

# TIRES & AUTOMOTIVE PARTS MAGAZINE

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## NEW RADAR TECHNOLOGY TO REDUCE RISK OF MISHAP IN UAE ROADS



**SCOTT FRANK**  
VP MARKETING AT AIRBIQUITY

### HOT PRODUCTS

Porsche Driver's  
Selection Range

PAGE 64



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# PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Sports events, whether you are watching them or participating in them are one of the greatest forms of entertainment known to men. Many of us care little about politics or legal niceties but we are walking encyclopedias when it comes to even small details related to our favorite football or cricket team. The world of motorsports attracts millions of enthusiastic viewers. Formula One races and famous rallies like the Dakar Rally are televised worldwide. As many companies like Nissan and Porsche prepare their cars for the 2015 racing season, we might wonder whether all the fun and action we see at motorsport events translates into benefits for the sedans and SUVs we actually see on the road.

I found out that most of the features that we take for granted in today's cars actually had their origin in racing. These include the humble rearview mirror which racers developed in the early 1900s to keep track of the competition, the use of aluminum and carbon fiber to make lighter cars and push button ignition to help drivers start cars faster. It goes without saying that racing played a crucial role in the development of better suspension systems and more aerodynamic shapes to make cars move faster and more smoothly.

It is pretty clear at first glance that automotive companies have benefited a lot from motorsports. What about tire companies though? Race tracks are the ultimate laboratory for the strength and durability of tires. We all remember the controversy that erupted in 2013 when Pirelli tires failed at the British Grand Prix. Innovations in tire technology like sipes to deal with slick roads, dual rubber compounds, variable contact patches and new tread designs are always tested on the track before they are incorporated into tires for production models. This is true not just for performance models, but even for sedate sedans.

Another huge payoff from being associated with motorsports is the increase in brand recall and brand recognition. Racing has gone a long way in raising the profile of companies like Ferrari, McLaren Mercedes, Honda, Renault, Alfa Romeo and Pirelli. Ferrari does hardly any advertising and has built up its reputation as a luxury brand primarily due to its performance in racing. Even non automotive companies that are associated with racing linger in our minds like the longstanding partnership between Infiniti and Red Bull. So, here is to a happy racing season in 2015 and may the best team win!

**Hamid Moaref**  
Publisher

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# INFINITI MIDDLE EAST MAKES MUSIC WITH CARS IN CHROMATIC



AUTOMOTIVE

TIRES

PARTS



Lexus RC F Joins Dubai Police Force  
PAGE 19



AW Rostamani Wins Achievement Awards from CEAT  
PAGE 30



Hyundai Offers a Big Surprise for Music Lovers  
PAGE 55

Aston Martin Racing Gives Young Racers a Flying Start with Evolution Academy 12

Ford Teams Up with Multimatic Motorsports to Build New GT 17

Jaguar Land Rover Continues to Bond with Bond in Spectre 18

Apollo Chooses to Close Durban Tire Plant 32

Continental Shifts MENA HQ of Tire Replacement Business to Dubai 37

Al Habtoor Motors Celebrates Growth Story of General Tire in the UAE 41

Shell Inaugurates GTL Base Oil Hub in UAE 50

Valvoline Unveils Full Synthetic Motor Oil with MaxLife Tech 57

Hot products 64



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SCOTT FRANK

VP MARKETING AT AIRBIQUITY

**Airbiquity is a global leader in connected car services innovation. What is the significance of your company name to the services you offer?**

The Airbiquity® company name comes from the convergence of “Air” (over-the-air/wireless) and “Ubiquity” (everywhere/omnipresent). We felt this was appropriate for our brand because our technology enables wireless connectivity on a global basis.

**Could you give us a quick rundown of your product offerings?**

Airbiquity has one cloud-based connected car services delivery platform—Choreo™—that enables six product offerings supporting the most popular connected car use cases:

- Connected Vehicle: Connected vehicle services delivery, management, and operations
- Driver Experience: Infotainment procurement, delivery, and management
- Driver Assistance: Personalized security, crisis, and convenience assistance
- Driver Efficiency: Optimization of Hybrid, PHEV, and EV vehicle ownership
- Fleet Efficiency: Vehicle fleet management and optimization
- Insurance Accuracy: Usage-based insurance

**It seems like everybody is talking about car connectivity nowadays. How did it start in your company and where do you see it in the future?**

For Airbiquity, connected car started in 1997 with the creation of our patented aqLink® technology, which was initially licensed by OnStar to enable data over voice communications. Since then, multiple automotive OEMs have licensed aqLink, which has been shipped in over 30 million production vehicles around the world. Airbiquity expanded its business model in 2007 with the launch of our cloud-based connected car service delivery platform—Choreo. We strongly believe that cloud-based service delivery and management is mandatory to enable flexible and highly scalable connected car programs that can be dynamically updated to keep program features and content “fresh” on a continual basis.

**Choreo is your global connected car platform. Could you tell us more about it?**

Choreo is our cloud-based connected car services delivery platform that is deployed in 50+ countries and offered in 30+ languages for multiple leading automotive OEMs. It is supported by a robust network of private data centers around the world with industrial grade uptime. More than 5 million cars are currently subscribed to Choreo, generating hundreds of millions of transactions monthly. Choreo is both flexible and scalable, enabling automotive OEMs to configure and deploy their connected car programs at the make, model, and country level using a single platform and one management interface.

**How would you assess the car connectivity market in the Middle East?**

The Middle East is definitely behind other regions such as North America and Europe that have deployed large amounts of connected cars to date.

**Do you also have plans to expand your connected car service in this region?**

Choreo is currently providing connected car service delivery in the Gulf Coast. Additional Middle East countries will come online as our automotive OEM customers expand their connected vehicle deployments into those countries and our platform is required to support them.

Just recently, you deployed two of the latest infotainment content providers on your Choreo private-cloud connected car services platform: TuneIn Radio and Twitter messaging. How will these providers take driving experience to the next level?

For Twitter, Airbiquity created an in-dash application enabling drivers to view, reply, and post tweets without increasing the risk of driver distraction. When the Twitter application senses that the vehicle is in motion, text-to-speech technology controls the application and the head unit touch screen keyboard is disabled, ensuring drivers’ eyes remain on the road. Drivers can also select from a list of custom preset Tweets to quickly and easily communicate with their followers and respond to other people’s Tweets.

For TuneIn Radio, Airbiquity created an in-dash application that enables drivers to stream over 100,000 radio stations and more than four million podcasts from around the world on their vehicle head unit. Familiar TuneIn features like Favorites, Trending, Top Podcasts, and Local Radio are fully supported and can be enjoyed while driving without having to pick up a smartphone. Additionally, the application keyboard feature on the head unit can only be used when the vehicle is in park, ensuring drivers can’t enter text while the vehicle is in motion.

**What is your latest innovation when it comes to infotainment?**

Airbiquity’s infotainment delivery product offering is called Driver Experience. It provides seamless connectivity for Apple iOS and Google Android-based handsets with custom app integration to take full advantage of integrating native vehicle systems like on-board navigation, minimize driver distractions, and leverage individual driver content and service preferences.

Additionally, Driver Experience is designed to power automotive OEM branded connected car programs and allow fully customizable program configuration and management at the make, model, and country level. Lastly, Driver Experience content can be updated dynamically from the cloud without any end user involvement, so the in-vehicle user experience is always fresh and up-to-date.

**Since car connectivity is a new technology, what challenges did you face when launching your connected car systems and telematics service?**

There are always challenges when integrating the latest hardware and software technology into complex automotive systems – being a technology innovator and integrator, we are used to that. The key is understanding the end-to-end components that are involved, ensuring specifications are well established and understood across all parties, and setting realistic expectations about what can be done with regard to deployment of a quality solution.

**What challenges are you anticipating to face in the future?**

Two areas come to mind. The first is data management to power more sophisticated use cases that are highly dependent on increasingly disparate data sets—structured and unstructured—and real-time predictive analytics. These analytic processes will be enabled within platforms like Choreo, as well as through cross platform integration. Another that comes to mind is the development of new multi-channel dynamic HMIs (human machine interfaces) that will present the outcome of the predictive analytics routines to the driver in a simple and meaningful way. Today, we think about a content and service world at the “channel” level primarily with mobile apps like Facebook and iHeartRadio extended into the vehicle. In the near future, we will transition to a new world of content and services that is above any one channel. This will not be easy to do, but it is where we are going to go.

**Could you share with us a few marketing strategies that you use to keep your company known worldwide?**

Being a B2B (business-to-business) company, Airbiquity’s marketing activity is targeted to the automotive and telematics industries. We actively maintain our corporate website from a content and search engine optimization perspective, and have continuous PR, analyst, and social media programs in place. We attend and exhibit at the major car shows and leading telematics events around the world, and provide constant support for our sales people in the field who work in Seattle, Detroit, London, and Tokyo offices.

