



TRUCKER

2024 | VOLUME 16 ISSUE 1

SCUDS



TOP TRUCKING TRENDS 2024

DRIVER SHORTAGE

TOPS 2024 TRUCKING TRENDS

One of the largest challenges faced by the trucking industry that will stretch into 2024 and beyond is a shortage of qualified drivers and maintenance technicians.

Although the American Trucking Associations did improve its forecast slightly in recent months, it still estimates the current driver shortfall at 60,000, projecting this could increase to 160,000 by 2030. The shortage is largely due to a high number of baby boom-era (born 1946-64) retirements, a lower number of available

Gen X (1965-80) employees, and drivers changing professions for better money, benefits, or home time.

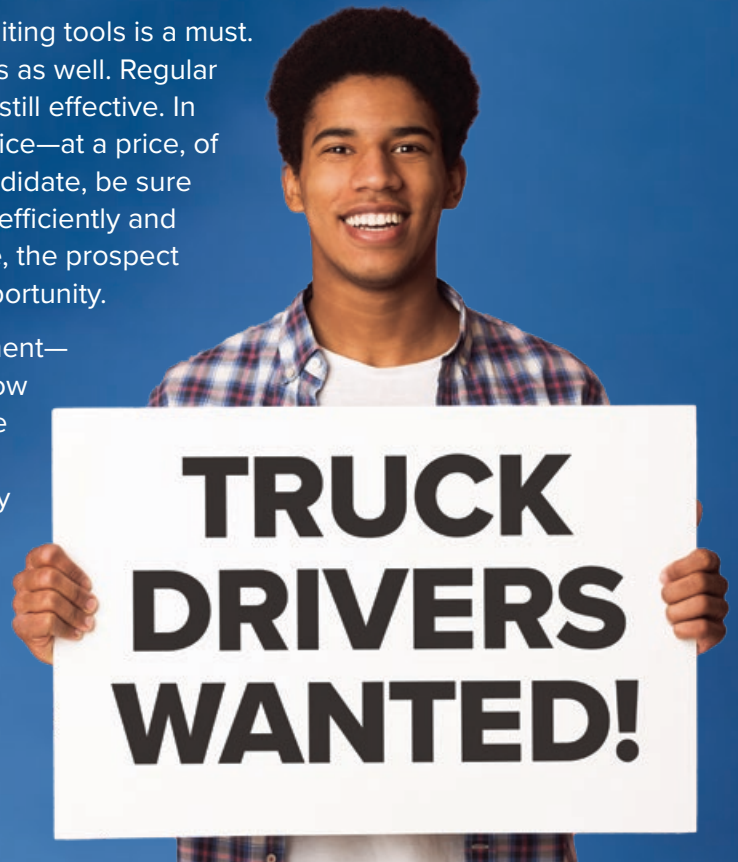
What does this trend mean for you? Traditionally, when looking for employees, companies primarily considered how applicants would meet their needs—experience, driving record, medical fitness, and so on. Today, how you will meet employees' needs is just as important to a successful search, if not more so.

When many openings exist, potential employees have the power to demand the job that best meets their needs, provides the best benefits, and delivers the greatest work/life balance. As a result, it is important to provide a clear description of your fleet's benefits. In addition to offering competitive pay, this may include a sign-on or referral bonus, paid time off including vacation and family leave, 401(k) with a company match, health care benefits, safety bonuses, and a positive company culture.



In today's technology-driven world, using online recruiting tools is a must. However, don't overlook traditional recruiting avenues as well. Regular classified ads, trailer signage, and word of mouth are still effective. In addition, recruiting companies can be a valuable service—at a price, of course. Additionally, once you have an interested candidate, be sure your hiring process is organized to move them along efficiently and with good communication. If your fleet falls short here, the prospect will simply discount you and move onto their next opportunity.

