

Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE BUS INDUSTRY

Defense Dept. ending popular bus inspection program

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Defense is ending the Passenger Safety Inspection Program that accredits bus, van and limousine carriers for military personnel movements and often has been viewed as a seal of approval for participating operators.

Consolidated Safety Services (CSS), which conducted the inspections throughout the program's 28-year history, was notified last month that the Defense Human Re-

sources Activity Procurement Support Office would not exercise its option for the final year of the current five-year contract.

CSS performed the Passenger Safety Inspection Program (PSIP) audits for the Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO), which was created in 2006 to unify management of chartered passenger services for the military branches. The office website described its work as a "multibillion-dollar

travel enterprise."

"We have been informed that this decision was made in the best interest of the Department of Defense, and is in no way an indication of our performance for the government," said Jolanda Janczewski, chairman of the board of directors of CSS.

"In recent conversations with the Defense Travel Management Office, we were assured they have been pleased with everything we

have done and they recognize and respect the significant contribution we have made to the Department of Defense."

She said DTMO officials told her they are discussing an information sharing agreement with the Department of Transportation, which enforces safety regulations and monitors carrier compliance through the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

"I will miss it," said Brian

Scott, president of Escot Bus Lines in Orlando, Fla. "The DoD inspection had a consistency to it that is sorely lacking at FMCSA in recent years."

Marcia Milton hopes the procedural change will not diminish the prestige of being a military travel provider.

"DoD approval was a marketing tool for our company," said Milton, president of First Priority

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Stephen Davis of AT&T Coach was named grand champion of the first annual UMA International Driver Competition, winning a \$2,500 check, a plaque and industry recognition.

Driver competition winner 'goes above and beyond'

LOUISBURG, N.C. — Stephen Davis was confident he would at least place in the first UMA International Driver Competition held at Motorcoach Expo 2017 in St. Louis.

But first place?

"I was shocked," said Davis, 58, a driver for AT&T Coach in Louisburg.

He was named grand champion of the competition and received a \$2,500 check and plaque as an award. (See April 1 *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

Denny House, owner of AT&T Coach, said he would clone Davis if he could.

"Everybody loves him," said House, whose mother, Ann, (the "A" in AT&T) started the company in the 1980s. "No complaints. He goes above and beyond."

That includes doing more than driving, helping at the bus yard wherever it's needed, House said. Davis' wife, Linda, also works at the company, cleaning and maintaining motorcoach interiors.

Davis has been driving for AT&T since 2012 — his first trip included driving CNN and White House staff for the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte — and has been driving motorcoaches

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Insurers urge caution as pedestrian fatalities rise

WASHINGTON — Pedestrian fatalities increased 11 percent last year for the largest surge in 40 years, according to the Governors Highway Safety Administration (GHSA).

Pedestrian accidents also account for a growing share of motorcoach incidents and insurance claims, industry insurers say.

"We are seeing an uptick in pedestrian hits," said Michelle A.

Wiltgen, assistant vice president and national marketing manager at National Interstate Insurance Company in Richfield, Ohio.

"The numbers aren't significant but the cost is. The bodily injury claim from a bus hitting a pedestrian is huge," Wiltgen said. "The actual numbers of pedestrian hits are not significantly up, but we are looking at the dollar amounts on these claims. We are

talking about six figures when a pedestrian is involved."

Lancer Insurance Company in Long Beach, N.Y., paints a similar picture.

Bob Crescenzo, vice president of safety and loss control at Lancer, said that over the past five years, pedestrian and bicycle accidents have accounted for only about 1.5 percent of frequency, or the number of claims.

"But they are about 11 percent of our severity — the cost of claims," Crescenzo said.

The pedestrian and bicyclist share of Lancer's claims ledger has been growing by about 1 percent annually, he said, adding that "people are much more expensive to repair than vehicles."

Final statistics for 2016 will list nearly 6,000 pedestrian traffic fatalities, an increase of 11 percent

from 2015 — which recorded an 11-percent increase over 2014 — GHSA reported.

That total "could make 2016 the first year in more than two decades with more than 6,000 pedestrian deaths," the agency said.

"Many factors contribute to changes in the number of pedestrian fatalities, including economic conditions, demographics,

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New motorcoach sales unchanged during first quarter

WASHINGTON — Sales of new motorcoaches remained unchanged in the first quarter of 2017 compared with the same period in 2016.

The American Bus Association Foundation's Coach Manufacturer Survey reported that 547 new coaches were sold in the first three months of this year, the same number as last year.

"Last year, especially the fourth quarter, was very strong for motorcoach sales," said ABA Foundation President Peter Pantuso. "We are seeing the same trend for 2017. The industry continues to grow and we have seen an upward trajectory with sales over the past few years since the end of the recession."

The strongest segment during the first quarter was 45-foot coach-

es, with 390 purchased by private-sector companies, an 18.5 percent increase from last year's first quarter. Sales of 45-foot coaches to the public sector totaled 104, down slightly from 113 last year.

Sales of smaller motorcoaches, which had been increasing in recent years, dropped off significantly in the first three months of 2017.

"We did see an increase in bigger buses this quarter, which is always a good sign for group travel," Pantuso said. "While the quarter over quarter remained unchanged, the first quarter is usually a slower period for sales, but we expect sales of all sizes of coaches to pick up through the year."

Other survey results included:

- Sales of pre-owned motor-

coaches totaled 256, down from 268 last year.

- Shell sales totaled 14, up from five.

- Cummins had the highest number of engines in the new coaches, with 306, followed by Volvo with 104, Detroit with 112 and Mercedes with three.

- All of the new coaches had Allison transmissions.

NJ Transit green lights second year of MCI contract

DES PLAINES, ILL. — New Jersey Transit has agreed to proceed with the second year of its six-year contract with Motor Coach Industries for the manufacture and delivery of 185 commuter coaches valued at about \$92 million.

MCI was awarded the contract in November 2015 to provide New Jersey Transit with up to 1,222 commuter coaches over six years.

After the successful delivery of three pilot coaches and completion of New Jersey Transit in-service testing and evaluation, MCI began production for the first-year order in mid-2016.

However, in July, MCI was in-

formed that the New Jersey Transportation Trust Fund was about to run out of money. The fund foots the bill for New Jersey Transit and New Jersey Department of Transportation capital projects.

