

## In the Trucking Industry, VR Simulator Training Moves to Center Stage, Catalyst for New Hires

*Virtual reality has emerged as a training mainstay for high-risk professions. In trucking, says ATS's John Kearney, simulation is attracting much-needed new candidates to the profession and turning out better prepared, safer drivers.*

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. ([PRWEB](#)) December 31, 2019 -- Recent research from Brandon Hall Group shows that the use of virtual reality (VR) as a training modality is growing rapidly in “high-consequence” industries—those in which operator mistakes can cause significant property damage or fatalities or both. According to the study, nearly a third of surveyed companies in such industries identified VR tools as a top learning priority over the next 24 months—a 60% increase over two years.<sup>1</sup> “We’re definitely seeing that in the motor freight industry,” says [John Kearney, CEO, Advanced Training Systems LLC. Kearney, whose company is a leading designer and manufacturer of virtual simulators for driver training, among other applications](#), adds, “Trucking companies, driving schools, and the general public are increasingly aware that simulation training—that is to say, virtual reality—helps produce drivers who are better prepared to deal with any situation they might encounter.”

Simulation, says Kearney, solves a classic training dilemma: how do you safely prepare trainees to deal with dangerous or extraordinary situations? Once dismissed as a toy, VR has been objectively shown to offer measurable improvement in the performance of tasks as disparate as flying advanced jets and handling dangerous chemicals.<sup>2</sup> This, Kearney notes, makes it a natural for truck drivers. The Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics, cites vehicle crashes as the leading cause of workplace deaths in the United States. Over 90% of such accidents, according to the National Highway Safety Administration, are at least partly due to driver error.<sup>3</sup> Training with simulators is relatively new to the trucking industry compared to other professions and Kearney’s firm has been at the forefront of advocating for simulation to be a training standard among the trucking industry for years. “Pilots are required to train via simulation—professional truck drivers should too. With all the high technology, this is a new era of CDLs.”

In addition to enhancing driver safety performance, simulation, by reducing the required amount of on-the-road training students must spend with a single instructor, and expediting instruction success, is helping attract more women to the truck driving field. [Advanced Training Systems helped Fox Business report on the Women in Trucking story in December 2019](#). According to the American Trucking Associations, the number of women truckers in the U.S. has increased by about a third since 2003.<sup>4</sup> Through community college-based commercial driver’s license programs, which increasingly include simulator training, the industry is also actively recruiting new drivers from the ranks of industries where employment is sagging, such as laid-off miners in Appalachia.<sup>5</sup>

Beyond reduced training cost and improved safety preparedness, notes Kearney, simulation offers long-term financial benefits to trucking companies. A trainer for an oilfield service company in Texas, for example, says simulator training has resulted in both fewer rollovers and fewer overall accidents. A Canadian bulk commodity hauler reports that by teaching correct driving technique, simulation training has reduced the company’s fuel cost by an average of 30%.<sup>6</sup>

“All in all,” says Kearney, “simulation training is doing two important things for trucking. First, it is producing better-trained, safer, and more cost-effective drivers. Second, by helping open trucking to people who might not previously have considered it as a profession, it is providing at least a partial solution to a chronic driver

shortage. My colleagues and I are proud of our work, and delighted to do our part to help this great—and essential—industry.”

About Advanced Training Systems:

Advanced Training Systems (ATS) is a high-tech simulator technology and engineering firm that has revolutionized the design and manufacture of advanced training systems to improve training and create safer drivers. ATS, the holder of multiple patents in high-tech training using simulation, has as its mission to provide this cutting-edge adaptive training to all involved in the transportation industry at an affordable cost, resulting in safer drivers/ operators. For more information, visit [www.atstrainingsystems.com](http://www.atstrainingsystems.com).

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