



How To Develop a **Driver Brand**



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There is No Driver Shortage

When you filled up your tank, was there gas at the station? When you went to the grocery store, were there cucumbers in the produce section? When you bought something on Amazon, did it make it to your door on time?

Tanks, shelves, and front porches are full in America. The law of supply and demand has not yet been repealed. The cost of goods will increase as the cost of driver wages drive up prices. There will always be someone there to deliver the next load. YOU have a driver shortage, but the industry does not.

We've worked with fleets that have done nothing but grow since the Great Recession. It's because they invested in their drivers. Operations, pay structure, lanes, and sales were all aligned to put the driver first. Our smart, creative marketing folks package all the good stuff they were doing for drivers and created a new driver brand statement.

The good news is that you're already doing a lot of great things for drivers – you just need to be clearer and more concise on how you specifically invest in drivers. This EBook shares our secret sauce to create a unique driver brand that grows your fleet.



What is a Driver Brand?

A brand is what drivers think of when they hear your company name. Your company has a reputation amongst drivers. Every interaction your drivers have with dispatch, management, payroll, secretaries, management, and other drivers shapes your driver brand.

You can try to steer your brand through marketing efforts, but social media and review boards have given the power to your drivers to define your Driver Brand. Their perception is your reality – fair or not. You need to start by assessing where your Driver Brand is today.

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What is your Driver Brand Today?

Start by asking your current drivers. They are the ones out there who define your driver brand. Ask these open-ended questions:

- Thank you for driving for us for so many years. Why do you stick around?
- What do you like most about the job?
- What satisfaction does the job give you?
- Why do you show up on time every day?
- How have you driven X number of miles without an accident?
- What does our company do well? How about Operations? Safety? Management?
- What should be the top priority of this company to make drivers' lives better?

Then, conduct exit interviews with drivers who recently left you. Some examples of exit interview questions include:

- Why did you leave the company?
- What suggestions for improvement to you have for us?
- Did you talk with anyone about your concerns, problems, issues? If so, who? What happened? Did they try to fix things? If not, why not?
- Would you recommend this company to your friends as a good place to work? Why or why not?
- What did you like most about your job?
- What did you like least?



Process to Create Your Driver Brand Statement

We use our simple formula to create your Driver Brand Statement:

1. Define Driver Personas
2. Define Pain Points
3. Define Competing Alternatives
4. Why Should A Driver Work For You?

1. Define Driver Personas

A Driver Persona is a fictional, generalized representation of your ideal driver. You probably have a handful at your company such as: OTR Randy Runner, Regional family-man Frank, Local Larry, Hustlin' Owner/Operator. Give them nicknames like the ones above to make them more real. It's much deeper than a class CDL-A license holder 50 miles from your terminal. Use the results from your stay interviews to specifically define your current driver demographics (gender, social class, age, and location) and psychographics (values, motivations, and personality).

Regional Family Man Frank
Male, Age 45 Denver, CO
Married, family at home



Local Larry
Male, Age 25
Albuquerque, NM
Unmarried



[Download Our Driver Persona Templates](#)

Process to Create Your Driver Brand Statement

2. Define Pain Points

Drivers will only consider joining your company if you solve a problem they have at their current employer. You need to define what 2 or 3 pain points you're strongest at solving. Then, focus your marketing message to prove how you specifically solve those problems for prospective drivers. Avatar has conducted over 2,000 driver exit interviews and the summary of the most common responses were:

I don't make **enough money**.

I'm not satisfied with my **home time**.

I don't like my **supervisor**.

I'm not happy with the way I'm **dispatched**.

The job isn't what I **expected**.

There are no **opportunities** to improve my situation.

The company doesn't **communicate** with me.

I'm not **appreciated**.

Process to Create Your Driver Brand Statement

3. Define Competing Alternatives

Direct Competition



Your direct competitors for drivers are typically within a 50-mile radius of your terminal (less if you offer a local position) and offer jobs with similar home time. Over-The-Road, Regional and Local tend to be the three segments that define your direct competition. Frequently your sales team competes with direct competition for the same freight and your recruiters compete for the same drivers.

Indirect Competition



Your indirect competitors are outside your home time segment of Over-The-Road, Regional and Local. For example, an LTL carrier is an indirect competitor to a regional Truckload carrier.