By far, the largest line item in the fund is the New Jersey Transit contract for MCI coaches. However, hundreds of other projects to replace bridges, resurface roads and renovate transit stations across New Jersey also were impacted by the funding dispute.

New Jersey legislators and Gov. Chris Christie reached an impasse in early July over a plan to raise fuel and sales taxes to provide the fund

with additional revenue.

That prompted Christie to issue an executive order declaring a state of emergency and directing the commissioner of the state Department of Transportation and the executive director of New Jersey Transit "to plan an immediate and orderly shutdown of all ongoing work that is funded by the TTFA."

That was quickly followed by an order from Dennis J. Martin, executive director of New Jersey Transit, that all contract work financed by the fund begin an orderly shutdown, including work by MCI on the commuter coaches.

The funding issue was finally

resolved in October with the approval of a fuel tax increase, allowing MCI to resume production of the commuter coaches.

While the contract was suspended for nearly three months, MCI was able to adjust production schedules and successfully deliver 96 commuter coaches to New Jersey Transit in 2016.

MCI fulfilled all year-one deliveries of 187 commuter coaches by the end of the first quarter 2017 and will commence delivery of year-two coaches starting in the third quarter 2017.

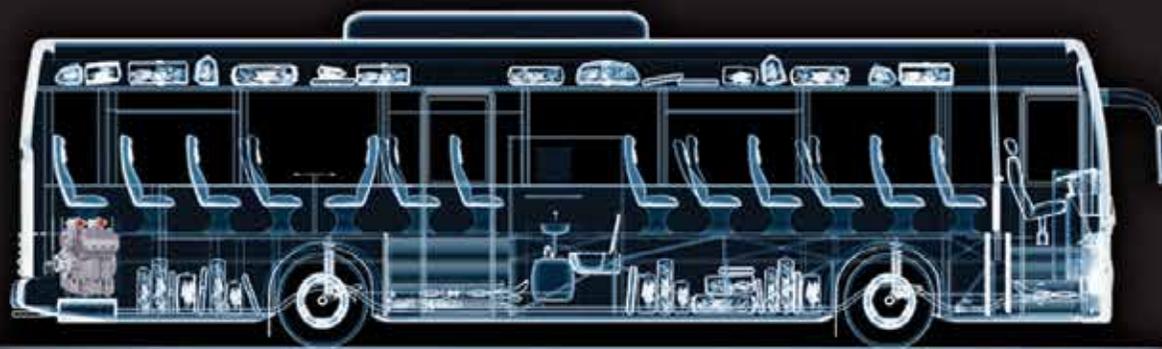
"MCI has a long history of working collaboratively with NJ

Transit," said Patrick Scully, MCI's executive vice president of sales and marketing. "MCI is proud to support their strategic initiative of replacing older buses with modern clean-diesel 45-foot commuter coaches that provide greater capacity, reliability, reduced emissions and lower operating costs, while providing passengers superior riding comfort."

The MCI commuter coaches are powered by clean diesel, with exhaust emissions reduced as required by the latest Clean Air Act amendments, and feature a 57-seat configuration that is Wi-Fi ready and seatbelt-equipped.

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THE DOCKET

Trucking group petitions Supreme Court to hear ELD case

GRAIN VALLEY, Mo. — An independent trucking association has petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court to review a lower court's ruling upholding a federal mandate that interstate trucks and buses convert to electronic logging devices.

The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association sued federal regulators last year, asking the

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit to overturn the ELD rule.

The association argued that requiring the use of ELDs violates drivers' Fourth Amendment right to privacy and protections against illegal search and seizure because it effectively calls for their locations to be tracked in real time.

The association argued that

employers could abuse the oversight and harass drivers.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, which issued the ELD rule, responded to the suit by saying, in essence, that the ends — highway safety — justify the means.

A three-judge panel of the appeals court ruled against OOIDA late last year, saying the ELD rule addresses the harassment issue by expressly limiting the scope of information that ELDs should track.

The judges also agreed with FMCSA's contention that trucking is considered a dangerous and a "pervasively regulated industry" under which the right against unreasonable search and seizure under the Fourth Amendment doesn't fully apply.

OOIDA filed a petition earlier this year asking the full Seventh Circuit appeals court to rehear the

case, but the court refused, leading the association to request that the Supreme Court review the case.

In its Supreme Court filing, OOIDA alleges that FMCSA failed to meet legal thresholds that would allow it to sidestep search and seizure protections in the Fourth Amendment.

The association claims that the Seventh Circuit ruling allows warrantless searches of millions of drivers without any restrictions on the ways the data collected by the ELDs can be used by any law enforcement agency.

This was the second time OOIDA sued the federal government over an ELD mandate. The first time, in 2011, the association successfully challenged the mandate by arguing that it didn't take potential driver harassment into account.

Todd Spencer, executive vice

president of OOIDA, told a trucking publication that at that time, the judges had been concerned about all of the arguments raised, not just harassment.

"In our previous case on this issue, the court ruled based on just one of our arguments — harassment," Spencer said. "This time, we have again raised several issues that should be taken seriously and we hope to have a full review by the court."

OOIDA also has been pushing its case against ELDs with the federal government, where Republican lawmakers favor rolling back regulations. However, Congress called for the ELD mandate in 2012 with broad Republican support, so it is unclear where they stand on the issue now.

FMCSA announced the ELD rule Dec. 10, 2015. It is scheduled to become effective on Dec. 18.

