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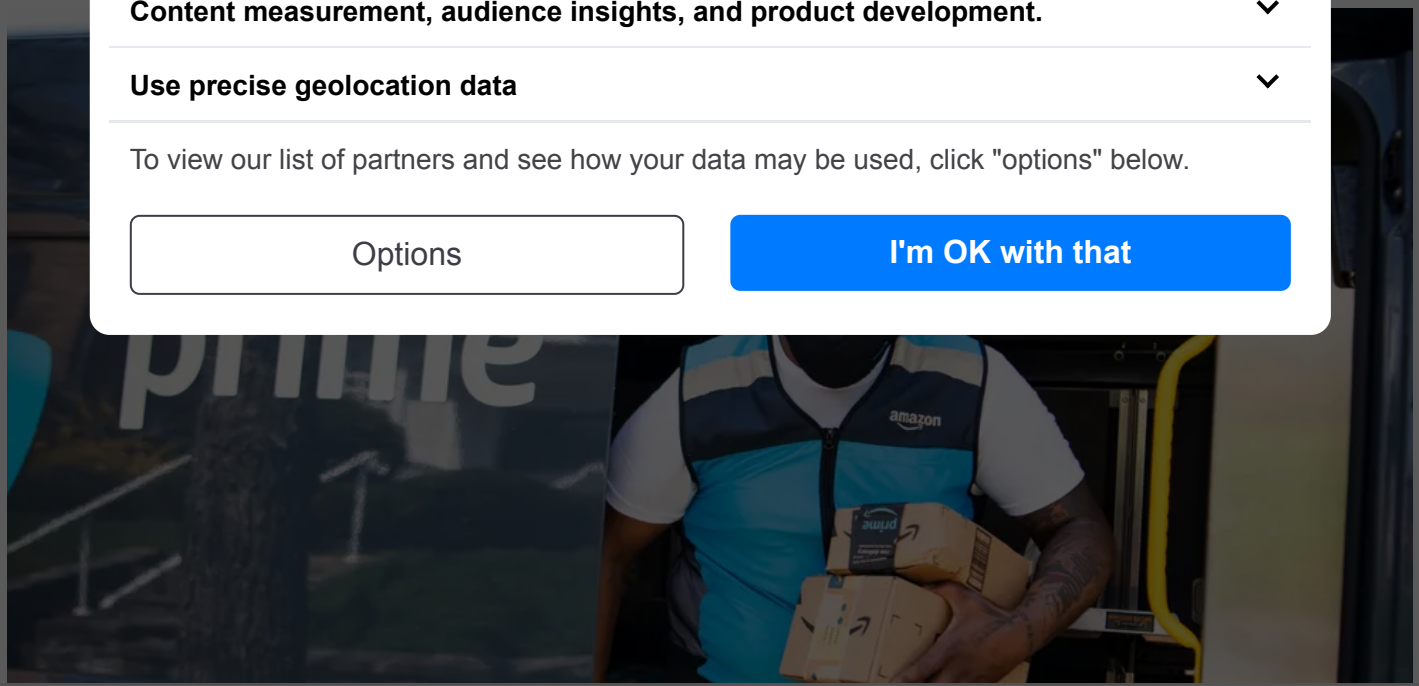

Tom Williams/Getty Images

- **Amazon's AI cameras penalize drivers for using side mirrors and being cut off, Motherboard reports.**

- **Penalties like these hurt workers' and DSPs' performance scores and their chances to get more money.**

- **Amazon said it has seen a reduction in accidents since installing the cameras in more than half of its delivery vehicles.**

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Amazon drivers say they are being punished for some driving habits that are considered safe and others that are beyond their control, Motherboard reported.

Drivers told Motherboard that the AI-powered cameras in Amazon's delivery vans unfairly penalized them for things such as looking at side mirrors, adjusting the radio, and even getting cut off in traffic by someone else.

"It's upsetting, when I didn't do anything," a Los Angeles delivery driver told Motherboard. "Every time I need to make a right-hand turn, it inevitably happens. A car cuts me off to move into my lane, and the camera, in this really dystopian dark, robotic voice, shouts at me."

Amazon said it has seen a reduction in accidents and other safety violations since installing the Netradyne cameras in its delivery vehicles.

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When the cameras spot possible unsafe driving "events," these instances factor into workers' performance scores and can, in turn, hurt their chances of getting bonuses, extra pay, and prizes. They can also affect the income of the Amazon delivery service partner itself.

These events help decide whether Amazon drivers are given ratings of "poor," "fair," "good," or "fantastic." Amazon Delivery Service Providers (DSPs), which employ and manage the drivers, can get bonuses to put toward repairs, damages, and other things only if their drivers' combined weekly scores land in "fantastic" territory.

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"Amazon uses these cameras allegedly to make sure they have a safer driving

workforce, but they're actually using them not to pay delivery companies," one owner of a Washington DSP told Motherboard.

"One of the safety improvements we've made this year is rolling out industry-leading telematics and camera-based safety technology across our delivery fleet," Amazon said in a statement to Insider. "This technology provides drivers real-time alerts to help them stay safe when they are on the road."

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cameras in more than half of its US fleet: accidents decreased 48%, stop-sign and

signal violations decreased 77%, following distance decreased 50%, driving without a seat belt decreased 60%, and distracted driving decreased 75%.

The Washington DSP owner told Motherboard that he wasn't trained on using the cameras. Amazon told Insider that each delivery company received training about the cameras and was required to let its workers know how events affected the DSP's scores.

Some Amazon drivers have resorted to covering up their vans' cameras with stickers to avoid getting unnecessary infractions, Motherboard reported.

"If we brought up problems with the cameras, managers would brush it under the table, they're only worried about getting the packages out," a Kentucky delivery driver told Motherboard. "So we cover them up. They don't tell us to, but it's kind of like 'don't ask, don't tell.'"

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Other workers wore sunglasses so the cameras wouldn't interpret eye movement as distracted driving.

"The Netradyne cameras that Amazon installed in our vans have been nothing but a nightmare," a former Amazon driver in Alabama told Motherboard. "I personally did not feel any more safe with a camera watching my every move."

Drivers also told Motherboard that it's difficult to appeal wrongly flagged events with Amazon, and that their attempts to do so were often dismissed.

Amazon told Insider that appeals were manually reviewed, and that erroneous events didn't affect DSPs or drivers.

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Amazon said in February that it would install the cameras in its delivery vans to improve safety. The move raised concerns about privacy and surveillance. The following month, an Amazon driver quit over the new camera installation, telling the Thomson Reuters Foundation, "It was both a privacy violation and a breach of trust." The system, called Driveri, includes a front-facing camera, two side-facing ones, and another that faces the driver.

Netradyne did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

If you're an Amazon delivery driver or warehouse worker with a story to share, you can get in touch with this reporter at sjackson@insider.com.

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