

TIRES & AUTOMOTIVE PARTS MAGAZINE

The Middle East's First Automotive, Tires & Parts News Source

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KASH UTTAM

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SGTC

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Fifa fever is back in the air. Everyone I know is engrossed in discussions about the fortunes of their favorite team and their favorite star, whether it is Lionel Messi or Cristiano Ronaldo or even the infamous Suarez.

What struck me most though about this world cup was the overwhelming publicity companies got by associating themselves with the FIFA World Cup. Whether it was running general football promotions on their social media platforms, running a co-promotion with one of the official sponsors or becoming a service provider, everyone wanted a slice of the action.

The automotive industry did not lag behind when it came to soccer sponsorship. Hyundai began its partnership with FIFA in 1999 and will continue as the official automotive partner till 2022. The company sees this sponsorship as one of the key elements of its marketing strategy to connect with its customers all over the world. Hyundai is the vehicle supplier throughout the tournament and all the 32 team buses have Hyundai branding. Hyundai Fan Parks in different countries around the world where fans can watch games on huge TV screens and share their excitement, the Hyundai Best Player Award, the perimeter boards, the "Goodwill Ball" program, online promotions like "Be There with Hyundai" and 'Fan of the Match' and the TV commercials have gone a long way in increasing the visibility of the brand.

Hyundai's sister concern Kia Motors America has roped in Brazilian supermodel Adriana Lima to turn American football fans into "futebol" fans. In the company's "For One Month, Let's All be Fútbol Fans" TV spots, Lima does her best to link Kia models like the Optima and Sorento to her passion for football and communicate the same excitement to the viewers.

Continental Tires too is one of the official sponsors of the 2014 FIFA World Cup™ in Brazil, and supplied all 32 FIFA team buses and the transfer buses used for Continental's guests with premium bus tires called ContiGol Urbano. These tires were developed specially for the tournament and have been customized for the heavy urban traffic in Brazil. They also come with a football motif on the sidewall, the FIFA World Cup logo and Continental's logo thus highly increasing the brand's visibility to millions of viewers around the world.

Castrol, another official sponsor brought stars from two equally exciting fields — soccer and motorsport to create the Castrol Footkhana. This saw a faceoff between Brazilian star Neymar Jr and fellow Castrol Ambassador and global rally icon Ken Block as they tried to score goals in an amazing performance. With 15,763,651 views on YouTube to date, the campaign has already proved to be a viral hit. Neymar, who is known for his wide array of soccer skills became the face of Castrol's World Cup promotions. Castrol used the 2014 FIFA World Cup as the perfect opportunity to showcase their passion for performance, innovation and of course, football.

With football turning into big business and the official sponsors reaping rich dividends when it comes to publicity, I see many more automotive companies getting into the act in the next edition of the FIFA World Cup.

Hamid Moaref

Publisher

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KASH UTTAM

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SGTC

SGTC is the authorized distributor for Duracell Automotive batteries in the UAE. What is the mission and vision of your company?

Our mission is to source and bring to the marketplace premium brands and high quality products before anyone else. Our vision is to develop a strategic brand portfolio that allows us to significantly increase our market share, as well as remain relevant to all our stakeholders.

Could you share with us the brief history of Duracell?

'Duracell' was introduced as a brand name in 1964. It came from 'durable cell battery' – this was the AAA mercury battery the factory started manufacturing in the late 50s. The company was founded in Burlington, Massachusetts in the late 20s when scientist Samuel Ruben and businessman Philip Rogers Mallory met and started working together.

Duracell Automotive Batteries is a new player in the region's automotive aftermarket. Tell us about the brand's launch in the country?

My company became the authorized distributor for Duracell Automotive batteries in the spring of 2013, and we launched the range at Automechanika that year. We were looking for a platform that would enable us to showcase the range with maximum visibility and impact, and we chose Automechanika because as the largest trade and networking exhibition for the region's automotive aftermarket, it allowed us to easily and efficiently connect to the parties we were interested in.

Everyone knows Duracell as the world's leader in high-performance alkaline batteries. For over 40 years, Duracell has been manufacturing and supplying the world with energy through its batteries. As a result, the brand name is recognized and trusted all over the world today, including here in the GCC. People also associate the 'Duracell' name with long life, power and performance. At the same time, the brand strives to remain relevant and grow its business footprint with the expansion of its product portfolio through the addition of automotive batteries.

For us, as the distributor, it was essential to demonstrate from the outset that car batteries carrying the 'Duracell' brand name, pack the same superior quality.

What challenges did you face in launching the brand? How did you deal with them?

Launching a new brand in a cluttered and competitive market is a lot of work, and that is one of the challenges we faced. Through establishing a sound foundation in the market, we can effectively scale up our operations, expand the channel and increase market share. That is how we intended and are intending to deal with that challenge.

Could you give us an overview of the Duracell Automotive product range?

The Duracell Automotive range covers the whole spectrum of batteries: from personal cars and SUVs, to trucks and other commercial, heavy-duty vehicles.

The entry point is the Duracell 'Starter', which offers an unmatched price-performance ratio. It provides reliable power for every cold start, absolute zero-maintenance and maximum safety, thanks to its 4-chamber leak protection.

The 'Advanced' line, which is designed to meet the strict requirements of leading automotive manufacturers, features inboard power pack units that combine full calcium technology (for more starting power) with superior safety features, thanks to its double lid leak protection. Moreover, there are over 20 battery types in this line to match virtually all European and Asian vehicles.

To begin with, we brought to the region the 'Starter' and the 'Advanced' lines. The range also features the Duracell 'Extreme', the special AGM and EFB batteries designed for environment-friendly vehicles. The absorbent glass mat (AGM) battery is utilized primarily in family and premium class vehicles with start/stop systems and brake energy recuperation. The enhanced flooded battery (EFB) is used mainly in family class and small cars, and where simple start/stop systems are in use.

The last product line in the Duracell Automotive range is the 'Professional' which is meant for trucks, buses and agricultural machinery, and is available in heavy duty (HD) and super heavy-duty (SHD) versions.

Could you give us an example of the advanced technology used in Duracell's Automotive range?

Let's take the AGM (absorbent glass mat) technology with high capacity power optimized flat spiral plates for optimum functioning in extreme conditions. The spiral and absorbed glass mat design retains the acid so the battery will not spill or leak, and delivers enhanced vibration resistance that is 20 times more than that of conventional batteries. The Duracell AGM battery also has DuraMAT™ components made of puncture-resistant separator material.

What sets the Duracell car batteries apart from other batteries on the market today?

The Duracell brand is synonymous with power, reliability and innovation. The same can be said about the Duracell Automotive batteries, which are manufactured in Austria to the highest quality standards.

All sealed maintenance free lead-acid Duracell batteries are made from the finest raw material resources, with the most advanced computerized equipment and undergo stringent testing and quality control checks. The advanced technology, superior under-the-hood heat protection, long-life performance and premium design make the Duracell car battery powerful and reliable.

Who are the buyers of Duracell batteries?

Our batteries are bought by car owners who place a high value on superior dependability and high-powered performance.

What are the compelling factors for consumers to buy Duracell over a generic make or any other brand?

It boils down to education and awareness. A battery plays an important role in the overall functioning of the car: it provides power to the starter and ignition system, it provides extra power necessary for all the electronics and accessories that either come installed or plugged into the car when the vehicle's electrical load requirements exceed the supply from the charging system, and it also serves as a voltage stabilizer in the electrical system. There are many demands on a battery that most consumers may not be aware of.

In the GCC in particular, with high humidity and temperatures rising to 40°C and beyond, the strain is even higher on the battery performance. The excessive heat causes the battery fluid to evaporate faster, damaging the internal structure. It can also speed up the chemical reaction inside the battery, causing it to be overcharged. That is why a top performing car battery can make a huge difference. Anyone who has experienced a car battery breakdown and was left stranded out in the heat can fully appreciate the importance of power and reliability.

When customers hear the brand name "Duracell", what is the first thing that you want to come to their mind?

When the brand name "Duracell" is mentioned, the first thing I want customers to think about is that it is a confident brand that can be trusted 100%.

In today's automotive industry, it is not enough for products to have only superior performance, long-life and excellent quality. They must also be environment-friendly as required by certain environment regulations. Can you declare Duracell as pro-earth by citing its eco-friendly properties?

Yes, I can say that Duracell is pro-earth because it is a lead-acid battery, which is one of the most recyclable products on the planet. In fact, 100% of every battery component can be recycled to make a brand new battery. Lead-acid batteries have a higher recycling rate than glass, aluminum and paper.

How big is the car battery market, and based on figures, where do you see Duracell in the future?

The automotive market in the GCC is on a high growth path that is estimated to increase at a CAGR of 5.9% totaling 1.66 million units by 2017; while the overall number of registered cars and pickups is to reach approximately 16.4 million units. The number of trucks and buses on the road is expected to be around 1.42 million. The entry sedan segment is expected to grow by around 40% and the mid-size SUV segment by around 25%, thanks to the new and exciting products launched in these segments. (Source: Frost & Sullivan). The forecast for the luxury car segment is equally positive, with key manufacturers projecting double digits sales increase in the next 3 years.

This overall growth impacts directly and positively on the automotive aftermarket, driving up the demand for auto services, spare parts and, of course, car batteries. It is estimated that 80% of the total volume of car battery sales comes from the aftermarket.

Overall, I would say that the car battery market is primed for substantial growth over the next few years, which also creates a great opportunity for differentiation in the marketplace, especially for a premium brand like Duracell that can fully address the changing needs in the automotive aftermarket.

There are several global battery brands sold in the UAE today. Can you share with us some of the strategies you use to ensure that Duracell will ace the tough competition in the country?

Our approach is two-fold: positioning via differentiation and education. We offer an unmatched, high-performance product range that is competitively priced. This helps us to achieve the right positioning in the marketplace, which is key to our sales efforts. Brand and product education for our distribution channel is also instrumental.

As a globally-renowned battery brand, what is the impact of Duracell to SGTC in terms of branding, clientele and sales?

Working with a prestigious global brand like Duracell Automotive has had a positive impact: it has helped to elevate our company's name and enabled us to establish business relationships with several prominent institutions and governments bodies that understand and value the quality of the products we offer. It has also boosted our revenue.

In the UAE, anyone can be a good driver, but not everyone knows how to deal with car breakdowns caused by battery failure. Do you have plans to offer programs or services to educate consumers about battery care and maintenance?

That is true. Long gone are the days when people would play mechanic on weekends. Our focus in the first year has been on B2B, but we do have plans to roll out a consumer initiative as well. We have a monthly newsletter covering all aspects of vehicle ownership, car battery tips and details about upcoming promotions and activities. At the moment, we have a long-term association with BAT-MOBILE, one of the country's leading emergency battery replacement experts that offers 24/7/365 mobile service throughout the UAE.

One year after launching Duracell, can you summarize the key inroads you have made so far?

Our focus so far has been on partners outreach and education, as well as on building a sound foundation from day one. That is why we directed our efforts towards creating a channel of strategic dealers. We have been successful in forging partnerships with dealers who not only have the right capabilities, but who also understand and value the product.

Can you share with us the next steps SGTC is going to take concerning the Duracell brand?

The next steps for us are to devise an aggressive market strategy and develop customized solutions in collaboration with our dealers in order to strengthen our consumer proposition and capture more market share. The Duracell car battery is a great product and we are determined for it to be the new power on the roads of the UAE and the wider region.

LIMITED EDITION TRUE BLUE ROLLS-ROYCE WATERSPEED COLLECTION DEBUTS IN UAE MARKET

Abu Dhabi Motors, the exclusive dealer cars for Rolls-Royce in Abu Dhabi and Al Ain is one of the few dealers across the world which will be showcasing the new limited edition Rolls-Royce Waterspeed Collection.

With a production run of only 35 Phantom Drophead Coupés in white and blue, UAE clients will have the privilege of being in a position to join an exclusive club of luxury car owners who can claim ownership of cars from the beautiful Waterspeed collection. The collection was designed in memory of renowned British racing enthusiast, Sir Malcolm Campbell. In a typically British act of adventure and sportsmanship, on 1 September 1937, he established the world water speed record of 126.32 mph in a Rolls-Royce-powered Bluebird K3 hydroplane boat on Lake Maggiore on the Swiss-Italian frontier, thus taking Britain one step ahead of the Americans. This was not only an act that caught the eye of the entire world, but also attested once more to the innate technical perfection of Rolls-Royce R-Type engines on the sea in addition to the land and the air.

The public got its first glimpse of the Rolls-Royce Waterspeed collection when it was launched at the famous Concorso D'Eleganza at the Villa D'Este on the shores of Italy's Lake Como.

Commenting on the arrival of the Bespoke Waterspeed Collection in the UAE, Arno Husselmann, General Manager of Abu Dhabi Motors, said: "The Bespoke Waterspeed Phantom Drophead Coupé is an exceptional car with a unique heritage. As with all Rolls-Royce vehicles, the Waterspeed Collection exudes luxury, grace, performance and sophistication, but its limited production run, storied inspiration, and striking contemporary Bespoke colour scheme make it that much more rare. With only 35 production units available globally, we are very excited to be hosting this masterpiece at our showroom here in Abu Dhabi later this year."

He added that as with other bespoke collections from Rolls-Royce, this collection too will offer several options to customers to have their very own customized Rolls-Royce. Having won the title of 'Best Bespoke Dealer Worldwide' consecutively for the past five years, Abu Dhabi Motors has proved the company's expertise in offering a level of customization very few dealers can match.

The level of attention and detail devoted to each car in the Waterspeed collection is absolutely amazing. Nine layers of paint are applied to the exterior before the steel deck is hand-brushed for over 80 hours by a Rolls-Royce craftsman. The coachline that comes with a Bluebird motif is further polished for another four hours with a squirrel-hair brush for a mirror like finish. For the first time, even the eleven-spoke wheels have a decorative touch.

The 35 Phantom Drophead Coupés that belong to the Waterspeed Collection are fashioned from the finest contemporary materials that have previously never been used in a Rolls-Royce like abachi wood. Finished in an exclusive Maggiore Blue shade to commemorate the aquatic exploits of Sir Malcolm Campbell, the hand-crafted wood inlays and the burnished steel of the exterior convey an impression of matchless luxury and further support Rolls-Royce's position as the purveyor of super-luxury cars.



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Automechanika Academy Session Underlines Key Role of Dubai in Regional Automotive Trade



Mohammad Al-Said
Strategy & Corporate Excellence Dep - Dubai Customs

The 12th edition of Automechanika Dubai that was held from 4-6 June at the World Trade Center in Dubai witnessed a record number of exhibitors, 1,695 exhibitors from 60 countries, a surge of 19% over the last year. Dubai, located strategically at the meeting point of three continents – Asia, Europe and Africa and with a multicultural mix of 195 nationalities is a key focal point for trade in the region. This is the main reason Automechanika Dubai experienced a heavy influx of trade visitors from countries as varied as China and Nigeria who used the show as a platform to network with other industry players.

The Automechanika Academy, a series of seminars and discussions held by industry experts in conjunction with Automechanika Dubai 2014 began its first session on June 5, with a presentation by Dubai Customs on the contribution of the automotive sector to Dubai's position as a premier trading destination in the MENASA region.

The first session at the Automechanika academy hence rightly focused on the role played by the automotive sector in the overall trade to and from Dubai. According to the speaker, Mohammad Al-Said of Dubai Customs, Dubai's total non-oil foreign trade in 2013 amounted to AED 1.3 trillion of which auto parts and accessories contributed as much as AED 40 billion or 3%. The breakup of this figure was AED 23 billion worth of imports and AED 17 billion worth of exports and re-exports.

Each year, the automotive trade figures have showed progressive growth with the figures being AED 32 billion, AED 36 billion and AED 37 billion in 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively. The fact that Dubai acts as a regional hub for the automotive trade in the region is proved by the fact that 74% of the parts and accessories imported are then re-exported. The annual trade figures are also showing an upward trend with 8% growth for 2013 as compared to 3% for 2012.

When it comes to the automotive sector, Japan is Dubai's top trade partner being the source of 25% of the imports, followed by South Korea and China which account for 14% and 12% respectively. The top four automotive exporters to Dubai - Japan, South Korea, China and Germany together contribute to as much as 60% of the imports.

The biggest importer of automotive products including parts and accessories from Dubai is Saudi Arabia, which imported 2.14 billion worth of automotive goods and accounted for 12% of the imports. Iraq (1.09 billion - 6%) and Afghanistan (0.84 billion - 5%) came a very distant second and third. The re-export trade is more evenly distributed than the import trade with the top four importers from Dubai accounting for only 27% of the exports from Dubai.

When it comes to the breakup for the individual components, of the AED 40 billion trade figure, parts and accessories for motor vehicles were responsible for a major chunk of the trade with a 23% share for imports and 27% of the re-exports, while new tires for motorcars contributed 9% to imports and 11% to re-exports and tires for buses and lorries contributed 7% to imports and 6% to re-exports.

The presentation by Dubai Customs Authority at the Automechanika academy only served to underline what we have known all along – that Dubai's automotive trade is not just thriving but that the emirate is definitely not a place anyone in the automotive industry can afford to ignore if they are serious about doing business in the Middle East.



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Academy Session Reveals the Bright Side of Africa



Subhash Joshi,
The Head of MENA Frost & Sullivan

There was a time when Africa was known as the “Dark Continent”. The second session at the Automechanika Academy helmed by Subhash Joshi, the Head of MENA for the renowned automotive research firm Frost & Sullivan quickly changed this perception. No stranger to the automotive market, Subhash has nine years of experience as an industry expert and specializes in planning, and delivering client-defined consulting engagements and strategic market reports.

His presentation revealed an Africa that was on the verge of explosive growth. The figures are just amazing – a continent with mobile penetration of 90% and 43% of the population living in urban areas by 2020 with a potential middle class of 360 million consumers. The top 18 cities will have a combined spending power of \$1.3 trillion, a figure that the automotive sector just cannot afford to ignore.