Texas to require ELDs in 2019

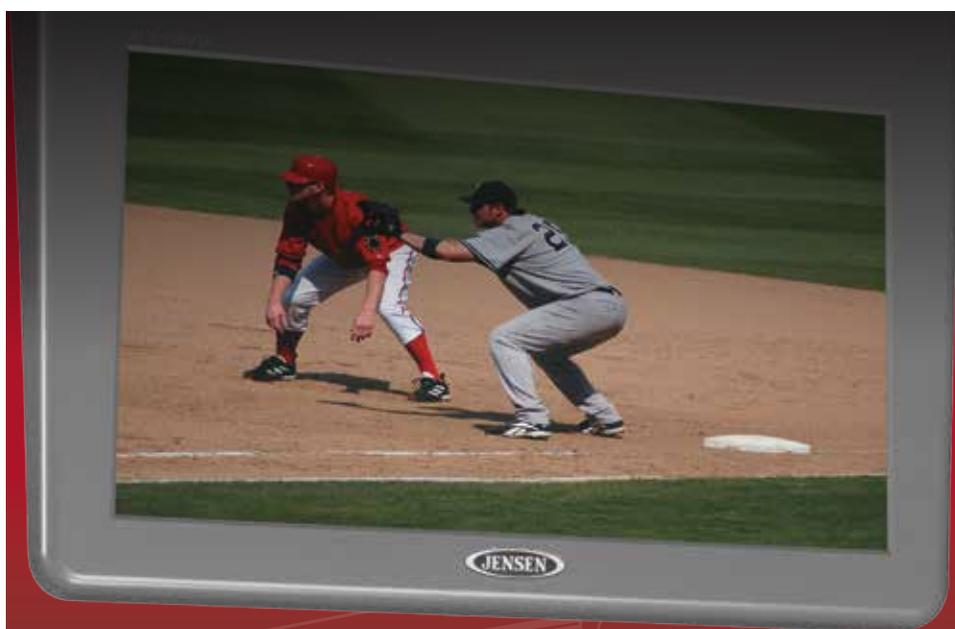
AUSTIN, Texas — Texas will require intrastate commercial motor vehicles to use electronic logging devices to record duty status beginning Dec. 19, 2019, almost exactly two years after a federal ELD mandate takes effect.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's ELD mandate begins on Dec. 18, 2017 and applies to interstate buses and

trucks.

Overdrive reports that Texas officials haven't released much information about the new regulations but they apparently will mirror the federal rule and require the same minimum specifications for ELDs.

Other states are expected to eventually follow suit and adopt their own ELD regulations.



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FMCSA working with partners to keep bus passengers safe

By Daphne Jefferson



Daphne Jefferson

Every day, millions of people travel by bus throughout the United States. We at the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) want to ensure that all of those passengers arrive safely to their destinations and travel safely back home.

FMCSA — along with our federal, state and local partners across the country — is conduct-

ing the 2017 National Passenger Safety Initiative. The objectives of this coordinated enforcement effort are to: remove unsafe buses and drivers from our roadways; improve passenger carrier safety compliance; and increase public awareness of commercial motor vehicle safety.

Here in Washington, D.C., I have witnessed first-hand how strategic and collaborative safety partnerships can improve our nation's roads. Motor coach inspectors and law enforcement officials from the United States Park Police, Metropolitan Police Department Motor Carrier Unit, Virginia

State Police, Fairfax County (Va.) Police, and Loudon County (Va.) Sheriff's Office joined FMCSA's Eastern Service Center, Virginia Division, Maryland Division, District of Columbia Division and several FMCSA Arizona Border Inspectors as part of a multi-agency task force.

Both at East Potomac Park and Maryland Avenue — just steps from the U.S. Capitol — and away from passengers, FMCSA and our safety partners conducted bus inspections from March 20-23 and April 3-5, 2017.

Buses found to have significant safety defects were placed out

of service, and those bus operators had to repair the affected vehicles before passengers could safely continue their journey.

Whether you're preparing to visit popular destinations like Washington, D.C., New York City, or San Francisco, or planning travel arrangements for your upcoming summer vacation, we encourage all potential bus passengers to download FMCSA's free Safer Bus mobile app or go online to Look Before You Book (both available at <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/>).

These tools allow consumers — before making a reservation and buying a ticket — to quickly

learn if a bus company under consideration is authorized to operate and whether it has a history of safe performance.

Our *Look Before You Book* website also provides bus passengers with safety tips on how to identify emergency equipment, get familiar with using emergency exits and be prepared in the event of an emergency.

I salute the dedicated FMCSA staff across the country, as well as our federal, state and local partners, for their collective efforts and tireless work towards saving lives on our nation's roads.

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Federal infrastructure funding plans on back burner

WASHINGTON — Prospects for a promised trillion-dollar federal infrastructure plan seem to be fading as the Trump administration grapples with other major issues such as health care and tax reform.

As of late last month, Congress was focused on passing legislation to keep the federal government open while President Donald Trump was talking about reviving a health care reform plan and unveiling a major tax overhaul proposal.

Meanwhile, infrastructure remained on the back burner.

"The timing of the process is still a little bit up in the air," DJ Gribbin, special assistant to the president for infrastructure policy, told the *Wall Street Journal*.

Trump made infrastructure funding one of the cornerstones of his election campaign, promising to deliver a plan to invest \$1 trillion to rebuild the nation's roads, bridges, airports, freight corridors and ports

within his first 100 days in office.

That 100-day period ended on April 30.

Various infrastructure-funding methods have been discussed, including fuel taxes and public-private partnerships.

Republican congressional leaders have said they plan on taking up an infrastructure bill this summer, while Democrats already have proposed a \$1 trillion plan.

Interest groups, including the

American Society of Civil Engineers, have been calling for immediate action on the issue, with the society giving the nation's infrastructure a near-failing grade earlier this year.

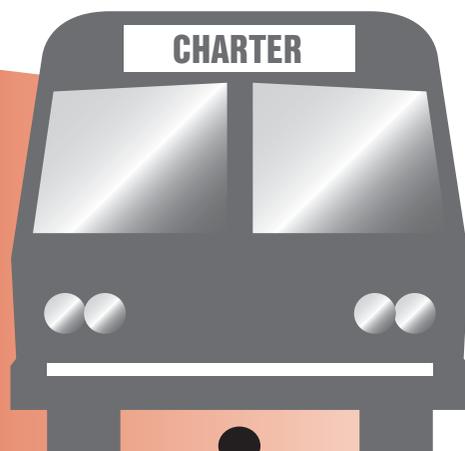
Some members of Congress are pushing for a long-term funding stream for the Highway Trust Fund as part of any tax-reform plan. The trust fund is used to help states pay for infrastructure projects.

Although there is agreement

by both political parties that infrastructure funding is important, methods of paying for it differ, with Democrats opposing private funding and Republicans against fuel-tax increases.

But Gribbin insisted in the *Journal* interview that fixing the country's roads and bridges remains a priority. "Infrastructure is one of the most important, and sort of most popular things we're doing right now."