Retaining good drivers is just as important as recruitment—perhaps even more so. Think of the ways you can show your drivers, techs, and other employees that they are valued. Even seemingly simple gestures like sending birthday and anniversary messages can go a long way toward boosting morale. Talk to your staff regularly to head off any problems or misunderstandings. And if an employee does leave to go elsewhere, conduct a “no blame” exit interview to find why they are leaving and determine if you can adjust your operations to keep other good employees on board.



This form is an example only. Requirements for the annual driver's certification of violations can be found in [49 CFR 391.27](#).

ANNUAL DRIVER'S CERTIFICATION OF VIOLATIONS

MOTOR CARRIER INSTRUCTIONS: Each motor carrier must at least once every 12 months, require each driver to prepare a list of all violations of motor vehicle traffic laws and ordinances (other than violations involving only parking) of which the driver has been convicted, or of which he/she has forfeited bond or collateral during the preceding 12 months (49 CFR 391.27). Drivers who have provided information required by 49 CFR 383.31 need not repeat that information on this form.

DRIVER REQUIREMENTS: Each driver will provide the list as required by the motor carrier above. If the driver has not been convicted of, or forfeited bond or collateral on account of, any violation which must be listed, he/she shall so certify (49 CFR 391.27).

COMPLETED BY DRIVER - CERTIFICATION OF VIOLATIONS

DRIVER NAME (LAST, FIRST, MI) _____ SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER _____ DATE OF EMPLOYMENT _____

DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER _____ STATE _____ EXPIRATION DATE _____

HOME TOWN (CITY AND STATE) _____

I certify that the following is a true and complete list of traffic violations required to be listed (other than those I have provided under 49 CFR 383) for which I have been convicted or forfeited bond or collateral during the past 12 months.

Check this box if you have had no violations in the past 12 months.

DATE	OFFENSE	LOCATION	TYPE OF VEHICLE OPERATED

If no violations are listed above, I certify that I have not been convicted or forfeited bond or collateral on account of any violation required to be listed during the past 12 months.

DRIVER'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

MOTOR CARRIER NAME _____ MOTOR CARRIER ADDRESS _____ DATE _____

REVIEWER PRINTED NAME _____ REVIEWER SIGNATURE _____ TITLE _____

Motor Carrier TOOLBOX

Acuity's Motor Carrier Toolbox serves as a one-stop shop for resources that help trucking businesses become more compliant and run more efficiently. It includes a wealth of information and provides access to tools, programs, and policies designed to help motor carriers comply with CSA and other FMCSA/DOT regulations.

Check out this handy form you can download and print. It's available without a sign-in at www.acuity.com/mctb.

SCF PROVIDES “SAFETY NET” TO TRUCKERS IN NEED



When Tracy had to come off the road to have a kidney removed because she had a tumor, she didn't know how she was going to pay her household expenses without income while she recovered.

And when Nathen was in a car accident, breaking his hip and fracturing his back, he began spiraling into depression wondering how he was going to financially survive while he recovered.

Nathen and Tracy aren't alone. Unfortunately, when illness or injury takes a trucker off the road, the impact can be devastating. Without income—and with more than one-third of truckers without health insurance—drivers can find it difficult to take care of household expenses and provide for their families.

Fortunately, both Nathen and Tracy found the St. Christopher Truckers Relief Fund (SCF). SCF was able to provide financial assistance, so Nathen and Tracy didn't lose everything while they recovered. SCF helps over-the-road semi-truck drivers and their families when an illness or injury, occurring within the last year, has caused them to be out of work. Assistance is typically in the form of direct payment to bill holders for necessity household expenses, including rent/mortgage, utilities, vehicle payments, and insurance.

"Truck drivers are often in a critical situation when they reach out to us," says **Shannon Currier**, SCF Director of Philanthropy. "We are a safety net for drivers, so they aren't losing their homes and cars, having utilities disconnected, or seeing their insurance lapse."