Africa is adopting urbanization at a very rapid pace with the three key trends being the formation of megacities like Cairo, mega regions like Lagos, and mega corridors connecting mega regions like the North-South corridor. Mobile penetration is another predictor of urbanization and with the availability of low cost devices, \$80 billion investment in infrastructure and the availability of value added services, the mobile penetration rate will be close to market saturation with close to 1,170 million mobile users by 2020, according to a study by Frost & Sullivan. With the growth in disposable income, high levels of urbanization, high mobile penetration and internet usage, there will undoubtedly be significant growth in trade across the continent. Countries like Morocco, Egypt, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Sudan, Angola and South Africa are set to be the economic powerhouses of the future.

The automotive sector in Africa has witnessed significant inflow of foreign investment, especially by China, with one of five buses sold in sub-Saharan Africa being of Chinese origin. With the size of the potential market in mind, many companies like Mobius have developed vehicles that have been specially customized for the tough terrain in the African continent.

Like markets in every region, the African market too has its own peculiar quirks. These include an overwhelming preference for 4x4s, SUVs and pickups. The main buyers for new vehicles are government agencies and corporate customers rather than individual retail consumers unlike in other countries. The key four markets – Nigeria, Morocco, Algeria and Egypt account for as much as 65% of the new vehicle sales. Of the vehicles on the road, more than 50% are over 16 years old. Hence the market for parts is quite vibrant. Parts are manufactured locally only in a few North African countries and nearly 55-60% of the market for parts is driven by grey imports. Sale of parts through unauthorized channels (55%) currently exceeds the sale of parts through authorized channels (45%). This is an area of major concern in the African automotive market.

The continent is witnessing keen competition among companies from different parts of the world for a share of the market. The North African market shows a preference for European and US brands with the Chinese and Korean brands slowly making headway. In west and sub-Saharan Africa though, it is the Japanese and Korean brands which dominate the market. Chinese and Indian companies too are pushing hard to gain a foothold in the African market.

Coming to distribution trends, multi-brand showrooms are the norm rather than showrooms showcasing a single brand as in more developed markets. Warranty claims are more prevalent than in other markets and this calls for wider availability of parts, availability of more trained professionals and better service facilities. Increasing activity in the used car market and preference for leasing rather than buying cars are other trends that have become popular in the African market in the recent past.

By the end of the session, every participant was aware of the immense potential offered by the continent that was formerly known as the “dark continent”.



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315/80R22.5 CEAT PRO R10	18	J	154/150	M	3750 (8270)	830 (120)	3350 (7390)	830 (120)	9.0 x 22.5"	1076	316	14.5

VOLKSWAGEN MIDDLE EAST REPORTS RECORD RETAIL GROWTH

Volkswagen Middle East has reported record growth of retail outlets with the addition of six showrooms and a number of technologically advanced service centers in the first half of 2014. The company has invested over US\$20 million in developing the retail network to cater to the growing demand for all Volkswagen models across the Middle East.

Commenting on the record that marks more than 50 years of operation in the Middle East market, Thomas Milz, the Managing Director of Volkswagen Middle East said that this focus on developing the retail network attests to the company's commitment to the Middle East market and its drive to provide its customers with the best products and extremely high levels of customer service in partnership with its local partners.

"Our retail network's record-breaking growth signifies our ongoing commitment to the Middle East. With the support of our trusted partners in the region, we remain on track to becoming a world leader in customer satisfaction and innovation by 2018," Milz added.

The company had recently opened six new showrooms in Beirut, Doha, Dubai, Erbil, Fujairah and Sharjah. The service center network has been expanded to include new high-tech facilities in Erbil, Muscat, Fujairah and Sharjah. Volkswagen Middle East has thus laid the groundwork well for the forthcoming launch of the new Beetle and the all-new Golf R in the Middle East.

The growth in the retail network is slated to continue in the same vein throughout the year with new projects like what the company claims will be the world's largest Volkswagen showroom and service center in Kuwait, a third Volkswagen showroom in Abu Dhabi, and plans for more outlets in Oman.

"We are confident in adding some of the Middle East's most advanced showrooms and service centres to our growing portfolio of first-class facilities. We look forward to welcoming customers seeking unparalleled driving experiences across the full model line-up, which will include the new generation Beetle and the dynamic Golf R from this summer," concluded Milz.



LIMITED EDITION MAZDA MIATA SELLS OUT IN 10 MINUTES



Mazda produced a 25th anniversary edition of the popular two-seater Mazda Miata. However, not even one is currently available for sale as all 100 cars of the limited edition production car sold out in just ten minutes.

On May 20, Mazda had opened its pre-order site for the anniversary edition on which customers intending to purchase the car could register. The company had planned to keep the site open till May 31, or till 250 customers registered to buy the car, whichever came first. However, within just ten minutes, 250 people had expressed an interest in buying the car. Of the 250 people who have registered, the first 100 whose details cleared the verification process had a chance to pre-order the MX-5 and were referred to their closest dealership to complete the purchase.

The 2015 MX-5 Miata 25th Anniversary Edition models went on sale at dealerships from the beginning of the summer at a price tag of \$32,205 for the six-speed manual version and \$32,655 for the automatic transmission. Inspired by the PRHT (Power Retractable Hard Top) model, the limited-

edition Miata has a striking combination of Soul Red metallic paint on the exterior and a black roof, Bilstein shocks, off-white leather upholstery in the interior and gunmetal wheels. The car also comes with special badging, a customized Tourneau watch with genuine leather straps and a display winder box.

Commenting on the success of the new model, Jim O'Sullivan, president and CEO, Mazda North American Operations (MNAO) said, "It is no secret the MX-5 Miata 25th Anniversary Edition is a specially-crafted 'Thank you' to every MX-5 fan – former, current and hopefully future. The enthusiasm surrounding the MX-5 since its debut in 1989 has been nothing short of phenomenal, and we sincerely appreciate every single person that has experienced the absolute joy of driving with in an MX-5 – whether behind the wheel or as a passenger. Since day one, this vehicle has been a true driver's car and we hope to continue to build upon its dynamic legacy for generations to come."

MARK FIELDS TO STEER FORD INTO THE FUTURE



In a move that was widely expected across the auto industry, Ford Motor Company has announced Alan Mulally's retirement and the appointment of Mark Fields as the new President and CEO of the company with effect from July 1, 2014. The change in leadership is taking place six months sooner than expected due to confirmation from Mulally that the new leadership under Mark Fields is now in a position to competently lead the company into the future.

Commenting on the move, the Executive Chairman, Bill Ford said that a smooth transition was the order of the day. He stated that the many initiatives that Mark Fields had taken to make the company's operations stronger over his 25 years with Ford had made him the leading candidate for the position.

Mulally, 68, is a veteran of the automotive industry with more than 45 years of experience under his belt and is retiring after almost eight years at the helm of the company. During his tenure at the top, he transformed Ford into one of the leading carmakers in the world. He was responsible for developing a strong product lineup and the company's ambitious global expansion program. Under his canny stewardship, Ford enjoyed 19 consecutive quarters of profitability.

"Alan deservedly will be long remembered for engineering one of the most successful business turnarounds in history," Bill Ford said. "Under Alan's leadership, Ford not only survived the global economic crisis, it emerged as one of the world's strongest auto companies. We always will be grateful to Alan for his leadership, compelling vision and for fostering a culture of working together that will serve our company for decades to come."



Most Powerful Rolls Royce Ever Arrives in the UAE

The most powerful 4-door Rolls-Royce ever, the limited edition Rolls-Royce Ghost V-Specification, has arrived in AGMC Showrooms in the UAE. AGMC is the authorized dealer of Rolls-Royce in Dubai, Sharjah and the Northern Emirates. The Rolls Royce Ghost V-specification provides the perfect blend of performance to the driver and comfort to all passengers.

Commenting on the car, Müller-Ötvös, the Chief Executive of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, said that the limited series effectively showcased one of the Ghost's most important features; the 6.6 litre Rolls-Royce V12 engine. He added that ever since its launch in 2009, the car's powerful design and high performance has made it the ideal choice for a growing number of discerning customers across the world.

Mohammed El-Arshy, Rolls-Royce Brand Manager, AGMC, added: "The most powerful 4-door Rolls-Royce ever built is truly a vehicle that commands respect on the roads. Customers in the UAE have a high appreciation for limited edition Bespoke vehicles and for engine power, which makes the Ghost V-Specification the perfect fit for this market. It is the most powerful Ghost ever and is only available for production for a limited window, so we expect strong demand for it as it is considered to be a collector's item."

The Ghost's powerful V12 engine smoothly takes the car from 0 to 60 mph in just 4.7 seconds with 80% of power available from idle. The elegant design with the V-specification motif coachline is the apt foil for the powerful engine. When it comes to the exterior colors, customers can choose from five special shades; Black Kirsch, Graphite, Arctic White, Black Sapphire and Infinity. For further customization, customers can opt to have visible chrome exhausts and 21" part-polished wheels.

The V-Specification motif continues in the interiors through engraving to the treadplates, embroidery on the rear armrest and hand-applied steel inlays to the front multimedia screen lid. The crowning touch in the interior is an exclusive designer clock with a black crown surrounding the face.

HONDA SET TO FLY HIGH WITH JET AIRPLANES



The Japanese auto manufacturer, Honda, is known mostly as a manufacturer of high-quality best selling automobiles. But in addition to cars, the Japanese corporation makes motorcycles, engines, robots, power equipment, ATVs, and – now even jet airplanes.

Honda engineers have been working on the company's first private jet from 2006, and after testing a number of prototypes in the past eight years, the first production version was built about a year ago. Now it is almost ready for final testing and delivery.

The announcement was made at a press conference held on the sidelines of the European Business Aviation Convention and Exhibition (EBACE) held recently in Geneva, Switzerland.

Named the HondaJet, the plane is fitted with GE Honda HF120 jet engines and is scheduled to complete the initial ground tests before taking its maiden flight this summer and receiving certification from the FAA (Federal Aviation Authority) next year. Painted in a bespoke pearl green shade with a gold stripe, it is a truly impressive sight.

Currently, eight more jets are in various stages of production at the Honda aircraft plant that employs more than 1,000 people drawn from 43 countries who represent the best talent in the aviation industry.

Commenting on the achievement, Honda Aircraft Company President and CEO Michimasa Fujino said, "Honda Aircraft Company's most important goals are achieving Federal Aviation Administration Type Certification and delivering the first customer aircraft. Our total effort is focused on reaching these much anticipated milestones in the first quarter of 2015."

He went on to add that the company, along with its global network of dealers and suppliers is putting in a lot of effort to hand over the planes to customers in a seamless manner so that they get the best ownership experience. The company will also invest in flight and maintenance training for customers by partnering with FlightSafety International to offer classes in the US later this year.

KIA GETS ADRIANA LIMA TO TURN "FOOTBALL" FANS INTO "FUTBOL" FANATICS



To people in the US, "football" means American football, though to soccer fans American football looks more like rugby than soccer. Soccer does not have a huge fan following in the US and Canada, where American-style football is more popular.

However, it is FIFA season again and as the official partner of the 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil™, Kia Motors America (KMA) is going all out to convert "football" fans into soccer supporters with a new marketing campaign.

The new campaign seeks to use Brazilian born supermodel Adriana Lima's in three TV spots highlighting the Kia Optima and the Kia Sorento CUV to get new converts to football. Titled "For One Month, Let's All be Fútbol Fans", the campaign will include TV, print, digital, social, point-of-sale and radio promotions. Kia will also be the presenting sponsor of pre-match shows on ABC and ESPN. This will be the second time Kia uses Adriana Lima as a spokesperson. The company had earlier used her as the face for the "Drive the Dream" Super Bowl commercial in 2012 to make a lasting impression on viewers' minds.

In the "For One Month, Let's All be Fútbol Fans," ads, Lima goes in a 2015 Optima sedan and Sorento CUV to different spots like a football field, a man cave and a local diner to get football fans to switch their loyalties to soccer for a month.

The three 30-second ads which were created in both English and Spanish by the agency, David & Goliath have been on air from June 12, when the group playoffs began. Kia will also be using the ads extensively on their website and on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Vine, Google+ and Pinterest.

Commenting on the new campaign Michael Sprague, KMA's executive vice president of sales and marketing said that with soccer's popularity growing across the U.S., Kia is in a unique position to promote the game and showcase its vehicles as the Official Automotive Partner of the World Cup.

He added that Kia had decided to use Adriana Lima as a spokesperson on the basis of the fact that the FIFA World Cup will be held in her home country of Brazil, her love for the game, and the stunning impact she made with her presence in the 'Drive the Dream' campaign. With Adriana Lima as the face of their campaign, Kia is adding a heavy dose of glamour and humor to their 'fútbol' campaign.



The most expensive production car ever was the limited edition Lamborghini Veneno, with a staggering price tag of \$4.5 million.

GOOGLE FIRST FIRM TO DEBUT CAR WITHOUT STEERING WHEEL AND BRAKES



Cars are an unavoidable necessity to get around, especially to get access to remote areas or places where public transport or taxis are not available. However, road fatalities due to human error, especially in the Middle East are one of the leading causes of death. In the wrong hands, a car can be a killing machine. A self-driving car that can be programmed to take a person from point A to point B may take the fun out of driving. However, it will also keep you from losing time looking for your destination and increase the safety aspect. It can even cut down on the time you hunt for a parking space by communicating intelligently with other cars, thus locating the best and closest spot that is available.

Google has always been in the forefront of players in the field who are working on autonomous cars or driverless cars. Now, the company has come up with a cute, prototype two seater car that has no steering, no brake pedals and no other controls except stop and go buttons. These two buttons are apparently all that are needed to keep the car moving at a sedate maximum speed of 25 kilometers per hour. The maximum speed has been deliberately kept low to avoid injury to pedestrians in the event of a crash. The car is fitted with an electric motor having a range of about 100 miles similar to that used in the Fiat 500e. The front of the vehicle is fashioned from plastic material that will also minimize the effect of any impact with a human.

According to a statement from Google the car comes with no steering wheel and no controls because they are not needed. The front of the car resembles a smiley face and Google plans to build about 100 similar prototypes for testing in the coming months.

Other autonomous cars from Google were designed based on conventional cars and allowed drivers the option of taking over the controls if needed. However, this new car was designed from scratch to be safer as it eliminates the possibility of human error and will be controlled entirely by the software in the car.

"They have sensors that remove blind spots, and they can detect objects out to a distance of more than two football fields in all directions, which is especially helpful on busy streets with lots of intersections," the company said.

Google has been working on autonomous cars from 2005, and Google cars have covered over 700,000 miles during test runs without logging a single accident. It is expected that roadworthy models will be available by 2020.

Of course, driverless technology and the introduction of cruise control for cars and planes does not mean that driving licenses and flying certifications will become redundant. It just means that mobility will become a lot easier even if you don't know how to drive or if you are just plain lazy.



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STAY COOL THIS SUMMER WITH SIMPLE TIPS FROM BMW GROUP

BMW Middle East has issued a few simple guidelines to help drivers stay cool this summer. Summer is a time that is tough on cars in the Middle East. The soaring temperatures cause extra strain on many parts of the car including the cooling systems, batteries, tire pressure and the air conditioning systems. The ideal thing to do would be to book your car for a service before summer begins to ensure there is minimal damage. However, in the event that this is not possible due to time constraints, you surely do not want to end up signalling for help on the roadside in the summer heat if your car breaks down. Make your trips joyful and hassle free with these tips from BMW that even dummies can follow.

It is very crucial but simple to keep an eye on the tire pressure in all four tires. Check your owner's manual, the door of the glove compartment or the driver's door to know what the parameters for the correct tire pressure are and ensure all tires are in good condition. Another point you need to consider is the tire tread. The tires should have a tread depth of at least 3 mm. If your tires are not balanced correctly or your wheels are not aligned, this could mean trouble ahead. Lumps along the tread and uneven wear when tires are more worn on one side are signs that your tires need attention.

Other things you need to monitor are the levels of the engine coolant, the engine oil, fuel levels and the air conditioning system. If the engine overheats and does not have sufficient lubrication, the parts will not stay clean and cool. In BMW cars, the onboard computer warns drivers when the oil needs to be topped up or changed.

The air conditioning system too has to work extra hard during the summer to keep the internal temperature at optimal levels. Check the air coming out of the vents and the coolant levels in the compressor to confirm that the air conditioning system can handle the summer challenge.

Roads are likely to become slippery and overheated in the summer and this is why brakes too need special attention. If your brake pedals are extra hard, rest too high or low, emit scraping and grinding sounds, or you see warning lights on the dashboard, then it is high time to get them checked.

Other general safety tips that are applicable at all times of the year include wearing seatbelts, making sure you have insurance for overseas summer trips, and enrolling in a good roadside assistance program.



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NIMR AUTOMOTIVE BREAKS GROUND FOR NEW FACTORY



Nimr Automotive, the subsidiary of the Abu Dhabi based Tawazun Holding company which is engaged in the manufacture of defense vehicles broke ground for its new fully integrated factory at the Tawazun Industrial Park in Abu Dhabi.

The groundbreaking ceremony was attended by eminent dignitaries like Saif Mohamed Al Hajeri, the CEO of Tawazun, Major General Fares Khalaf Al Mazrouei, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Nimr Automotive and Mohammed Saeed Bin Jabr Al Suwaidi, the CEO of Emirates Defense Technology.

The production facility is a world-class factory that is fully modernized with lean production methods and technology for maximum manufacturing efficiency. The factory complies with global health and safety standards and will have a built up area of 37,000 square meters in addition to a test track and service center. It is expected to be fully operational by October 2015 and will handle the entire production process from vehicle design, development, prototyping and testing to serial production within one facility.

