Backseat Drivers, Hold Your Tongues: Driver Assist Technology Could End ‘Annoying’ Backseat-Driver Behaviors On The Road

- Ford Co-Pilot360™ driver-assist technology can quiet nagging “backseat drivers” and help drivers navigate the roads with confidence
- According to a recent Ford study, 68 percent of drivers believe that “backseat driving” behavior will decrease because their role is replaced by driver-assist technology
- By reducing chirps from backseat drivers, driver-assist technology can help reduce relationship tensions in the car for a more harmonious ride

DEARBORN, Mich., Aug. 22, 2019 – “You can get over a lane.” “Watch that truck!” “You’re trailing to close. Slow down!”

Ah, the incessant chirps of the backseat driver.

Perhaps the days of a driver hearing those common calls from the backseat are coming to an end, thanks to driver-assist technology like Ford Co-Pilot360™. According to a recent study from Ford and sociologist Jess Carbino, 68 percent of drivers believe that backseat driving behavior will decrease because of driver-assist technology.

Ford Co-Pilot360 Technology can help quiet backseat drivers and take the lead in helping drivers navigate the road with confidence. Available driver-assist technologies – such as Blind Spot Information System with cross-traffic alert and Pre-Collision Assist with Automatic Emergency Braking can help reduce the risk of collisions and build confidence in certain driving situations, while always allowing the driver to remain in control.

For the study, Ford teamed with sociologist Dr. Jess Carbino, best known for her work with Bumble, and confirmed that backseat drivers can cause more harm than good for the well-being of those inside the vehicle.

“For a lot of drivers, constantly getting advice from passengers is more than just annoying, it’s stressful,” Carbino said. “The Ford Co-Pilot360 helps encourage trust during the drive and can help create a more relaxed, collaborative atmosphere in the car.”

In fact, the study’s findings contradict a growing belief that technology inhibits human connection. Insights from the study show that while backseat driving can cause in-vehicle relationships to suffer, driver-assist technology can help avoid unnecessary backseat banter. Since the technology can help assist with some of the burdensome tasks of navigating, drivers and passengers can focus on more enjoyable aspects of the ride, namely each other.

The data also suggests that since respondents have confidence in the technology, it can help eliminate the perceived need for their backseat driving input.

“Certainly the intent of Ford Co-Pilot360 Technology was not to eliminate backseat driving,” Chris Billman, Ford Co-Pilot360 engineering manager, said with a laugh. “But hey, if we can help in that way too, that’s great!”

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