**We have heard that one of your product offerings is “Driver Efficiency.” How would this benefit both drivers and automotive OEMs?**

Driver Efficiency is all about helping drivers get the economic and environmental benefits from their EV/PHEV/Hybrid vehicle purchases. It enables OEMs to create information-rich ownership experiences reflecting the unique aspects of operating vehicles with electric drivetrains such as battery charge status, driving range, charging station POI, eco-centric trip planning, and gamification. This information can be accessed by the driver in the vehicle or on an OEM-branded smartphone app remotely, and used to optimize the overall efficiency of the vehicle on an ongoing basis.

**Who is your biggest client so far? What are the factors that helped you win their trust?**

Our largest customer is Nissan Motor Corporation for our Driver Experience product offering. Nissan’s deployment began in September 2013 with the Altima and Rogue models in North America. In just 17 months, that deployment has expanded to 23 models across 51 countries demonstrating the high scalability of the Choreo connected car services delivery platform. Nissan selected Airbiquity for the following reasons:

Strong reputation for creating and deploying innovative automotive telematics technology

Proven ability to engineer and integrate complex technology solutions end-to-end

Deep experience working with automotive OEMs, tier 1 suppliers, and mobile network operators

Market leading cloud-based SDP (Choreo) with flexibility, scalability, and manageability

Ability to procure, develop, integrate, and manage content providers on a global basis

Positive experience with Airbiquity/Choreo on the Leaf and LCN2 programs

**What sets your connected car content portfolio apart from the content portfolios offered by other companies?**

The quality of our app integration into the OEM’s proprietary system to ensure the user experience (features) they are used to outside the car is available inside the car with modifications for driver distraction mitigation. Our app portfolio can also be dynamically deployed and updated from the cloud at the individual app level, ensuring the end user always has access to the latest and greatest content.

**What do you consider as Airbiquity’s biggest milestone in the telematics industry so far?**

The creation of the Choreo cloud-based connected car services delivery platform and the recent deployment of the Nissan program to 23 models across 51 countries in 17 months. Deploying a program of this depth and breadth in just 17 months is an astounding feat and clearly demonstrates the scalability and global footprint of the Choreo platform.

**What is the technology behind your vehicle telematics service and what makes it more advanced than the rest?**

We don’t openly discuss the core technologies behind the Choreo cloud-based platform for competitive reasons. Those details are provided to customers and prospects as we go through the RFI/RFP process, and deep technology, feature, and integration issues are discussed and assessed.

**What can customers expect from your company next year?**

First is the continued development and refinement of the Choreo platform, services, and features. Second is the introduction of an exciting new product offering that we can’t disclose the details of at this point in time. However, our second 2015 prediction below might provide a hint.

**What are some industry predictions for 2015?**

We have two to share with you:

- Leading automotive manufacturers will embrace both proprietary and third party platforms

Early in 2014, Apple announced the roll out of its CarPlay connected car infotainment delivery solution at the Geneva Motor Show following similar announcements to enter the market from Google with Android Auto in late 2013. These announcements were proof that both Apple and Google see the connected car market as a ripe and maturing opportunity into which to extend their brands, technologies, and content ecosystems. Meanwhile, drivers are increasingly becoming aware of connected car technology and what it can do for them. They also expect safe and seamless integration between their mobile devices and their overall driving experiences.

After months of meetings, reviews, and analysis, it’s becoming clear not all automakers are willing to cede control of the center console—and more importantly, the valuable data being generated by the vehicle and consumers driving them—to third-party technology providers like Apple and Google with their own interests in mind. Connected car technology in today’s leading automobiles represents much more than just another feature – it is an increasingly important aspect of the in-car ownership and usage experience that automotive brands are now recognizing as critical to maintaining post vehicle purchase customer engagement and building loyalty for the next vehicle sale. Moreover, infotainment delivery solutions are just one dimension of the connected car experience that automakers need to bring to market to meet the needs of their consumers today and tomorrow. Safety and security features like remote vehicle location/immobilization and driving optimization features like battery charge management for EV/PHEV/Hybrid vehicle owners represent significant opportunities for automotive manufacturers to leverage connected car technology to improve vehicle design while delivering added value to their customers.

So, will leading automakers cede control of the infotainment connected car experience to companies like Apple and Google? Given the high stakes, we believe it’s not an either/or proposition, but rather most automakers—with the strategic intent and means—will deploy a “triple stack” with their own branded proprietary platforms and third-party platforms like Apple CarPlay and Google Android Auto to cover their bases.

- The connected car will become the “intelligent car”

No one seems to question the growth potential of the connected car market. However, many industry observers are working hard to figure out the economic potential of the connected car, and how automakers will benefit financially from increased investments in technology and services over the long term. One area that will eventually contribute meaningful revenue to automakers and their chosen ecosystem of content and service providers will be the evolving concept of the “intelligent car.”

Intelligent car is about a vehicle—and the connected car platform it is connected to—leveraging multiple data streams with driver preferences, habits, and physical locations to dynamically and proactively serve up real-time, highly relevant communications and promotional offers from local businesses and service providers. The technology is coming together fast to make this a reality—integrated GPS is available in most new cars, and local points of interest and traffic data can be sourced from various cloud-based applications and service providers. What’s missing is the data management and analytic capability, and most importantly, new user interfaces for presentation of multi-channel content to the driver in center stack head units, driver instrument clusters, and heads windshield up displays.

We believe that 2015 will see the beginning of this new wave of next generation apps and user interfaces which will demonstrate the value of intelligent car to the automotive industry. An important aspect of powering this next wave of technology and user value that cannot be overlooked will be consumers’ willingness to share their vehicle and personal information as they become increasingly aware of what’s going on behind the scenes from a data perspective. We believe this will not be an issue for a portion of consumers that are already sharing data in other aspects of their lives as long as there is a clear benefit for what they get in return (i.e., a coupon to a local Starbucks on their drive home from work as an incentive to stop in and make a purchase). However, an equal number of consumers will likely be very wary to sacrifice their privacy until they more fully understand the implications and get first hand exposure to the benefits. To overcome this, automakers and their ecosystem partners will need to tread carefully in the wake of recent high-profile privacy scandals to ensure they do what is right for the consumer and provide the necessary assurances and safeguards to build trust.



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# ASTON MARTIN RACING GIVES YOUNG RACERS A FLYING START WITH EVOLUTION ACADEMY



Aston Martin Racing, the official motorsport arm of Aston Martin has a rich history in the field of motorsports with many podium finishes and wins to its credit including victories at Petit Le Mans and 24 hours of Le Mans. For the first time, the company is launching a specific program to encourage young racing aspirants. The most successful driver to participate in the program, which is named the Evolution Academy, will be offered an Aston Martin Racing works driver contract for the 2016 season.



The Academy which was launched at the Autosport International Show held in the first week of January, will be used to help nurture young talent and as a source of Aston Martin Racing works drivers for the future. Drivers aged 17-25 who are competing in an Aston Martin racing car in the 2015 season can apply for entry to the academy by sending in their CV for review by an expert panel.

The panel will consist of key team officials including Team Principal John Gaw, who stated that Aston Martin Racing has been highly supportive of young drivers for several years. The team had seven young drivers at Spa 24 Hours in 2014 and had signed two young drivers for the works team in the past two years. However, he added that this will be the first time that the company will be offering a full program designed to identify and polish the skills of upcoming stars in the world of racing. The program will focus not only on developing their racing skills but will include training in all the skills needed to ensure a long and successful career as a racer.

A maximum of ten applicants who are thus shortlisted by the expert panel will each be assigned a professional mentor belonging to Aston Martin Racing's team of top GT drivers to take them through their paces with training sessions in Aston Martin Base Performance Simulator. They will also receive expert help in other areas including nutrition, fitness, marketing, PR and sponsorship support. They will be provided Evolution Academy-branded apparel including a race suit and team kit.

At the end of the 2015 season, the most successful driver at the Evolution Academy will win an Aston Martin Racing works driver contract for 2016.

The Aston Martin Racing team competes in all the great GT races including the Nürburgring 24 Hours, FIA World Endurance Championship, the 24 Hours of Le Mans. The works team gets plenty of opportunities for racing in events like the Blancpain GT Series and other major GT races. The team also has different models of GT racing cars to suit drivers of different skill levels ranging from the V8 Vantage GT4, an entry-level race car to the V8 Vantage GTE and the V12 Vantage GT3.

As John Gaw rightly said, the company has a proven track record of taking drivers from GT4 races to GT3 to the very top levels of GT racing, the GTE. The Evolution Academy offers young drivers the best opportunity ever to get a great start in a racing career.



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## CLOSURE OF SHOWROOMS SPURS SALE OF USED CARS IN QATAR



The recent closure of four leading showrooms selling major brands of new cars has spurred the sale of used cars in Qatar. The showrooms in Doha were temporarily closed by the Ministry of Economy and Commerce based on reports that they were repairing and repainting damaged used cars and passing them off as new cars to customers.