Alternative Industry



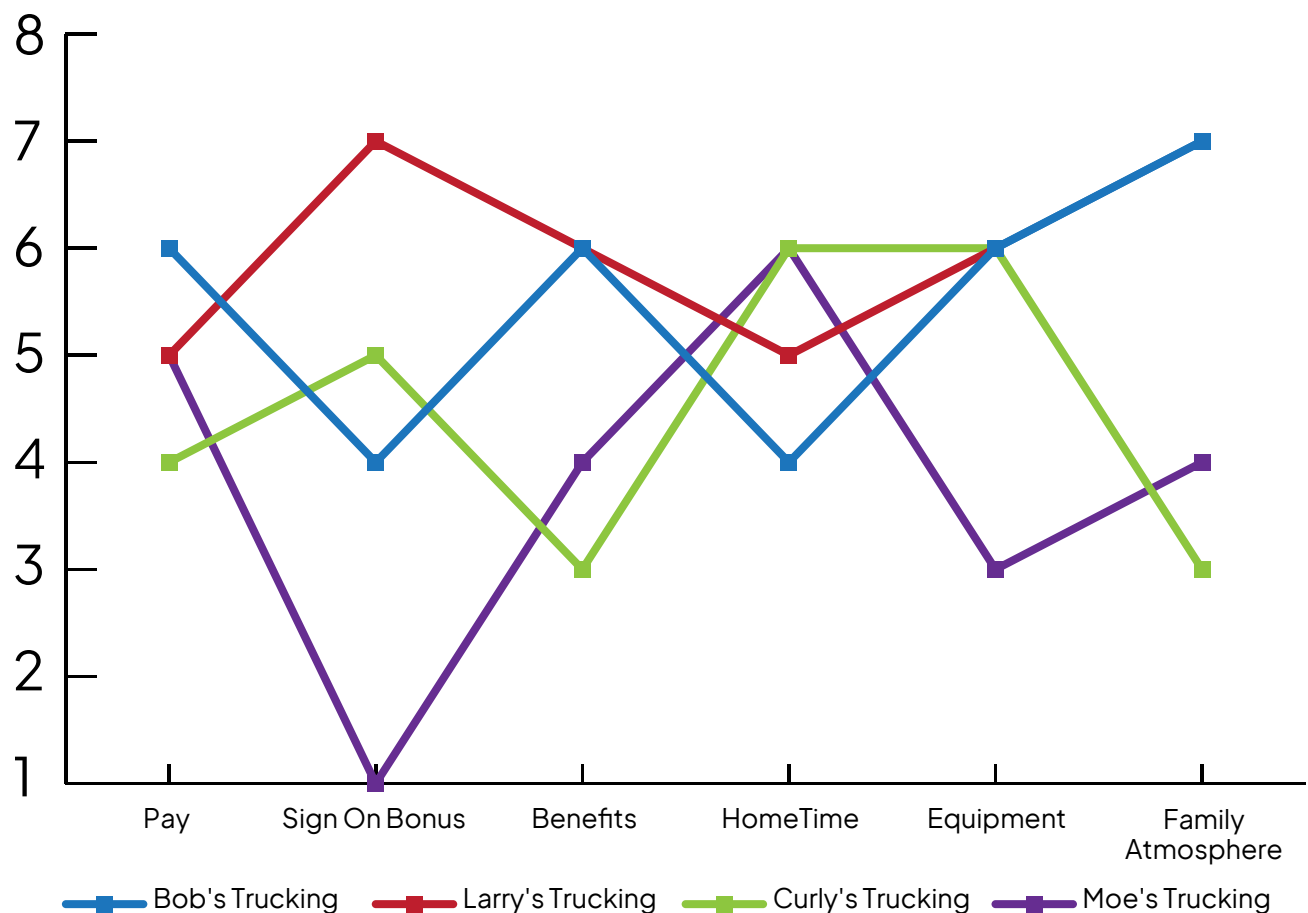
Any blue-collar industry (construction, farmers, factories) where a driver with a similar education/training level can make comparable or better pay with comparable or better home-time.

Process to Create Your Driver Brand Statement

3. Define Competing Alternatives (cont.)

Once you have defined your competing alternatives, create a value curve to visually summarize how you differentiate from other trucking companies.

This takes the key benefits you learned from your stay interviews and plots them against your competition. In the example below, Bob's Trucking did competitive research that determined they were strongest with pay and family atmosphere when compared to their top competitors. There are a lot of trucking companies that are marketing "great pay and a family-owned company". The next step teaches you how to be specific and stand out from the crowd.



Process to Create Your Driver Brand Statement

4. Why Should a Driver Work for You?

There are over 3 million truck drivers on the road and not all are good fits for your company. A professional, safe driver can work for any trucking company in North America – what makes you so special? You can't be all things to all people. So only be special to your driver personas. Define your target driver persona and only go after that type of driver.

Use our formula to create your Driver Brand Statement:

For this driver persona...

with these pain points

these competing alternatives

We have the best driving job because ...

Test It

It's now time to check your work and test the quality of your statement. A good Driver Brand Statement makes specific and unique claims no other trucking company can make.

Be Specific: It does not include platitudes like "great pay and a family-owned company". Use truthful historical numbers to make specific claims that you can prove.

Be Unique: Put your competitor's logo on top of your brand statement and evaluate if they can make the same claim. If so, go back to the drawing board.

A brand statement is not your new tag line. It's the guiding principal to which all your marketing needs to follow. Show your new brand statement to your current drivers and ask if you got it right. Your objective is to accurately summarize what makes you the best place to work for your target driver persona in one sentence.

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Your Next Move

Follow this template to create your brand statement. The brand statement does not go right into your advertising copy. Remember, it is the guiding principal.

Use the brand statement to update your tagline, ad copy, ad sources, and recruiting process.

If you need help creating your brand statement or turning it into something real, give us a call for a free one-hour session with our President and brand statement guru, Scott Rea.

Contact us today!

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Avatar provides motor carriers an all-in-one platform to fill empty seats, pass every audit and bring drivers home safely.

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