four driver tests. The first test, our control, was a carefully controlled, non-distracted, test sequence. In the second test, subjects completed the driving sequence while texting. The third test sequence, measured driver error rate while talking on a cell phone. The final driving test sequence measured driver error rate while operating a cell phone using speaker mode. The application of various driver distractions yielded some interesting results. Our investigation confirmed that driving while texting resulted in a substantially increased rate of driver error. In fact, there was not a single subject who performed the texting sequence without notable errors. Also, observations and recorded results indicated that driver error is significantly higher using a cell phone device in any application.