Shimohana Logistics Expands Their Workforce With Help From Mobileye

Shimohana Creates a Stable and Safe Workforce

Shimohana Logistics is a third-party logistics provider (3PL), specializing in fulfilling food delivery. Based in Hiroshima, Shimohana operates out of 50 bases across Japan. For the past 25 years the company has managed to grow annually, reporting sales of 45.1 billion yen ($41.9 billion USD) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2019. The company has a ten-year plan to double sales and become the number one food distributor in Japan. Their strategy includes expansion into the Chukyo and Tokyo metropolitan areas.

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Mr. Masato Matsunaga
General Manager of Shimohana

Client
Shimohana Logistics, Hiroshima, Japan

Industry
Food Industry Logistics

Challenge
Recruit new, sometimes inexperienced drivers, during a driver shortage, while lowering the number of rear-end collisions

Solution
Install Mobileye technology in order to help inexperienced drivers stay safe and learn proper following distances

Outcome
The company successfully recruited new drivers and improved driver behaviour

To support their operations, Shimohana owns a fleet of 1500 vehicles, which they operate 24 hours a day in order to maintain peak efficiency and impeccable service to their customers. Of course, this kind of operation means the company needs a large staff of drivers to keep their trucks on the road.

Unfortunately, as in much of the world, Japan is suffering from a severe shortage of truck drivers with reports of three job openings for every applicant and an estimated shortage of 280,000 drivers by 2028. This shortage is caused, in part, by Japan's aging population – more than 20 percent of the country's population is over 65.

> "If you use Mobileye, you can automatically get the event image at the time of alert. You can understand the dangerous driving of each driver regardless of whether there are complaints."

Mr. Matsunaga Masato
General Manager of Shimohana

Training New Drivers with Mobileye

In order to overcome this challenge, Shimohana started a program, training inexperienced drivers to help increase their workforce. The first step in such a program is an intensive training course, teaching new recruits driving skills, courtesy on the road and safety. After the course, new trainees drive with an in-cab coach who checks their skills.

Of course, once these drivers hit the road they are no longer accompanied by coaches so Shimohana decided to take an extra step to protect their drivers – installing Mobileye collision avoidance systems on their fleet with the assistance of J21, Mobileye's master distributor in Japan.
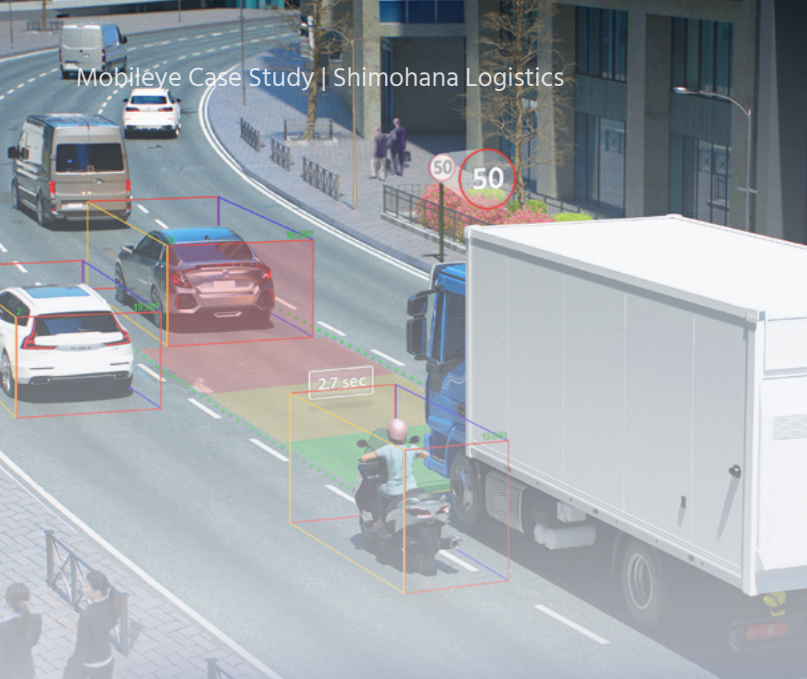
It is interesting to note that these units were installed in addition to factory installed automatic braking, back-up alarms and video cameras. According to the company, while these other systems helped with minor crashes, Mobileye was more effective in helping prevent more serious collisions involving a vehicle or pedestrian in front of a vehicle, collisions that were often the result of driver distraction or drowsy driving.

Mr. Masato Matsunaga, general manager of Shimohana, was impressed by the accuracy of the Mobileye units, "I have monitored many kinds of devices so far, but I have not found this kind of accuracy. Mobileye was highly regarded by drivers... The delivery manager and I agreed that the units could help with safety education and would prove useful for management."

Why Mobileye?

The company was impressed with Mobileye's track record in Japan where the collision avoidance system has helped fleets lower collision rates by an average of 88 per cent. Mr. Masato Matsunaga also noted that by alerting drivers when they are entering a hazardous situation, the system helps train them to avoid these situations in the first place.

...the number of alerts usually decreases by 50% after one month (of using Mobileye). Inexperienced people learn to judge the distance between cars.

Shimohana places particular importance on using Mobileye for their Risk Prediction Training program. **According to Shimohana, by combining information from Mobileye's collision avoidance system with dashcam footage, incidents of poor driving can be isolated for review, analyzed and used as a valuable training tool.** By capturing alert data, the fleet manager can easily review near-miss occurrences and increase driver training or warn other drivers of a potentially dangerous stretch of road. This saves valuable time and lets managers focus on the most important footage, helping them teach others how to avoid potential hazards.

As first reported in Japan by Logi-Biz[1], the results of Shimohana's training and safety programs have been impressive. Shimohana reported that they have been able to recruit new mid-career hires, 30 per cent of whom do not have previous truck driving experience, as well as new graduates. This expanded manpower tool is critical in the Japanese food logistics market where demand is so high and the main barrier to growth is lack of employees. Mr. Matsunaga notes that the company's ability to recruit and retain drivers is their "main weapon" and will allow them to expand their business which is faced with growing demand.

While this program started out by installing Mobileye in 300 fleet vehicles, it has proven such a success that Shimohana plans on installing units in all their entire fleet.