The SCF was founded in 2007 by Dr. John McElligott (Dr. John), Dave Nemo (Radio Nemo/RoadDog Trucking XM Radio 146), and Michael Burns (Radio Nemo), and SCF helped their first driver in 2008. SCF recently celebrated 15 years of service and has helped over 3,850 over-the-road drivers with over \$4.6 million in assistance.

SCF also offers free **health and wellness programs** for professional over-the-road semi-truck drivers, including diabetes prevention, its "Rigs Without Cigs" smoking cessation program, chronic disease management, at-home cancer screenings, and free flu, shingles, and pneumonia vaccines. Additionally, SCF provides all applicants with **additional resources** that may provide help beyond what SCF can offer.

Acuity is proud to support SCF through direct donations as well as by sharing information about the organization with our agents and trucking customers. To learn more, to donate to SCF, or to apply for assistance yourself, visit truckersfund.org, or reach out to Shannon directly at shannon@truckersfund.org.

"We know it's hard to ask for help, but don't wait. That's why SCF is here," says Shannon. "Let us shoulder that financial stress so you can recover and get back on the road."



Tracy



Nathen and his wife

BEST OF THE BLOG



DATA Qs: WHAT IS IT AND WHY SHOULD I USE IT?

Information collected during roadside inspections and at the scene of DOT crashes is used to calculate CSA BASIC (Behavioral Analysis and Safety Improvement Category) scores and populate a driver's Pre-Employment Screening Program (PSP) report. To ensure that the data is accurate, the FMCSA has developed DataQs for fleets and drivers to:

- **Correct erroneous information from roadside inspections.**
- **Make corrections to DOT crash information.**
- **Make corrections to drivers' PSP reports.**
- **Request a roadside inspection report.**

Users must register for DataQs and enter a Request for Data Review (RDR) or an Inspection Report Request (IRR). Once submitted, the request is sent to the state office in which the violation or inspection occurred, where it is reviewed by a trained official. Often, the inspector who created the violation also reviews the challenge and data provided.

DataQs is not meant to fight tickets or citations, which are handled by the court system. However, if a fleet or driver is successful in having a ticket or citation reversed or reduced to a lesser charge, this information may be submitted as to help remove the violation from the roadside inspection report or lower the value (weight) of the violation.

Once the RDR has been filed, the requester can review the status of the request or enter additional information/documents through their account. Once a determination has been made on a submitted RDR, the requester will be notified via email. If the reviewer's decision is disputed, the requester may request another review. RDRs may be reviewed up to a maximum of two times.

Correcting violation inaccuracies found on roadside inspection reports and/or crash determinations can

help drivers and fleets ensure they are portraying an accurate picture of themselves. Errors on these reports can negatively impact Safety Measurement System (SMS) scores and result in drivers having difficulty getting hired.

Best practices that will help in filing successful RDRs include:

- **Fleets should log in to the FMCSA's SMS website monthly to monitor their SMS scores and ensure accuracy of roadside data and crash information.**
- **Fleets should review the FMCSA's Crash Preventability Determination Program to gain an understanding of which crashes are eligible for review.**
- **Drivers should obtain a copy of their PSP report and review it for accuracy.**
- **Only file an RDR for crashes/roadside violations that are legitimate and meet the eligibility requirements. Filing RDRs on ineligible events may create a negative perception by the reviewing officer, which could result in difficulties or delays in getting legitimate issues reviewed.**
- **For violations with citations, consider adjudicating them before submitting an RDR.**
- **Provide as much documentation/evidence as you can to support your RDR. Supporting documentation may include state inspection reports, state crash reports, vehicle and driver lists, portions of pertinent regulations, photographs, and videos.**
- **Provide clear, concise, and accurate information. Be as specific as you can.**

For additional information regarding DataQs and the RDR process, contact your local Acuity Loss Control Representative and check out our other trucking blogs at acuity.com/the-focus/trucker.

ASK THE CONSULTANT

Cliff Johnson
is Acuity's Trucking
Consultant. Have a
question for Cliff?
Reach him at
cliff@acuity.com.