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Beep-Beep! Read the fine print before choosing an ELD

By Sandy Johnson

Before Netflix and a thousand cable channels existed, there wasn't a kid on the street whenever the "Bugs Bunny Show" came on TV.

Who doesn't remember poor old Wile E. Coyote thinking he had a great idea with his newest Acme Company gadget?

He'd spend hours putting it all together. Only after it all went horribly wrong, and the Road Runner got away, did he read the fine print.

Carriers are trying to put it all together right now when it comes to electronic logging devices, which you're required to have by Dec. 18 in order to operate in the United States.

There's so much fine print involved that you need a giant Acme magnifying glass to read it, espe-

cially when it comes to e-logs and distance-based taxes. So here are six things you should know:

1. Neither the jurisdictions nor the organizations that manage IFTA and IRP certify, endorse or approve of any one specific ELD product or system. When a vendor says its product is "IFTA certified" or "IRP certified," ask for the official certificate from IFTA Inc. or IRP Inc. Or go to the IFTA and IRP websites and search for a list of certified e-logs. But save yourself some time, you won't find any. The minute you hear the word "certified," run like the Road Runner in the opposite direction.

2. Most vendors are not IFTA or IRP experts. I saw one vendor's video that claimed you could just print off a report, stuff it in an envelope and send it to the government. Voila! IFTA reporting is so, so easy. My dad had a saying when

something didn't work that it didn't cut the mustard. Word on the street is that there is a bunch of hot-dog ELD startups that are over-promising what their systems can do.

3. Even though GPS has been around for a while in the commercial motor vehicle industry, it is still in its infancy with the IFTA and IRP audit community. Many auditors have never done an audit using GPS data! In some jurisdictions, they will not accept GPS data and want your paper records.

4. If you have questions about GPS records or reporting requirements, go to the source. Talk to your jurisdiction's IFTA and/or IRP office. Ask to speak with an auditor to see what is acceptable to them and their jurisdiction. It's your name on the return, not the vendor's.

5. GPS overall is accurate and

reliable, but it's not perfect. A bunch of things have to happen before GPS data can be used for IFTA/IRP reporting, like checking it for missing points and making sure the distance is attributed to the right jurisdiction. The jurisdiction will expect that you have done this before submitting your return.

6. Do not — I repeat, do not — rely solely on a summary of the distance-by-jurisdiction report from your GPS vendor. An auditor will expect you to produce the original GPS in the event of an audit.

You may not realize it, but that is a huge amount of data to store and manage. If your vendor tells you they will store it for you, make sure they are storing it according to the IFTA/IRP rules and not FMCSA requirements for hours-of-service data. And be sure to ask

them if there is a charge for storage and/or retrieval in the event of an audit.

The U.S. ELD mandate is only seven months away. If you're looking at ELD vendors now, ask about IFTA, IRP and other distance-based reports in addition to hours-of-service compliance.

And if you're waiting on Acme to deliver a crate full of gadgets, good luck. Be sure to read the fine print before you put it all together.

Sandy Johnson has been managing IFTA, IRP, and other fleet taxes for more than 25 years. She is the author of the free book, "7 Things You Need to Know About Fleet Taxes," and operates northstarfleet.com, which provides vehicle tax and license compliance services for trucking operations. She can be reached at 877-860-8025 or info@northstarfleet.com.

A wave of 'Big Data' is coming to the vehicle industry

By Thomas D. DeMatteo

We have all heard or seen phrases like "Big Data," the "Internet of Things," "V2V," "AVs," and "Petabytes." So let's get some perspective as to what this new nomenclature means to the vehicle industry.

By 2020, only two and a half years from now, 75 percent of all cars shipped globally will be able to connect to the Internet to provide entertainment, diagnostics, navigation, software updates and potentially V2V (vehicle-to-vehicle) communications, according to *Technology Now*.

The amount of data that will be accumulated is staggering. One

autonomous vehicle (AV) will generate 1 gigabyte of data per second or 2 petabytes per vehicle per year.

For context, an estimate of all of the data in all of the academic research libraries in the United States totals 2 petabytes.

McKinsey & Co. researchers suggest that Big Data could be a \$750 billion business by 2030.

Big Data will be used in the following ways: to generate revenue through direct monetization by selling products, features or services to customers, including tailored advertising and selling data; to reduce costs by gathering field data for research and development and by analyzing usage

patterns, repair and downtime; and to increase safety and security by collecting collision avoidance data and forwarding warnings in real time.

However, when looking at value created by Big Data, the question becomes, for whom is it creating value, the manufacturer or the consumer?

McKinsey researchers provide some guidelines to ethically handle consumer information:

- Never use data against your customers, but rather in their service. Frequency of interaction is critical, as customers do not want to be stressed by continuous questions or propositions.
- Provide clarity and education

on what kinds of data are to be used, why and how (e.g., anonymized vs. personalized), with a simple experience in the "terms and conditions" acceptance.

- Do not misuse and do not allow potential third parties to misuse data.

- Aggressively promote data security and respect of privacy, and be clear on "legal aspects."

- Give customers the choice of what to share and what not to share and for which purposes (i.e., customers need to be in control of their own data); periodically remind customers that they can revise the parameters of data sharing.

- Make gathered data available

to customers.

At some point, we should all be asking who owns the data captured by the vehicles and the downstream and upstream networks that feed the system.

On a recent road trip with my vehicle, I always entered "find nearest Starbucks locations." It won't be long before I see Starbucks pop-up ads on my dashboard monitor as BMW and Starbucks mine Big Data.

Thomas D. DeMatteo is chief legal officer, general counsel and secretary at ABC Companies, which provides new and used motorcoaches, parts and service. He can be reached at TDeMatteo@abc-companies.com.

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Computers, websites might just bring us new business

By Dave Millhouser

We almost made it back intact. The boss had launched me east on a Colorado-to-North Carolina round trip in a Scenicruiser whose clutch was slipping in fourth gear.

"Only a great driver can make this trip, and we don't have time to 'clutch' the bus," Joe said.

The one accurate word in that sentence was "only," as I was the only driver available.

The 'cruiser made it to Greensboro and back to Amarillo before the slipping clutch limited us to 25 mph. In ye olden days one could roll under a bus with a three-quarter-inch wrench and crank the clutch fingers tight. I locked that sucker up, then "rode steel."