One unexpected result of the closure was an increase in the demand for used cars, especially at the beginning of the year, when usually new models of different cars are launched and the market sees an increase in the sales of new cars. Generally, the demand for used cars peaks only in the summer.

The rise in demand has been confirmed by a dealer for used cars who said that demand has risen in the first quarter. According to the marketing manager of a used-car portal based in Doha, there is more demand for sports cars and family cars. In view of the closure of the showrooms, many customers are now more cautious about buying new cars from showrooms. He said people prefer to buy pre-owned cars now as they undergo technical checks before the transaction is completed.

Even those who planned to buy new cars had plans to get them checked as they did not want to be taken for a ride. Some Qataris had plans to buy cars directly from manufacturers as they have lost their trust in dealers.

A prospective customer said that though minor dents and scratches can occur in the body of cars while they are being transported, passing off old cars as new is definitely not acceptable. Another consumer felt that it is the duty of the dealers to inform customers if there was even a minor scratch on the car. Failure to do this should be considered as fraud as customers would feel cheated later on if they find a flaw.

"Car dealers are damaging their reputation. They should deal with customers in a transparent way," said Ahmed Jolo, Chairman, Qatar Engineers Society.

## GERMAN BRAND BORGWARD PREPARES FOR A COMEBACK AT GENEVA MOTOR SHOW

Long before Japanese cars and cars from China became prevalent in the automotive industry, German engineering was a byword for quality in the industry. Brands like Porsche, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen and Audi have gained the trust of millions of users spread across the globe.



One German automotive brand that became lost as time passed was Borgward. Though it sounds like it belongs to the realm of Harry Potter and Goosebumps, the brand was highly popular back in the 1950s and was one of the largest car manufacturers in Germany. It was best known for the popular, curvaceous two door car named the Isabella.

The company was established by Carl F.W. Borgward in 1919, and Borgward pioneered technical innovations like automatic transmission and air suspension. However, in spite of high demand for its models, the brand went bankrupt in 1961 due to financial and quality issues. Now, after half a century, the company has announced plans for a comeback helmed by the founder's grandson, Christian Borgward with support from his business partner, Karlheinz L. Knoss.

According to Knoss, they began working on a plan to revive Borgward nearly ten years ago and are all set to reveal something new at the opening of the 2015 Geneva Motor Show on March 3. He failed to reveal exact details, but the press release mentions that their participation in the show will herald Borgward's return "to the international automotive industry." The company released a teaser video featuring a sports coupe in profile at the end. This suggests the company might debut a new car at the show.

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# INFINITI MIDDLE EAST MAKES MUSIC WITH CARS IN CHROMATIC



The sound of engines is the favourite music of many but Infiniti Middle East has now made it possible for you to take the sound of engines with you wherever you go. The company recently debuted the region's first audio soundtrack that is composed completely from the sounds of cars.

Named the 'Chromatic', the creative composition is available both as a soundtrack and as a video with animation, with both being distributed globally by the Universal Music Group. The sounds and shapes of cars from the entire Infiniti range were used to create "Chromatic".

The idea took root in April 2014, and Infiniti partnered with the agency TBWA-Raad over a long period of eight months to generate a library of the wide array of sounds created by the components of cars including seatbelt clicks, roars of exhausts, tire spins, brakes, gear shifts and internal alerts. The models used for compilation included the Q50 sedan, QX60, QX70 and the QX80.

According to Francesca Ciaudano, Deputy General Manager, Marketing and PR, Infiniti Middle East, this is the first time an automotive manufacturer in the region has attempted such a feat for general release as an artistic expression of the brand's values. Megadon Betamax, a renowned classically trained musician, composer and producer who is the founder of Voyeur Rhythm Records was roped in to make the piece enjoyable, contemporary, bold and shareable.

Commenting on his creation, Megadon said that the effort helped him to combine his two passions- music and cars. He added that it was a real creative challenge to come up with a unique piece of music for one of the world's premium automotive brands. His goal was to come up with a sound that would showcase the power and performance of the Infiniti engines, impart energy and get listeners' feet tapping while building up to a crescendo. He met and exceeded

his goal as many listeners cannot believe that the track is made only of car sounds. The complex visuals accompanying the track were developed by the expert animator and videographer Misha Shyukin. She deftly blended the designs of Infiniti cars with arabesque designs seen in Middle Eastern art to come up with complex visuals that fascinate the viewer with their patterns, symmetry and shapes. She created over 150 intricate designs solely from the shapes and curves of the cars used for the sounds.

Francesca Ciaudano concluded that the launch of "Chromatic" is a perfect example of Infiniti's quest to always challenge the norm and try to do things differently, by effectively combining two entirely different elements- music and the auto industry – to create something that is truly a work of art – both in audio and visual forms.

Infiniti is distributing "Chromatic" globally in partnership with Universal Music Group on popular music platforms like Deezer, Anghami, iTunes and Spotify. In addition to sharing "Chromatic" through Facebook and Youtube, Infiniti has also added it to SoundCloud for those who would like to download it and hear the track using their mp3 player, Smartphone or on their car stereo.

# PORSCHE REVAMPS 919 TO GET BETTER RESULTS IN 2015 SEASON



After a long break, Porsche made a grand return to the world of global endurance racing in the 2014 season with a 919 hybrid. The team did end up winning one race, the Sao Paulo race in Brazil. However, it ended third when it came to the factory manufacturers, with Toyota and Audi faring far better,

For the 2015 season which will begin in April, the company has made a few major modifications to its racer. The car will still be called the 919, but the photos released to the media indicate that the front end has been completely redesigned. The car is currently undergoing extensive testing at Abu Dhabi's Yas Marina circuit.

Calling the new version a "comprehensive evolution" in a press release, the company divulged very little about the new racer. The front end has a simple horizontal intake running across the entire width and the nose extends outwards from the windshield. The side has a more intricate design as compared to the previous design with a number of fins behind the driver's compartment.

The 2015 919 model like the 2014 version will be fitted with a 2.0-liter turbocharged V4 engine with an electric motor providing power to the front wheels. The car also comes with two energy recovery systems.

The 2015 season will be more challenging for Porsche with one more competitor from factory brands. In addition to cars from Audi and Toyota, the Nissan GT-R LM Nismo is expected to be a strong performer with an engine that may be fitted in front of the driver.

After the tests at Yas Marina, the car will undergo several endurance and performance tests before the first race in the WEC season that will be held in Silverstone on April 12.

# FORD TEAMS UP WITH MULTIMATIC MOTORSPORTS TO BUILD NEW GT



We do not normally think of Ford when it comes to supercars. At the Detroit Show, however, Ford launched a 600-hp car that definitely impressed visitors with its sleek lines, lightweight body made of carbon fiber and aluminum and a reported price tag of more than \$200,000 when it goes into production next year. According to reports, only a few hundred GTs will be made every year. The GT is one of 12 models that the company will be manufacturing under the label of a new division named the Ford Performance division. Other models include the Mustang GT 350R, Focus RS, and the F-150 Raptor, all of which have debuted in January.

Now, the company has revealed that it will be partnering with Multimatic Motorsports based in Markham, Canada for building the GT. Ford has a longstanding partnership with Multimatic for its racing programs and confirmed plans for production of the GT in Ontario at the Toronto Motor Show. Multimatic has been Ford's partner on and off from 1992 and was part of the team that engineered the 2000 victory

at LeMans in LMP675 class. The most recent partnership between the two companies was for the Mustang Boss 302R.

Ford executives say that the GT was designed to mark the 50th anniversary of the 1966 LeMans victory. The choice of Multimatic as the partner for the GT has led to speculation that Ford will use the GT to join the ranks of automotive companies participating in the 24 Hours of LeMans race in 2016, though this has not been confirmed by the company.

Joe Hinrichs, Ford's president of the Americas, said Ford has been working with Multimatic for the past 30 years and will definitely gain from the company's expertise in working with carbon fiber. Multimatic has 12 production plants spread across five countries: the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Mexico, and China.

According to Ford's executive chairman, Bill Ford, the GT will be assembled in a "purpose-built" facility rather than a conventional factory.

# JAGUAR LAND ROVER CONTINUES TO BOND WITH BOND IN SPECTRE

James Bond movies offer fans a heady combination of beautiful cars, amazing gadgets and exciting action sequences. All the cars that have been featured in Bond movies have proved to be runaway hits.

Jaguar and Land Rover vehicles have been involved in many Bond films. The most recent instance was the 2012 movie, *Skyfall* in which the female field agent Eve Moneypenny drove the Defender 110 Double Cab Pick Up in the opening sequence.

Now, the company has announced it will continue its association with the Bond series for the forthcoming Bond movie, *Spectre*, which is the 24th Bond movie. The vehicles which will play a starring role in the movie include the Defender Big Foot, the Jaguar C-X75 and Range Rover Sport SVR. The vehicles for "Spectre" were provided by Jaguar Land Rover Special Operations and were heavily modified.