Ask Cliff

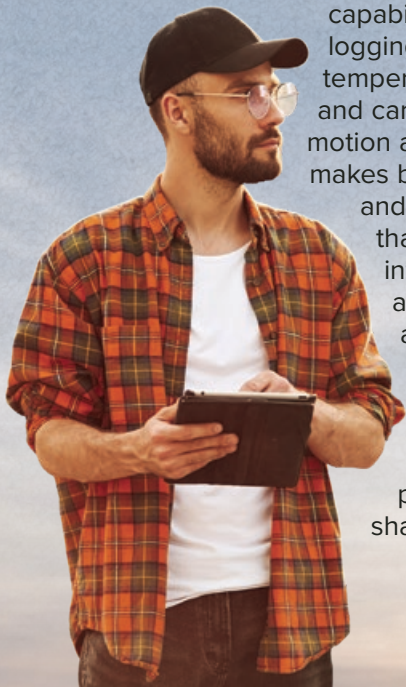
How is technology transforming trucking?

Over the course of my career, I have seen countless changes in trucking. Drum brakes changed to disc; mechanical fuel injection converted to electronic; and personal computers and cell phones are ubiquitous today.

Technology plays a greater role in some fleets than others, depending upon the trucking niche, but every fleet has been impacted in some way. The electronic logging device (ELD) mandate, along with GPS equipment, are commonly credited with making technology more commonplace in trucking. In turn, these technologies spurred the adoption of monitoring equipment for efficiency and driver safety, including:

- **Cameras**
- **Harsh, aggressive, or distracted driving monitoring**
- **Seat belt usage**
- **Driver scorecard and coaching**

ELD devices can also offer asset management capabilities beyond simply logging, such as refrigeration temperature monitoring, door and cargo security, and wake-on-motion alerts. This equipment also makes being compliant with local and federal regulations easier than ever before. Because information is stored securely and logging becomes an automated task, you have easy access to not just hours-of-service logs, but also DVIR pre/post-trip inspections, messaging, proof of delivery, document sharing, and more.



Technology has also revolutionized vehicle maintenance. With today's machine intelligence and real-time sensors, fleet managers can better predict and schedule maintenance and repairs proactively, contributing to reduced costs and greater uptime. Capabilities of these technologies include:

- **Tractor diagnostics**
- **Route and fuel optimization**
- **Tractor maintenance**
 - Technician remote diagnostics
 - Preventative maintenance
 - Engine codes
 - Temperatures
 - Fuel data

A game changer for many fleets is the introduction of transportation management software (TMS) into their fleet operations. Most TMS programs are cloud-based, allowing 24/7 access to data from anywhere across the country. TMS is being used by more and more fleets, brokers, and shippers for combining and streamlining operations, reducing paperwork, reducing manual processes, saving labor hours, and minimizing human error.

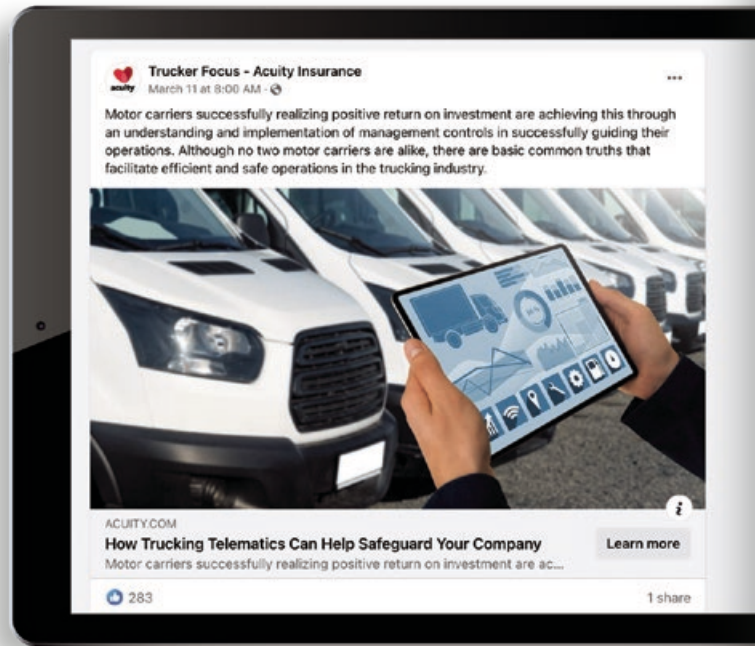
There are a large variety of TMS vendors that tailor their services to type and size of accounts. Some focus on serving small fleets for a low price, while others cater to larger fleets, brokers, warehouses, and shippers that have complicated needs and required services. For fleet managers, technology is creating a powerful lens through which every aspect of operations can be viewed.