That's a euphemism for roaring down the road with a clutch you couldn't disengage, double clutching without a clutch, trying desperately to avoid stopping. If you came to an actual halt, you started the bus in gear and hoped for the best.

We limped in from Amarillo to the garage, when Joe marched up and said, "We need you for one more move. Only a great driver

can make this trip, and we don't have time to 'clutch' the bus."

I was grumpily climbing into the driver's seat when, totally unexpectedly, my pal Leon rolled into the lot with an empty coach.

Leon's trip had been canceled, and he and his Eagle were available to save my bussy bacon. If we had known he was nearby, everyone would have been spared the spectacle of me muttering unkind words while staggering sadly back towards the bus.

With no pay phone nearby to give us hope, Leon had just headed home.

Back then, on the road, our primary method of communication was collect phone calls. Joe was phenomenal at guessing our location, but he wasn't perfect, and we often weren't sure where buses and drivers were.

A major reason the nonprofit we worked for abandoned the bus program was deadhead mileage often necessitated by lack of communication.

Fast forward, and by the 1970s some companies had dispatch radio, which one operator said

made his fleet effectively 10 percent larger because he could use coaches more efficiently.

Along came cellphones, GPS and other electronic innovation. Both charter and scheduled operators are able to use these resources to utilize their fleets more efficiently than in the past.

That's a major step forward in an industry that's required to invest heavily in equipment that is often used seasonally.

Getting the most "moves" out of a finite fleet was often accomplished by artful dispatch. If your operations folks were really good, you did more work with fewer buses.

The key to making money with a \$600,000 coach, built to travel 150,000 miles a year, is using that hardware a lot.

There's controversy around the new leasing rule precisely because our industry, particularly small and midsized carriers, need to be able to use coaches efficiently. We can't have one carrier turning business away while another has buses sitting idle.

Regardless of how that shakes out, one key to our future is likely

to be computers. Lots of things are looming on the horizon, and if history teaches anything, some will work, some will not.

The point is that we need to be paying attention and experimenting (but in ways that minimize risk). Many companies kept parallel paper dispatch records while trying out computers.

Brokers are a mixed blessing so far, but technology and social media are sorting them out. New websites are popping up that create bus movements in response to events.

Not only are they assembling groups of people heading to concerts, athletic events and political rallies, they are creating new business. Software replaces group leaders in creating both the idea and reality of a coach trip.

Just as Uber and Lyft have revolutionized urban transit, we can be certain that websites are going to do the same for the coach business. They have the ability to make our current efforts far more efficient, but more significantly, they have the potential to create new business.

People will use coaches in new,

and unforeseen, ways because websites make it easy (and hopefully during our slow season).

The trick for our industry is going to be sorting the wheat from the chaff, and (as you have come to expect) I'm long on questions and short on suggestions.

I have a few, though. Try lots of things, but don't become dependent on any single one. Maintain existing customer relationships while trying new things. Make sure you get paid in money, not promises, and get feedback from other operators.

There is some risk in all this, but if we don't explore down this path, our industry will likely shrink into irrelevance.

We can't just mutter Luddite musings in hopes that Leon will show up to save us.

Dave Millhouser is a bus industry marketing consultant and freelance writer. Contact him by email at Davemillhouser@gmail.com.



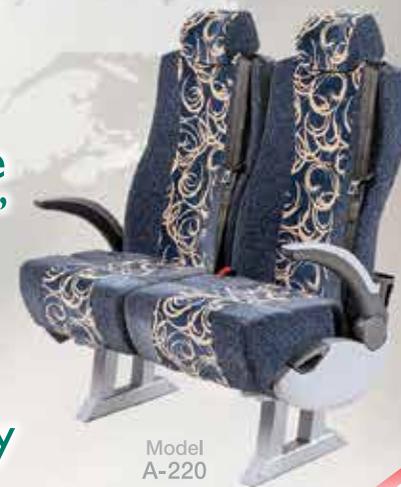
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Here are some items to add to your marketing toolbox

By Christian Riddell
Motorcoach Marketing Council



Christian Riddell

Marketing is a big umbrella. Everything from websites to T-shirts falls under it, and sometimes it can be difficult to know where to start.

As I work with more and more transportation companies around the country, I consistently see the need for a marketing toolbox that makes it easy for companies to quickly access what they need to effectively advertise their business.

In order to set companies up for success, it's important that they have the following things in place, regardless of the medium they are using.

A logo and artwork

I would say that most of the companies I work with have a logo of some sort. While some have invested in a company to design it, most have had it around for some

time and can't really remember who built it or when.

Your logo is an important foundation of your brand and is used in almost all advertising to ensure that you are recognized by customers and potential customers.

While most of you can check the box when it comes to having a logo, I'd be willing to bet that a lot of you don't have it in all of the formats that you need. (It never fails that just about the time you get all of your logos in a folder, someone will request something you don't have.)

So, before you do anything else, it's important that you have all of your logo files in three formats: full color, grayscale and black and white. When it comes to logos, colors, or lack thereof, matter. And if you're wondering what types of files you should have to cover all of your bases, here are the essentials:

JPEG files — These are traditional photo images of your logo. JPEGs are probably the most common "image" file and something that many companies will request when working with your company's marketing. These images should be saved in multiple sizes because

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JPEGs do not scale well.

This means that if you have a small logo file and you try to blow it up to put it on a banner, it will become pixelated and unreadable. I like having three sizes of each color in JPEG format: one that's very large (a minimum of 24 inches at its widest point), as well as a medium and small version. (As a reference point, I like the smallest one to be only three or four inches at its widest point.)

EPS files — Although these aren't used as often, they're very helpful when you are doing Web advertising and graphic design work. The primary difference between these files and JPEGs is that they are saved without a background, allowing you to place them over the top of other images without that frustrating white box around your logo.

Like JPEGs, EPS files do not scale well, so you'll want to have

them in the same colors and sizes as the JPEG files.

Creation files — Because every designer is different, these files may be called vector files, AI files or PSD files. They'll probably be the most frustrating files you have to work with because it's likely you will not be able to open them.

Chances are good you'll be able to see the file, but when you click the open button, the "what program would you like to open this file with" dialog box will pop up. Even though you may not be able to open them, the files have significant value to you as a company because they're traditionally scalable to any size without degradation.