The C-X75 vehicles which have been used in *Spectre* were built in association with Williams Advanced Engineering facility in Oxfordshire, England. The Jaguar C-X75 will be used along with the Aston Martin DB10 for a spectacular car chase sequence filmed in Rome. Sequences that used the heavily modified Range Rover Sport SVR and the Land Rover Defender have already been filmed in Austria. For the purpose of filming, Jaguar Land Rover Special Operations fitted the Range Rover Sport SVR, which is the most powerful and fastest Land Rover ever with giant 37-inch diameter off-road tires to handle the extreme terrain. The vehicles were also fitted with customized suspension systems and enhanced body protection.

Managing Director of Jaguar Land Rover Special Operations, John Edwards, said: "This is an exciting partnership for Jaguar Land Rover and an opportunity to demonstrate the fantastic capabilities of the Special Operations team."



## TOYOTA RETAINS TOP POSITION BY A WHISKER IN SPITE OF LOOMING THREAT FROM VW

The race to become the largest car manufacturer in the world is a hotly contested one. There was a time when Detroit in the United States was the hub of car production in the world. For almost 80 years, General Motors which is the largest car manufacturer in the United States and is based in Detroit was the market leader till the increasing popularity of Japanese models made Toyota the top manufacturer in 2008.

In all the years since, except for 2011, when GM regained the number one position, Toyota has been the largest car manufacturer in the world. In 2013, Toyota had sold 9.98 million units to beat VW and General Motors to the top spot.

In 2014 too, Toyota Motor Corporation managed to retain its crown of being the largest car manufacturer in the world in spite of really tough competition from the German VW Group. For the first time in history, the sales of Toyota vehicles crossed 10 million units. Inclusive of deliveries from the Daihatsu and Hino truck making divisions, the Japanese carmaker sold 10.2 million vehicles, an increase of 3 per cent, while VW was nipping at its heels with sales of 10.1 million

vehicles. Volkswagen also crossed the 10 million mark for the first time in 2014. Both VW and Toyota had expected sales to be more than 10 million units in 2014. General Motors came in third with sales of 9.92 million vehicles, an increase in global volume by 2 per cent.

With VW CEO Martin Winterkorn at the helm, the auto manufacturer has been pursuing an aggressive growth strategy. VW planned to become the top car manufacturer in the world by 2018 with sales of 10 million units in that year, but as the 2014 sales figures reveal, the German group could reach its goal well ahead of schedule.

In view of decline in demand in Japan and the emerging markets, Toyota has forecast a decline in sales by 1 percent to 10.15 million in the 2015 financial year. Sales outside Japan are expected to increase by 2 percent to 8.06 million vehicles, backed by strong demand from the US market. However, domestic sales are expected to decline by 9 percent to 2.1 million units. The automotive sector in Japan has been hit badly by the government's policy of increasing the national consumption tax, which came into effect in 2014, making consumers think twice about buying expensive items like cars. Another factor that will hit Toyota's sales is the drastic drop in oil prices, decreasing the demand for its hybrid and other fuel-efficient models like the Prius. As an outcome of these factors, the demand for Toyota, Lexus, Daihatsu and Hino brands is expected to fall.

This will be the first year Toyota is expecting negative growth after 2011 when an earthquake and a tsunami affected the production and sales of Japanese car manufacturers in a double whammy. In that year, GM had raced to the top spot. Another year of decline in Toyota sales could well pave the way for VW to take the lead.

# LEXUS RC F JOINS DUBAI POLICE FORCE



The Dubai Police Department is well known for its fleet of exotic supercars like Bugatti Veyrons, Bentleys and Lamborghinis. The latest car to join the fleet is not yet another supercar, but the V8-powered Lexus RC F.

Purchased along with the renowned Toyota Landcruiser, the RC F has the green and white livery of Dubai Police. Like other luxury cars used by the city's police force, the RCF is not meant for high speed car chases like those seen in action movies or for carting criminals to prison.

The Lexus RC F will join the ranks of supercars which will provide photo opportunities to tourists visiting the wide range of attractions in the city like the Burj Khalifa, the tallest tower in the world. The cars may be taken abroad for events to promote the city to international expos and potential tourists as part of public relations and marketing initiatives. The cars will also be used to reach out to the residents of the city and to contribute to Dubai's image as a city where the unusual and the exotic are the norm.

Some might question why a city where the biggest cause of accidents is speeding needs to have one more luxury car in its fleet of police cars. But if seeing such a car on the road to work makes you happy to be a part of life in Dubai, the car would serve its purpose.

## AL-FUTTAIM MOTORS GETS OVER 1000 ENTRIES FOR TOYOTA DREAM CAR ART CONTEST



The Toyota Dream Car contest that the company conducted worldwide last year proved to be a huge hit. The competition received entries from more than 660,000 children and teenagers aged 4-15 drawn from 78 countries. From these entries, about 600 drawings made it to the final shortlist.

As an outcome of the popularity of the 2013 contest, Al-Futtaim Motors, which is the exclusive distributor of Toyota in the UAE, organized the submission of entries from the UAE for this year's Toyota Dream Car contest. More than 1,000 children participated from the UAE. The contest was held in partnership with the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) and is meant to spur the spirit of creativity in youth and encourage them to help make the world a better place.

Entries were accepted from all children aged 5-15. In the UAE, the contest began on December 1st, 2014, and ended on January 31st, 2015, when the final leg of the competition was held at the Toyota Abu Dhabi Airport Road showroom. The last date for submissions was February 21st, 2015.

Speaking about the contest, Jon Williams, Managing Director, Al-Futtaim Motors said that there has been a high level of participation from schools in Dubai. The first set of drawings that were received revealed that children across the UAE have become increasingly aware of issues related to their daily lives like traffic congestion, noise pollution, environmental issues and technological developments like self-driving vehicles.

The Toyota Abu Dhabi Airport Road showroom had a special area dedicated to the contest where participants got all they needed to give full rein to their creativity including art supplies and qualified art tutors to guide them in expressing their ideas.

All entries received from the UAE for the Toyota Dream Car Art Contest will be judged by a local jury who will shortlist the thirty best entries. These young artists will have a chance to participate in a local art exhibition with the top nine qualifying for grand prize and entry into the global contest.

Those who qualify for the competition at the global level will be invited to fly with their parents or guardians to Japan to participate in an awards ceremony that is schedule to be held in August this year. During the award ceremony, four awards will be announced for each category - Finalist, Best Finalist, Bronze, Silver, Gold and President Akio Toyoda Special Award.

# 2015 JUKE MAKES MIDDLE EAST DEBUT IN DUBAI

The Nissan Juke, the company's signature urban crossover proved to be popular across the world ever since it was launched in 2010. With crossovers becoming increasingly popular, the company has been revamping the Juke on a regular basis to help it stay ahead of its competitors in the segment. The 2015 Juke made its Middle East debut at a novel interactive party event held at the Dubai Autodrome on February 12. The Juke is now available at Nissan dealers across the Middle East.

In keeping with the urban theme, the launch event featured Electric Days and a club like atmosphere with an eclectic mix of local DJs and urban graffiti artists putting on a performance for those who attended the event. The venue featured designated areas for each of the Juke's main areas of innovation- technology, design and performance and partygoers were drawn to participate in the performance through an interactive onground experience.

The 2015 Juke retains many of its characteristic features including its striking front design. Customers can choose from models having either a direct injection 1.6-liter 4-cylinder engine having a turbocharger or a 1.6-liter naturally-aspirated engine. The Juke has three engine trims – S, SL and SL Turbo. Maximum engine power for S & SL Grade is 86(117) kW(ps) @ 6000rpm with 158Nm of torque. The SL Turbo grade has maximum engine power of 140(190) kW(ps) @ 5600rpm with 240Nm of torque.

The CUV boasts the most up-to-date version of the NissanConnect connectivity technology and a new audio system. Motorists can choose from three driving modes depending on their preferences - sport, eco and normal.

All the changes that have been made make the 2015 Juke a much more appealing option for customers. These include updates to the grille and to the upper front headlights which now have LED daytime runners. The under-bumper trim has been made tougher and the door mirrors have been redesigned to incorporate LED repeaters and a new rear view camera. The tail-lights too have been revamped with LED 'light guide technology' and have a more aggressive rear bumper to match them.

The Juke is now more spacious and flexible in the cargo area with the facility to fold down the rear seats. You can also pack in more luggage with the two-stage floor in the luggage hold. Larger objects can be accommodated by raising the seats in the second row and lowering the cargo floor while for flatter objects, the cargo floor can be raised and the seats can be folded down. Standard features include power windows, rear-view camera, 60/40 folding rear seats, electric mirrors, cloth upholstery, and four-speaker CD/MP3 stereo with AUX port. Optional extras include NissanConnect, automatic a/c, leather upholstery, intelligent keyless entry with starter button, fog lamps, automatic a/c and a sunroof.