The factory is being built in partnership with Arabtec Construction L.L.C, one of the leading construction companies in the UAE. Nimr already has a factory in Algeria and with the commissioning of this factory in Abu Dhabi, the company will double its production of 4X4 and 6X6 platforms.

Commenting on the new plant, Saif Mohamed Al Hajeri the CEO of Tawazun said the new facility attested to Nimr's growing success in the UAE and in the world. He added that with the new plant which is the first of its kind in the region, Nimr Automotive hopes to become an established brand in the international military vehicles industry and cater to its growing customer base.

TESLA SAYS NO TO PATENTS

The automotive industry is one in which companies zealously guard information relating to any new technologies, processes or models they have developed. However, Elon Musk, the CEO of Tesla Motors, has always marched to the beat of a different drummer.

He recently announced with great fanfare that all the patents on the walls of the company's Palo Alto headquarters have been removed in the interests of advancing electric vehicle technology. According to Musk, since Tesla was created primarily to advance the cause of sustainable transport, it would go against the company's mission to erect intellectual property barriers that would prevent people from using any technology developed by Tesla.

Though Tesla had initially feared that the leading car manufacturers would easily copy Tesla's technology and start mass production of electric cars, these fears turned out to be baseless. Electric cars still account for hardly less than 1% of their total vehicle sales and these cars have a limited range as compared to the cars produced by a manufacturer with special expertise in the field like Tesla.

Going by current trends, in view of sustainability factors, cost and efficiency, there is growing demand for electric cars. The annual new vehicle production globally is 100 million cars per year and the global fleet is approximately 2 billion cars. The demand for electric cars is huge and it would be impossible for Tesla alone to manufacture electric cars to meet this demand.

According to Musk's statement, this is the reason why Tesla has decided to proceed with making its technology available on open source platforms. The company strongly believes that this move will only add further luster to Tesla's already glowing reputation in the market.



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DUBAI POLICE INVENTS NEW DEVICE TO WARN PARKING OFFENDERS



The Dubai Police have introduced several measures to support the rights of the disabled. One of these is the reservation of parking spaces for those who are disabled and have a valid permit for parking in parking spots for the disabled.

However, many able bodied drivers violate the law by parking in these spaces when they are unable to get parking elsewhere. Though the penalty for such illegal parking can be as high as Dh 1,000 and get them 4 black points for each violation, they are fairly confident that they can get away with it as they are rarely caught in the act. Even so, Colonel Saif Mohair Al Mazrouei, the Director General, Directorate of Traffic, Dubai Police, confirmed that the police recorded 36,858 parking violations in disabled zones during the past four years.

Now, the Dubai police force has come up with a new device named the "Sergeant" radar that will warn drivers who park in spaces which are reserved for the disabled. The Commander of Dubai Police, Major General Khamis Mattar Al Mazinah, announced this new development and said that the gadget will warn drivers with a loud alarm that will sound for about 20 seconds if they park in a handicapped parking spot. He added that the police department is in the process of applying for a patent for this gadget.

In partnership with the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA), the police will also try to introduce the use of this warning system across all the malls in Dubai. In addition to the alarm device, the system will have a backup camera to capture the offending vehicles, providing further documentation to penalize offenders. This information will be sent in real time to the Dubai Police operating room.



EATING WHILE DRIVING IS AS RISKY AS TEXTING

Thanks to road safety awareness campaigns by car manufacturers and government bodies, most drivers are aware of the dangers of texting while driving. However, how many of us know that eating while driving is just as dangerous while texting?

It may look stylish to sip a latte while driving and you may just have to take that business call on your handsfree. However, a new study by Lytx, the manufacturer of video-based safety systems revealed that drivers are 3.6 times more likely to have an accident if they are eating or drinking than if they are not. Drivers who use a handsfree increase their chances of an accident by 4.6 times while use of a smartphone or tablet can increase the risk of an accident by 4.7 times.

"I see people eating while driving almost every day. What we've learned is that this type of distraction is nearly as dangerous as talking or texting on your phone," said Del Lisk, vice president of Safety Services for Lytx.



He added that distraction on the part of the drivers plays a major role in traffic accidents and this alone should give drivers reason to think before they reach for their cup of coffee or sandwich while driving on Sheikh Zayed Road. You can always have a drink or eat later, but it is not possible to reverse the effects of a possibly fatal accident. So, go ahead, increase your willpower and say no to temptation to reach home safely.

GRAND BICYCLE RACE ADDS A TOUCH OF COLOR TO MASERATI CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS



The Giro d'Italia or the Tour of Italy is one of the prestigious trio of Grand Tours races in the world of cycling, along with the Tour de France and the Vuelta a España. Conducted every year from 1909 except during the World Wars, it is also one of the oldest and longest races held over a period of three weeks, generally in late May and early June. The route changes every year, though the format remains the same, with at least two time trials and a ride through the Alps.

This time round, the Giro d'Italia partnered with Maserati to celebrate the Italian carmaker's centenary year. The tenth stage of the colourful Grand Tour started with a festive convoy at the front entrance of the Maserati factory, in via Divisione Acqui, Modena. This point marked the zero kilometer mark for the tenth stage of the competition. Each stage of the Giro d'Italia race begins with a zero kilometer mark.

By making the Maserati factory the starting point of the stage, the renowned race paid tribute to the hundreds of men and women who have made Maserati what it is today over the past 100 years - a luxury car maker that is known the world over for high performance cars of incredible design and precision engineering.

The Grand Tour convoy was welcomed by crowds of Maserati employees who lined up at the entrance of the House of the Trident to witness the historic occasion when the cyclists started the race from the 97th Giro d'Italia.

Maserati's emblem, the trident, was inspired by the fountain on the Piazza del Nettuno in the center of Italian town of Bologna and symbolizes the unifying spirit of the company, the town and the style and craftsmanship for which Bologna and Emilia-Romagna are famous.

Maserati has done really well in its centenary year, building on the success of the GranTurismo and GranCabrio ranges with the launch of the the latest model of the company's flagship sedan, the Quattroporte, and the new sports sedan, the Ghibli. The success of these new models will propel Maserati well on its way to achieving the stated target of producing about 50,000 units annually by 2015 and significantly strengthening its presence in the global luxury car market.

For the 2013 financial year, Maserati had reported a 148% increase in shipments over the last year to 15,400 vehicles and a 120% increase in revenue to €1,659 million with the company's major markets being the US, China, Europe, Asia-Pacific and the Middle East.

UBER OFFERS SPECIAL SUMMER RATES FOR DUBAI RESIDENTS

Waiting to get a taxi in any season in Dubai can be a real chore, especially during peak hours and in remote areas. However, during the summer season when temperatures soar into the 40s and even the 50s, waiting for even a short time can make you really frazzled and sap all your energy. If it is Ramadan and you are fasting as well, you might even be tempted to give up on a taxi and just return home.

Uber, the US based company had transformed the taxi scene in Dubai through a smartphone app connecting drivers of luxury cars with those who need a ride in a hurry. Uber users no longer have to wait for hours, but can order a ride and track the driver with the app. Riders can use Uber to update friends and family on their route and arrival time to enhance the safety aspect.

Now Uber has launched a special summer offer lowering their minimum fare for the season from 35 AED to 20 AED. With this new fare structure, the rate can decrease by as much as 40% for the shorter routes. For example, the fare from Downtown Dubai to DIFC will decrease from 35 AED to 20 AED with the new rates.



All customers need to do to benefit from the Uber offer is download the app to their smartphone and input their credit card details as all transactions are cashless. Once a request is made using the app, they will get a ride in a Lexus or Audi from their location to the destination of their choice and the fare will be automatically deducted from their card.

With this offer, the Uber service becomes more accessible to customers in Dubai. The company will also benefit from a wider customer base.

AL-FUTTAIM MOTORS WINS RICH HAUL OF AWARDS FOR THE 4TH YEAR IN A ROW

Al-Futtaim Motors, the exclusive distributor for Toyota and Lexus vehicles in the UAE, won a trio of prestigious awards from Toyota Motor Corporation (TMC) for the fourth consecutive year in recognition of the dealer's marketing campaigns and customer service initiatives.

The awards, a Diamond Award for Al-Futtaim Motors' overall marketing activities, a Gold Award for Excellence in Distributor Marketing and an Outstanding Customer Service Award were presented to Omar Al Futtaim, Vice Chairman of the Al-Futtaim Group by Hisayuki Inoue, Senior Managing Officer of TMC at an exclusive ceremony that was held at the headquarters of Toyota Motor Corporation in Japan.

Other eminent dignitaries who attended the ceremony included Len Hunt, President of Al-Futtaim Automotive Group and Mr. Jon Williams, the Managing Director of Al-Futtaim Motors. They were congratulated on Al-Futtaim Motors' outstanding performance in a highly competitive market like the UAE.



Commenting on the awards Len Hunt said that Al Futtaim Motors was honored to represent the Toyota and Lexus brands in the UAE on a longstanding basis. 2015 will mark the 60th anniversary of this distribution partnership and he expressed his fond hope that the anniversary will be marked with many more successes.

"Al-Futtaim Automotive Group's motto is 'customers and vehicles for life' and these awards demonstrate the success of our customer-centric philosophy which fuels our ambition to reinforce our market leadership and even extend it for years to come," he added.

AL TAYER MOTORS SCORES A HAT TRICK WITH THIRD CONSECUTIVE AWARD

In a high-profile event held at the Armani Hotel in Dubai, Al Tayer Motors, the exclusive distributor for Jaguar Land Rover in Dubai and the Northern Emirates won the prestigious 'Dealer of the Year' award for the Middle East North Africa and Pakistan (MENAP) region from Jaguar Land Rover for the third year in a row. The award is normally given to the distributor that delivers an outstanding performance across all areas of the business in the MENAP region. This brings the total tally of dealership awards won by Al Tayer Motors to seven. The firm also received the top awards for Customer Service Excellence for both the Jaguar and Land Rover brands.

Al Tayer Motors emerged as the top dealer in the MENAP region based on the sales volume. Accepting the award on behalf of the company, Ashok Khanna, Chief Executive Officer of Al Tayer Motors said: "Coming on the back of a strong performance in the last fiscal, winning the Dealer of the Year accolade for the third successive year is very satisfying. It is a reflection of the efforts of the entire team at Al Tayer Motors and Premier Motors, and the investments made in new facilities as well as in promoting the brands in the UAE."

The dealership sales figures reflected an increase of 52% for Jaguar Land Rover sales in the fiscal year 2013-14 as compared to 2012-13. This increase in sales of Land Rover models (an increase of 56%) was primarily driven by a strong increase in the demand for Range Rover with sales nearly doubling and a 25% increase in sales of Range Rover Sport with the launch of an all-new model in the third quarter of the year.

The main factors responsible for the increase in sales of Jaguar models (29%) were a 60% increase in sales of the XJ, a five per cent increase in sales of the XF, and deliveries of the new Jaguar F-TYPE convertible.

Commenting on the award, Bruce Robertson, Managing Director for Jaguar Land Rover MENAP said the strong partnership between Jaguar Land Rover and Al Tayer Motors was based on common goals and was responsible for the success of the Jaguar Land Rover brands in the region. He added that the strong sales result was the outcome of the blend of Al Tayer Motors' commitment to customers and a strong line-up of vehicles from the marque.



WILL KEI CARS DISAPPEAR FROM THE ROADS OF JAPAN?



The automotive market in every country has its own strange quirks. In different markets, customers look for different benefits from the vehicles they buy. In the US, the pickup leads sales of other types of vehicles by a huge margin while European customers have a weakness for five-door hatchbacks. However, in the Japanese market where traffic congestion and the size of the car are the main constraints, small cars known as kei cars have a lion's share of the market. These do not offer much power or size with just 660 cc of displacement but they are more affordable than conventional cars as they are taxed at lower rates. They usually have a cute, boxy appearance and have names like Honda N-One, Subaru Sambar and Nissan Dayz Roox. However, now the Japanese government is seriously considering measures to phase the kei cars out of the market.

On one hand, the kei cars in the Japanese market offer better fuel economy and made vehicle ownership a reality for many Japanese who could not otherwise afford them. Kei cars accounted for approximately 40% of the new car sales in 2013 in the Japanese car market, according to a report in The New York Times. On the other hand, as the kei cars do not appeal to overseas buyers, they are rarely, if ever exported. So, even if Nissan and Honda have popular kei models, they cannot market or distribute these models in other markets.

The government now feels that the amount invested by companies in development of kei cars is unproductive as kei production cannot contribute to generation of foreign exchange revenue and uses up valuable production capacity of the leading Japanese automakers.

The government is now focusing on trying to make kei models less attractive to Japanese customers by increasing taxes on these models by 50 percent. In such a scenario, they would automatically prefer to buy standard models as there would not be much difference in the prices.

However, there is one way the Japanese government's move can backfire. Since the kei cars are manufactured by Japanese companies, if customers eventually switch to conventional models, the market could witness greater competition from foreign automakers. With the Japanese economy picking up at a fast rate, the higher taxes on the kei cars and higher levels of disposable income could mean the end of an era in the Japanese car market.

VINTAGE LAMBORGHINI COUNTACH FETCHES RECORD PRICE



Normally it is vintage Ferraris and Bugattis that make eyes pop with the record prices that they fetch at auctions. However, this time around, it was a Lamborghini Countach that broke previous records to go under the hammer for over \$1.2 million dollars at the 7th annual Greenwich collector motorcar auction held by the renowned auction firm, Bonhams.

It helped that the car was in immaculate condition with a tan leather interior and flawless "Blu Tahiti" paint. The car had logged only 10,000 miles on its odometer. It also had the unique rearview mirror that only the first 150 examples of this model had. Hence the name "Periscopa" for these cars.

The standing room only crowd at the auction grew silent as the 1975 Lamborghini Countach LP 400 'Periscopica' triggered a bidding war and was finally sold for \$1.2 million dollars, fetching twice as much as the pre-sales estimate. The winning bidder got the best of several telephone bidders spread across the world by quoting a price that broke the previous world record for a Countach. The previous record was set when another Countach was sold in August 2013 for \$836,000.

Other cars that fetched good prices at the auction included a 1961 Jaguar E-Type Series 1 3.8-Liter Roadster which fetched \$335,500 and an award-winning 1959 Fiat-Abarth 750 Record Monza Bialbero Coupe which went to a telephone bidder for \$203,500.

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THE LAST AMBASSADOR COMES OFF THE LINE



The Ambassador Car from Hindustan Motors has been the official vehicle for all government organizations right from the time India got independence. Based loosely on the Morris Oxord, there has been little change in the design of the car for the past 60 years and it was primarily used by politicians and senior government officials. But with more modern vehicles becoming popular in the Indian market, especially of the SUV genre, many bureaucrats switched loyalties. However, the car still remained popular with taxi drivers, politicians and tourists with a soft spot for the past.

Signaling the end of an era, the Ambassador story has come to an end. The manufacturer of the car, Hindustan Motors announced that it has closed its Ambassador factory in Uttarpara in West Bengal where the car has been coming off the production line since 1957. The reasons being given

by India's oldest carmaker for the closure are debt, huge liabilities, growing indiscipline among the employees and lack of demand with the factory producing only five cars on a daily basis. Sales have declined from 24,000 cars per year in the 1980s to less than 6,000 in the 2000s.

According to a senior official, the work at the plant has been suspended on an indefinite basis to staunch the drain on the funds of the company. Eventually, it may be reopened, but there is no guarantee that the Ambassador will be revived.

Though the Indian automotive market had shown an upswing in the recent past, with the economy growing at a rate that is less than 5%, the sector is currently facing tough times.

Commenting on the demise of the "grand old lady of Indian motoring", India's leading auto designer Dilip Chhabria said, "Had HM [Hindustan Motors] continued to evolve the Amby over the past 60 years without changing the DNA, it would have been the Rolls-Royce of India."

ORIGINAL ASTON MARTIN THAT INSPIRED JAMES BOND CREATOR UP FOR AUCTION



The James Bond movies are known as much for their flashy cars and beautiful women as they are for Bond's thrilling heroics. Ian Fleming who wrote the James Bond books was so passionate about sports cars that he was once the co-driver for one of Britain's top rally drivers, Donald Healy, the famous manufacturer of sports cars.

The 1954 Aston Martin DB 2/4, the car which is thought to have originally inspired Ian Fleming's choice of an Aston Martin for his superhero in the movie Goldfinger, was recently put up for auction by the renowned firm Coys at the Old Admiralty Building, where Ian Fleming had his office.

The Aston Martin is a Vantage specification 1954 DB 2/4 Mk I, with the registration plate JBW 974. It had been kept in storage for many years where it collected rust and dust till it was purchased by a father son duo who restored it to its previous glory. It was during the restoration process that they uncovered a set of special modifications that revealed the car's connections to the British Intelligence Service and Ian Fleming. The modifications are the same as those mentioned in Goldfinger like hidden lockers, reinforced steel bumpers, connections in the driver's seat for a two way radio and a Halda Speed Pilot device, which correctly calculates the time and distance for pre-selected speeds. The car thus directly links the most famous spy in fiction with one of the most iconic brands of sports cars.

Speaking about the car that had such an effect on James Bond's image, Chris Routledge, Managing Partner of Coys said, "The story around this car and its discovery is phenomenal. It was supplied new on 4th July 1955 to the Honourable Sqdr. Ldr. Phillip Ingram Cunliffe-Lister DSO, whose father was Lord Swinton, a close confidant of Winston Churchill and head of MI5 and the Security Executive during WWII."

He added that Ingram was friends with Ian Fleming's direct next-door neighbor, Dennis Ramsey and the car was regularly parked there. Ramsey's house was also used to inspire the settings in Fleming's novels, especially in the story "Moonraker" where the villain, Sir Hugo Drax's residence was based on the Ramsay house.