One pro tip: Ask the designers who help you make this to be sure to embed or outline the font *before* they send you the art. This will ensure that you do not run into a designer down the road trying to match a font and only being able to "get close."

You'll want these files when you're doing high-end design work, as well as any other work that requires large sizes such as bus wraps, billboards and signage.

Coach images

This is another box that most companies may think can easily be checked, but I am always surprised with just how incomplete company photo libraries really are. To have a well-rounded image library, you want to have some pictures in each of the following categories:

• **Straight on side of the coach.** While it sounds simple, this photo is a "go to" for a lot of marketing venues. Get one of every type of vehicle you have.

• **Interiors.** Frankly, the interior of a modern motorcoach is more comfortable than many airplanes I fly on these days. We have an opportunity to educate the buying public by capturing, by class of vehicle, what is available. Get detail shots of the video system, air vents, overhead luggage space, seat belts, restroom and anything else that highlights the selling points of your various vehicles.

• **Exteriors.** Photographing your coaches in picturesque locations is a powerful marketing tool, and you definitely want some of these in your toolbox. It's also a good idea to take

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11 ►



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Passenger safety

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

We also appreciate the bus operators and drivers who are responsible and committed to transporting their passengers safely. All of them are true champions for safety.

Daphne Jefferson is Deputy Administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety/look-you-book/look-you-book>

Obituary: Steven Marion, a 19-year veteran of MCI

MANHEIM, Pa. — Steven Marion, director of customer solutions in the Northeast for Motor Coach Industries, has died. He was 61.

Marion had a 19-year career with MCI, where he was responsible for supervising the company's Technical Solutions Managers (TSMs) in 25 states. TSMs provide operators with training and troubleshooting expertise on various systems and new technologies

on MCI and Setra coaches.

Marion was highly respected by his peers and customers for his knowledge, dedication and commitment to helping them.

"We affectionately called Steve 'Crittter' because he always had a solution when others got stuck," said Kevin Keith, a longtime colleague and MCI's national customers solutions director, private sector. "He always put customers' needs first."

Marion was born in Ithaca, N.Y., and received his bachelor's degree from Binghamton University's Harpur College in 1978. After graduation, he managed Poyer Orchards and Equipment in Ithaca and went into the motorcoach industry as director of maintenance at Ithaca's Swarthout Coaches. He joined MCI in 1998.

Marion, who lived in Manheim, is survived by his wife Lisa, son Christopher, daughter Heath-

er, granddaughter Michaela and mother Doris Marion. Contributions in Marion's memory may be sent to the Humane League of Lancaster County, 2195 Lincoln Highway East, Lancaster, PA 17602.



Steven Marion

Marketing Minute

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

pictures of special features that make your coaches convenient for passengers. From luggage bays to wheelchair lifts, capture detail shots and put them in the toolbox.

• **Smiling, happy people.** Once you check the box on the first three, start thinking about this one. Building a library of smiling, happy people on, or near, your coaches is a remarkable marketing tool. These photos say more for your business than any testimonial, caption or text ever can. A well-executed driver photo program is a powerful way to make this happen.

Company images

These are probably the most overlooked images, and they're super important because they allow a customer or potential customer to engage with and begin to feel comfortable with a company.

• **Key Staff Members.** Having photos of your staff in your toolbox is important. Using them on your website and other avenues will give you a powerful advantage over companies who don't use them. While headshots are the traditional photos used, we have seen some that we really like that are more informal but still tastefully done.

• **Driver photos.** Despite the fact that drivers are the face of most

bus companies for their customers, there is always a noticeable lack of these same faces in our marketing efforts. Taking photos of friendly, professionally dressed drivers doing what they do best is good for the customer aspect of your business and it's a great tool for recruiting additional drivers as well.

• **Facility Photos.** Do you have a facility that you are proud of? If yes, get some photos, start using them in your promotional efforts and keep them in your toolbox.

Video

Video is one of the most important marketing methods in today's world. From social media posts to

television spots, video is driving more buying decisions than ever before.

Building video is often seen as being intimidating and expensive. And while it's true that it can be both of those things, it doesn't necessarily have to be. From cellphones to GoPro cameras, there are lots of inexpensive ways to capture video clips that can be put together to make promotional videos of almost any sort.

Don't let "getting started" get in the way of getting it done. Start by building clips you can use, even if they're short.

Once again, drivers can be a great resource here to help you get

video of your coaches, staff, facility and even your passengers.

Here's the thing: a well-executed and well-stocked marketing toolbox will make marketing simple, quick and easy.

Whether you are using the suite of GoMotorcoach tools, our new Do It For You program or employing some other method to sell more charters, to more people, for more money, we're positive this toolbox will save you time and effort — two things that are in high demand for all of us.

For more information about the Motorcoach Marketing Council and its programs, go to www.motorcoachmarketing.org.

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Pedestrians

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

weather, fuel prices, vehicle miles traveled and the amount of time people spend walking,” said GHSA, a safety advocacy and lobbying organization representing state highway safety offices.

Motor vehicle miles traveled increased 3.3 percent last year, the report said.

A more recent contributing factor to the rise in pedestrian accidents may be the growing use of smart phones to access wireless data while walking and driving, GHSA said.

That is one factor the motorcoach industry is seeing — more pedestrians who aren't aware of the traffic around them.

“People are looking down at their phones. They have headphones on. They are not paying any attention,” Wiltgen said.

Both National Interstate and Lancer have investigated accidents involving pedestrians who stepped off sidewalks into the sides of stopped buses.

The companies also are seeing increases in collisions involving bicyclists.

“Pedestrians are more prevalent,” Crescenzo said. “There are bicycle rental programs in a lot of

cities. There is more access to pedestrian accommodations and bicycle trails. When people leave those areas, perhaps there is a false sense of protection.”

Although motorcoach drivers are trained to watch for people, there is only so much they can do to avoid inattentive pedestrians. And most of their driving is in high-risk environments.

“There are sporting events, music events, parking lots at destinations,” Crescenzo said. “The way buses are lined up at a destination may contribute to a pedestrian hit. When a driver is taking a group to a destination, he should scope out the parking challenges — where boarding and alighting is done.