There is no compromise when it comes to safety with features like stability control, front airbags, optional side-curtain airbags and ABS disc brakes with EBD.

Commenting on the new Juke, Nissan's managing director Middle East, Samir Cherfan, said that the Juke is a vehicle which has proved to be a success since its inception. With the Juke's ability to deliver on all fronts with its combination of a fast and sporty but comfortable ride, he expects the vehicle to sell well in the Middle East market. Though changes have been made, it still retains all the characteristics that made it a success in the first place. It is now a lot more spacious but offers a ride that is as thrilling as that in a sports car.





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# NISSAN REVEALS LE MANS CHALLENGER IN SUPER BOWL COMMERCIAL



In the 2015 season, Nissan will join the ranks of automotive companies like Porsche, Toyota and Audi which play an active role in motorsports. In a marketing masterstroke, Nissan started the season on the right note by choosing to reveal its Le Mans challenger in a Super Bowl commercial. The model, the Nissan GT-R LM NISMO looks like it is a worthy challenger to cars from the best sports car manufacturers in the world.

In keeping with the technical regulations, the Nissan GT-R LM NISMO is a front wheel drive car fitted with a V6 3.0-liter twin turbo gasoline engine mounted in the front and has a kinetic energy recovery system.

Speaking about the car, Roel de Vries, global head of Marketing and Brand Strategy at Nissan said that with the Super Bowl being one of the greatest sporting events in the United States, it was the ideal platform to showcase Nissan's entry for another great sporting event. He said the GT-R would be the company's flagship road car and carries on the company's glorious heritage in sports with NISMO, the motorsport and performance arm of Nissan having a tradition of excellence for the past 30 years. Racing in Le Mans generally drives innovation. Though Nissan would be a newcomer at Le Mans, he expressed his hope that there would be greater innovation in the company's range of vehicles for the road as an outcome of success on the track at Le Mans.

The Nissan GT-R LM NISMO will be Nissan's entry for the FIA World Endurance Championship in the LM P1 class, which is the highest category in sports car racing. The Championship begins with the race at Silverstone in UK on April 12, and will include races in Spa, Belgium, the Le Mans 24 Hours and the Nürburgring race in Germany in addition to other races in China, Japan, the US and the Middle East.

The FIA World Endurance Championship gives automotive companies the chance to test their latest technological innovations under the toughest conditions and these developments on the race track often translate into new developments for road cars. Both racing car engineers and road car engineers face the same challenges with the focus shifting to energy efficiency on track as well as off it. With technical guidelines not being so stringent as for F1, the LM P1 engineers have more room for innovation.

Shoichi Miyatani, president of NISMO said that the team's main criterion was sustainability and the technical regulations for Le Mans gave the team the chance to come up with new developments in this aspect. So far, NISMO's best at Le Mans has been the third position and the team is faced with the challenge of chasing a victory there.

Faced with very strong contenders like Porsche, this is definitely not an easy challenge.

Nissan has also announced that it will be having multi-year partnership agreements with three companies for its LM P1 program. These include Swiss watchmaker TAG Heuer as the Official Watch Partner and Official Timekeeping Partner, Motul as the Official Lubricants Partner, and Michelin as the official tire partner. Michelin has developed customized tires for the GT-R LM NISMO and been extensively involved in the car's testing program.

# VW BREAKS GROUND IN KUWAIT FOR LARGEST MODULAR CONCEPT SHOWROOM IN THE WORLD



Behbehani Motors Company is the exclusive distributor for Volkswagen cars in Kuwait. The company has great plans for the Volkswagen brand in the country and in line with these plans recently broke ground for the construction of what it says will be the world's biggest Volkswagen Modular Concept showroom for passenger cars. Behbehani Motors Company developed the plans for the showroom in collaboration with Volkswagen. The construction of the showroom, which will consist of six levels including levels above and below the ground and will cover 25,000 square meters is expected to cost USD \$20 million. It will be opened to the public in early 2017.

The groundbreaking ceremony for this world first was attended by Thomas Milz, Managing Director, Volkswagen Middle East and key executives from Behbehani Motors Company like the owner, Ali Murad Behbehani and Hussein Murad Behbehani.

Speaking at the ceremony, Thomas Milz said that the Middle East is one of the key markets for Volkswagen and the expansion in the range of models justifies investing in extension of the retail network to deliver outstanding levels of service throughout the region. With Behbehani Motors Company joining hands with Volkswagen in order to open the world's largest Volkswagen showroom in Kuwait, the company is on track to become a world leader in customer satisfaction and innovation by 2018.

The showroom has been designed in line with the Volkswagen Modular Concept, and will have an open and inviting atmosphere for prospective car buyers with its minimalist décor, crisp white walls, and natural wood finishes with clean lines.

Once the showroom is up and running, it will be staffed by a professional team of technical experts, sales teams and service advisors, to make the state-of-the-art facility the benchmark for the automotive industry's best practice.

The owner of Behbehani Motors Company, Ali Behbehani said that the showroom will play a significant role in the company's strategy to expand the reach of Volkswagen in Kuwait and in the entire region. Kuwait is experiencing considerable growth and the development of the landmark showroom will help the company to cater to the country's flourishing automotive industry, and to help meet the increasing demand for world-class German vehicles.

Volkswagen already has a major presence in Kuwait. After almost six decades of longstanding partnership with Behbehani Motors Company, it has an extensive retail network spread across the region. With the opening of the new showroom, the largest such showroom in the world, Volkswagen is clearly highlighting the strength of its partnership with Behbehani Motors Company and its plans for continued growth in Kuwait.

2014 has been a milestone year for Volkswagen Middle East. The brand has demonstrated major growth in the retail segment across the region with the announcement of opening of new showrooms, top-notch service centers, showroom renovations and additions to the existing retail network. 2015 too has started on the right note for this company that is poised to become one of the leading automotive brands in the Middle East.

# MUSTANG MOST POPULAR CAR FOR DIGITAL GENERATION

The Mustang may be more than 50 years old, but it is just as popular among the natives of the digital era as it was a half century ago. A recent study conducted by SplashData, a company that specializes in password management, revealed that when it comes to passwords, it is the Mustang all the way, attesting to the evergreen popularity of the pony car.



The word "Mustang" ranked 16th when it came to commonly used internet passwords, leaving superheroes like "superman" in 21st place and "batman" in 24th place far behind. It was also the only car name that made it to the list of the 25 most commonly used internet passwords.

Commenting on the results of the study, Keith Moss, Ford Director of Cyber Security said that it was highly flattering to have people use "Mustang" as their password. He however cautioned browsers that it is advisable to strengthen the password with a mix of upper and lower case letters and to add symbols, acronyms and letters to make their password unique.

These modifications could range from adding the year you first saw a Mustang or bought one to adding your dream destination.

And who says you can use only one password with the word "Mustang"? Since it is not generally recommended to use a common password for all websites, the number of passwords you can use with the word "Mustang" is limited only by your imagination and your ability to remember them. So, here is one more thing for all pony lovers to be proud of – their favorite brand is as popular on the net as it is on the street.

# NEW MULSANNES SPEED MAKES MIDDLE EAST DEBUT AT QATAR MOTOR SHOW

Bentley Motors chose to make the Middle East debut of the new Mulsanne Speed on the opening day of the 2015 Qatar Motor Show. Ever since the new model was launched globally in November, Bentley fans in the Middle East have been waiting eagerly to see the model in the region.



Board Member for Sales and Marketing at Bentley Motors Ltd., Kevin Rose, told the audience at the launch that the new Mulsanne Speed provides motorists with the fastest ultra-luxury driving experience in the world. The car is a real performer on the road with an output of 537 PS (530 bhp/395 kW) and 1,100 Nm (811 lb.ft) of torque. Steering on demand and selectable sports suspension make the ride more exhilarating and add substance to the stylish appearance of the car.

Other models Bentley showcased at the 2015 Qatar Motor Show included the new Continental GT Speed, which is the fastest production Bentley ever and the new Flying Spur V8, both of which were added to the Bentley range in 2014. The new Continental GT Speed is a grand tourer which effortlessly blends powerful performance with the qualities of refinement, luxury and individuality that the Bentley brand is known for.

The Flying Spur V8 which is fitted with the famous Bentley 4.0-litre twin turbo V8 engine has sleek and elegant lines. The exquisite craftsmanship and advanced technological features available in the sedan will help Bentley widen its customer base by attracting new customers with its combination of luxury and performance.

Neil Wilford, Regional Manager, Middle East, India and Africa, Bentley Motors, said that 2014 was a crucial year for Bentley Motors in the Middle East as it marked the arrival of the Flying Speed V8 and the new Continental GT Speed.

The company is starting 2015 on a positive note by holding the regional launch of the new Mulsanne Speed at the Qatar Automobile Show. With the addition of the new Mulsanne Speed, Bentley will have an even stronger range of models for its customers.