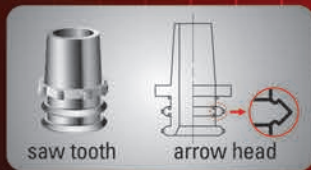
Bidding will be held for the car at Coys' traditional Blenheim Palace sale on 12th July.

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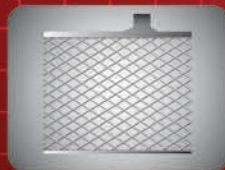
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COOPER STRENGTHENS CHINESE PRESENCE WITH NEW TECHNICAL CENTER



Cooper Tire & Rubber Co. has increased its commitment to the Chinese market with the opening of the \$23 million Asia Technical Center. The Asia Tech Center was previously located in Shanghai and was moved to the new expanded facility in Kunshan to accommodate Cooper's research and development activities and staff of 65 material scientists and tire engineers.

The 54,000-sq.-ft. center is meant to focus on the design and development of passenger and truck tires for the tire market in China and other Asian countries. The facility which is located on the site of the company's factory in Kushan, the Cooper (Kunshan) Tire Co. and took nine months to construct was inaugurated on June 12. The technical center will play a key role in supporting Cooper's growth in China and other Asian markets. The company spends about 1.5 per cent of its annual revenue on R & D.

Commenting on the establishment of the new Technical Center, Allen Tsaor, vice president and general manager of Cooper Tire Asia said that the company is keen to increase its sales of passenger and truck tires in Asia while working with OEs such as Great Wall and BAIC in addition to catering to the demand for replacement tires.

Cooper has three other technical centers spread across the world including ones in Melksham, England, and at Cooper's headquarters in Findlay, Ohio.

Dignitaries who attended the dedication ceremony of the new technical center included Chuck Yurkovich, the vice president of global research and development and Gavin Edwards, the general manager of the tech center.

Yurkovich said the new facility reflected Cooper's readiness to make improvements on a continual basis and to launch exceptionally innovative products through developing new and enhanced tire and materials technology.

Edwards commented that the proximity of the tech center to the Kunshan plant gave the company chances to quickly test the new products developed in the center. This allows the company to respond quickly to its customers, especially in the case of OE vehicle manufacturers, who can be very demanding technically.

CEAT EXPANDS PRESENCE IN SRI LANKA



CEAT, one of the leading tire manufacturers in India has expanded its manufacturing presence in Sri Lanka with the commissioning of a new hi-tech plant for manufacturing radial tires for passenger cars, SUVs and trucks. The plant will be named Asia Tyres (Pvt.) Ltd and will be run by CEAT Kelani Holdings, CEAT's joint venture with Sri Lanka based Kelani Tyre. It was built on land belonging to CEAT Kelani's existing manufacturing complex in Kelaniya.

The factory was inaugurated by the Sri Lankan minister for economic development, Basil Rajapaksa in a gala event that was attended by other high key dignitaries including Sri Lankan government officials, Chanaka De Silva, Chairman of CEAT Kalani Holdings and N.C. Venugopal, the managing director/CEO of the company.

According to Sri Lanka's Ministry of Economic Development, the factory involved a total investment of \$7 million and will have an annual capacity of 13 million units.

CEAT is the market leader in Sri Lanka when it comes to both the radial and commercial tires segments, and has fulfilled almost half of the country's tire requirements. The output of the new plant will help drive CEAT Kelani's growing exports of radial tires from Sri Lanka. Currently, the company exports more than 30% of its production of radial tires in Sri Lanka to markets like the Middle East, Africa and South Asia, making it an important source of foreign exchange for the country.

Speaking at the event, CEAT Kelani Chairman Chanaka De Silva said the commissioning of the new plant symbolizes the post-conflict economic recovery in Sri Lanka. He said the opening of the new factory underlines CEAT Kelani's commitment to support this process of economic resurgence.

Expanding on this point, N. C. Venugopal, the Managing Director/CEO of CEAT Kelani Holdings said that the new technology acquired for the state-of-the-art plant included the most modern Bead Apexing Machine, Cap Ply and Cap Strip Machine and the best tire building machines and curing presses. With such advanced equipment, the company hopes to produce a new grade of high performance radials in all sizes for performance oriented cars.

In addition to the plant in Kelaniya, CEAT Kelani has another plant in Kalutara and is engaged in the production of both bias-ply and radial tires for cars, vans, light and medium trucks, two- and three-wheelers, and agricultural equipment, along with tubes and flaps.

AL DOBOWI SIGNS AED 8 MILLION DEAL WITH DUBAI TAXI FOR SUPPLY OF HANKOOK TIRES



The Al Dobowi Group successfully submitted a bid in a tender that was held by the Dubai Taxi Corporation for the supply of tires to the company's entire fleet.

Speaking about the 8 million dirham deal, Ahmed Khalfan Al Suwaidi, CEO of the Dubai Taxi Corporation, said that the Al Dobowi Tires Group was selected on the basis of the company's continued cooperation, solid expertise in the tire industry and the high quality of tires supplied by the company. He added that the DTC gave high importance to the proper selection and maintenance of the tires in view of the crucial role they play in maintaining the safety of the vehicle and ultimately the safety of passengers.

According to the terms of the contract that was signed between the two companies, Al Dobowi will supply DTC with tires of the Korean brand, Hankook that comply with GCC specifications and standards. The tires will be embossed with the DTC brand and logo on the sidewall. The deal covers providing the DTC facilities in Muhaisnah 4 with the necessary equipment and staffing them 24/7 with Al Dobowi employees who will change at least 30 to 40 tires on a daily basis.

In the event that two or more tires are changed for a vehicle, free tire fitting, tire balancing and wheel alignment services will be provided by Al Dobowi. Al Dobowi will have specially designated employees for providing free puncture repair services for DTC taxicabs. Another provision in the deal is that Al Dobowi will buy all used and replaced tires of all sizes from DTC.

Commenting on the deal, Surender Singh Kandhari, the founder and Chairman of Al Dobowi Group, expressed his delight at winning the tender and continuing the relationship with DTC for another two years. "We are fully ready to honor what we have agreed to in this contract taking into consideration the interests of the DTC and providing the highest levels of security and safety to its taxi fleet." He added that all relevant equipment in addition to expert and skilled technicians for changing and the balancing of tires at DTC's workshop will be provided by Al Dobowi. Nitrogen gas would be provided free of charge to all new tires mounted at the Center in addition to providing a mobile service in emergency or extreme cases.

He concluded that the Hankook Tires that will be supplied to the DTC as part of the deal will be covered by a warranty against manufacturing defects.

GITI TIRE ANNOUNCES FIRST PRODUCTION VENTURE IN THE US



The Singapore based Giti Tire Co. Ltd. had recently made news for breaking into the list of the top 10 tiremakers in the world. Now the company has announced that in order to meet the growing demand from the North American market, Giti will be building a factory for manufacturing consumer tires in Chester County, South Carolina. In the first phase of production, the plant will produce 5 million tires on an annual basis with production being ramped up depending on the demand in the future.

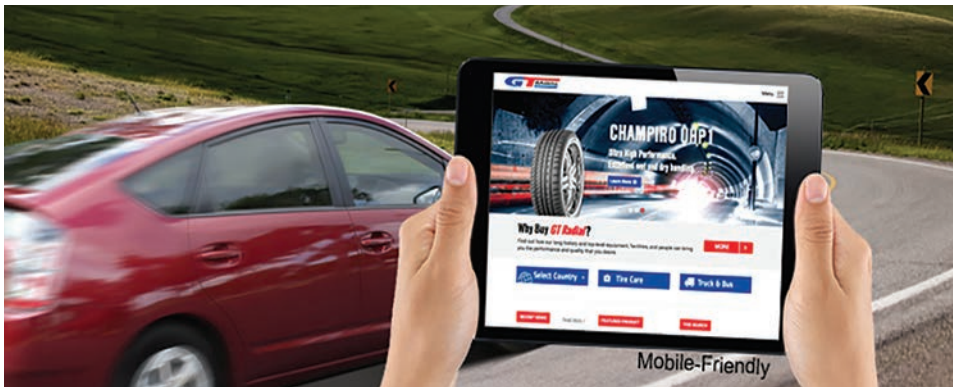
The factory will involve a capital outlay of \$560 million and is expected to create 1,700 new jobs over the next decade. The company's North American subsidiary, Giti Tire (USA) Ltd., will oversee the construction, commissioning and operations of the new plant, which will combine a manufacturing plant and a distribution center with a total area of 1,800,000 square feet.

Announcing the new development, Enki Tan, executive chairman of the Giti Tire Group said that this major capital investment represented Giti's strong commitment to its customers in North America and was driven by the escalating demand for Giti Tire's passenger and light truck tires in North America.

The plant in South Carolina will be Giti Tire's first such venture in the US and will turn out passenger and light truck tires for the replacement and original equipment markets. Explaining the choice of location for the plant, Lei Huai Chin, the managing director of the Giti Tire Group said that with Chester County being in close proximity to interstate highways, railway stations, airports and a major metropolitan area, it was the ideal choice. It is also supported by an extensive and efficient infrastructure network.

With this new development, Giti joins the ranks of other tire makers like Continental who have built plants in South Carolina, thus becoming the state's fifth OEM tire manufacturer.

GT RADIAL LAUNCHES NEW GLOBAL SITE IN A BID TO INCREASE BRAND AWARENESS



GT Radial is an Indonesian tire manufacturer that claims to be the largest manufacturer of tires in Southeast Asia and is engaged in the manufacture of tires and inner tubes for motorcycles, passenger cars, commercial and heavy equipment vehicles.

The company is now pursuing an aggressive growth strategy and as part of its efforts to revamp and enhance its image has launched an improved global website (www.gtr radial.com) with many new customer-friendly features.

A few selected GT Radial country sites have also been redesigned to be compatible with the new global site as part of the efforts to increase engagement with customers. In tandem with the launch of the new site, the company will also be debuting promotional and advertising activities including online marketing campaigns on a global and local basis to increase the brand awareness among customers.

Commenting on the launch of the new global site, Adrian Thio, Senior Manager of International Marketing said, "As the GT Radial brand continues to increase traction worldwide, we are focusing on giving consumers on the most optimal online user interface."

He added that customers today are focusing more on getting maximum possible information and convenience and the site caters to these needs with more flexibility, greater depth of information and better search options so that they can find the tires that suit their needs best.

The new global site incorporates features such as an optimized display for mobile phones, tablets and regular computers, more detailed product pages with better filtering options, a comprehensive Tire Care section that deals with almost all queries customers may have about tire care and maintenance, and a News & Media section that provides browsers with updates on the latest products and developments in the company.

Overall, the new site has a simpler, more attractive design that facilitates easier and faster navigation while giving more information to browsers.

HANKOOK COMPLETES HAT TRICK WITH IDEA DESIGN AWARD



Hankook Tire Co. Ltd. won the IDEA design award in the transportation category for its concept tire duo of Tiltread and eMembrane. The International Design Excellence Award (IDEA) from the Design Society of America is one of the most sought after design awards in the world and recognizes companies that make products which are creative, original, are visually appealing, are of benefit to society, and are environment friendly.

This completes a hat trick of awards for Hankook as the company had won the other two top design awards, the Red Dot Design Award and the iF Design Award earlier this year.

The company says receiving the prestigious awards is the result of Hankook Tire's continued efforts and investment in R&D.

Hankook had been in the news earlier when it had announced its strategic R&D vision during the groundbreaking ceremony for its new R&D center, the Hankook Technodome, in Daejeon, Korea.

The Tiltread concept tire is meant to increase the performance of high-powered vehicles that are equipped with the latest car engine technology. It comes with a tilting system having three partitioned tires and automatic control suspension. This maximizes the contact area of each partitioned tire and brings a car's body closer to the ground level by tilting the shaft during cornering. This makes it possible for high-end cars to make safe and powerful turns even at high speeds. The partitioned non-pneumatic tires are highly durable and elastic as well as puncture resistant.

The eMembrane concept tire is a hybrid tire that can be used for both performance and regular city driving. Made of shape memory alloys that change the contact ratio of tire depending on the speed of the car, eMembrane's tread minimizes road contact area and ground friction when used at low speeds. This innovative feature contributes to higher fuel efficiency and lower rolling resistance. At higher speeds, the tread center expands to increase the ground friction and ground contact area, giving the tire greater grip to enhance cornering and performance driving. The eMembrane also comes with an LED system in the tire's sidewall to indicate changes in the tire's driving modes.

Commenting on the IDEA award, Seung Hwa Suh, CEO and vice chairman of Hankook Tire said "Recognitions from all the world's top-three design awards proudly reveal Hankook Tire's outstanding design innovation and R&D capability as a top-tier tire company. As a leading global tire company, Hankook Tire will continue our extensive investment to bolster competitive edge in tire technology, contributing to push the boundaries of driving innovation."

Apollo on Growth Track with Expansion of Chennai Plant



Apollo Tyres has been certainly a newsmaker this year. Undeterred by the failure of its bid to take over the US based Cooper Tire, the company has announced record profits in the first quarter of this year. Now, Apollo is in the news once more with plans to expand its production capacity at its Chennai plant and to set up a new facility for R&D centre in the same location. The R&D facility will work on developing new products, processes and technologies in relation to commercial vehicles for Apollo subsidiaries across the globe.

Speaking about the new development, Gaurav Kumar, the Group Head of Corporate Strategy and Finance said that these plans have been finalized in anticipation of increased demand for radial tires in the Indian market in the coming years.

Currently, the Chennai plant has the capacity to manufacture 6,000 truck tires and 16,000 passenger car tires on a daily basis when functioning at around 70-75% capacity. The output of the factory is sold both in the domestic and overseas markets. While specific figures were not mentioned, it is expected that the manufacturing capacity will be ramped up by at least 50% to meet the expected surge in demand and the shortfall in production when the company's plant in Kalamassery that currently manufactures a mix of truck tires and agricultural tires switches to manufacturing specialty tires. The cost for the expansion will be funded by the income from the Indian operations.

The planned R & D center that will be set up close to the Chennai plant will focus specifically on commercial vehicles on a global basis while R&D for passenger cars will continue to be carried out at the company's global R&D center in Enschede in the Netherlands.

Gaurav Kumar added that the company will continue to focus strongly on R&D in order to make a bigger impact and facilitate entry into the European market and other new markets.

Goodyear Announces \$500 million Plant in Americas



Making a slight change in the 2014-2016 capital allocation plan that was announced earlier, Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company has said that the company now has plans to allocate \$500 million to build a new consumer tire plant in the Americas region. The plant will produce the tires needed to meet the demand in North America and in Latin America.

The plant will be equipped with machines having the most advanced technology and will initially have a production capacity of six million tires per year. This will be ramped up as the demand increases. No definite site has been identified as yet and a number of sites are currently being evaluated to find the most appropriate one to serve the needs of the customers in North America and Latin America. It is expected that once the plant is set up, tire production will begin in the first half of 2017.

Commenting on the new announcement, Richard Kramer, chairman and chief executive officer said "Our investment supports another key element of our strategy -- to focus on winning with consumers in profitable market segments."

He added that this is indeed the right time to invest in increasing the manufacturing capacity in the region as there is growing demand for Goodyear's high-value-added tires in North America and Latin America.

The 2014-2016 capital allocation plan update aimed to maximize shareholder returns and benefit from high-yield opportunities in the Americas region. Since Goodyear was able to use the strong free cash flow obtained during the 2013 financial year to fully fund its hourly U.S. pension plans in early 2014, the company is now in a position to reallocate approximately \$1.1 billion of its 2014-2016 cash flow. It is estimated that this reallocation will increase shareholder value by providing approximately \$650 million in returns to investors, thus strengthening company's bottom line and providing more growth opportunities.

The revised capital allocation plan also envisages an increase in the quarterly cash dividend by 20%, an increase in the share repurchase program, and an allocation of an additional \$400 million for debt reduction thus improving the credit rating of the company.

"This updated capital allocation plan for 2014-2016 reflects Goodyear's commitment to balancing all our priorities -- returning cash to shareholders, investing in high-return growth projects and achieving investment grade metrics -- to drive long-term shareholder value consistent with our articulated strategy."

Mitas Ventures into Tractor Territory with New Powerpull Tire

Mitas, the Czech tire manufacturer that specializes in off-road tires like agricultural, industrial and motorcycle tires is venturing into tractor pulling tires. In addition to working on a special new tire for tractors named Powerpull, the company has just signed a sponsorship agreement with the European Tractor Pulling Committee (ETPC).



The prototype for the new tractor-pulling tire, was designed in a process similar to that for Mitas' high-horsepower tractor tires. After several refinements made during the research and development process, the first testing prototypes of the Powerpull tire were successfully tested at the company's new factory in Otrokovice, Czech Republic in April and proved to have a high rating when it comes to endurance and durability. Mitas is planning on debuting the Powerpull in 2014.

Commenting on the new tire, Andrew Mabin, Mitas' marketing and sales director said that he was very confident about the successful development and launch of the new Powerpull tire as Mitas already has considerable experience in manufacturing tires for tractors having high horsepower. He added that the company's tires are known for their durability, longevity and strength and the new Powerpull will exhibit all these characteristics to a significant degree.

Mitas has a longstanding history of supporting sport events as part of their marketing campaigns, right from 1947, when the company first started production of motorcycle tires. When the company started producing agricultural tires, it was a logical extension to sponsor tractor pulling events.

As an outcome of the new sponsorship agreement that has been signed with the ETPC, the Mitas will get opportunities to promote the Mitas brand and products during international tractor-pulling competitions held by the ETPC. These will include 11 ETPC Eurocup events in total that will be held in seven European countries.

