

SEARCH IN:

PAST WEEK (Free)

[SEE STORIES](#)

[FEATURES](#)

[ARCHIVE SEARCH](#)

[MOVIE TIMES](#)

[MOVIE REVIEWS](#)

[COMICS](#)

[UA WILDCAT SPORTS](#)

[OUTDOORS](#)

[CALENDAR](#)

[BORDER NEWS](#)

[PHOTO GALLERIES](#)

[MULTIMEDIA](#)



[VIEW CURRENT VIDEO](#)

[OUR SPONSORS](#)

BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2005

Computer: E-cop rides as passenger

Devices record traffic violations. Parents are key customers.

Teenagers used to worry about their little brother or sister snitching on them. Now, big brother is watching.

New monitoring devices are hitting the market that let parents keep close tabs on how their kids are behaving behind the wheel.

They can tell whether teenagers are driving recklessly, whether they're wearing seat belts and whether they are just going to the library as they promised.

Based on technology long used by trucking companies to track driver behavior, the gadgets - typically installed under the dashboard - can track acceleration, braking and distance traveled.

[More »](#)



Courtesy of Smart Driver

Elizabeth Zook checks the connection on a SmartDriver unit installed in a car. A red light glows on the unit when a driving violation occurs. To get a report, the unit must be plugged into a PC.

IN BUSINESS

Phoenix firm hit with \$770K do-not-call fine

WASHINGTON - The government imposed a \$770,000 fine yesterday against a Phoenix mortgage company it says called people who put their telephone numbers on the do-not-call registry. The Federal...

New group to help Tucson firms deal with British

The British are coming! The British are coming! A Tucson subchapter of the British American Business Council is being started to tighten the local business link already in place with Great Britain....

Buffalo nickels rumble toward registers

WASHINGTON - With 2,000-pound Cody the bison standing as a silent witness, the U.S. Mint marked the return of the buffalo nickel yesterday after 67 years. Accompanied by American Indian dancing,...

Airport's tower may shut at night

Pilots flying to Tucson between midnight and 5 a.m. may not be able to contact Tucson International Airport's control tower if a Federal Aviation Administration proposal is accepted. A...

Featured



Tucson Business Edge

Your Southern Arizona
Business resource

SEARCH IN:

PAST WEEK (Free)

GO

SEE STORIES

FEATURES

ARCHIVE SEARCH

MOVIE TIMES

MOVIE REVIEWS

COMICS

UA WILDCAT SPORTS

OUTDOORS

CALENDAR

BORDER NEWS

PHOTO GALLERIES

MULTIMEDIA



VIEW CURRENT VIDEO

OTHER STORIES

IN BUSINESS »

- Phoenix firm hit with \$770K do-not-call fine
- New group to help Tucson firms deal with British
- Buffalo nickels rumble toward registers
- Airport's tower may shut at night
- Cyber Sightings: At tax time, it's important to maximize deductions

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

ezAccess

- Subscribe to the Tucson Citizen
- Current Subscribers
- Delivery Issues
- Going on Vacation

Breaking News Alerts

Enter your email address to receive breaking news

GO

EVENTS CALENDAR

March 2005

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Today's Events

Check out what's going on in and around Tucson, with the Citizen's new events calendar.

OUR SPONSORS

BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2005



EMAIL THIS STORY



LETTER TO THE EDITOR



RECENT STORIES BY

Computer: E-cop rides as passenger

Devices record traffic violations. Parents are key customers.

MICHELLE HIGGINS

The Wall Street Journal



Courtesy of Smart Driver

Elizabeth Zook checks the connection on a SmartDriver unit installed in a car. A red light glows on the unit when a driving violation occurs. To get a report, the unit must be plugged into a PC.

Teenagers used to worry about their little brother or sister snitching on them. Now, big brother is watching.

New monitoring devices are hitting the market that let parents keep close tabs on how their kids are behaving behind the wheel.

They can tell whether teenagers are driving recklessly, whether they're wearing seat belts and whether they are just going to the library as they promised.

Based on technology long used by trucking companies to track driver behavior, the gadgets - typically installed under the dashboard - can track acceleration, braking and distance traveled.

Some of the new devices are interactive, capable of notifying parents if their child speeds or drives beyond a predefined boundary, such as a boyfriend's house or Nogales.

Depending on the product, the alerts come via e-mail, phone or by logging onto a Web site.

Alltrack USA, an online retailer that offers Real-Time Tracking, sells a \$40 add-on that lets parents immediately tell their kid to knock it off.

From their computer, parents can flash a light on the dashboard or blow the car's horn at the driver. It allows parents to prevent a car from being restarted once it's parked somewhere.

