

**8 January 2010**

## Digital dashboards are a safety hazard, says IAM

The internet dashboard, or 'infotainment system' is the next in-car device that could cause a major distraction to drivers, says the IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists).

Intel and Google are both looking into interactive dashboards, including 10-inch screens above the gearstick which will show 3D maps, web pages and even videos. Other similar systems are being previewed at trade shows.

Peter Rodger, IAM Chief Examiner, said: "If drivers were tempted to use the internet or watch videos on the move, the results could be deadly,"

"If it's not acceptable to read a novel while driving, how can it be acceptable to read a multimedia display? Just how much information can a car driver absorb and still drive responsibly?"

"There is a fine line between providing useful extra information and causing a dangerous distraction. This system appears to cross that line," Mr Rodger added.

"Viewing things like restaurant reviews and venue information online while driving should be illegal, and it should be an offence to buy, sell, fit and transmit information for this particular use."

The systems are not designed to be used on the move, but not all systems will be impossible to use while driving. One car manufacturer's version, due out this autumn, bears the notice: "Please only use the online services when traffic conditions allow you to do so safely".

"It should be made clear that the system should only be used when the vehicle is parked," Mr Rodger commented.

ENDS

**Notes to Editors:**

- New York Times Article: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/07/technology/07distracted.html>

**Media contacts:**

IAM Press Office – 020 8996 9777

[press.office@iam.org.uk](mailto:press.office@iam.org.uk)

ISDN broadcast lines available

[iam.org.uk](http://iam.org.uk)

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1. The IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists) directly influences the driving and riding of more than 100,000 full members in the UK and Ireland. Established in 1956, the IAM is today best known for the advanced driving test and the advanced driving course, which is available to car, motorcycle and commercial licence holders. The IAM has grown to become the UK's largest independent road safety charity, dedicated to raising driving standards, engaging with the road-using public and influencing road safety policy. The commercial division of the IAM operates through occupational driver training companies IAM Fleet UK and Drive & Survive.

2. A 2006 report by Brunel University, following an 18 month study, concluded that "advanced driver training produces safer drivers and lower accident involvement", with measurable improvements in knowledge, skills and attitude.

3. In January 2007, the IAM Motoring Trust was established as the Policy and Research Division to undertake research, promote practical policies, act as an advocate for safer roads, safer drivers and safer vehicles and encourage responsible motoring through education and training. In January 2007, the IAM Motoring Trust was established as the Policy and Research Division to undertake research, promote practical policies, act as an advocate for safer roads, safer drivers and safer vehicles and encourage responsible motoring through education and training.