Yokohama Wins Innovation Award at Reifen



Yokohama Rubber Co. Ltd turned out to be one of the winners of the Innovation Award that was given by the organizers of the Reifen Show. Yokohama won the award in the Technology/Products category for the company's pioneering work in developing a process that reveals the aerodynamic and acoustic profile of a rolling tire, thus paving the way for the development of quieter and more aerodynamic tires. Yokohama had presented the details of the process to the jury in a visual presentation that used the supercomputer owned by the Japanese space authority, JAXA's supercomputer.

The awards were announced on the eve of the opening of the Reifen show. Along with Yokohama, Borbet, CEMBA and Counteract were the other three companies that won the innovation award. Borbet won the award in the Environment Resource Conservation category for the development of a "nature wheel" that modifies the alloy process to reduce the weight of a wheel without compromising its performance. CEMB received the award in Service Concept/Process Optimization category for the company's proprietary Paguro P2 wheel balancing system for commercial vehicles while Counteract won the award in the Motor Vehicle Service category, a category that was introduced for the first time this year, for its "Stud Cleaning Tool".

A 30 member panel of expert jury members selected the winners of the award from 30 applicants in the four categories.

Reifen and Automechanika Agree to Cross Promote Shows



The Reifen shows in Essen and Shanghai are the biggest trade shows in the tire industry while the Automechanika shows which are held in 14 locations around the world such as Istanbul, Dubai, Moscow, Frankfurt and Buenos Aires showcase the automotive service markets. Both events have a highly international flavor. Over 70% of the exhibitors at Reifen and over 80% of the exhibitors at Automechanika are overseas exhibitors.

In a significant development, an announcement was made by the organizers of these two shows that they have now mutually agreed to cross-promote their shows to take advantage of the “synergistic effects of sales and marketing” across borders.

According to Michael Johannes, a vice president for Messe Frankfurt G.m.b.H., and Oliver Kuhrt, the managing director of Messe Essen G.m.b.H., the agreement will cover the maiden Automechanika show in Chicago which is scheduled to be held from April 24-26, 2015 and the Automechanika shows that will be held in 2014 in Buenos Aires, Dubai, Frankfurt and Moscow.

The Reifen trade show has been held in Essen every two years from 1960 onwards. With regard to the Reifen shows, the agreement will cover the Reifen China show later this year and the Reifen shows that will be held after Reifen 2016 as the 2016 show will be jointly held by Messe Essen and the German Tire Trade Association (BRV). The BRV has already announced plans to pull out of the Reifen show after 2016 and hold a separate event that is of a similar nature from 2018 onwards in Cologne, Germany. After the 2016 Reifen Trade Fair in Essen, Germany, the Essen organizers will join hands with Automechanika Frankfurt.

Commenting on the synergy between the two partners, Automechanika representatives said that of the 14 Automechanika fairs, a few such as Automechanika Dubai or Johannesburg, Moscow and Istanbul already have strong representation from the tire industry. Hence, Reifen Essen becomes a truly appropriate partner to extend the presence of this sector even further.

Detlef Braun, managing director of Messe Frankfurt, and Oliver Kuhrt, chairman and CEO of Messe Essen, said, “Due to the cooperation, we are improving the garages and car service sections in Essen and are extending the value added chain at Reifen in this way. Thus, we are creating an outstanding surplus value for our joint customers which they cannot find anywhere else.”

Bridgestone Signs Deal to Turn into Top Olympics Sponsor

The Olympics is a mega event that take place only once in four years but brings together the top sportsmen from all corners of the globe. There is no prize money involved but it is a matter of national pride to be chosen to represent your country whether you are from an Olympics powerhouse like the US or Russia or a tiny nation like Nauru.



Being associated with the Olympics games as one of the sponsors is of immense benefit to companies. As a sponsor of the London Olympics, Coca Cola increased sponsorship awareness among youth by 37%. It is this kind of brand awareness that companies are looking for when they sign on as Olympic sponsors.

The top tire manufacturer Bridgestone Corporation has announced that it will partner with the International Olympic Committee in a 35 billion yen (\$344 million) deal. The agreement will cover a period of ten years including the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympic games and the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Under the terms of the deal, Bridgestone will be one of the 11 worldwide sponsors included in the TOP (The Olympic Partner) program. Generally, only one company is selected as a TOP partner from each sector. Bridgestone will be permitted to use the Olympic logo globally for all promotion purposes including advertising. Bridgestone is also likely to be chosen as the tire supplier for the vehicles used to transport athletes and supplies during the practice sessions and the Olympic Games.

The Olympics began to be associated with commercial sponsorship from the 1984 summer games in Los Angeles when the practice of choosing one company from each sector as a TOP sponsor began. There are other types of sponsorship like contracts with individual national Olympic committees or contracts with the organizers of individual Olympic Games that limit the usage of the Olympic logo for promotional purposes. Currently, Panasonic is the only other Japanese company to be associated with the Olympic Games and had signed a contract back in February that extended its sponsorship agreement with the IOC to 2024.

Tire Industry Benefits from Global Glut of Natural Rubber



For the sixth year in a row, natural rubber prices are showing a downward trend, reaching their lowest levels since 2009. Industry experts predict that this trend will continue well into 2016 due to the significant decline in the demand for natural rubber from the tire industry as the market for tires dims in China and Europe. The supply too is higher than previous levels as a large number of trees planted between 2006 and 2008 when the demand for rubber was really high enter their maturity and yielding phase in countries like Thailand, Malaysia, China and Vietnam.

The London-based Rubber Economist Ltd estimates that the supply demand gap will be 316,000 metric tons in 2016 as compared to 483,000 tons in 2015. According to Prachaya Jumpasut, the managing director of Rubber Economist, this surplus is likely to continue till 2016 and unless there is a sudden change in the demand scenario in China and other major markets for tires, the prices will remain on the low side.

In Qingdao, the main center of the rubber industry in China, the inventory levels of natural rubber reached a record 270,000 tons on May 16, according to the Qingdao International Rubber Exchange Market. Market analysts fear that

this could be an indicator of a forthcoming slowdown in the Chinese economy. However, with the US economy showing signs of revival, they are hoping that the outlook will improve in China. Thailand and Vietnam also have high stocks of natural rubber. Another factor to consider is Thailand's decision to sell 200,000 tons of natural rubber owned by the government, which may lead to a further drop in prices.

With Asian countries responsible for more than 90% of the world's output of natural rubber, many Southeast Asian farmers are turning to other crops due to the slump in rubber prices. The area under rubber cultivation in Thailand, the largest producer could reduce to half in 2014 while Vietnamese farmers too have cut down rubber trees and reduced tapping.

As the cost of natural rubber accounts for more than 40 per cent of the cost of a tire, the only ones who have benefited from the current scenario are the tire manufacturers. Shares in major Indian tire manufacturers like Apollo Tyres Ltd and MRF Ltd have increased by 2 to 4 per cent recently as a result of the downward spiral in rubber prices.

Pirelli Signs Mega Deal with Rosneft for 200 Outlets at Filling Stations



Premium tire manufacturer Pirelli had been in the news back in March when it struck a deal with the Russian company Rosneft to sell a stake of 13% to the Russian entity. As a part of the deal, Rosneft agreed to allow Pirelli use the company's extensive network of fuel stations across Russia to sell tires and work with Pirelli on production of synthetic rubber.

This agreement was formalized when Rosneft signed binding agreements to buy the Pirelli stake from a group of Italian investors including holding company Nuove Partecipazioni, the banks UniCredit and Intesa Sanpaolo, and private equity fund Clessidra. Under these agreements, the investment structure will not change for five years.

Earlier, Pirelli had claimed that the deal with Rosneft will not be affected in any way by the imposition of Western sanctions on Russia due to the tense situation in the Ukraine.

According to the terms of the agreements that have been finalized between the two companies, a minimum of 60 retail outlets will begin stocking and selling Pirelli-branded products in 2014 and 2015, with the balance scheduled to open by 2019.

Rosneft will manufacture synthetic rubber in Nakhodka, a coastal town near Vladivostok in Russia's far east with the rubber being supplied to Pirelli in keeping with a long-term supply agreement that will be signed between the two entities.

Hankook Breaks Ground for State of the Art Technodome



Hankook Tire Co. Ltd. has just broken ground for a state of the art R&D center called the Technodome, in Daejeon, Korea. At the ceremony, Hankook Tire announced its mid-to long-term strategy for R&D which includes new tire research and testing facilities to increase the edge the company has in the development of new tire technologies. This new strategy will be carried out mainly through R&D work done at the Hankook Technodome in Daejeon, and the Hankook Test Engineering Center in Sangju.

Setting up the Technodome will include a total outlay of \$262 million (KRW 266 billion) and the facility is scheduled to be completed by 2016 while the Test Engineering Center is scheduled to be completed by 2018. The Technodome will serve as an incubator for the development of new technologies for the future while the Hankook Test Engineering Center will be fitted with top-notch tire testing facilities and will be the company's main hub for tire evaluation technologies.

"We strongly believe that acquiring more robust, more advanced R&D capabilities is a crucial step in our growth formula towards becoming a global top-tier tire brand," said Seung Hwa Suh, vice chairman and CEO of Hankook Tire.

He added that breaking ground for the Technodome is a significant milestone in the company's history. He expressed his hope that in tandem with Hankook's proactive corporate culture, the new thrust on R&D facility will equip the company with the right foundation to build a management structure based on quality and progressive leadership.

Just bricks and mortar are not adequate to build a great research facility. The team is just as important. Hankook says it will be investing a considerable amount in retaining and attracting the best engineers and researchers in the field. Currently, Hankook Tire's R & D center has a team of 700 researchers and this will eventually grow to a team of 1,000 experts and researchers at the Hankook Technodome.

New Anti-Landmine Tire from Michelin Makes War Zones Safer for Armies and Civilians



Michelin has launched a new military tire that makes it safer to drive through areas that may have hidden landmines. The French tire manufacturer collaborated with renowned military and defence systems manufacturer MBDA for the development of the tire. Normally, mines explode with the slightest pressure and stepping on one can maim and cause injuries which may prove to be fatal in some cases. Michelin's new tire makes it possible for even a 7.5 ton mine clearance vehicle to drive over a minefield without any risk of setting off the mines.

The company launched the new tire named the LX PSI 710/75 R 34 ahead of the Eurosatory 2014 Defence Expo and claims that since it creates just 0.3 bar of pressure, it can run over even a plastic coffee creamer pot without crushing it. Michelin spent more than ten years on developing the technology for this new handmade tire to get the right balance of softness, size of the footprint and the heat generated so that the tire does not burst due to under-inflation or cause mines to explode.

Now, the tire has been selected by the French army to be fitted on the MBDA SOUVIM II mine clearance vehicle and has received original equipment certification after it successfully cleared all the military's 'stealth' tests for anti-landmine tires.

When it is fitted with the tires, which weigh 200kg each, the 7.5-tonne SOUVIM exerts a ground pressure of just 360g/sq cm, which is even less than that exerted by a rabbit weighing 2.5 kg. Hence, though the tires will be primarily used on SOUVIM vehicles that will tow equipment to safely detonate mines, they can also be used on security, rescue, evacuation, and supply vehicles in war zones where mines are an ever present danger. Such vehicles which are fitted with the new tires can move safely over the landmines without activating them.

The casing of the new LX PSI 710/75 R 34 is based on Michelin's agricultural tires, which normally have a wide, 10 cm thick foam band manually attached to them before being covered with a fine rubber film called 'skim'. Working in tandem, the foam band and the rubber film give the agricultural tires the right combination of the ability to operate at record-low pressures while creating the biggest possible footprint.

Michelin Expands Presence in Brazil with Sascar Acquisition



The French tire manufacturer, Michelin has announced the acquisition of the Brazilian company, Sascar Participações SA, which specializes in digital fleet management and freight security in a 440 million euro (\$600 million) deal.

Three years before, a Latin American private-equity firm named GP Investments Ltd had taken control of Sascar based on its analysis that the demand for monitoring services from car insurers, logistics firms and security risk managers would grow in the Brazilian market, where currently only 4 percent of vehicles are tracked.

This analysis proved to be true and in the 2013 financial year, Sascar had an operating profit of 37 percent with revenue of 91 million euros and increase in net sales by 16 percent. It is projected that the demand for digital tracking will grow at an annual rate of 15 per cent in the next four years. The company manages 190,000 trucks belonging to 33,000 companies – an impressive figure by any means.

GP Investments benefited handsomely from the deal with Michelin, getting a return that was 2.6 times the amount it invested by selling its 46 per cent stake in Sascar.

Commenting on the deal, Jean-Dominique Senard, Michelin's chief executive officer said, "Michelin will benefit from the client base and human, technical and marketing skills built up by Sascar in the fast-growing telematics market for professional truck fleets."

Michelin is currently seeking to increase its presence in emerging markets like Brazil where experts predict that the demand for vehicles and auto-related services will increase at a high rate in the coming years.

The land transportation market in the country is huge and Sascar dominates the small truck fleet segment with a 23 per cent market share. The takeover is subject to approval by the Brazilian competition authorities and involves taking on Sascar's current debt burden of around 80 million euros. As an outcome of this deal, Michelin hopes to increase its sale of truck tires and to replicate the Sascar model in other South American markets.



Tire Fact

Extend the life of your tires and provide a smoother, more fuel-efficient ride by periodically rotating the tires.

Hunter Grabs Spotlight at Reifen Show with new Revolution Tire Changer



The Hunter Engineering Company was in the spotlight at the recently held Reifen Show in Germany with what the company called "the industry's most advanced fully-automatic tire changer." The new machine named the Revolution makes changing tires safer than ever with features like powered press arms for maximum control. The arms automatically adjust depending on the diameter that is put in to the system and power clockwise to prevent tire slippage.

The rollers of the Revolution device can loosen beads and can be used to loosen even the most stubborn stuck-on soft sidewall tires. There is a special tool head for catching and lifting the bead and the machine can be used irrespective of the design of the wheel. The entire process of changing the tire can be overseen through a touch screen display that informs users of the progress.

The complete automation of the process maximizes the safety margin as the operator will be positioned away from the machine. All rim or near-rim contact is plastic. With the Revolution constantly monitoring the TPMS location and preventing a tire from being mounted or dismounted in an unsafe position, operators can rest assured that the Revolution machine will truly enhance their safety in the workplace.

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REIFEN 2014 SMASHES ALL PREVIOUS RECORDS



Reifen 2014 proved to be an event at which all previous records were broken. With 670 exhibitors from 44 countries which included 20 of the world's largest tire manufacturers, the trade fair also hosted 20,000 visitors from 130 countries. It is indeed with good reason that the Reifen show is termed as the largest tire show in the world.

Exhibitors at the show ranged from companies engaged in the production of tires to those dealing with chassis technology, wheels and equipment though as many as 90% of the exhibitors were from the tire industry. The event also took place concurrently with Rubber Tech Europe giving visitors access to products and technologies at all stages of tire production from the preliminary stage of production right up to retreading.

The fact that more than 64% of the exhibitors were from overseas is an indicator of the importance the event holds in the tire industry. It is not just about the number of visitors but about the deals done as well. With many of the visitors belonging to the tire trading and tire service sectors, more than one third of them placed orders at the fair.

On the first day of the show, the organizers of the Reifen show, Messe Essen announced a bilateral strategic partnership with Messe Frankfurt in conducting the Reifen and Automechanika shows in the future. The two global fairs will be closely linked with each other after the forthcoming Reifen show in 2016.

Oliver Kuhrt, chairman and CEO of Messe Essen, said, "The response of the exhibitors to the partnership with Automechanika is outstanding. We are creating a substantial surplus value for our customers and are safeguarding the long-term growth of Reifen in Essen."

Wes Sprunk of Tire Service Equipment/Saf-Tee Siping & Grooving, said, "For us, Reifen in Essen is the most important fair anywhere in the world where we can present ourselves to an international public. We are very satisfied with the number and quality of the visitors. We were able to meet many of our regular customers, to establish new business contacts and to close good transactions. In 2016, we will definitely be an exhibitor once again."

The trade fair's supporting program which focused on tire pressure checking systems (TPCSs) was just as valuable to visitors and exhibitors alike. The Reifen Innovation Awards which were awarded to companies like Yokohama Tire Corporation for their pioneering new products will encourage companies to come up with many similar, environment friendly and energy saving products in the future.

Preparations have already begun in full swing for the 2016 Reifen show and the 2018 Reifen show which will be doubly special as it will mark the 30th anniversary of the show.

AW Rostamani Brings CEAT Tires to the UAE



AW Rostamani has earlier signed a distribution deal with the Mumbai based Indian company CEAT to launch the company's passenger car radial tires in the UAE. CEAT (Cavi Elettrici e Affini Torino) was originally an Italian company that was taken over by RPG enterprises in 1982 and is a well established brand of popular tires in India. CEAT tires are exported to more than 110 countries in the world and the company was also the first Indian company to get a TUV certificate for performance and manufacturing.

Arabian Automobiles Co LLC and AW Rostamani Trading Co. announced the official launch of the sale of CEAT passenger tires at 14 Nissan, Infinity, and Renault service centers during an event held at the Traders Hotel in Dubai. The event was attended by senior executives from Arabian Automobiles Co Service, AW Rostamani Trading and senior officials from CEAT, India who were in Dubai to attend the Automechanika trade fair.

Prior to their launch, CEAT tires were extensively tested in the UAE to ensure that they will be able to withstand the challenging climatic and road conditions in the Middle East.

CEAT has tires in different sizes that can cater to 80% of the sedan cars in the UAE market. The main idea of launching the sale of CEAT PCR tires through AAC Service centers was to offer customers a one stop shop that will cater to all their requirements when they come in to get their vehicle serviced. The tire sales business model was first set up in AAC in December 2012 with all tire technicians receiving extensive training in tire fitment and balancing and warranty handling.

In view of their economic pricing, high mileage, low noise, excellent temperature and traction rating and the 5 years warranty, CEAT tires are definitely bound to be a hit in the UAE market.

