

# Social Media in Trucking – Success Story

BY MICHAEL HOWE

Even though the popularity of social media in general, and specifically in the trucking industry, is relatively new there have been multiple “success stories” associated with Web 2.0. One of the more inspiring stories out there is that of Hope Rivenburg, who tra-

gically lost her truck driver husband, Jason, when he was shot and killed – in part as a result of where he was forced to park his truck.

Hope Rivenburg began the crusade of advocating for more safe truck parking and ultimately came up with “Jason’s Law” in the United States.

The last four years of her life have been devoted to this cause. Allen Smith, Founder of the Trucking Social Media Convention, says, “Even though her husband was dead, Hope vowed to fight for more safe truck parking”. U.S. Congressman Paul Tonko (D-NY) presented the bill, Jason’s Law, to the U.S.

House of Representatives and that’s when the real social media effort began.

Three years of national call-ins to Washington, DC and Hope Rivenburg going to Washington and lobbying for truckers, the trucking community now had “hope” for a situation that was “hopeless.” Prior to this, 20 years of U.S. Fed-

eral Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) studies confirming that there was a lack of truck parking, didn’t seem to motivate anyone to remedy the situation. “It took a young widow with 3 children all under 3 to create a movement,” says Smith.

How did social media help? “I am convinced that Social Media, which created a viral awareness within the trucking community, was responsible for Jason’s Law making it into the Transportation Bill, MAP21. Social Media and Hope’s supporters, (in the beginning it was Allen and Donna Smith and Desiree Wood) who started tweeting on Twitter and blogging, eventually caught the attention and gained the support of drivers and trucking organizations,” says Smith.

Hope Rivenburg was the winner of the 2011 Making a Difference Award at the First Truck Driver Social Media Convention. The award is now named the “Jason Rivenburg Making a Difference Award.” But Hope Rivenburg is not done! DOT is supposed to do a survey to determine where the funding for Jason’s Law is most needed. She believes that truck drivers should be the main part of this survey and has decided to begin the survey herself.

Learn More about Jason’s Law here: <http://jhlrivenburg.com/cgi/wp/>.

Another great success story of how social media has impacted the trucking industry is with the group “Truckers Against Trafficking.” This group essentially started to expose human trafficking issues in the United States. “This is a group that began with a dream - to end the atrocities of modern day human slavery in the United States”, says Smith. Arguably, very few really even know or knew what human trafficking was, so this group set out to educate the trucking industry and anyone else

that would listen. It was all about “educating an entire industry regarding the billion dollar business of forced prostitution and labor, and the trucking industry has embraced this education and is supporting it from all ends.”

Truckers Against Trafficking has used Twitter and Facebook as a large part of their campaign



Hope Rivenburg

to create awareness and educate the masses. Truck Drivers are now reporting suspicious prostitution of underage girls at truck stops.

Kylla Leeberg, one of the founders of Truckers Against Trafficking, was even a speaker at the 2012 Truck Driver Social Media Convention, sharing the awareness of human trafficking and how social media plays a part in that awareness. “She will return again this year as our special guest at the convention. She is also a two-time candidate and outstanding achievement award winner at the convention for the “Jason Rivenburg Making a Difference Award”, says Smith. Because of social media, in large part, Truckers Against Trafficking is now known worldwide.

Learn more about Truckers Against Trafficking at [www.truckersagainsttrafficking.org](http://www.truckersagainsttrafficking.org).

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