

In addition to lowering fuel costs, this technology utilizes road capacity better and saves time and emissions. When trucks align in a close group using connectivity technology (radar, GPS, WIFI) and automated driving support systems, the air resistance or drag is reduced. The small distance between vehicles decreases wind resistance and improves fuel economy.

What are the disadvantages?

A very real concern focuses on truck drivers' jobs. It will not happen overnight but more and more truckers will be replaced by new technology. Nevertheless, humans still will be involved in the cargo industry as new job positions will be created to support the new system.

Another drawback considers security since hackers and other criminals look for vulnerabilities in new software that is being tested. Even if for now we don't take the human drivers out of the cabin, there is still a high risk that hackers could compromise the control system.

We may still be far away from putting fleets of autonomous trucks on the road, however, there are already legal liability issues. There are many unsolved questions about potential accidents and responsibilities.

The big companies which are now developing autonomous vehicles, such as Otto or Chinese Pony.ai, outline the importance of taking a closer look specifically at self-driving trucks, not at the passenger vehicles. Otto is concerned about the number of highway fatalities.

The need to make the truck safer is one of the company's goals since 70% of freight in the US is delivered by trucks.

Pony.ai is best known for applying a self-driving system in the passenger car but recently realized that the technology for trucks will be implemented much earlier because of the tremendous interest, already seen today, and support in commercializing autonomous trucks. Our next step will be to find the solution so we can connect the transport management system (TMS) to the autonomous truck system such that it will be responsible all the way, respond to every change on the road route and bring the client full visibility.

Remember the song of John Lennon "Imagine":

"you may say I'm a dreamer But I'm not the only one I hope someday you will join us And the world will live as one"

Maybe now all this seems far in the future, but don't forget just in the 1950s we gave up the idea of using elevator operators!