Tires & Batteries Division of Al Habtoor Motors Offers Dealers Rewarding Opportunities



Al Habtoor Motors is well known in the UAE for handling the distribution of reputed automotive brands like Bugatti, Bentley, McLaren and Mitsubishi Motors. Due to the company's longstanding association with automotive customers, the company has a good understanding of what they look for in terms of ancillary products like batteries and tires. This led Al Habtoor Motors to set up a Tires & Batteries Division to handle the sales of such products. The division has signed exclusive distribution deals for Sumo Firenza and Avon Tyres in the GCC, and for General Tires in the UAE. The company had also recently acquired the distribution rights for Mastercraft tires for the GCC region except for Kuwait and UAE.

The new Tires & Batteries division had participated for the first time ever in the 2014 edition of the Automechanika show, the Middle East's largest trade fair and networking event for the automotive aftermarket.

According to Neil Coolledge, the head of the Tires & Batteries Division and General Manager of SpeedFit, the booth of the Al Habtoor Motors Tires & Batteries Division had received over 700 visitors from countries across the MENA region at the Automechanika show.

After the grand success at of its new Tires & Batteries Division at the Automechanika show in the first week of June, Al Habtoor Motors is now all set to take the comprehensive range of leading brands of tires, accessories and batteries the division offers to the general public in the MENA region through dealerships in the region. Neil Coolledge added that the company is currently seeking and shortlisting distributors for its various brands across the GCC. He encouraged those dealers who have an interest in distributing the brands to contact the company so that they could benefit from this opportunity.

Customers who buy two General tires from Al Habtoor Motors Tires & Batteries Division currently benefit from a free vehicle health check and a one shot AC treatment. The One Shot AC Treatment kills germs and bacteria, deep cleanses the air vents and imparts the new interior cabin with the customer's choice of lemon, strawberry or apple fragrances. Customers who purchase four General Tires get an even better offer as they become eligible for a free car wash, Body Wax Polishing, Vacuum and Full Compound Body Polish, Body Shine Polishing, Engine Bay De-Greasing, RIM Cleaning and Tire Polishing.

EVENT	DATE	INFORMATION	LOCATION
Shanghai International Automotive Manufacturing Technology & Material Show	11-13 August 2014	Manufacturing Technology & Material Show is a three-day event that will focus on the automotive manufacturing technology industry. The 2014 edition is anticipated to be attended by engineering technical personnel in the sector to gain insights regarding the latest in auto manufacturing technology.	Shanghai New International Expo Centre, Shanghai, China
Perth Motor Show Live	16-18 August 2014	Perth Motor Show Live is an international trade event which aims to make the motor and automotive industry aware of the latest technologies required to make the other industries associated with this sector more advanced.	Perth Convention Exhibition Centre, Perth, Australia
The Great American Trucking Show	21-23 August 2014	The Great American Trucking Show is the second grandest trucking trade show in the nation. This three-day show offers a variety of free educational seminars and exhibitor sessions to all attendees.	Dallas Convention Center, Dallas, USA
Denver Modernism Car Show	22-24 August 2014	Denver Modernism Car Show is a three-day trade and sales event featuring post-atomic European and American car design. Here, attendees will get a chance to see various car designs and buy and sell cars.	National Western Complex, Denver, USA
Moscow International Motor Show	25-28 August 2014	2014 Moscow International Motor Show is one of the grandest trade events in the Russian automotive industry. The latest edition, which is organized by International Trade and Exhibition (ITE) Moscow and Messe Frankfurt RUS, will showcase the newest auto components and parts from all over the world.	Expocentre Fairgrounds, Moscow, Russia
China (Shanghai) International Battery Industry Fair	26-28 August 2014	China International Battery Industry Fair is a three-day event which attracts hundreds of international suppliers to engage in the battery industry. It is anticipated to bring together battery designers and developers as well as automobile and auto electronics manufacturers under one roof.	Shanghai New International Expo Centre, Shanghai, China

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EVENT	DATE	INFORMATION	LOCATION
The Indonesia International Bus, Truck & Components Exhibition	26-28 August 2014	Indonesia International Bus, Truck, Heavy Duty Vehicle & Equipment Exhibition is a three-day international business-to-business industrial exhibition designed for the promotion of automotive companies specializing in equipment and components for coaches, buses, trucks and heavy duty vehicles.	Jakarta International Expo (JIE expo), Surabaya, Indonesia
Automotive Manufacturing Vietnam	27-29 August 2014	Automotive Manufacturing Vietnam is a prestigious event that will showcase the latest developments in the field of auto parts production and technologies. Attendees in the 2014 edition will get a chance to gain more knowledge about productivity improvement.	Hanoi International Center for Exhibition, Hanoi, Vietnam
China International Auto Parts Expo	12-14 Sept 2014	China International Auto Parts Expo is an independently-held specialized global event by the Chinese government. The event serves as a bridge for promoting Chinese exports as well as for introducing, learning and innovating overseas products and technologies.	Beijing China International Exhibition Center, Beijing, China
Automechanika Frankfurt	16-20 Sept 2014	Automechanika Frankfurt is one of the biggest and most-awaited events in the automotive world. Several exhibitors worldwide take part in this event to unveil their wide-ranging products such as tuning, accessories, IT products and services, car washing, automotive parts, filling-station equipment and workshop, etc.	Exhibition Centre Frankfurt, Frankfurt, Germany
IAA Commercial Vehicles	25 Sept - 02 Oct 2014	IAA Commercial Vehicles is one of the most talked about auto shows around the world as it is devoted to exhibiting a wide array of commercial vehicles and accessories used by automotive industrialists.	Hannover Exhibition Center, Germany
Togliatti Motor Show	26-28 Sept 2014	This show is a grand showcase of products such as fueling stations, garage equipment, auto-oil, auto parts, hydro and motorcycles, freight transport, vintage cars, foreign and local production, motorcycles and cars, etc.	UIC Olympus, Tolyatti, Russia



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3M Car Care Steals Spotlight at Automechanika 2014 with Newest Automotive Solutions



Demonstrating its leadership in the field of research and development, the 3M Car Care business has recently unveiled its most advanced innovations in the aftermarket segment at the recently held Automechanika Dubai 2014 from June 3 to 5.

3M automotive solutions are designed to enhance the vehicle's appearance and protect it against all types of damages. Included in the technologically advanced solutions showcased by the company in the event were Headlight Lens Restoration, which adds more clarity to lenses that have become cloudy or dull over time; Scotchgard Vehicle Protection, which offers protection against common paint blemishes and stains; and Sun Control and Paint Protection films portfolio, which provides a series of automotive films in various shades to add privacy and customize the vehicle's look while also saving energy and offering protection from glare, heat and damaging UV rays. Another important innovation

unveiled at the big event is the 3M Paint Protection Film, which aims to protect the vehicle from the damage caused by minor abrasions, environmental elements, insect debris and stone chips.

Earlier in a statement, 3M Car Care Division Manager Samer Sharara, said that 3M Car Care solutions have been at the forefront of product innovation that has allowed a safe, pleasant and lifestyle-enhancing driving experience for consumers all over the globe. "The Middle East is one of the fastest growing markets for our automotive business and Automechanika 2014 will provide a perfect platform for us to engage with our customers."

For the past century, 3M's groundbreaking solutions have been utilized by the global automotive industry across a variety of applications and now, the same applications have been custom-made for direct consumer application as they are widely available across 3M authorized autocare centers in the United Arab Emirates.

Customers are advised to dial 800PROTECT hotline to know more about the list of services offered by a certain 3M authorized autocare center and its locations in the country. They can also visit www.3mgulf.com/autocare to check out the other products the company has in store.

German Automaker Unveils Heart of AMG GT Supercar



Luxury German automaker Mercedes-Benz has taken a slow-but-sure approach in unveiling its latest AMG GT supercar featuring a strikingly futuristic design. To satisfy the curiosity of people involved in the automotive industry concerning its performance, the automaker has finally shed some light on what is under the car's hood.

The heart of the GT is a 4.0-liter twin-turbocharged V8, which puts out impressive numbers—510 hp (375 kW) at 6250 RPM and 650 Nm of torque between 1750 and 4750 RPM. The powerful engine boasts aluminum forged pistons, and puts the turbochargers in between the cylinder bank to keep the engine compact, thus aiding responsiveness.

In addition, Mercedes has also fitted a dual mass flywheel. The engine will sit on active mountings, which are designed to keep the ride smooth and comfortable without affecting handling. The new engine's cylinder barrels will also be coated with what AMG touts as "Nanoslide" to reduce oil consumption and lower friction.

According to Mercedes, oil is not the only consumption figure it strives to keep low—through lessening turbocharging and displacement, the new engine must record better economy figures and emissions than the 6.2-liter V8 it replaces.

Though impressive, the all-new 4.0-liter V8 (M178) is less powerful than the 6.3-liter V8 from the SLS AMG, which made 560 hp. However, the engine makes the same torque amount, and the new GT is said to be lighter and smaller than the old car, so it is anticipated to give drivers higher speed thrills.

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The kerfs can reduce pattern noise caused by tire rolling.



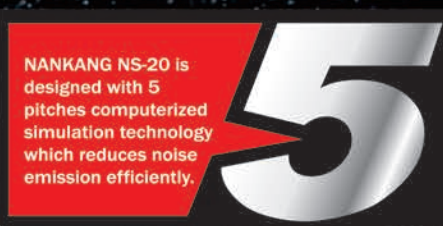
The two sub straight grooves on tire shoulder not only share the main grooves drainage, but reduce tread wear efficiently.



New silica tread compound makes NS-20 have excellent grip ability.



Sipes on tire shoulder reduce block rigidity, lower the noise from road and increase comfort.



NANKANG NS-20 is designed with 5 pitches computerized simulation technology which reduces noise emission efficiently.

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Sportnex **NS-20**

Four straight wide grooves enhance tire drainage and maneuverability in wet conditions.



Ali Alghanim Becomes Exclusive Dealer of LIQUI MOLY and Exide



Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive, the official importer of Rolls-Royce, MINI and BMW automobiles in Kuwait, has further reinforced its status as the leading automotive retailer in the country after becoming the official dealer of German oil brand LIQUI MOLY and American auto battery brand Exide.

Just recently, Wolfgang Haschek, regional technical head of LIQUI MOLY Germany, spearheaded the inauguration of the first-ever LIQUI MOLY outlet and service center at the Oula fuel station located on the 6th Ring Road. He also educated the local team regarding the company's products as well as their benefits and applications.

The LIQUI MOLY motor oil is now being used at all Ali Alghanim & Sons showrooms and service centers, as well as in its service center at the Oula fuel station in west Mishref. The renowned German motor oil brand is also available at different Oula fuel stations in Kuwait, making it fully accessible to all car owners and aficionados throughout the country.

At present, there are eight LIQUI MOLY outlets located in different Oula fuel stations across Kuwait where Exide car batteries are also available. Haschek said in a statement that the automotive market in Kuwait has experienced massive growth, and such growth needs leading products like LIQUI MOLY, which offers unrivaled performance to all motor vehicle brands.

"We are therefore pleased to have partnered with a highly reputable brand as Ali Alghanim & Sons in order to bring LIQUI MOLY into the Kuwaiti market. As soon as customers try out our products, I am confident that it will be just a matter of time before LIQUI MOLY becomes the top-selling motor oil brand across Kuwait," he added.

Meanwhile, Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive General Manager Yousef Alqatami expressed his optimism on the effect of having the two leading brands on board the company's premium quality products offered to Kuwaiti drivers.

According to Alqatami, their company has been dynamically following fresh innovations and trends in terms of retail and product for decades. He is also confident that their partnership with LIQUI MOLY and Exide will significantly enhance their share in the different segments of the Kuwaiti automotive industry.

LIQUI MOLY boasts more than 5,000 premium quality products in its range, including chemical-based technical solutions, motor oils, car care items, and additives for automotive applications. The motor oils of the German brand are approved by leading car manufacturers as they are proven to reduce engine wear caused by the rapid build-up of oil sludge from high sulphur content in fuel.

Exide is the largest car battery manufacturer in the world with footprints in over 100 countries. Founded by well-known American inventor Thomas Edison, the company was the power behind Admiral Byrd's mission to Antarctica as well as NASA's first-ever mission to the moon in 1969. It also offers an 18-month warranty cover against manufacturing defects.

Alqatami concluded that they have further plans of expanding their services and service points in the coming months. He also assured Kuwaiti customers of world-class services.

BMW Partners with Bang & Olufsen to Ensure Technical Superiority in Audio Technology



AGMC, the exclusive BMW importer for the Northern Emirates, Sharjah and Dubai, has recently hosted an event for its customers at the ikonhouse design showroom in Al Quoz with Danish audio product manufacturer Bang & Olufsen.

In the event—which highlighted BMW's strong commitment to offering outstanding surround sound and in-car audio technology—Bang & Olufsen Automotive industrial designer Mikkel Venge unveiled the procedure of developing a concept and how it is converted into real-world prototypes and ultimately, into production. Moreover, he shared behind-the-scenes stories of the entire procedure to develop the best possible Bang & Olufsen in-car sound systems exclusively for BMW.

"I would like to thank AGMC and Ikonhouse for giving me the chance to speak at this evening's event. Bang & Olufsen's partnership with BMW is a pinnacle part of our business due to the fact that both brands are experts within their different fields. And the result? A premium product made even more premium thanks to our high-end sound systems," Venge said in the event.

In a statement, AGMC Marketing Manager Natalija Norikova said that BMW and Bang & Olufsen are two well-respected brands in their individual categories that are both globally known for excellence in terms of high-end performance and aesthetic design. She also added that this is evident in the bespoke Bang & Olufsen high-end surround systems that are exclusively developed for multiple BMW models such as the X5, 5 Series, 6 Series and 7 Series.

In the cabin of BMW models fitted with this optional sound system, the speaker trims fit perfectly within the interior's body while a central speaker is displayed on the dashboard when the music starts playing. A 16-speaker series which can reach up to 1,200 watts also flood throughout the cabin for a crystal-clear sound. This sets the highest possible tone quality, giving motorists and passengers a luxury music-listening experience.



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BMW 6 Series Gran Coupe Gets High-End Danish Audio System



German automaker BMW has recently announced the unveiling of the much-anticipated 2015 BMW Individual 6 Series Gran Coupe “Bang & Olufsen Edition”, a luxury grand tourer which embodies the design and engineering expertise of the two luxury-sector manufacturers. The new car edition blends first-class materials and exquisite craftsmanship with advanced technology and the finest high-end sound.

Reports say that the production of the edition is only limited to 100 BMW 650i Gran Coupe models equipped with BMW xDrive all-wheel drive or rear wheel drive and powered by the BMW TwinPower Turbo V-8. Those who want to have a more thrilling and sportier driving experience can select from the ten BMW M6 Gran Coupe “Bang & Olufsen Edition” vehicles, featuring the Competition Package that improves the most powerful engine ever launched to a BMW production vehicle by increasing its output from 560 to 575 hp. Orders for this edition are now being taken on a first-come first-served basis with deliveries to start this summer.

Taking the sleek yet powerfully designed 6 Series Gran Coupe as its canvas, the edition is available in two colors: Dark Graphite II Metallic or Brilliant White Metallic.

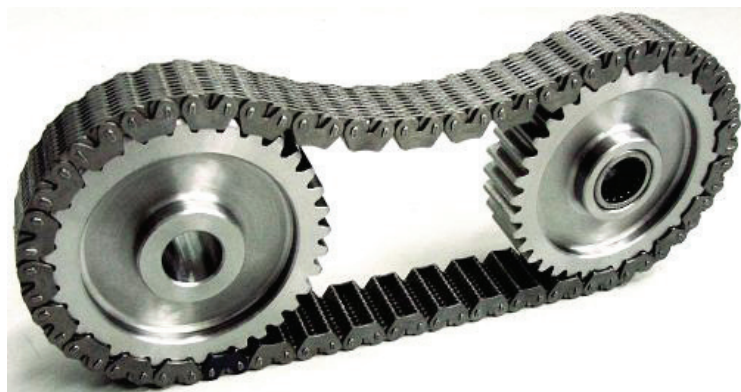
The M6 Gran Coupe’s interior boasts fine handcrafted Merino Leathers in Opal White & Black with Contrast Piping/Stitching or Black with Contrast Piping/Stitching. This design theme is accented by specially designed floor mats as well as a Piano Black Wood Trim with a “Bang & Olufsen” inlay on the front cup-holder lids. Also added to the M6 Gran Coupe is the M logo which is distinctively embroidered into the front headrests in the M colors.

At the center of the vehicle series is the Bang & Olufsen High End Surround Sound System featuring special loudspeaker grilles in a brushed black aluminum finish, which made their debut on the edition. With a total of 16 active loudspeakers powered by 1,200 watts, the sound system from the Danish company has the power to deliver full, rich, high-end sound.

Apart from its revolutionary audio quality, the “Bang & Olufsen Edition” also has a list of standard content including the Cold Weather Package. For the M Sport Edition, the included packages are the Driver Assistance Plus Package, LED Lighting Package, M Sport Package and Executive Package. Three of these packages— Competition Package, Executive Package and Plus Package—now come as standard content in the M6 Gran Coupe.

To take drivers’ listening experience to the next level, every BMW Individual “Bang & Olufsen Edition” also has a set of black BeoPlay H6 high-end headphones finished in the same brushed aluminum treatment as the car’s loudspeaker grilles.

BorgWarner Launches HY-VO Chain Drives Transfer Cases for Lexus and Toyota



Global automotive components and parts supplier BorgWarner has recently unveiled its next-gen HY-VO® chain drives transfer cases for the Lexus® GX and the Toyota FJ Cruiser, Tacoma, 4Runner and Land Cruiser Prado. Engineered to reduce friction and manufactured at the company’s Japan-based facility, the new HY-VO chain significantly enhances efficiency and helps boost fuel economy.

