



News Release

For more information, contact:

Barbara Gould
Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC
(440) 329-9609
barbara.gould@bendix.com

or Ken Kesegich
Marcus Thomas LLC
(888) 482-4455
kkesegich@marcusthomasllc.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAVAJO EXPRESS: A FOUNDATION OF SAFETY, A CULTURE OF DRIVER RESPECT

*Denver-Based Carrier Equips Bendix® Wingman® Family of Active Safety Systems
on More Than 1,000 Trucks Nationwide*

ELYRIA, Ohio – Aug. 7, 2018 – Don Digby Sr. sat down at his family’s kitchen table and used their home phone line to establish the brand-new offices of Navajo Express, Inc. It was 1982, and the company got up and running with 13 trucks.

“Thirty-six years on, we’ve established ourselves as the leading refrigerated carrier, primarily hauling groceries – perishables and beverages – along with some dedicated opportunities for big-box retail chains,” said President Don Digby Jr. “And we’ve done this by primarily focusing on and respecting our drivers, making sure we’re taking care of them first, and increasing their home time, plus getting them out and back safe and sound. We run 1,025 trucks – and all of them are equipped with Bendix® Wingman® Advanced™ or Bendix® Wingman® Fusion™.”

Headquartered in Denver, with terminals in Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin, family-owned Navajo – Don Digby Sr. is chairman of the board – serves most of the territory in the continental United States. In addition to its tractors, the company fleet includes 2,600 trailers. Navajo began equipping Bendix Wingman Advanced – A Collision Mitigation Technology in July 2014, and will soon take delivery of its 2018-19 truck orders equipped with Bendix’s flagship driver assistance system, Wingman Fusion. Beginning with the 2019 model year, Navajo will also equip Bendix® ADB22X™ air disc brakes on all truck and trailer axles.

“When safety is a core value, it’s a foundation you structure your entire operation on,” said Jay Thomas, Navajo vice president of safety. “It’s what you build your daily activities and

resolve your problems based on; it's not a department – it's a culture. Everyone at Navajo is responsible for supporting our drivers and keeping them safe.”

It's All about the Drivers

Don Digby Jr. says Navajo works constantly to protect, listen to, and recognize its drivers, considering every step of the way how a business decision will impact the men and women behind the wheel, as well as their families.

“We have seven terminals located specifically so we can run more like a regional operation, and maximize our drivers' home time and quality of life,” he explained. “That made it a no-brainer to implement Wingman[®] collision mitigation technologies on all of our vehicles, and we've received positive feedback from our drivers: It's helped them sharpen their habits, and they've found it to be extremely rewarding on longer trips. At the same time, our city and regional drivers tell us they wouldn't drive without it, because it helps with keeping a safe distance in traffic congestion, putting our drivers in a better position and keeping them happy.”

About 90 percent of Navajo's trucks are Kenworth Truck Company on-highway T680 models.

Bendix[®] Wingman Advanced[™] delivers active cruise control with braking features, along with collision mitigation technology. Using a radar sensor mounted to the front of the vehicle, Wingman Advanced delivers both warnings and active interventions to help drivers potentially avoid rear-end collisions or, at least, help reduce their severity. Because it is built on the full-stability technology of Bendix[®] ESP[®] Electronic Stability Program, Wingman Advanced also uses input from a vehicle's brake sensors to recognize and mitigate conditions that could lead to rollover and loss of control.

Wingman[™] Fusion[™] takes the technology to the next level. Fusion integrates a forward-facing camera with the radar to create a comprehensive driver assistance program with a multi-faceted safety approach focused on multiple crash causes, including following too close, unintended lane departures, speeding, distraction, and drowsiness. The Fusion system gathers input through a suite of sensors working together, and not just in parallel. The system creates a highly detailed and accurate data picture using deep, multisystem integration, setting it apart from radar-only systems. This enables Fusion to deliver enhanced rear-end collision mitigation and adaptive cruise control, along with following distance alerts, stationary object alerts, lane departure warning, alerts when speeding, and braking on stationary vehicles – all while prioritizing alerts to help reduce driver distraction. The system's camera is powered by the Mobileye System-on-Chip EyeQ processor with state-of-the-art vision algorithms.

“At Navajo, we recognize safety achievements both monthly and annually,” Digby Jr. said. “The big thing is that our million-milers get customized trucks – it’s important to get them into something that they find attractive, and that they can call their own: But all of them come with Wingman[®] Advanced[™] or the Wingman[®] Fusion[™] system. I’m a driver to the core, and I believe that doing everything we can to keep our drivers safe includes utilizing these technologies.”

Making a Difference

On and off the roads, Bendix technologies are changing things for the better at Navajo. “Comparing the last four years of data – going back to when we started using Wingman – to the four years before that, we’ve seen a 77 percent decrease in rear-end collisions,” Thomas said. “So not only has it been a huge benefit to our drivers and the public, it’s been a benefit financially, because rear-end collisions are typically among the costliest accidents.”