“We have had situations where a bus pulls up to a museum parking area with middle-school kids. The doors opens, the kids run off through the parking lot and one is hit by a car. What is the liability there? There may be liability if the bus is parked in an unsafe place or there is not management of passengers.”

Busy urban intersections are another danger zone, Crescenzo said.

“The light will change and people will start walking between vehicles. If you haven't checked your mirrors, people may be around the bus. It is very impor-



Pedestrian accidents, many caused by inattentive walkers, account for a growing share of motorcoach incidents and insurance claims, industry insurers say.

tant that there is a full view and the driver is aware of blind spots around the bus.

“The other thing is the swing of the bus — being aware of the rear swing on a turn is critical,” he said.

Back-up cameras are valuable tools for avoiding accidents, Wiltgen said. The 2014 NHTSA data show that the back of the vehicle struck 5.5 percent of pedestrians killed in bus accidents.

About 1.3 percent of auto/pedestrian fatalities resulted from rear impacts.

Event data recorders and cameras can prove a driver was not at fault in a pedestrian incident, she said.

“We had a kid run out from between parked cars — he was wearing dark clothes and there is nothing the driver could have done. Without the video that would not have been so evident.

“In a lot of situations event recorders are the only defense that operators have,” Wiltgen said. “We have a subsidy program to help our customers defray the cost of that equipment.”

A fatal 2013 collision proved the value of data recording for a Lancer policyholder.

A man who turned out to be highly intoxicated dashed in front of a motorcoach. The recorder confirmed that the driver was operating at the speed limit then braked and swerved as the man entered the street.

“The quick response of the coach driver and her company, together with the efforts of Lancer's claims professionals, prevented litigation and resulted in no claim payments,” the company told customers in a safety newsletter.

Lancer has advised its policyholders that it is important to identify and be aware of their surroundings, especially where large groups of people congregate.

There is a common error in accidents involving pedestrians, Crescenzo said: “Assuming the pedestrian will yield to the bus. Clearly, that is not a prudent assumption.”

He listed three issues bus and coach drivers must remember:

- The size and weight of the vehicle requires that additional time must be allotted for every driving maneuver.
- Every professional driver should be trained to recognize that pedestrians often fail to yield to buses.

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Bus & Motorcoach Academy

Former UMA CEO Victor Parra joins M&A firm as advisor

MEMPHIS — Former United Motorcoach Association President and CEO Victor Parra has joined Corporate Finance Associates in an advisory capacity.

CFA, an investment banking service firm, works with middle-market companies by providing acquisition, divestiture and transition planning guidance.

While CFA offers mergers and

acquisitions advisory services to a wide range of industries, Parra's role will be focused in the bus and motorcoach area.

"Before accepting the role as an advisor, I reached out to several of CFA's past clients and they all spoke very highly of the work that they provided," Parra said. "It is very important to me that they have a good reputation.

"As you would imagine, I have many dear friends in the motorcoach industry and it is vital to me that they get the best advice possible. Many of these folks are like family to me, and I want to make sure that they are well taken care of."

Parra spent 19 years as presi-

dent and CEO of UMA before retiring at the end of March.

Brad Lindsay, managing director of CFA MidSouth in Memphis, praised Parra for his knowledge and understanding of the motorcoach industry.

"Vic has dedicated the last 19 years to serving this industry and

the passion he has for the business really shows," Lindsay said.

CFA helps motorcoach operators that are looking to grow through acquisition, are seeking to understand the value of their company, are transitioning their business to family members or are selling to a third party.

Charter Bus Lines, Traxx merge

VANCOUVER, B.C. — Canadian companies Charter Bus Lines and Traxx Coachlines merged in a private transaction with the assistance of Corporate Finance Associates. The terms were not disclosed.

Charter Bus Lines is the largest independent privately owned motorcoach operator in British Columbia. Founded in 1949, the company provides charter bus services from the Pacific Northwest cities of Victoria, Vancouver, Seattle, Whistler and Williams Lake to both Canadian and U.S. destinations.

Traxx Coachlines, which has more than 85 years of experience

and background in the transportation business, provides ground transportation in Western Canada and the Pacific Northwest. It was one of the first Canadian companies to receive approval to work with Chinese travel agencies in bringing that country's tourists to North America.

"The companies are very excited about the synergy that a merger brings," said Brad Lindsay, managing director of CFA MidSouth in Memphis. "They will leverage the strengths and experience of each, which will play an important role in the growth of the new entity as a dominant player in their market."



Four Trailways drivers shared Driver of the Year honors. They are, from left, Toby Cluney of Burlington Trailways (scheduled route), Martin Martinez of Pacific Coachways Trailways (charter and tour), Jon Pattee of Orange Belt Trailways (charter and tour) and Terry Martin of Burlington Trailways (charter and tour).



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DoD inspections

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Trailways in District Heights, Md. “Because motorcoach companies are closely alike, DoD approval and other certifications give your company a special place amongst all companies and could be a deciding factor when a group has to make a choice of their motorcoach provider.”

The Defense Department’s list of approved “bus, van and limo carriers” includes 450 contacts, with some representing additional locations for carriers operating from multiple states.

DTMO administrators did not respond to an interview request prior to deadline. Their website still advised that carriers seeking Department of Defense approval must “undergo rigorous onsite safety inspections that include facility, terminal, and equipment every two years per the Passenger Safety Inspection Program. Carriers will be subject to unscheduled safety inspections to monitor continued compliance.”

Another section of the website added, “DTMO has embarked on a major initiative to transform the Defense Travel Enterprise. As our strategy and way ahead, this effort is designed to improve delivery of travel services, maximize policy understanding and compliance, improve cost-effectiveness across the Defense Travel Enterprise, provide a positive customer experience that drives high satisfaction, and maximize control and visibility into travel spend.”

A 1985 charter airline crash

led to federal legislation requiring commercial carrier inspections for military travel. The crash killed 248 members of the U.S. Army’s 101st Airborne Division shortly after takeoff from Gander, Newfoundland.

The DC-8 attempted to take off despite iced wings, passenger weight miscalculations and several mechanical difficulties. A subsequent investigation by the General Accounting Office found that charter air carriers with military contracts exhibited more safety issues than commercial airlines overall.

Three-quarters of military charter airlines were rated in the bottom 50 percentiles in national inspections.