Joe Fadool, president and general manager of BorgWarner Morse TEC, said in a statement that BorgWarner used advanced testing and simulation capabilities to develop the next-generation HY-VO chain, which boosts fuel economy without compromising the quiet ride motorists expect.

The new HY-VO chain, developed in partnership with Toyota, features enhanced tooth geometry with two different tooth shapes intended to reduce noise, vibration and harshness. Set in a certain pattern, the links counterbalance noise without the need for the spring links used in earlier designs. HY-VO chain drives are proven to offer lower noise, lower cost, enhanced efficiency and greater center distance tolerance compared with gear drives.

Dubai to Have Hundreds of Vehicle Testing Lanes in 2015

Getting a yearly vehicle fitness test done is a hassling experience for most car owners in Dubai, but with more than a hundred vehicle testing lanes to be added in the city by the end of 2015, this will soon be a thing of the past.

According to a senior official of Roads and Transport Authority (RTA), the government agency has set out a plan to expand its reach across the entire city to increase the current 76 testing lanes.

RTA currently collaborates with nine partner organizations that have 22 centers all over Dubai, including SpeedFit Vehicle Testing Centre which opened in Umm Ramool on May 4, 2014. In the latter part of the year, the agency and the organizations will open two more centers, which will take the overall lane capacity to 86. RTA claims that Dubai has about 1.3 million registered vehicles and each vehicle is required to undergo a technical fitness examination to guarantee its road worthiness.

After the inauguration of the SpeedFit Vehicle Testing Center, Ahmad Hashim Bahrozian, CEO of RTA Licensing Agency, said in a statement that there is a continuous increase in the number of vehicles that they have to serve without causing inconvenience to drivers. "Last year, we opened the Quick Registration Centre and now, we have added to our capacity by opening the 22nd vehicle testing center in Dubai."

Bahrozian added that they have a capacity to test up to 6,000 vehicles a day at the existing centers, and in the latter part of the year, they intend to double the number. Aiming to reach out to areas where they don't currently have a presence, he further revealed that their main challenge is to search for the right land at accessible locations.

To provide a better service to motorists, RTA extended in April the timings of four testing centers to 24 hours, and is also prompting the set-up of electronic kiosks at the registration centers to enable people to serve themselves.

"We are focusing on shifting the traffic away from counters at registration centers. Since we have 24-hour registration facilities through the web and phone, we are encouraging our partners to set up self-serving kiosks. Currently, only 10 per cent of transactions are being done online or through the phone and by the end of this year, when we will launch a mobile platform for registration, we expect the share to double," revealed Bahrozian.

In 2013, RTA also combined the testing systems across the board and ordered all its partners to improve their testing equipment to the same standards.

According to Neil Coolledge, SpeedFit Vehicle Testing Centre General Manager, their facility is equipped with the most advanced testing technology. He said that their main focus is to reduce waiting time for people, and with their technology, they can provide one of the quickest test experiences around. "The actual testing would take around ten minutes and the entire process from beginning to end takes around 25 minutes."

SpeedFit, a part of Al Habtoor Group, is capable of providing testing facilities for up to 60 vehicles per day through its two lanes, and is set to double its capacity by July this year. The center also has an online appointment booking facility and is open between 7am and 10pm.

CME Presents First-Ever Online Catalog for UAE Customers



Al Fahim Group member Central Motors & Equipment (CME) has recently presented its first-ever automotive parts and power tools online portal, which targets both individual and corporate customers who want a quick and simple ordering process in just a click of a button.

Bilal Al Ribí, CME general manager and project owner, said in a statement that they are proud to be launching the first online web catalog as it provides their dealers accessibility to information which they previously did not have. He also added that as the only distributor of the Bosch brand in the UAE and agent for Valeo and Osram, it is their duty to offer the right tools to their dealers to help them achieve their best in terms of performance and satisfaction.

"This involves quick access to information at their fingertips, unlimited access to parts references, seeing the total number of orders they have requested per month, status of existing orders, order availability, price and delivery time, among other services."

To ensure accurate and smooth communication, the newly launched web catalog portal offers a quick, simple and systematic ordering process. First, the client is required to create an account on the website with the help of a CME sales consultant. Once the step is completed, the client may browse the site's product catalog and set their requirements. Upon confirmation of the purchase, the client will automatically receive an online agreement of the transaction.

Recalling the time prior to CME's introduction of the valuable information network, Hazem Hussein, CME sales manager, said that dealers used to use phones, emails and sometimes even fax machines. However, today, they can easily access their personalized accounts, choose the products they want to order and follow up on the delivery status—all under one roof and on the spot. "We are confident this tool will improve our relationship with our corporate clients and guarantee better strategic decisions by them, which in turn will provide us with the insight we need to make our own progressions in the market."

With CME's efforts in developing new methods to give customers peace of mind, clients in the UAE will find it easier to search for their needed products by eliminating the middleman. This will help save time, reduce human error and provide customers with the right information, thus enabling them to make better decisions.

Electric Test Car Proves Its Race Track Might with Aluminum-Air Battery



In 2013, leading aluminum producer Alcoa and renowned high-energy density systems developer Phinergy, has announced the development of an aluminum-air battery that could provide an electric vehicle with a 1,000-mile range potential but would require stops every 100 miles for a water top-up. Just recently, the companies have launched the technology on the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal.

Excluding Tesla's Model S and its 300-mile range, most Li-ion battery systems normally provide users with a limited range before needing a recharge. As reported by sources in April, there are multiple companies working on the next generation air-battery technologies, mostly focusing on lithium-air solutions. However, one of the major issues with the new metal-air batteries is the carbon dioxide-related premature failure.

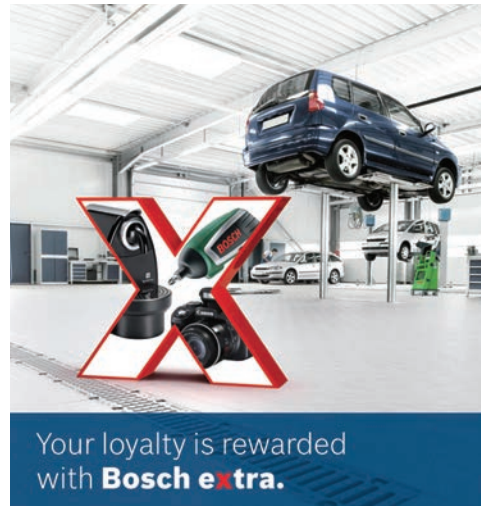
Alcoa and Phinergy's aluminum-air battery system utilizes the energy that is released through the reaction of aluminum and water with oxygen to produce electricity with the use of a silver-based catalyst and distinctive structure. This allows oxygen into the cell while preventing entry to the problematic carbon dioxide molecules. According to the two companies, travel distances, life-cycle costs and purchase prices would be analogous to vehicles powered by petrol.

Since the battery plates are non-rechargeable and must be replaced, the system is being endorsed as a supporting technology. When driving around the city, a Li-ion system can manage most power needs, but during longer trips, the aluminum-air battery serves as a range extender. The used aluminum can also be reused when depleted.

Phinergy claims that just one of the 50 aluminum plates in its aluminum-air battery can power a car for about 20 miles or 32 kilometers. When supplemented to a lithium-ion configuration, the technology could extend the range of an electric vehicle by around 1,000 miles. The technology is also anticipated to be used in further enhancing the range of upcoming hybrid vehicles.

However, though the aluminum plate anodes of the battery are said to have 8 kWh/kg energy density, the power or performance figures from the test vehicle were not mentioned.

First-Ever Bosch Auto Trade Loyalty Program Unveiled in Middle East



Bosch, one of the globe's largest automotive spare parts suppliers, has recently rolled out an all-new trade loyalty program in the Middle East to reward its avid customers.

The 'extra' program enables auto spare parts traders to gather points all throughout the year on every purchase they make from a wide array of select Bosch spare parts. The points can then be exchanged for different rewards including power tools, home appliances, electronic gadgets and non-cash prizes.

According to Andreas Bodemer, Vice President of Bosch Automotive Aftermarket in Middle East and Africa (MEA), the Bosch 'extra' program was created to reward their loyal partners in the Middle East. He also added that they are proud to be the first-ever automotive supplier to launch such a project in the region, and they are confident it would become an extremely well-known initiative in the next few months.

The new program has been rolled out to auto aftermarket professionals after being presented at the recently held Automechanika Dubai 2014, the grandest automotive trade event in the entire region.

Workshop operators retailers and wholesalers who subscribe to the Bosch 'extra' loyalty program can choose their rewards with the use of a user-friendly online portal, via mobile phone SMS or through direct contact with their local agent.

For the first time, the loyalty program is being offered to four GCC markets—Oman, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE. Over 50,000 workshops in Europe have used a corresponding scheme since 2009.

UAE FURTHER BOOSTS AFRICA'S GROWING AUTO INDUSTRY



As years go by, the trade relationship between the UAE and Africa is booming continuously. Asad Badami, the managing director of A-MAP, a leading automotive aftermarket global distributor based in the UAE, claims that profitable opportunities in the automotive industry is a critical factor of that bond.

After a meeting between Badami and a delegation from Uganda, headed by the Prime Minister of Buganda—a subnational kingdom in the country's Central Region—the Dubai-based global distributor asserted the opportunities coming out of the relations that firms such as A-MAP can leverage, specifically in the automotive industry.

Badami said in a statement that while North and South African automotive markets are booming, the lack of an established manufacturing industry within West and East Africa implies that companies such as A-MAP play a huge role when it comes to keeping the continent going. He also stressed that with the increase in automotive demand across the African continent, the spare part sector of the automotive industry is equally vital.

Badami continued that Uganda remains as one of the most interesting African destinations due to its rapid economic growth over the last few years, despite its liberal external trade policy as well as the global financial crisis. He also added that they are delighted to welcome the delegation from Uganda, and privileged to host the Prime Minister of Buganda, His Highness Charles Peter Mayiga.

In accordance with a report from the Dubai Chamber of Commerce, over the past few years, Uganda's economy has achieved constant growth, averaging 6% yearly and with expectations reaching 7% for 2015 to 2017. The same report also lists motor vehicles as the third largest import product on a global scale, which accounted for about 5% of total imports, or approximately USD 244.4 million in 2011.

Commenting on the growth of Uganda's automotive industry, as in other countries in the region, Badami said that it has been prompted by a strong construction sector, which has generated demand for heavy vehicles and trucks.

The recent report of the Dubai Chamber showed that almost 10% of Uganda's overall imports come from the UAE, with car parts and accessories reaching about USD 5.6 million in 2011.

"As one of the largest suppliers of goods and services to Uganda, the United Arab Emirates is clearly a favored trade partner. Companies are continuing to seek regional partnerships with well-known, trusted suppliers like A-MAP who have a reputation globally for world-class operations," said His Highness Charles Peter Mayiga, Prime Minister of the Buganda Kingdom.

The economic performance of Uganda has not gone overlooked by other UAE-based sectors. Just recently, Etihad Cargo, the freight business of UAE flag carrier Etihad Airways, has announced a new weekly flight between Abu Dhabi and Entebbe. According to Emirates Airlines' report, there is a significant traffic increase on its Dubai-Entebbe sector, which offered yet another sign of booming trade relations between the two countries.

Federal-Mogul Vehicle Components Division Gets a New Name

Tier-one American automotive supplier Federal-Mogul has recently announced that its Vehicle Components division will be renamed Federal-Mogul Motorparts.

The newly renamed division is a top provider of renowned brands, including Ferodo, Anco, Wagner, Champion, Fel-Pro and Moog, to the global aftermarket. It also offers premium-quality wiper, chassis, and braking components to global OE manufacturers.

Daniel Ninivaggi, CEO of Federal-Mogul Motorparts and Co-CEO of Federal-Mogul Holdings Corporation, said in a statement that for over a century, they have remained focused in offering the highest quality components across each of the product categories and regions they serve. He further claimed that automakers know this, as their friction products are found on seven of the top ten car models in Europe, and the best-selling car in North America.

Ninivaggi further added that their aftermarket products are exclusively designed and engineered around the principle that car safety and product performance are what matter most. Stressing that Federal-Mogul's high quality products are tantamount to quality, he said that the company would continue to be the way they distinguish their products from others available in the market.

"Notwithstanding recent trends in some aftermarket categories, our unrelenting focus going forward will be to support our premium products and clearly communicate their advantages to our channel partners, professional service technicians and consumers."

Federal-Mogul Motorparts benefits from the Federal-Mogul Powertrain division's engine expertise. The new name and logo of the renamed division will be launched in the global market immediately, thus leading to a new marketing campaign for its product brands.

GoPro Action Cam Arrives in BMW Infotainment Systems



Winding roads through a majestic desert or lush green forests, leisurely autumn drives on scenic roads along the coast, fun winter road trips with friends in the city—whatever a person's daily or weekend travel looks like, it might be the excellent subject for an HD video. With BMW's easy-to-use GoPro action camera which is now integrated into its infotainment architecture, capturing the best driving moments is made even better.

For the first time in its history, the renowned German automaker is integrating GoPro control into its Mini Connected systems and BMW apps by way of the advanced GoPro iPhone app. The app works by pulling control from the GoPro hardware to the car's iDrive controller and color display. Users can mount the GoPro anywhere on their car whether inside or out, and enjoy a more intuitive control.

Commenting on the GoPro, Phil Johnston, head of BMW Group AppCenter USA, claims that it is a natural fit for BMW aficionado drivers. He also reveals that the flexibility and power of the BMW Group App Integration Platform combined with GoPro's revolutionary camera technology brings new, safe, and fun experiences to aficionados that were previously not possible. "When the camera is connected to the car, it allows GoPro's app to present context-appropriate presets that allow the enthusiast to capture the perfect shot."

The GoPro enables recording and switching between photo and video modes. It also offers six drive-specific camera models that users can choose from such as straight road time lapse, winding road time lapse, drive camera facing in, sport driving facing out, night driving and leisure driving facing out. In the car's display, the battery life, Wi-Fi connection strength and remaining storage space of the camera are also shown. When the car is stopped, the screen shows a preview image, which the driver can utilize in repositioning the camera for the best view.

Reports say that BMW will start adding GoPro app compatibility in July to all 2012 and new models with Mini Connected and BMW Apps. The app is exclusively designed for iPhone 4 and later models as well as GoPro cameras equipped with Wi-Fi (Hero3+ and later models). The iPhone, which is connected to the BMW by snap-in adaptor or USB cable, bridges the car's infotainment system and the wirelessly connected GoPro. Now available in the iTunes Store, the updated GoPro app is anticipated to take drivers' road trips to the next level.

Indy 500 Racing Legend is Pulstar Plugs' New Performance Expert



Two-time Indy 500 champion Al Unser Jr., has recently joined New Mexico-based Enerpulse Technologies as performance expert of its leading Pulse Plugs brand. Unser will serve as customer advocate for Enerpulse and assist the company in providing automotive aficionados with enhanced car power and performance.

Unser revealed in a statement that when he initially tried the Pulstar plugs in his 2011 Chevy Suburban LTZ, he noticed a 2 mpg increase and testing showed that he had picked up 5 horsepower. He also added that he could really feel the power just by changing his spark plugs.

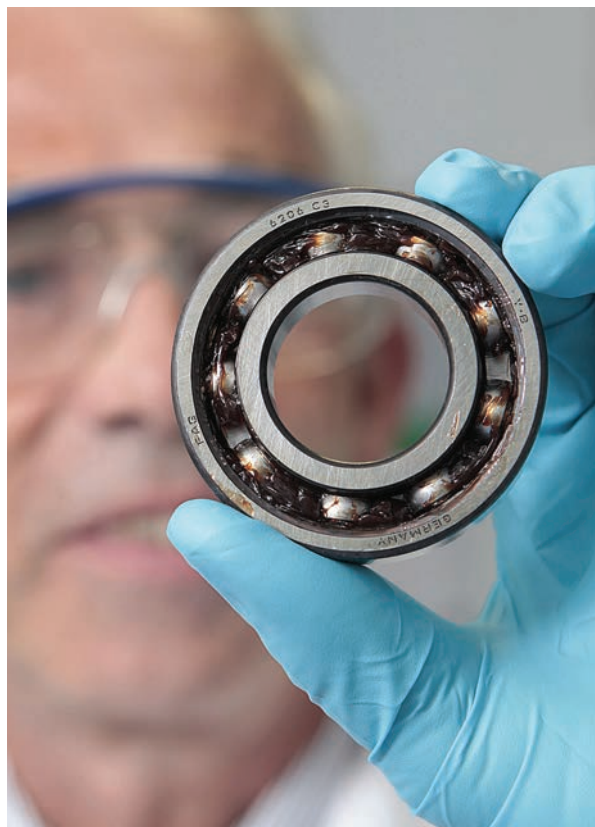
Unlike regular spark plugs, Pulstar Pulse Plugs utilize an integrated capacitor that works by storing and compressing electrical energy to further intensify the spark. With this process, engine performance and fuel economy are increased—a benefit unachievable by any regular spark plugs available on the market.

Unser rose to fame in the IndyCar Series after winning 34 races and winning the Indy 500 and the Series championship in 1994. He then stepped up to the next level after being inducted into the prestigious Motorsports Hall of Fame of America in 2009.

Expressing his extreme excitement about the partnership, Unser said, "I am not a physicist, but I do know a thing or two about getting the most power from your engine; and the performance improvement I experienced with Pulstar Pulse Plugs is nothing short of amazing."

The two-time racing champion took part in the 2014 Indianapolis 500 as a coach for the KV Racing Technology team. He then returned to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway where he won in the "Indy Legends Pro-Am", a special feature of the SportsCar Vintage Racing Association's "Brickyard Invitational" vintage race weekend that ran from June 6 to 8.