Gadgets such as these range in price from \$140 for a basic system without instant tracking to more than \$400 plus monthly fees for options that use global-positioning satellite technology.

In about a month, Road Safety International Inc., maker of the RS-1000 Teen Driving System, plans to add an optional GPS receiver that will push the total cost of the product to about \$480 from about \$280 now.

Now, Road Safety's device records the car's speed and other data that parents can only retrieve later.

advertisement

As with nannycams and other observational equipment, the teen trackers raise tough issues for parents.

On the one hand, car crashes are the top cause of death among teens.

On the other, many parents want to treat a young adult as worthy of trust.

When Jeff Auerbach put a tracking device in the car used by his 16-year-old son Andrew, the two went shopping for it together.

"What I didn't want it to be was sort of a 'gotcha' spy program," says Auerbach, a patent lawyer in Rockville, Md.

NEXT PAGE » 1, 2



EMAIL THIS STORY



LETTER TO THE EDITOR



RECENT STORIES BY

SEARCH IN:

PAST WEEK (Free)

GO!

SEE STORIES

FEATURES

ARCHIVE SEARCH

MOVIE TIMES

MOVIE REVIEWS

COMICS

UA WILDCAT SPORTS

OUTDOORS

CALENDAR

BORDER NEWS

PHOTO GALLERIES

MULTIMEDIA



VIEW CURRENT VIDEO

OTHER STORIES

IN BUSINESS »

- Phoenix firm hit with \$770K do-not-call fine
- New group to help Tucson firms deal with British
- Buffalo nickels rumble toward registers
- Airport's tower may shut at night
- Cyber Sightings: At tax time, it's important to maximize deductions

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE



- Subscribe to the Tucson Citizen
- Current Subscribers
- Delivery Issues
- Going on Vacation

Breaking News Alerts

Enter your email address to receive breaking news

GO!

EVENTS CALENDAR

March 2005						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Today's Events

Check out what's going on in and around Tucson, with the Citizen's new events calendar.

OUR SPONSORS

BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2005

EMAIL THIS STORY

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

RECENT STORIES BY

His hope was that since Andrew knew someone could be checking up on him, he'd be inclined to drive safely all the time.

Andrew says he was a little upset at first.

"It's not the greatest feeling" knowing that someone might be watching, he says.

But he says it provided a helpful excuse once when a friend urged him to see how fast his car would go.

"It was very, very easy to just say, 'No, it's got a tracker system.' "

Similar technology is being used by car-alarm makers to help prevent theft and recover stolen vehicles.

Directed Electronics Inc.'s Viper GPS Tracking System, a device designed to add tracking capabilities to the company's car alarms and with teen-tracking capabilities, can alert the car's owner if the alarm is activated.

Insurance companies are starting to get interested in technology like this.

Progressive Insurance, based in Mayfield Village, Ohio, is running a 5,000-car pilot program in Minnesota using a device that records speed and other data.

Participants, in return for letting the insurer track their driving patterns, can qualify for insurance discounts of up to 25 percent.

The most basic devices - the ones without GPS or e-mail capabilities - plug into the computer that most cars these days have.

It records a couple days' worth of data, such as when your teen or anyone else started the car, how far it went and at what speeds.



Consumers who buy Real-Time Tracking from Alltrack USA can buy a peripheral device that flashes a dashboard light or beep a car's horn as a reminder the driver is being monitored.

To see the data, a user must unplug the device from the car and hook it to a PC.

More powerful versions, which either offer instant e-mail or real-time access via a Web page, never have to be removed from the car.

Since some of the more powerful devices use cellular phone networks to transmit data, they may require monthly fees of up to nearly \$70.

Dozens of products are available with an array of brand names, but many of the devices are similar.

Indeed, many are manufactured by a handful of companies, including AirIQ Inc., Advanced Tracking Technologies and Discrete Wireless in Atlanta.

CSI Wireless Inc., based in Alberta, Calgary, makes the hardware and provides the software to Directed Electronics, a vehicle-security and remote-start company based in Vista, Calif., for its five GPS tracking products. Each of those products is sold under four brands: Viper, Clifford, Python and Automate. Inger Falco of Northport, N.Y., found that a basic model solved her son's problems.

After he got into crashes, she says, she put a SmartDriver recording device in his car.

"Of course, he said that's very sneaky of you," she recalls. "But he got over it very quickly. It was either have this in your car, or don't drive.

«PREV. PAGE 1, 2

EMAIL THIS STORY

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

RECENT STORIES BY

Enter your email address to