## BUGATTI TO SHOWCASE LAST VEYRON AT GENEVA MOTOR SHOW



Like all superluxury cars, Bugatti had planned a limited production run of 300 coupes and 150 open-top Grand Sports for the Veyron. The 300 Veyron coupes were all sold years ago and 142 Grand Sports have already been sold. The company will sell just eight more Grand Sports.

Recently, the Chairman and CEO of Bugatti, Wolfgang Dürheimer, who also helms the Bentley brand, revealed in an interview that the last Veyron, the 450th car, will be the centerpiece of the Bugatti exhibit at the 2015 Geneva Motor Show.

Dürheimer went on to confirm that Bugatti will not manufacture any more Veyrons, marking the end of an eventful chapter in the company's long history.

He did not give any details about the last car, but it will definitely be a Grand Sport Vitesse model fitted with a powerful engine having an output of 1,183 horsepower. In view of the limited number of Veyrons and the high demand for a milestone car, the car has probably been already sold.

Once the production run of the Veyron ends, the Bugatti factory in Molsheim, France will be modified and tooled up to begin production of its successor. Not much is known about the forthcoming model, which will probably reach the market in 2016. There have been hints that it will be a more powerful, faster model that may have hybrid technology.

All Dürheimer would say is that Bugatti cars, like art masterpieces, take time to develop. However, he did confirm that the Veyron's successor will definitely be a better performer than the Veyron in every aspect, making Bugatti fans worldwide eager to meet the new model from the marque.

# MCLAREN SUPER SERIES BREAKS PRODUCTION RECORDS



McLaren Automotive crossed a production record by building the 5,000th model derived from the pathbreaking carbon fiber MonoCell chassis. The Monocell Chassis is only in its fourth year of production. It has been used for all models in the McLaren Super Series including the 12C which debuted in 2011 and was followed by the 12C Spider, the 650S and the 625C which was made specifically for the Asian market. This makes the Super Series the range with the highest volume of carbon fiber supercars and is another significant milestone for McLaren after selling more than 1,400 Super Series models in 2014.

The 5,000th car was a Volcano Yellow 650S Spider that was customized for an Australian customer. It came off the production line in the McLaren Production Centre on Monday, 2 February. To mark the special occasion, it was joined at the end of the production line by the first production 12C, which now belongs to the McLaren Heritage Collection.

The first 12 C was produced in 2011 by a handpicked team of 30 employees in a specially demarcated plant-within-a-plant in the McLaren Technology Centre. Deliveries were made worldwide from June 2011 before production was moved to the specially equipped McLaren Production Centre in November. All McLaren road cars were henceforth manufactured at the McLaren Production Centre. The specially designed Centre now houses more than 500 employees involved in manufacturing and logistics and was designed by Foster + Partners to combine outstanding quality with optimal production methods. The assembly line was upgraded in March 2014 in order to keep up with the increasing demand for the new McLaren 650S.

Mike Flewitt, Chief Executive Officer at McLaren Automotive said that McLaren Automotive has made considerable progress within a short period of four years and the completion of 5,000 cars marks a spectacular milestone. Right from the 12 C which was a pathbreaking supercar, all the company's models, especially the new 650S have been truly top notch luxury cars, winning awards and delivering high levels of customer satisfaction. With record numbers every year, the company is well on its way to success. The next production milestone will be the launch of the forthcoming 675 LT in the Super Series, and the new Sports Series later in 2015.

The McLaren Super Series is the keystone of the McLaren marquee and is positioned higher than the forthcoming Sports Series. The McLaren 675LT which is scheduled to make its global debut at the 2015 International Geneva Motor Show in March will soon be added to the McLaren Super Series.

With regard to sales of McLaren in the Middle East, of the 5,000 cars that have been produced so far, almost 450 have been sold or delivered to the MENA region, with demand mainly coming from the UAE and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In view of the fact that as a business strategy, McLaren produces smaller number of cars to maintain exclusivity, the MENA region is a key market for the company. In fact, exclusivity, power packed performance and innovative technologies are the main attractions of owning a McLaren car and there are many pending orders for the 650S in the Middle East.

# SKODA PRODUCTION CROSSES MILESTONE OF 17 MILLION VEHICLES

Skoda is a company with a glorious heritage. It is one of the oldest automotive companies in the world with a history going back as far as 1905. That was the year when the founders Klement and Laurin built their first model, a Voiturette A. A lot has happened in the years after that, with the brand growing at breakneck speed after joining forces with Volkswagen in 1991. Now, the company has announced that it has just produced its 17 millionth vehicle. The car, a Skoda Rapid Spaceback in 'Corrida Red' was produced at the main Skoda plant near its headquarters in Mladá Boleslav and will be delivered to a customer in Germany.

The brand has been going from strength to strength in recent years, completing its transformation from a European brand that was sold only in the region to an international brand with a global presence having more than 40 model variants and seven models. For the first time in its history of 120 years, in 2014, Skoda produced and sold more than 1 million cars in a single year with sales crossing 1.4 million units. In the next few years, Skoda plans to increase the annual sales to a minimum of 1.5 million vehicles.

According to Skoda CEO, Prof. Dr. h.c. Winfried Vahland, the production of 17 million vehicles in the period from 1905 is a testament to the enduring popularity of the Skoda brand. Of the 17 million cars, more than 12 million were manufactured after the merger with Volkswagen in 1991. With the achievement of this milestone, Skoda joins the ranks of international volume manufacturers.

Skoda is focusing on growth not only in Europe but also in the main international markets, like the Chinese market. With regard to individual countries, Skoda had the highest sales in China, which accounted for as much as 27 per cent share of Skoda's total sales. In order to promote further international sales and to move closer to customers, Skoda has developed production facilities in different parts of the world, with Skoda vehicles now being manufactured at 13 plants spread across Ukraine, India, China, Russia, Slovakia, Kazakhstan and the Czech Republic. Skoda has plans to further expand production capacities.

He added that the company will not rest on its laurels, but will continue to pick up the pace and drive sales with a comprehensive model campaign. From 2011, the brand has been expanding into important segments like the addition of the new Skoda Fabia in the small car class. The company will be shortly launching the Skoda Superb.





The world's fastest street-legal production car is the Bugatti Veyron Super Sport, at 267 mph (431 km/h).

## LAMBORGHINI SET TO MAKE A SPLASH AT BLANCPAIN WITH NEW HURACAN GT3 RACER



Lamborghini has long been associated with the world of motorsports though it has not been as successful as other luxury brands like Alfa Romeo and Ferrari. The company is hoping to change that perception with the introduction of the new Huracan GT3 racer at the Blancpain Endurance Series which will be held in five venues across Europe in the 2015 season. The company's growing success in motorsports has attracted support from prestigious companies like the Indonesian oil and energy petroleum company PERTAMINA, which will be the official technical partner of Lamborghini Squadra Corse from the 2015 season. The world premiere of the Huracan GT3 was held at the company's headquarters in Sant'Agata Bolognese.

The earlier versions of Lamborghini racers were primarily developed by external companies like Reiter Engineering which modified the Gallardo GT3 for the racetrack. This time round, though, most of the modification has been done in-house, with a little assistance from the Italian chassis manufacturer Dallara for refining the aerodynamics. The aerodynamics has been significantly altered to allow the maximum possible airflow penetration and the best traction and adherence to any surface. The adjustable front diffuser, the louvres and the rear adjustable wing all help to maximize the efficiency of the engine.

Safety has been a prime consideration in the design of the racer with the provision of an OMP fire extinguishing system, a carbon frame 8862 specification seat and a special roof hatch that will make it possible for medical staff to gain access to the driver through the roof. The adjustable pedals, FT3 fuel tank and OMP seat belts will all contribute to the safety factor. The braking system comes with 12 different settings that can be controlled using the steering wheel, which can be used to adjust the traction also. The car has a pneumatic lifting system to facilitate tire changes.

The GT3 retains the 5.2-liter V10 engine of the production car. The engine has been paired with a six-speed sequential gearbox. However, it is purely rear-wheel drive. The car is lighter due to the use of composite materials in its fabrication. The Huracan GT3 weighs in at 2,732 pounds, 80 pounds lighter than the Super Trofeo racer and lighter than the regular Huracan which weighs 3,135 pounds. However, the final weight will be set by the FIA for the competition.

The Huracan GT3 has been tested extensively on the track in development tests, under the careful supervision of the head of motorsport Giorgio Sanna. Sanna commented that as the first GT3 car from Lamborghini, the Huracan GT3 will give young racers the chance to drive a Lamborghini in competitions like the tough 2015 Blancpain Endurance Series. The 2015 season will be crucial for the team as they gain expertise in the new category, GT3, which is quite demanding. The Huracán LP 620-2 Super Trofeo will also be debuting in the Lamborghini Blancpain Super Trofeo series in Asia, Europe, and USA.

With two new models for racing and a host of young drivers selected from Lamborghini's Young Drivers Program, Lamborghini is set to change its fortunes in the world of motorsports.