Conductive Lubes Shown to Shield Electric Motors of the Future



A recent joint research project conducted by a group of German industrial and basic engineers have revealed impressive findings—electrically conductive lubricants will shield electric motors of the future from the surface damage caused by electrical discharging in the bearings. This has driven the engineers to take a huge leap toward attaining the future's sustainable electromobility.

The project, called "SchmiRmaL" (Switchable intelligent tribological systems with minimal friction losses and maximum lifespan), was sponsored by the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research and was presented to gear up for the vehicles of the future, which will need higher voltages than existing models. Presently, 12 volts are needed to supply all automotive electric systems—ranging from lights and radios to air conditioners—with enough power. The figure is anticipated to escalate to 48 volts within the next few years, as electric power is needed for an increasing number of functions. Hybrid vehicle's voltage levels are even higher, requiring as much as 400 volts.

According to Dr. Gerd Dornhöfer, one of the Bosch associates participating in the "SchmiRmaL" project, in electric motors and alternators, higher voltage levels imply that alternating electric fields are now stronger than they once were.

For instance, this can lead to electrical discharge in the ball bearings of alternators and motors. When this happens, sparks may fly that can melt small areas of the metal's surface, leading to uneven raceways. This results to noisy ball bearings, which malfunction too soon.

Looking at the measurement results on his computer, Dornhöfer claims that they can already prevent it from happening with the lubricants they have developed.

Anyone who has experienced getting a small electric shock from a doorknob is aware of static charges. When the finger is only a few millimeters from the doorknob, an electric spark jumps between the two. The spark travels further when there is higher electric tension. The air between the finger and the door serves as an insulator until the finger is close enough to the knob.

The same thing can also take place when a current is produced between the housing and shaft of an electric motor, as the lubricant coating in the bearing serves as an insulator. As the speed of rotation increases, the bearings from the raceways are separated by the lubricant greases in the ball bearings. This is similar to losing steering control on wet roads. However, unlike on roads, this phenomenon is advantageous in ball bearings, as it reduces the friction produced by the surface damage as well as the bearings.

However, similar to a capacitor, this can also make the bearings recharge when the lubricant film is intact. When enough, the built-up voltage can infiltrate the insulating lubricant grease. This energy is sufficient to temporarily melt a small portion on the surface of the bearing. If this occurs recurrently, tiny imperfections appear on the bearing.

"We want to prevent this at all costs, as it can result in greater damage to these spots over time," says the Bosch scientist.

This is called electrical pitting by scientists. The process leads to damaged areas on the raceway that are similar to potholes. It is anticipated that the energy of these discharges may become greater in the future as the voltages and density of automotive electric systems rise.

Considering this possible problem, the strategy of the SchmiRmaL project, focuses on the development of new lubricants, whose substances stay

conductive even at higher voltage levels. Thus, these lubricants do not serve as insulators. The levels of voltage as well as potentially destructive electrostatic discharge no longer build up.

"This can be achieved in several ways. One could, for instance, add fine metal particles to the grease to conduct the current. But this would mean that the lubricant grease would also act as an abrasive, and of course we want to avoid this," says Dornhöfer. He also reveals that ionic fluids are electric conductors, and this is the reason why they add those substances to their lubricants.

After multiple tests, the scientists now have developed greases that are less electric-resistant. In simple terms, the lubricant conducts electrons as needed in the ball bearing and thereby prevents electrical flashovers. The first material was an industrial lubricant available in commerce.

The new grease is black in color, but it mainly resembles its predecessor. Presently, Dornhöfer focuses in part on probing all the characteristics of the grease. To guarantee long life cycle, ball bearings should be heat-resistant and have cold flow properties. In addition, the new additives must not sacrifice the corrosion protection properties of the grease. Not to mention that the new grease must not pose health or environmental risks. "So far, our findings have been very promising", Dornhöfer reveals.

The advantages of the project's work go beyond electric motor applications. The new lubricants can also enhance the reliability and increase the service life of machine elements experiencing strain, particularly transmission components and roller and plain bearings. Additionally, performance can be enhanced for motors of the same size, or retained if motors are smaller. Along with that, the lubricants offer significant contribution to increasing efficiency and reducing energy consumption.

The SchmiRmaL project participants include Fraunhofer Institute for Mechanics of Materials IWM (Freiburg im Breisgau), Fraunhofer Institute for Algorithms and Scientific Computing SCAI (Sankt Augustin), SCHUNK GmbH & Co. KG (Lauffen/Neckar), Inprotec AG (Heitersheim), Schaeffler Technologies GmbH & Co. KG (Herzogenaurach), IoLiTec-Ionic Liquids Technologies GmbH (Heilbronn) and Klüber Lubrication SE & Co. KG. Bosch is now applying the new lubricants and testing their appropriateness under real-world conditions.

RoofScope Gives Peace of Mind to Drivers Worried About Car-Top Cargo



Apart from eating, texting, talking on the phone and looking after children, worrying about the security of the stuff on the roof of the car is another distracted driving habit. Drivers who have car-top cargo can only have peace of mind if they stop the car at the side of the road, get off and check if it is still securely in place. But with the RoofScope, this will just be a thing of the past.

The RoofScope is not a groundbreaking technology, but merely just a wide-angle mirror designed to be stuck on the car's hood with the use of an attached vacuum mount cup. To give the driver a full view of the roof-top cargo from the driver's seat, it must be angled properly and then locked in place. With this mirror, there is no more need to sneak peek at the car's reflection or shadow in windows, nor to angle one of the wing mirrors all the way up—which does not work.

According to reports, the RoofScope stays attached and properly angled even at highway speeds, but its effect to mileage is not known. As a side benefit, the device's presence on the hood reminds drivers that there is a load on the car-top, so smashing that load into overhead obstacles is prevented.

Since January this year, the ever-functional RoofScope has been offered online, although its UK-based designers have now turned to Kickstarter—the globe's largest funding platform—to fund larger-scale production and an improved model. Those who pledge £30 (US\$50) will get one in the event the funding target is successfully met.

SCHAEFFLER BUNDLES SALES ACTIVITIES FOR ITS THREE LEADING AUTOMOTIVE BRANDS



Schaeffler Automotive Aftermarket is currently bundling its sales activities for its three popular brands FAG, INA and LuK with those of its subsidiary, Ruville. After the successful completion of the startup stage in the pilot markets of France and Northern and Eastern Europe, the German company is implementing a gradual international launch.

According to Michael Söding, president of Schaeffler Automotive Aftermarket, with the reorganization of their sales structures, they are reinforcing the power of the company on the global spare parts market. He also reveals that in the future, customers of the aftermarket experts will have a central sales contact partner available in every domestic market for all their four brands.

Thomas Dee, Senior Sales Manager Western Europe/Eastern Europe and International at Ruville, also claims that with this, they are making the entire product portfolio of Schaeffler Automotive Aftermarket open to direct access. "All products and services from a single source, locally – which is a big plus for customer proximity."

The FAG, INA, LuK and Ruville brands stand for outstanding quality, innovative power and technical superiority. In addition to utilizing new synergies and simplifying interfaces, the bundling sales activities will also include a market-covering expansion and improvement of the Ruville brand. The service performance and competitive edge of the company is further reinforced by more market penetration along with product portfolio optimization.

Rouven Daniel, director of Marketing & Communications at Schaeffler Automotive Aftermarket says that a repositioning of communication activities for the FAG, INA, LuK and Ruville brands is running similar to the sales structure's reorganization. He also promises that they will continue their focus on communicating the four brands. "The logical consequence of this is a consolidation of our marketing and communication activities and a joint external representation."

The process of bundling sales activities is slated to be completed in the third quarter of 2014.

Brembo Announces \$115 Million Plant Expansion to Boost North American Business



Brembo, the premier Italian brake supplier to Porsche, Ferrari and Formula One race cars, is now making a major presence in the North American industry.

Just recently, the company announced the \$115 million expansion of its brake component facility based in Homer, Michigan. The plant can now manufacture up to 400,000 calipers and corner modules and 12.5 million brake discs annually, up from 300,000 calipers and corner modules and 10 million discs in 2013.

Brembo executives forecasted in an interview with Automotive News that North America will become the company's largest global market this year, as the European market continues to stagnate. Last year, the continent's revenue climbed 19%.

Matteo Tiraboschi, Brembo's executive deputy chairman, said in a statement that he anticipates sales in the region to rise up to 15% this year. "That's good growth. Brembo is growing very fast in this market". He further revealed that they are thinking about other investments in the Mexican aftermarket.

In North America, Brembo does business with Chrysler Group—its largest customer in the region which uses its brake components for Chrysler compact sedans and minivans—as well as General Motors and Ford Motor Co., along with legendary European customers like Germany's premier car brands. The brake manufacturer has also expanded its product portfolio beyond high-performance cars like Cadillac CTS-V, Chevrolet Corvette and Dodge Viper.

Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne attended Brembo's dedication ceremony at its expanded Homer facility.



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TAISAN and Power Japan Plus Collaborates for Development of First Ryden Dual Carbon Battery-Powered EV



Before the start of this year's much-anticipated 24 Hours of Le Mans race in France, racing team TAISAN and leading material engineer Power Japan Plus have announced that they entered into a partnership agreement for the development of an electric racing vehicle, which will be the first in the globe to utilize the Ryden dual carbon battery. Under the terms of the agreement, Power Japan Plus will supply Ryden cells while TAISAN will use its experience in international racing to improve the battery and develop a management circuit and battery pack.

Yasutsune Chiba, owner of Team TAISAN, revealed in a statement that they have encountered a number of issues with EV battery up until now, and that the Ryden battery from Power Japan Plus is the right solution they have been searching for. "We will first develop a battery capable of withstanding the rigorous demands of racing, before advancing the technology for use in commercial applications," he added.

TAISAN has faced several roadblocks with traditional battery technology, with the risk of thermal runaway being the most predominant. Due to extreme heating, the other electric vehicle racing cars utilized by the racing team were prevented from running continuously. In its search for a solution to this problem, the team discovered Power Japan Plus' Ryden dual carbon battery.

The Ryden dual carbon battery employs an energy density similar to Li-ion batteries, with a faster charge time. It is also resistant to heating during operation, minimizing the threat of thermal runaway and producing a simpler battery pack cooling system.

Commenting on team TAISAN, Dou Kani, CEO and co-founder of Power Japan Plus, said that it has profound automotive technology experience, especially with the high demand of the motorsports world. "I am confident that by working together with Team TAISAN, we can produce an irreplaceable electric vehicle battery unlike any ever made."

The development is slated to begin with a go-kart powered by the Ryden dual carbon battery, which will undergo intense endurance testing in extreme summer heat conditions in August this year. Then, team TAISAN will build a full scale electric racing vehicle powered by a Ryden battery pack. The team will carry out endurance and safety tests on the EV at its Chiba-based facilities in Japan, with a target for the vehicle to launch in a Japanese EV racing competition.

With a total of 72 victories, team TAISAN, which was established in 1983, is dubbed as one of the most prestigious racing teams in Japan. Among these wins, the team has won 13 national racing championships—eight during the last two decades—at the Super GT (SGT)/ All Japan Grand Touring Car Championship (JGTC). In addition, the Japanese team has also won a total of six overseas championships, including The 24 Hours of Le Mans in the GT class in its first attempt.

Klondike Presents Latest Automotive Engine Oil Line



Klondike, a renowned Canadian oil and lubricant manufacturer, has recently expanded its product portfolio to include the latest automotive engine oil line which is available from its warehouses across the country. The company continuously expands its facilities throughout the North America in its quest to further boost the presence of its products. From its existing warehousing and distribution centers growing in Vancouver, it is now expanding to new plants in Edmonton, Toronto and Chicago.

Applying its long-standing experience from a successful history in chemicals, lubricants and oils for the automotive and industrial industries, Klondike aims to provide automotive consumers with premium-quality Canadian products that can meet even their toughest demands.

Since Klondike Lubricants Corporation has first started its journey in the market in 1987, it has been offering chemicals, lubricants and oils to wide-ranging markets and industries with demanding supply needs and exacting requirements. Leveraging the expertise of its team, the company delivers its products in a timely fashion while providing their customers with competitive advantage by offering training and education on their product offerings.

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Adidas miCoach Smart Soccer Ball

Football fervor is in the air and even if you are not very athletic, you might still like to improve your soccer skills. The Adidas miCoach Smart soccer ball is a ball with a difference – it is bluetooth and app-enabled and comes with in-built sensors that track every move you make. This information can then be sent to your iPhone or iPod touch so that you can analyze at your leisure the flight trajectories, the strike data, your free kicks and corners. With this near real-time feedback and a library of football videos that can help you hone your ball skills, you can dream of becoming the next soccer superstar, or at least a decent soccer player. The Smart Ball app also collates your data over a period of time to track your progress and save your favourite kicks. There are leaderboards and sharing options to see how you compare with your friends. The ball does need to be charged and once the battery is charged for an hour it is good enough to last for 2,000 kicks or one week. With heat-welded die-cut TPU outer panels and a TPU bladder, the ball comes with the traditional 32 panels, confirms to all FIFA standards and will last forever. What more do you need?

Earin Wireless Earbuds

We all use Bluetooth to minimize the use of cables between the phone and our ears, but even so-called wireless headsets still need a cable connecting the speakers. Thus, we end up getting snagged in cumbersome necklaces or suffer connection issues when we use Bluetooth headsets.

However, the Earin wireless earbuds, which are billed as the world's smallest wireless earbuds are actually 100% wireless. They are essentially two in-ear speakers that combine to form a single headphone, without any cables or wires. The sound quality is amazing in view of the size and all the components are already inbuilt in the earbuds. The sleek storage capsule for the earbuds that looks like a keychain doubles as a charger. The buds last for 2.5- 3 hours with the 50 mAh batteries. With the fundraising campaign on Kickstarter concluding successfully, we will hopefully see the Earin earbuds in UAE stores soon.



Brute Box Coolers

Keep cool during your road trips this summer with the new heavy-duty American-made coolers from Brute Box. The company claims their tough looking coolers with thick pressure-insulated walls, rubber gasket seal and proprietary foam insulation are good enough to keep ice solid for as long as 5 days. Available in 25, 50, 75, 100, and 150 quart sizes depending on your convenience, the box coolers are fashioned from one solid piece and are designed to last forever with flush mounted cantilevered hinges, dual drain plugs, heavy duty rubber latches, a tamper proof lid that can be locked, and big anti-skid feet. In all sizes, the coolers come with an integrated ruler for measuring quantities. Optional accessories even include seat cushions to make your trip the last word in comfort. The grab rails make it easy to carry or tie down the cooler. With this cooler that can take all kinds of use and abuse, you are all set to disappear for a week.



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much as planting 500 trees
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Hey Joe Coffee Mug

Most of us are particular about just how we like our coffee. However, when you are at work, unless you have a state of the art coffee machine in your office, you may not get the kind of coffee you like. Travel mugs help but however good they are, you could end up with lukewarm or cold coffee when what you need is a piping hot cup of java.

With the Hey Joe coffee mug, you can brew your coffee on the go with the custom coffee pods or the coffee blend of your choice to get the coffee of your taste at the right temperature. The cup comes with two separate compartments separated at the half way point of the mug so that the top part holds the water and the bottom part holds the coffee after the water is heated and drips through. There is a tray in the middle of the mug for inserting the coffee pod and water is added to the top compartment. A detachable, rechargeable battery at the bottom of your mug acts as the power source, sending energy to the copper coils encased within the heating plate in the center of the mug.

All you need to do is add water to the coffee filter and just press the button of the 14-oz. travel mug to brew the coffee and regulate its temperature automatically. You press the button once to get coffee at 140° F, twice to get it a hotter 155° F, or thrice to get a cup of cold coffee if that is what you are looking for. If your coffee has become cold, all you need to do is push the button again to warm it up in a few minutes. You end up with coffee having really good taste that you can brew anywhere, anytime to save you money. The Hey Joe coffee blends coming in biodegradable packaging, so you will be doing your bit to help save the environment as well.

Cleaning the jug is easy too. Just add water in the top, add soap if needed, push brew, rinse and voila, it is sparkling clean!



Ray-Ban Round Folding Classic Sunglasses

With summer around the corner, you need the right shades to protect you from the glare of the summer sun. These round folding classic sunglasses from Rayban have just the right retro look. A vital accessory for all the cool musicians in the 1960s, their round crystal lenses and distinct shape bring back the heydays of the 60s era. They are incredibly functional and have been modernized for the wearer's comfort with a curved brow bar, adjustable nose pads and plastic end tips. The sunglasses are foldable with 6 concealed hinges on the ridge and can be easily carried in your pockets. With Rayban's typical penchant for style, attention to detail and precise engineering, these glasses are one accessory you don't want to miss.



Grovemade Desk Collection

We spend a major part of our workday at our desk but few of us give a thought to how our desk looks or how ergonomic the position of our keyboard or monitor is. Unless we plan it carefully beforehand or the office has been designed by an interior designer, generally the colors of our monitor, the keyboard, the pens, the cups and all the stuff that pile up on our desk are totally mismatched.

Grovemade is a company that had launched stylish wooden iPhone cases and now the company has come up with the Grovemade Desk Collection to give your desk the classy look it needs. The collection consists of a monitor stand, keyboard tray, mouse pad, ruler, wrist pad, pen cup, paperclip holder, a planter, and a lamp, all fashioned from machined aluminum, top quality leather and from maple or walnut wood in matching colors. The monitor stand raises your screen by four inches to reduce the strain on your back and eyes and is strong enough to support even heavy monitors weighing up to 200 pounds. The keyboard tray comes with extra storage and separate slots for pens, notes and all the stuff you want to keep out of sight. The keyboard wrist pad elevates and supports your wrists and comes in maple or walnut backed by aluminum and finished in black or tan leather. The leather mouse pad, the wooden desk lamp, the planter, penholders and cups all add up to one collection you cannot afford to miss in your journey to the top.



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