As we move forward, technology will continue to dramatically boost trucking efficiency, including hiring, dispatch, operations, paperwork, maintenance, DOT compliance, tracking, payroll, and taxes.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

 facebook.com/acuitytrucking

Read about how telematics can help your trucking company—and stay tuned for some exciting news about Acuity’s new partnerships with leading telematics providers that could save you money! Join in the conversation on our Facebook page at: facebook.com/acuitytrucking.



WIN \$100!

FIND THE FLAGPOLE TO BE ENTERED!



Acuity is proud to hoist a 70- by 140-foot American flag on a 400-foot flagpole at our headquarters in Sheboygan, WI. Visit www.acuity.com/flag to learn more.

To enter, find the flagpole hidden in this issue and send an email with the location to flagcontest@acuity.com. We'll randomly choose a winner from the correct entries received by April 30, 2024.



WINNER
of last issue's contest was:
Terry Willey
Willey Insurance Group, Inc.
Mesa, AZ

This contest is not open to employees of Acuity or their immediate family members. For a complete list of rules, visit www.acuity.com/flagcontestrules.

TEAR ALONG THE PERFORATION LINE



Acuity Knows Trucking!

Check out our dedicated trucking-focused online channels!



Trucking Web Page
acuity.com/trucking



Facebook
facebook.com/acuitytrucking



Blog
acuity.com/trucker-focus



YouTube
youtube.com/acuityinsurance
(Trucker Focus playlist)



LinkedIn
linkedin.com/company/acuity-insurance



Twitter
twitter.com/acuityinsurance

TRUCKING QUESTIONS?

Acuity's on-site trucking consultant provides over 30 years of industry experience to your business.



Email

trucking.news@acuity.com



Phone

800.242.7666, extension 1740





INDUSTRY: General Freight Trucking
OCCUPATION: Truck Driver
TASK: Pre-Trip Inspection

A 59-year-old, no-touch freight truck driver was injured while completing her pre-trip inspection and putting the seal on the trailer. The truck and dry van trailer were parked on the pavement near a light post with grass around it. Hidden in the grass was a five-inch wide and four-inch deep hole. She tripped in the hole, fracturing her right ankle.

Sadly, other drivers had also been tripped up by that hole, but the customer had not fixed it. Just packing some dirt in the hole would have prevented her injury. Instead, it cost nearly \$47,000 and over a year and a half in lost work days. And the driver will now live with hardware in her ankle.

Often, we cannot control the housekeeping and maintenance standards at customer sites, so stay vigilant. Look twice to avoid hazards. If you cannot be sure of your footing, as in grassy areas, take small, careful steps.

TIPS TO LIVE BY

EMPLOYERS

- If your driver is injured at a customer site, follow up with the customer to ensure it won't happen again.

DRIVERS

- Always wear sturdy shoes with good traction.
- Stay vigilant about hidden hazards. Before inspecting your truck and trailer, inspect the area around them for slip, trip, and fall hazards.
- Report debris, spills, or other hazards to the yard manager.





focused on truckers

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Focus



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