



Healthy Heads in Trucks & Sheds

Healthy Heads in Trucks & Sheds (HHTS) is a nonprofit charitable foundation established to improve psychological well-being for employees within road transport, warehousing, and logistics industries in Australia. The Foundation has designed an approach to create healthy working environments for all.

<https://www.healthyheads.org.au/>

Industry

Nonprofit

Headquarters

Sydney, Australia

VMware footprint

VMware Tanzu Act (offered by VMware Tanzu Labs)

Promoting mental health and physical well-being for Australian road transport drivers, shed workers, and logistics workers with tailored solutions and support delivered via a mobile app.

About the customer

Healthy Heads in Trucks & Sheds Foundation (HHTS) was co-founded in 2020 by Australia's top retail and logistics companies in response to the severity of poor mental health among road transport drivers, shed workers, and logistic workers. According to recent studies analyzing these industries, drivers with depression are seven times more likely to have been in an accident; the three leading causes of death are heart attack, heart disease, and suicide; and 38.2% of all workers with reported conditions say their workplace has caused or worsened their mental health condition(s).¹

Established in August 2020, HHTS has already proven to be a great example of an industry getting together to find solutions to existing, troubling problems. Founding members of HHTS include two of Australia's largest supermarket chains, Woolworths and Coles; four of Australia's largest transport and logistics companies, Toll, Linfox, Finemores, and QUBE; and the Australia Post, the national mail service. These industry players came together to support the establishment growth of HHTS. Senior members of these businesses sit on the [HHTS Board of Directors](#) to help set goals, support responsibilities, and ensure HHTS has the right resources to succeed.

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NAOMI FRAUENFELDER, CEO, HEALTHY HEADS

1. <https://www.workplaceassured.com.au/news/truck-drivers-health-issues-raise-their-crash-risk>

HHTS engaged with [VMware Tanzu Act](#), a program delivered by [VMware Tanzu Labs](#), to build and design a mobile application to support the mental health and well-being of these workers. Tanzu Act partners with nonprofit organizations to identify, design, and deliver practical solutions to address critical, pressing challenges around the world at a discounted rate. This program contributes to VMware's [2030 Agenda](#), a decade-long Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) commitment and call to action to foster a more sustainable, equitable, and secure world.

"The aim of Healthy Heads is to be the umbrella body for mental health in transport and logistics," said CEO Naomi Frauenfelder. With support from Tanzu Act, HHTS has designed an app that aims to improve the declining mental health of the road transport, warehousing, and logistics community.

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Digital, tailored content inspires users

Through HHTS' engagement with Tanzu Act, their small team was able to design a mobile application with tailored content and support services for truck drivers, shed workers, and logistics employees in these industries. The app includes handbooks for frontline staff; well-being check-in features; stretching exercises and breathing techniques; and support services from Beyond Blue and Lifeline, two Australian mental health and crisis support service providers.

"There's a number of great mental health apps out there, but being that this is an industry with a very male dominant workforce, there is a lot of stigma attached to mental health issues. We needed something specific for the industry that has content curated for dealing with fatigue, isolation, disconnect, and financial pressure. This is such an enormous and unique industry, and tailoring resources to them is quite effective. That's why we wanted a specific app that we could provide for people working in the sector," Frauenfelder said.

According to research by [Beyond Blue](#)² Australian men are three times more likely to die by suicide than women, yet men are far less likely to seek help for mental health conditions due to fear, shame, lack of insight, limited awareness, or simply not having the time. HHTS is working to break this stigma by offering easily accessible digital mental health support and resources for their cohort.

"There are specific risk factors in the industry which can come from the nature of the roles," Frauenfelder said. Many of these workers have long, demanding shifts where they are potentially working through the night. Seeing a doctor regularly does not align with inconsistent or overnight schedules. Many are also exposed to traumatic events out on the road that they may find difficult to process.

Another factor that affects these workers mentally is lacking physical well-being. These careers are sedentary in nature, and if drivers visit a rest stop, locations do not always have healthy food choices. These workers are prone to developing or worsening mental health challenges without solutions. By digitizing mental health resources for their industry, HHTS is paving the way for workers to feel supported, have their voices heard, and improve their overall health.

How Tanzu Act empathetically connects with users

Tanzu Act leads with empathy when working with users to turn problems into solutions. Through the engagement with HHTS, the Tanzu Labs product team gathered enough information to understand the needs and goals across the road transport and logistics sector to successfully design an app for this unique demographic.

By conducting user interviews, the product team spoke directly to more than 20 truck drivers and shed workers to hear their daily work experiences, how they feel their work impacts their mental health, and how their home life is affected by their work. Frauenfelder said the engagement with the Tanzu Labs team saved them time because of these tests and user interviews. The original kickoff for this project was in May 2021, with the first build of the app completed in late August.

2. <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/media/statistics>

HHTS was able to determine what drivers and shed workers are looking for regarding resources, services, and communication by focusing on users' pain points. What they have developed is based on exactly what the users need, rather than on assumptions of what they need.

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The Healthy Heads app is an extension of the website launched earlier this year, with a goal of using additional mediums to reach different audiences. It's been proven that younger generations are more comfortable using technology on their mobile devices, and using an app to find mental health resources may work better for them than other methods.

Tanzu Act understands that pressing challenges—like managing employees' mental health—require speedy solutions. Frauenfelder said HHTS was interested in designing an app that was readily available and would provide the best user experience.

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One of HHTS' founding organizations initially said they were looking for a simple well-being check-in for their employees. They then shared that some of their workers may never have thought about investing in their mental health and do not know where to start. By starting small, and empathetically connecting with users, HHTS took the development one step at a time to design the best application, including all of the right tools. Many other road transport companies agreed the application has filled the gap and truly supports improving overall wellness for these industries.

The app has unveiled hundreds of new resources in its first few months, all implemented from users' and founders' feedback. One example of this are the short stretching exercises offered through the app for drivers and shed

workers to squeeze in five- or 10-minute active sessions during their brief breaks. The HHTS team listened to these concerns to understand how they can still provide simple solutions that may contribute to improving drivers' and other workers' mental health.

Healthy Heads app in the future: More reach, more solutions, more impact

The Tanzu Act team will continue to partner with HHTS as they develop new features and support services for their users. To date, the app has more than 1,000 downloads, and their hope is to reach more and more road transport drivers and logistics workers. Currently, HHTS is determining what the next builds of the application will include, based on current users' feedback about what's working well and what's missing.

In the next version, the team plans to add features that map rest areas for drivers along their route. To do this, HHTS plans to investigate additional features that could solve problems for workers that struggle to find appropriate rest stops on long trips, to make it easier to connect with others when they feel they're struggling with their mental health and overall well-being.

"We've had lots of great feedback on the app so far in terms of the simplicity and how easy it is to use, which is important because it's the first app we've ever done. Part of it is normalizing the idea of truck drivers and shed workers to stop and reflect on how they feel mentally. There are quite a number of companies that want to have it automatically loaded on their company devices," Frauenfelder said.