GOOGLE REVEALS ITS SELF-DRIVING CAR ACCIDENT RECORD

It's natural to be a little wary of self-driving vehicles, considering the frequency with which we curse at our PCs. But if Google's self-driving car accident report is any indication, at least *some* of that anxiety may be unfounded.

According to Google's Self-Driving Car Project Monthly Report for May, vehicles in Google's self-driving fleet have been involved in 12 accidents since the program's inception in 2009. All 12 collisions were minor fender benders, and only six occurred while the self-driving car was in autonomous mode.

In all cases, Google's cars got bumped or clipped by other vehicles, and sustained minor damage at worst. According to Google, its vehicles were not at fault in any of the collisions, and none of the accidents resulted in reported injuries.

Google's self-driving fleet has clocked over 1.8 million miles since the program began in 2009, so its fleet averages one fender bender every 150,000 miles. Chris Urmson, the director of Google's self-driving car program, provided some accident stats last month, but Google's new report provides a detailed account of each accident that affected the fleet. It still remains to be seen how well self-driving vehicles would perform on a wider scale-- Google has only 23 self-driving vehicles on public roads--and some, such as Patrick Lin at The Atlantic, have wondered about the ethics of self-driving vehicles. Still, Google's stats are an encouraging sign. If you'd like to see the accident details for yourself,

HP TO HELP TURN AVATAR SEQUELS INTO A DIGITAL ATTRACTION

The 2009 sci-fi blockbuster *Avatar* created a stir with audiences and critics for its themes, storytelling and special effects. Three sequels are in the works, with the first planned for release in December 2017. But this time around, *Avatar* may become much more than a film.

At HP's user conference, three firms -- Hewlett-Packard, Lightstorm Entertainment and 20th Century Fox -- announced a five-year partnership to create an online digital experience for *Avatar*. The plan is to build a platform that extends years beyond the film's box office release.

Exactly what this digital experience will entail is, for now, a little vague. But what is clear is that Jon Landau, the *Avatar* producer and COO of Lightstorm Entertainment, wants to do something so innovative that it serves as a compass to the future of the online experience.

"It's going to be a different level of interactivity than digital experiences currently offer," said Landau, in an interview. "It's going to take many different forms."

Landau envisions a platform customized around a user's wants. For someone who uses games, the platform could mean interactions on that level. For those more interested in the literature of Avatar, its environmental and race relation themes, a knowledge base would be available.

Today, movies exist in "2.5 hour blocks," but "we have more stories to tell than that," said Landau. "The digital space is the perfect outlet to engage people on stories we don't have time to tell."

Landau wants an online platform that extends the movie experience by decades, and to build it the three company's will be using HP tools, including its hybrid cloud platform, Helion, as well as its security, data analytics and collaboration software.

The filmmakers could have gone in a different direction, and selected multiple vendors for the job. But John Herbert, executive vice president and CIO at 20th Century Fox, said his company already has a long experience with HP, and "we really push them from a technological point of view" to drive innovation.

In the absence of a technological plotline to Avatar's future platform, all we can do here is share a little of Landau's vision. The main character in the *Avatar* film is Jake Sully.

"The movie begins and ends with Jake opening his eyes," said Landau, an image that represents "a challenge for people to open their eyes and to understand that their actions have an impact on the world and the people around them.