CSS earned the first contract for the Passenger Safety Inspection Program and continued to win the contracts that followed. The current \$4.5-million, five-year contract was awarded on June 5, 2013.

“Every government agency retains the right to not exercise an option or continue a contract,” Janczewski said.

Technically, non-renewal is justified when it is “in the best interests of the government.”

“We respect that,” Janczewski said. “We have been in government contracting for nearly 30 years, so we get it. We may not like it, but we understand it.”

She does not believe the changing of presidential administrations in Washington prompted the decision.

“I don’t have that feeling,” she said. “It always is incumbent on every agency to review all procurements then decide to continue,

not continue or do it in-house. Everybody is under tight pressure.”

CSS had conducted more than 40,000 vehicle inspections, 20,000 corporate inspections and 4,000 spot inspections for the Department of Defense, Janczewski said.

The reviews investigated compliance with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations and issues unique to military operations, she said.

“The military also had us do roadside driver and vehicle inspections at military bases when they were doing troop movements.”

DoD carrier status is not used as a marketing tool by Vandalia Bus Lines, but it did view PSIP feedback as a valuable management tool, said Dennis Streif, vice president of the Caseyville, Ill., operator.

“We always liked it when Consolidated Safety came and did their

inspections for the DoD,” Streif said. “Even though we think we operate top-notch, it’s always good to have another set of eyes come in periodically and look over your facility, records and vehicle. We’re definitely going to miss them.”

Carriers expressed concerns that the quantity and quality of inspections will decline without PSIP.

“DoD would get to you every 24 months,” Streif said. “Some people can get under DOT’s radar for quite a while — if you are a small operator and haven’t had any accidents, you could go for five or six years without an inspection.”

Scott added that the DoD rating system was better because it ranked operators on a scale of 1 to 5, rather than satisfactory, conditional or unsatisfactory.

CSS said it would continue to provide motor carrier safety reviews for its other clients, such as

the GoGround/NCAA partnership for collegiate athletics and primary and secondary municipal school districts.

“We have still got the same inspection crew out there,” Janczewski said. “We are still excited to be here and hopefully we will be back with the military.”

Ken Presley, vice president of industry relations and chief operating officer at the United Motorcoach Association, praised the professionals at CSS for the many years of service they provided the motorcoach industry.

“The lives saved and crashes that never happened reached far beyond the military and for many operations the Number 1 rating was a source of pride,” Presley said. “The members at CSS were always more than just ‘government contractors,’ with their advice and guidance the hallmark of professionalism.”

Calendar

June 2017

2-3 2017 Spring Fling, Museum of Bus Transportation, Hershey, Pa. Info: www.buseum.org

20-23 Pennsylvania Bus Association Annual Meeting,

Radisson, Corning, N.Y. Info: www.pabus.org

22-25 New England Bus Association Annual Meeting, Sea Crest Beach Hotel, Cape Cod, Mass. Info: www.newenglandbus.org

July 2017

29-Aug 2 SCMA-GMOA-

AMA Regional Meeting 2017, Sheraton Arlington, Arlington, Texas, Info: www.southcentral-motorcoach.org

August 2017

6-9 IMG Strategic Alliance Meeting, Nashville, Tenn. Info: www.imgcoach.com

Winning driver

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

for about 10 years. Before that, he drove a semi-truck pulling a 53-foot flatbed trailer.

So when it came time to back up a 45-foot motorcoach in a serpentine course in the driver competition, it was no problem.

“That was easy for me,” Davis said.

Other skills tested during the competition included alley backing, 90-degree turn, offset alley, parallel parking, stop line and on-board evaluation. The competition began with a 50-question written examination testing the drivers’ knowledge of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.

Twenty-six drivers representing 16 companies in 21 states and two Canadian provinces competed in the inaugural event, which was held Feb. 28.

The biggest difference, Davis said, between driving a tractor-trailer and a motorcoach: people.

“In a tractor-trailer, you’re just dealing with your cargo, but when you’re driving a motorcoach, you have lives in your hands,” Davis said.

Davis said he’s been accident and ticket free for 10 years driving a motorcoach, which he attributes to training, learning and knowing what’s going on around his coach.

“You have to look as far as your eye can see,” Davis said. “And you’ve got to know your surroundings, that’s what (is) going

through my head when I’m out there driving every day.”

When possible, he said he also tries to avoid traffic by traveling roads less traveled, “because it doesn’t have to be you to cause a problem, it can be somebody around you.”

Davis estimates he’s driven about 500,000 miles as a motorcoach driver and said he drove more than 1 million miles in tractor-trailers.

He had just a few days to prepare for the competition. House said his mother wanted Davis to go for all he does for AT&T. House then scrambled to get Davis entered into the competition and gave him a regulatory book to study.

It all paid off.

Davis was assigned to drive an Irizar coach, which he’s never driven before. AT&T’s 21-coach fleet includes MCIs, Setras and Van Hools.

Again, no problem.

House said Davis has taken some good-natured ribbing from colleagues about his title, and has dished it out, too.

“He’s asking them to call him Grand Champion,” House said with a laugh.

And on a recent five-coach trip to Chicago, with Davis as lead driver, the other drivers arrived that morning and stood in line at attention for inspection, House said chuckling.

On a former trip to the Medieval Times jousting show in Myr-

tle Beach, S.C., where guests get paper crowns as part of the experience, Davis had been photographed wearing his crown. A colleague recently modified the photo to have the crown read “Grand Champion,” House said.

All fun aside, House is thrilled to have Davis behind the wheel, both for his driving aptitude and people skills.

“He just gets what we’re doing,” House said. “He understands what it is that we’re trying to do, in customer service, in buying new equipment. He buys into the whole deal and not everybody does that.”

Plenty of drivers can hold a steering wheel, “but about one out of every 20 comes along that can get along with 56 people day in and day out and do what you need them to do,” House said.

Davis said he treats people the way he would want to be treated.

“You can’t let anything upset you,” he said.

House said Davis should be proud of his accomplishment. While the prize money was nice, House underscored the recognition for his driver.

“I told him no amount of money would replace the people you were standing in front of. You were standing in front of some pretty heavy hitters in the bus industry up on that stage,” House said of the honor of being recognized during the UMA Leadership Awards Celebration at Expo.

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