# TRAVEL FASTER THE SHIFT WAY



In the past few years, a number of attempts have been made to stem the increasing level of congestion in city limits. Interesting projects like Uber have been launched, and now a service named Shift offers an array of options.

Unlike Uber, Shift is more of a private transport system that promises a chauffeur-driven vehicle with just five minutes notice. Its USP is the range of vehicles it offers from cool Teslas to electric bikes to tiny Smart cars. Members can summon a Shift vehicle using their iPhone or Android app. When summoned, the Shift app uses an algorithm to calculate which vehicle to send depending on the destination and related factors, like parking space and the nature of the job to be done. This ensures that one arrives at his/her destination quickly and comfortably. Members can unlock the vehicle by swiping the membership card on the dashboard reader.

The service covers a number of eventualities, including a backup in case the company vehicle breaks down on the way. If you have to walk to reach where the car/bike is parked, the app gives walking directions to that as well. Users will have the choice of driving the vehicle themselves or opting for a chauffeur.

Shift is offering monthly membership packages to keep things economical and to save members the hassle of figuring out the cheapest way to get from point A to B. According to Zach Ware, the CEO of Shift, charges begin from \$25 a month (for bike-only access) and can go up to \$500 for frequent travelers. The company began with a pilot project in downtown Las Vegas, US. It plans to roll out "dynamically routed" commuter shuttles as well.

## MERCEDES EMERGENCY AIRBAG SET TO TAKE SAFETY TO THE NEXT LEVEL



In the 1980s, the movie Back to the Future had predicted that the world would have flying cars by 2015. No such luck, and the cars today are still very much on the road. However, there is no dearth of innovations in car technology, particularly in terms of state-of-the-art features which have taken safe driving to another level.

For several years, Mercedes has been working on one such feature: Braking Bag is an airbag that helps stop the vehicle when its pre-crash sensors foresee an inevitable collision. While airbags have been around for years to cushion the impact of an accident, this path breaking innovation is a pre-emptive feature that takes safety consciousness from the passive to the active level.

Building on the existing system, the Braking Bag is fitted between the front axle carrier and the underbody paneling. When the onboard system anticipates a crash, it immediately activates the emergency braking system. The airbag springs into action just before the crash, its friction coating protecting the car against the road surface.

When it senses an impending impact, the car slows down briefly and the airbags raise the level of the car by about eight centimeters, reducing the impact of collision on the other party. The seats too slide about three centimeters towards the occupant, tightening the seatbelts, and thus reducing the brunt of the collision on the occupants.

Although Mercedes' initial tests of the Braking Bag have been successful, it has not yet been incorporated in production models.

# MCLAREN SPECIAL EDITION 650S CELEBRATES HISTORIC LE MANS VICTORY



McLaren had built only 106 models of its iconic racer, the McLaren F1. The 1995 Le Mans endurance race, one of the toughest races in the world, witnessed a historic finish. Five McLaren F1 GTRs crossed the finish line to complete the race in 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 13th position – a magnificent achievement by any standards. In honor of this historic win, the company commissioned five special editions of the McLaren F1, badged the McLaren F1 LM – one for each of the cars that finished the race.

Now, 20 years after this splendid Le Mans victory, McLaren Special Operations (MSO) revealed plans to build a special edition 650S, in order to mark the milestone. Only 50 McLaren 650S Le Mans will be produced, with a design that will be inspired by the #59 McLaren F1 GTR which won the race. Deliveries of the special edition car will begin later this year.

The special edition 650S will be designed by MSO in collaboration with Peter Stevens, who designed the original McLaren F1. Commenting on the McLaren 650S Le Mans, Stevens said the McLaren F1 rewrote all the rules as the primary focus was on creating a fun driving experience, making the car a true race winner.

The 650S Le Mans stays true to the original by borrowing its iconic design features like the wing louvres and the roof-mounted air intake, while incorporating the latest groundbreaking technologies. It therefore aptly captures the spirit of the car that won one of the most challenging races in the world.

The McLaren 650S Le Mans will be available only as a coupe. The remarkable roof-mounted 'snorkel' air intake inspired by the F1 will convey air to the 3.8-litre twin turbo V8 engine, and will also add to the aural effects in the cabin. When it comes to the exterior, the front wings will have delicate louvres which will increase the downforce by reducing the pressure over the front wheels.



The 'Le Mans Edition' lightweight wheels which are of 19-inch size at the front and 20-inch size at the rear, similar to the motorsport rims the 1995 racers had, provide the ultimate finishing touch. The wheels are fitted with Pirelli P Zero™ Corsa tires that were developed by McLaren in association with Pirelli. The tires are mounted with McLaren Orange callipers in front of carbon ceramic brakes which are available as a standard feature.

The engine for the McLaren 650S Le Mans is the same as that for the typical production model, with an output of 650PS (641 bhp) and 678 Nm (500 lb ft) of torque. The car can go from zero to 62 mph in just three seconds and has a top speed of 207 mph.

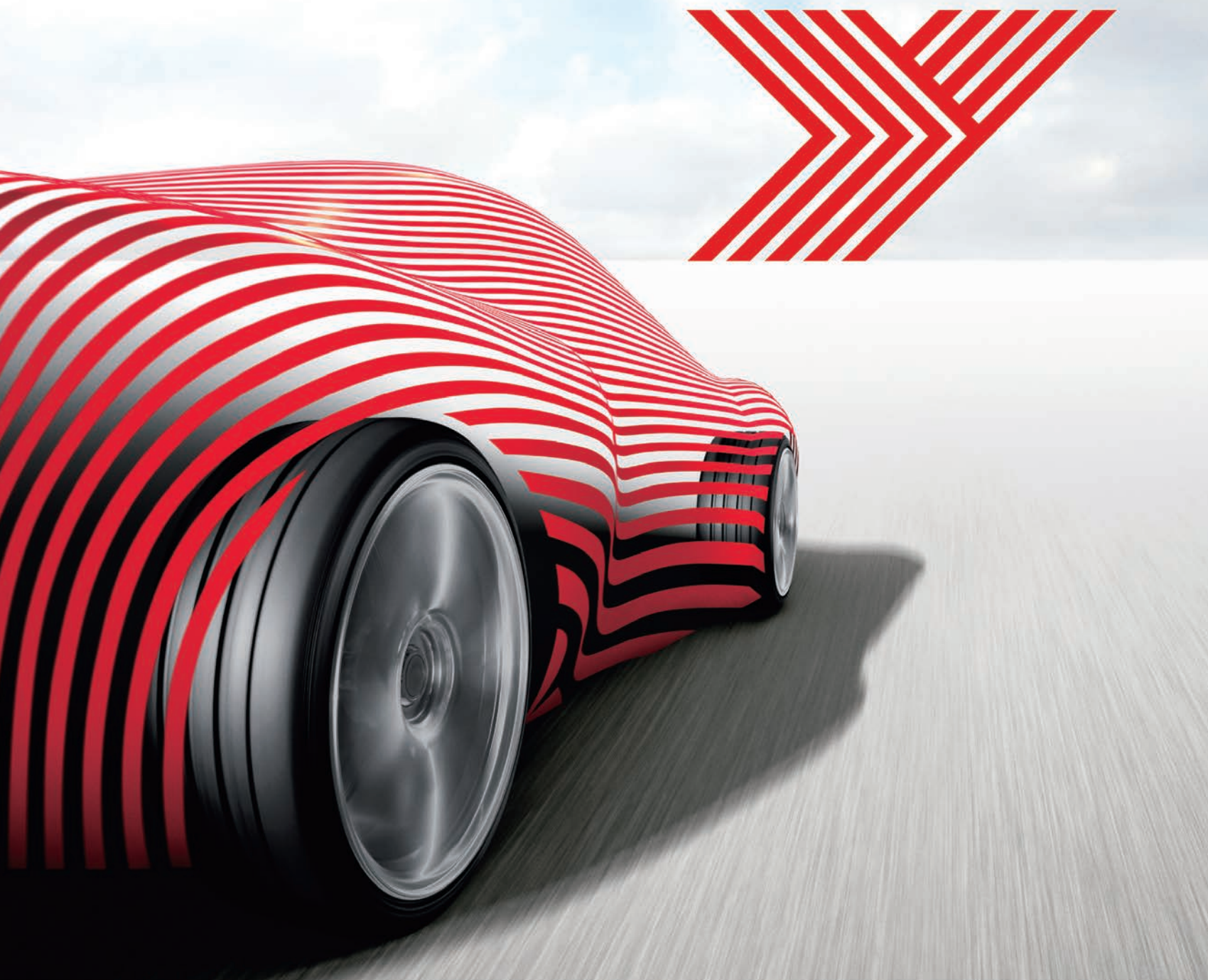
Carbon fiber detailing is used throughout the model, from the front splitter to the rear bumper. The MSO-developed extended side blades and the distinctive MSO rear diffuser give the car a distinctive look which is accentuated by the metallic Sarthe Grey exterior color, the same as that of the McLaren F1 GTR which won Le Mans. The Le Mans logo on the wheels in McLaren Orange, the trailing edge of the extended MSO door blades, an internal dedication plate on the door card all mark the car as a limited edition model.

