



DRIVE SQUARE RECEIVES GRANT FOR VIRTUAL REALITY DEVICE THAT EMULATES REAL-LIFE DRIVING EXPERIENCE FOR NEW AND OLDER DRIVERS

This is the first of several Drive Square training programs aimed at older and novice drivers which Drive Square is developing to improve overall road safety, lower auto related death, injury, and property damage rates.

NEWTON, MA, ([PRWEB](#)) October 30, 2003 -- Drive Square, a company using simulation technology to develop innovative driver training products, has received a NIH Phase One Small Business Innovative Research award to improve road safety. Drive Square's virtual reality devices enable new and older drivers to experience life-like driving conditions in the safety and comfort of their own parked vehicles. These practice sessions enable individuals to improve their driving skills and become better drivers in real life. Drive Square's work will be done in collaboration with the Human Performance Lab (HPL) of University of Massachusetts at Amherst and the Virtual Environments Lab (VELab) of Northeastern University, Boston.

The simulation devices being developed by Drive Square utilize techniques adapted from commercial and flight training simulators using one's actual vehicle. Initially, the technology is being developed for the consumer market. However, its benefits can also be applied to commercial, military, and other uses.

Combining the knowledge of the types of age-related losses with Drive Square simulation technology may help many older adults to continue driving longer, while reducing their crash risk. Drive Square's driving simulator is not only uniquely portable, it also permits the use of an individual's own vehicle, thus avoiding the discomfort associated with driving in an unfamiliar vehicle," said Professor Ron Mourant of Northeastern University's Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering.

Drive Square intends to employ this simulator in a program of intervention that combines first-hand (simulated) exposure to risky situations, immediate feedback, and confidential advisement. This approach can assist older individuals to make informed driving choices, practice strategies to reduce risk, and, ultimately, reach a personal decision about driving cessation. This project will refine and test this simulator, evaluate its validity, and determine its efficacy through participants' feedback," said Don Fisher, a professor in the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

"This is the first of several Drive Square training programs aimed at older and novice drivers which Drive Square is developing to improve overall road safety, lower auto related death, injury, and property damage rates," said Konstantin Sizov, President of Drive Square. "It is well-documented that the accident rate of drivers is elevated in novice and elderly populations. The Drive Square Training System ® will provide a safe environment for individuals to test and improve their own skills."

About the University of Massachusetts Human Performance Laboratory

The University of Massachusetts Human Performance Laboratory contains an advanced driving simulator and associated state-of-the-art eye tracking equipment that have been used to study the behavior of younger and older drivers, the effect of in-vehicle technologies on driver performance (e.g., collision warning systems and cellular phones), and the effect of different signs, signals and pavement markings on drivers' behavior. The



entire northbound and southbound tunnel sections of the Big Dig have been modeled (see www.ecs.umass.edu/hpl for a simulation of a drive through the Central/Artery Tunnel), as well as the complete arrival and departure ramps at Logan International Airport. Research has been funded by the Massachusetts Highway Department, the Massachusetts Port Authority, the Federal Highway Administration, the New England University Transportation Center, the National Institute of Aging and the National Science Foundation, among others. For further information, please contact: Dr. Donald L. Fisher, Director, Human Performance Laboratory, phone: 413-545-1657.

About Northeastern's Virtual Environments Lab

Northeastern University's Virtual Environments Laboratory builds three-dimensional virtual environments that permit the simulation of real-world driving. Their software allows the assessment of normal and potentially hazardous driving conditions. For further information, please contact: Dr. Ronald R. Mourant, Director, phone: 617-373-3931.

About Drive Square LLC

Drive Square LLC is an emerging company focused on the development, marketing and sale of patent-pending driver training products and services, utilizing techniques adapted from commercial and flight training simulators. The company believes that the application of its proprietary technology to consumer, commercial, military and other applications will substantially improve drivers' skills and reduce accidents, providing significant economic and social benefits.

The company's technology allows drivers to be safely trained, under simulated conditions, using their actual vehicles in consistent, fully automated sessions. For more information on Drive Square, please visit www.drivesquare.com or call 617-762-4013 (x112).

###



Contact Information

Christine Shock

SHOCK PR, INC.

<http://www.drivesquare.com>

508-893-9933

Online Web 2.0 Version

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).