Using the data generated by the Bendix technologies, the fleet has also been able to take note of situations like hard braking or stability system activation and address them quickly. “It’s really assisted us in communicating with our drivers in a timely and effective manner, whether it’s about adjusting habits to be safer, or recognizing them for guiding their truck safely through a difficult situation,” Digby Jr. said.

At the wheel-ends, Bendix[®] ADB22X[™] air disc brakes help further enhance safety by providing shorter stopping distances compared to drum brakes, virtually eliminating brake fade, and delivering greater reliability with more consistent stops. Brake fade can start to set in on drum brakes during heavy stop-and-go traffic situations or during mountain descents, and can extend stopping distances as drum brakes heat up. Air disc brakes also provide improved brake stability from side to side, reducing the risk of brake steer and providing a car-like feel for straighter, more stable stops. ADB stopping power allows active safety and driver assistance systems like the Wingman family to work their best.

In the shop, the ADB22X offers quicker pad replacement and longer pad life, leading to greater uptime and lower maintenance costs. In addition, it includes an internal self-adjustment mechanism that can help lower the risk of brakes being found out of adjustment during inspection, which can affect Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) scoring.

Since launching the ADB22X in 2005, Bendix has produced well over 2 million units, reflecting an ever-increasing demand for air disc brakes in the commercial vehicle industry. Worldwide, Bendix and its parent company, Knorr-Bremse, are the clear global leader in air disc brake production at nearly 40 million and counting.

Navajo has also gone the extra step of making sure its non-driving employees have the best perspective possible of what it's like behind the wheel, working with Bendix to get the office staff into the cabs of demo trucks so they can see how the technology works firsthand.

"It changes people's perception of transportation, and the way non-drivers look at these big trucks, and it's made a real impact," Thomas said. "We want people to be more familiar with these technologies and educate them on how safe these trucks are, and it's gotten an awesome response."

"The thing about the Navajo team is that they really push Bendix to excel in the best ways possible," said Lance Hansen, Bendix North America regional vice president – fleet/trailer sales & service engineering. "We know they're not going to settle for anything less than cutting-edge, proven systems that deliver – because nothing matters more to them than keeping everyone in and around their vehicles safe on the highways. It's a philosophy we understand completely, and it's why we're proud to work with them every day."

Eyes on the Future

The Navajo team likes to think big-picture when it comes to the future, and strives to make changes that pay off with wider benefits for everyone down the road. "We are about quality of life," Digby Jr. said. "So our two big passions are safety and becoming more environmentally friendly.

"Even though we haul more freight than our competitors, we've been able to strategically take trucks off the road to maximize our drivers' time at home, and that's been a big factor in lowering our carbon footprint." Last year, he noted, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency included Navajo among the 2017 winners of the SmartWay® Excellence award, honoring the top 1 to 2 percent of SmartWay partners that reduce their operational costs through gains in freight efficiency, mitigating their transportation environmental footprints by using less energy and cleaner technologies to move goods across America.

Bendix and Navajo both emphasize that safety technologies are not intended to enable or encourage aggressive driving, and responsibility for the safe operation of any commercial vehicle remains with the driver at all times. Nothing replaces a skilled professional driver practicing safe driving habits, and supported by ongoing, proactive training programs.

Navajo also sees the adoption of advanced driver assistance systems as the foundation for more advanced trucking technologies to come.

"Platooning is the next leap forward in highway transportation, and as a third-generation trucker, I'm excited about expanding our horizon when it comes to safety and efficiency," Digby Jr. said. "And that kind of advancement for a fleet isn't in the works without Wingman® Fusion™".

“As we go forward, we want to make sure we’re continuing to raise safety standards, not just here at Navajo, but industry-wide, because we should all be doing the right thing.”

Through its ever-growing portfolio of technologies, along with unparalleled post-sales support, Bendix delivers on areas critical to the success of fleets and owner-operators, including safety, vehicle performance, and efficiency. By lowering total cost of operation (TCO) and strengthening return on investment in today’s most effective commercial vehicle safety systems, the company strives to enhance highway safety across North America.

About Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC

Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, a member of the Knorr-Bremse Group, develops and supplies leading-edge active safety technologies, energy management solutions, and air brake charging and control systems and components under the Bendix® brand name for medium- and heavy-duty trucks, tractors, trailers, buses, and other commercial vehicles throughout North America. An industry pioneer, employing more than 3,200 people, Bendix is driven to deliver solutions for improved vehicle safety, performance, and overall operating cost. Contact us at 1-800-AIR-BRAKE (1-800-247-2725) or visit bendix.com. Stay connected and informed through Bendix expert podcasts, blog posts, videos, and other resources at knowledge-dock.com. Follow Bendix on Twitter at twitter.com/Bendix_CVS. Log on and learn from the Bendix experts at brake-school.com. And to learn more about career opportunities at Bendix, visit bendix.com/careers.

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