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Do Not Disturb: Ford Fights Distracted Driving With Limited In-Motion Sync Access

Andrew Peterson - Writer | Jul 12, 2010

Distracted driving has become an issue recently, thanks to all the mobile devices we carry around, combined with a greater number of in-car distractions. Ford is proactively working to prevent distracted driving by adding a new "Do Not Disturb"

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feature to its Sync connectivity system that blocks certain functions while the vehicle is in motion.

"The power of Sync voice control combined with Ford's latest connectivity improvements will reduce the temptation to pick up the phone and take your eyes off the road, providing a safer solution for the use of mobile devices in the car," said John Schneider, chief engineer of Ford's multimedia and infotainment systems.

Ford's new Do Not Disturb feature allows drivers to decide how much connectivity they want to retain while driving. The function automatically blocks incoming text messages and phone calls from the paired Bluetooth phone, but allows drivers to make voice-activated, outgoing phone calls and still connect to emergency services using Sync's updated 911 Assist.

A new Bluetooth system allows the option for drivers to have incoming texts read back to them while driving.

Although the current version of Sync can read text messages to the driver, the system is not compatible with all phones. To further the system's phone connectivity, Ford adopted the latest Bluetooth Message Access Profile, which defines a set of features and procedures on how devices exchange information. Because MAP is more widely used than the previous system Ford was using, it now works with most Bluetooth-enabled phones.

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In addition to adding Do Not Disturb, Ford has automatically locked out certain Sync features while the vehicle is in motion. Blocked features include screens with information not intended to be used by the driver while driving (i.e. restaurant and point-of-interest reviews), actions that require typing on the keyboard, manually adding phone book contacts, pairing a Bluetooth phone, and playing video on the navigation screen. The majority of these functions can, however, be accessed using Sync's voice-activated system, thus encouraging drivers to stay focused on the road while keeping them connected.

Ford's latest Sync features will be part of the new MyFord Touch and MyLincoln Touch systems available on the 2011 Ford Edge and 2011 Lincoln MKX, and will later be available in other models across the lineup.

Source: Ford

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