



How to Choose a **Defensive Driver Safety Program**

By:
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Driver Training

Where to Start?

Traditionally, most professional driver training has been delivered using a combination of classroom workshops led by a facilitator and skills-based training either on or near the vehicle. This is a tried-and-true method that's worked well for many years, but it isn't your only option.

There's a way to implement safety training that's easier, more cost-effective, and takes up less resources. Best of all, you don't need to sacrifice results.

It's time to take your training online. That will give you the flexibility to send content and supporting materials to your drivers (and other employees) any time and have them complete the training anywhere with an internet connection.

But where do you begin?

There are four things to consider when thinking about investing in online driver training:

1. Your platform
2. Your content
3. Your delivery method
4. Your budget

If you start by addressing these areas of note, you'll learn that online defensive driving training isn't just feasible, but a no-brainer for most companies.

Your Platform

DIY vs. Learning Management System

First, you have to decide how and where you will host your online training. You can do it yourself with a combination of online meeting platforms like Google Meet or Zoom, PowerPoint presentations, and video hosting services like Vimeo.

Or, you could invest in a professional Learning Management System (LMS). An LMS is a specialized software program that hosts and delivers your training to your drivers 24/7.

If you don't know much about Learning Management Systems, [I recommend you check out this article.](#)



Your Platform

DIY vs. Learning Management System

	DIY	LMS
No outside expenses	✓	✗
Time-saver	✗	✓
Easy to organize materials and have content readily available	✗	✓
Simplified communication with employees	✗	✓
Assign courses or allow open enrollment	✗	✓
Track employee usage and manage progress	✗	✓
Create automated training files for legal defense	✗	✓
Run reports	✗	✓



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**WHY YOU NEED AN LMS FOR YOUR
IN-HOUSE SAFETY TRAINING**

Your Content

Home Brewed vs. Off-The-Shelf

Once you decide where to host your training, you have to decide what your content should be. You can create your own content using internal trainers, Powerpoints, home-made videos, and content you find online. Or, you can invest in professionally-developed defensive driving training.

Let's compare the options:

	HOME-BREWED	OFF-THE-SHELF
No outside expenses	✓	✗
Time-saver	✗	✓
Custom to your company	✓	✗
Professional instructional designs with proven learning outcomes	✗	✓
Professional videos, graphics, animations and supporting materials	✗	✓
Real behavioral change leading to fewer accidents	✗	✓

For a third option, you can invest in custom-branded training materials. Custom-branded materials provide the best of both worlds, but they come with a higher price tag.

If you're interested in learning more about custom-branded training, [contact us here.](#)

Your Delivery Method

Self-Directed vs. Instructor Led

We've covered the "where" and the "what" for the training. Now for the "how." We mentioned the historical reliance on live workshops and the challenges they present.

We're all familiar with this type of instruction. It's how we went from Kindergarten to High School graduation, and there are benefits to live instruction. There are also drawbacks, which is why self-directed learning is an option.

Self-Directed

Self-directed learning puts the student in control. Professionally-designed web-based courses usually consist of video, animations, photographs, graphics, animations, quiz questions, and learning activities. Self-directed learning allows the learner to take courses at their own pace and gives them the flexibility to pause, rewind or repeat a lesson until it is mastered. Self-directed training can be completed anywhere at any time and does not require an instructor.

Instructor-Led

Instructor-led courses usually have videos and/or PowerPoints, a facilitator guide, and individual study guides for each participant. Instructor-led courses are effective for learning hands-on skills, discussing complicated topics, and building a connection between employees and their employer. However, instructor-led courses rely on a good instructor to be effective.



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**Online Driver Safety Training:
What You Need to Know**

	Self-Directed	Instructor-Led
Low cost	✓	✗
Easy to organize	✓	✗
Eliminates the need for an instructor	✓	✗
Available 24/7 just about anywhere	✓	✗
More effective for complicated topics	✗	✓
Higher learning outcomes	✓	✗
Shorter training time	✓	✗
Best for skills-based training and evaluation	✗	✓

The best training programs use a combination of instructor-led and self-directed learning. They also utilize multiple forms of media such as videos, graphics, animations, activities, exercises, discussions, and quizzes.

This is what we call a blended learning approach. A blended approach to adult learning is most effective because it integrates technology and digital media with traditional instructor-led classroom activities such as group discussions and exercises.

It also gives you the flexibility to choose which courses should be self-directed and which should be instructor-led. With a blended approach to learning, you can more more effective engage your learners, teach to all learning styles, and save money by only using instructor-led courses when it really counts.

A purple banner with a white box on the left containing the 'FLEET SAFETY COURSE' logo, which features a shield with wings. To the right of the logo, the text reads 'Learn about AvatarFleet's Light-Duty Safety Training:' in white, followed by 'The Fleet Safety Course' in a smaller, italicized white font. At the bottom right, there is a white button with the text 'SCHEDULE YOUR DEMO' in purple.

**Learn about AvatarFleet's
Light-Duty Safety Training:**

The Fleet Safety Course

SCHEDULE YOUR DEMO

Your Budget

Cost vs. Outcomes

Finally, given your preferred platform, content, and delivery method, it's time to consider your budget. You need to weigh the cost of each possibility against the potential return on investment.

For example, if you have more than 1,000 drivers and a high accident frequency, it may be worth it to invest in custom-branded training materials. If you have a few hundred drivers and average accident rates, off-the-shelf training via a Learning Management System is probably right for you. And if you only have a handful of drivers, you might rely on a senior driver to show the new guys the ropes: traditional on-the-job training.

It's important to know, however, that quality defensive driving training pays for itself. The savings from reduced accidents and injuries are almost always greater than the cost of providing quality training. You may ask, "what if I train them and then they leave?" Think about this, "what if you don't and they stay?" The best defensive driving training programs pay for themselves within the first few months of proper implementation.

Get Your Online Training Started on The Right Foot

Some people believe online training is costly and complicated. It isn't. It's fast, easy and affordable. With the right platform, content, and delivery method in place, online training can save you thousands of dollars. You can eliminate the headaches and heartburn that come with too many accidents. Best of all, you can sleep soundly at night knowing you're protecting your people.



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Authors



John Kuder



John Kuder has spent his professional career at Avatar Management Services developing training curriculum, educational content, and selection and hiring/onboarding procedures for transportation companies across the country.

He has used his study of adult learning theories, instructional design, and creative and professional writing to help dozens of clients achieve superior safety results. He is grateful for the chance to help make the world a safer place.



Mark G. Gardner



Mark G. Gardner is dedicated to making the world a safer place.

Gardner has studied human behavior, organizational systems and job performance for 49 years, with a special focus on the design and production of creative strategies that can be used to influence people at work and to achieve better safety results. He has personally advised more than 250 transportation companies and his designs have helped more than one million professional drivers improve their skills.

Gardner is the author of LLLC Defensive Driving.



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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