



Trucker Reality

By OOFI • May 15, 2023

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Welcome back to Trucker Reality. Today we'll discuss my recent trip to Intelligent Transportation Society of America.

I hate it when you are loaded for bears but there are no bears



This one seems to be telling me what I can do with my reality!

Recently I attended the Intelligent Transportation Society of America's (ITSA) annual event held in Grapevine TX.

SO? The previous annual meeting that I attended was almost exclusively focused on autonomous vehicles including commercial trucks.

- I was ready to hunt this time around with my ammunition of facts.

The Bears:

- Ford Motor Co. CEO predicted in 2015 that fully autonomous vehicles would be on the market within 5 years. Didn't happen.
- Locomotion Inc. let go a large portion of it's non-engineering employees and is in financial trouble.
- Argo AI closed in October 2022 when Ford stopped investing in them.
- Embark Trucks is looking for a buyer and liquidation is an option, was previously working with Kenworth.
- Tesla still hasn't delivered on it's autonomous heavy duty truck.
- Uber shuttered its self-driving truck division.
- Strasky Robotics shut down in 2020.
- Peloton, which developed a "platooning" system for trucks, shut down.
- TuSimple is in financial trouble and at risk of being de-listed from Nasdaq.

I had my ammunition ready to hunt but the bears were not there this year, as there were only two real sessions on autonomous vehicles and they were poorly attended.

I did get to talk to the CEO of ITSA. I introduced myself and who I represented, and let her know that it was concerning that no actual drivers of these systems were on any panels.

- I got the proverbial nod of the head and she took my card and I got the brushoff.

Who would know more about the driving experience and the difficulties in driving scenarios than the individuals who drive every day, in every weather and under every adverse situation?

- There is a refrain in an old folk song, "Where have all the flowers gone", that ask "when will they ever learn, when will they ever learn"?
- Until researchers and tech experts get their heads out of the "cloud" and work with drivers they will continue to waste money, time, and lives.

The one powerful conclusion of all this is, drivers are skilled professionals and need to be recognized and paid as skilled professionals.

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