The interior of the car is suitably luxurious and is upholstered in a combination of black leather and Alcantara®. The two sports seats have a black leather finish with a striking center stripe of contrasting McLaren Orange Alcantara®. Each seat has a headrest which is embossed with the Le Mans logo and floor mats to match.

The deliveries of the limited edition McLaren 650S Le Mans will begin in mid-2015 and the cars do not come cheap at £244,500 each. Nevertheless, this might be a small price to pay in view of the fact that they mark an important milestone for McLaren and belong to a production run of just 50 cars. As an added benefit, every buyer will get an invite for two to an exclusive 20th anniversary celebration of the famous Le Mans victory.

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## AW ROSTAMANI WINS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS FROM CEAT



AW Rostamani Trading Co LLC is the Exclusive Distributor of Ceat and Altura Radials in the UAE. The partnership between the two companies started with the introduction of Ceat radial tires for trucks and buses in the UAE aftermarket in 2011. Altura China tires were launched by AWR in UAE and the GCC Market in 2013. The company solidified its relationship with Ceat by taking on the distribution of Ceat tires for the passenger car segment in 2014.

AW Rostamani Trading Co LLC has been able to achieve excellent response from customers for these products. The company recently won the Gold Cup for the highest turnover in Radial Tires in 2014 in addition to "Super Achiever Award 2014" and "Altura China Highest Sales in Radials Award" at the Ceat Platinum meet held in Bangkok on 3rd February, 2015.

The Ceat Platinum Club is an exclusive performance reward program run by CEAT Limited in which the company recognizes and rewards their business partners across the globe for their efforts to promote and sell Ceat products. The winners are selected after a comprehensive evaluation process based on their success in meeting predefined targets for various parameters.

AW Rostamani Trading became a member of the Platinum Club for the fourth consecutive year. AWR Trading had previously won the Platinum performance awards for three years in a row - 2011, 2012 and 2013.

## MRF CREATES WORLD FIRST WITH CRICKET WORLD CUP LIMITED EDITION TIRE



MRF Limited (MRF) is the largest tire manufacturer in India and is the only Indian company that belongs to the elite club of the top 16 tire manufacturers in the world. With cricket being one of the most popular sports in India, the company had recently signed on as a global partner of the ICC Cricket World Cup (CWC) 2015. MRF has now unveiled a special World Cup edition tire named ZSPORT, a first in the world of cricket.

The tire was unveiled at a gala event which was held on 7th February in Mumbai, which was attended by cricketing great and the Global Ambassador for the ICC World Cup 2015, Sachin Tendulkar. The audience at the event was also lucky enough to get a sneak peek of the ICC Cricket World Cup Trophy which made its first public appearance at the event.

This is the first time, ever, that a tire has been designed to mark the Cricket World Cup. The Limited Edition tire comes with a ICC World Cup logo on the sidewall and will be a definite draw for cricket lovers across the country. Designed to deliver excellent performance, the tire comes in 205/55R15 size and is suitable for use on more than 25 Indian models belonging to the mid and premium categories.

Commenting on the tire, Arun Mammen, the Managing Director of MRF Limited said that MRF has a longstanding association with cricket and was honored to become a Global Partner of the ICC World Cup 2015. The launch of the limited edition ZSPORT tire highlights the company's commitment to the game and will increase MRF's brand recognition among cricket lovers across the world. As a global first, it is definitely a milestone for the company.

Koshy Varghese, Executive Vice President of Marketing at MRF Limited commented that the ZSPORT is a tire that was designed to provide excellent braking and handling in both dry and wet conditions. The new tire is expected to enhance brand recognition among the youth and add to the already strong presence MRF has in all segments. MRF tires are designed to provide a combination of high performance and reliability and the release of the ZSPORT tire will promote the company's relationship with key stakeholders and all customer segments.

At the function, cricketing maestro, Sachin Tendulkar, said that MRF has been involved to a great extent in nurturing young talent in cricket through initiatives like the MRF Pace Academy and Pace Tryouts. He was really excited to see the buzz around the Cricket World Cup and felt the new ZSPORT limited edition tire, like other cricketing initiatives of the company showcased MRF's passion for cricket.

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## APOLLO CHOOSES TO CLOSE DURBAN TIRE PLANT



Apollo Tires has a checkered history in South Africa. The company thought it made a good move when it bought Dunlop South Africa in 2006 for \$200 million. However, things did not go as planned and in 2013, the company divested most of its business in South Africa including its plant for passenger car tires and the right to sell Dunlop tires in Africa to Sumitomo Rubber Industries in a \$62 million deal. It retained its plant in Durban which manufactures OTR and TBR tires and the right to sell Regal, Vredstein and Apollo tires in South Africa.

Now, according to a statement issued by Onkar S Kanwar, chairman of Apollo Tires Ltd., the company has decided that it will be closing its plant in Durban due to labor issues and an uncompetitive cost structure. He went on to add that the closure of the plant was completed after securing the best value for all the stakeholders. The statement was issued as part of the company's third quarter results report.

600 workers lost their jobs when the plant closed and Apollo had budgeted \$13 million to cover all the costs associated with the procedure.

Though Apollo will no longer manufacture tires in South Africa, the company will continue to sell Apollo, Vredstein and Regal branded tires throughout Africa through its subsidiary, Apollo Tires South Africa Pty. Ltd, which is based in Durban. Apollo has subsidiary firms in the United Arab Emirates and Zimbabwe.

The company reported a sales income of \$69.5 million in Africa for the nine month period ending on Dec. 31, down 62 percent from 2013, mainly due to the deal with Sumitomo in which it sold the bulk of its business in Africa.

## BKT EUROPEAN HQ MD SAYS WORLD OF AGRICULTURE UNDERGOING SEA CHANGE

There was a time when farming was considered to be an idyllic occupation – a world far away from the competitiveness that characterizes the corporate world. But not any longer, according to a statement made by Lucia Salmaso, the Managing Director of BKT's European head office. As the person heading the European operations of the Indian tire company, BKT which has a turnover of 617 million US dollars from the agricultural sector and accounts for 65% of the total sales of tires for agricultural machinery worldwide, she definitely knows what she is talking about.

According to Lucia, there are several significant ongoing changes in the agricultural world that has made things change. These include the need for a more work oriented approach to farming as an outcome of the global economic crisis, which completely changed the rules of the game. She went on to add that the borders of agriculture have been redesigned, with the introduction of the concept of "farm competitiveness" and the establishment of new agronomic paths. This sea change has led to the development of new, more specialized roles in the sector like the farming contractor.

This means that every farmer has to become more businesslike and focus on increasing the total production and yield of their farm. Catering to the increasing demand for food from all over the world for a growing population and doing so with the minimum impact on the environment are other priorities. All these requirements have made it imperative for farming to be conducted as a business by professional experts like the farming contractor who has the specialized knowledge and is qualified to extract the maximum benefit from the land while coming up with regular innovations to handle the increasingly complex environment. According to a study conducted by NE Nomisma Energia, an independent research company that specializes in energy and environmental issues, as many as 33.4% of 534,000 farming businesses used contracting services to help increase productivity. When studying businesses registered as contractors at various chambers of commerce, there were over 18,000 farming businesses which termed themselves contractors and carried out at least one farming activity for others using their own mechanical machinery.

With agriculture increasingly playing a vital role at the global level in terms of economy, finance and its dimensions, the world of agriculture is slowly changing its identity and direction to become more productive. The future of farming lies in the hands of the contractor. For the contractor, the choice of the tire plays a crucial role in the overall cost, the effect on the soil and on productivity. Lucia Salmaso concluded by saying that from the perspective of a tire manufacturer, the farming contractor has become an important customer when it comes to the tire he chooses.

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## CONTINENTAL EXPANDS PRESENCE IN INDIA WITH NEW RESEARCH FACILITY



Continental, one of the leading names in the tire and automotive industry recently opened a new 13,000 square meter facility in Bangalore to expand its R&D capabilities. The 12.4 million Euro Technical Center India (TCI) is located at Gold Hill Supreme, Electronic City Phase II in Bangalore and will be staffed by 1,000 engineers. The skilled staff at the Center who will work out of eight state-of-the-art R&D labs within the facility will provide engineering assistance and develop software to support both local and global R & D projects.

TCI is one of the three Automotive Systems and Technology (A S&T) hubs that Continental has across the world. All the three centers are involved in the provision of cost effective, high quality engineering solutions for business units like Vehicle Dynamics, the Commercial Vehicles and Aftermarket unit, and the Engine Systems unit.

Speaking at the opening of the Center, Helmut Matschi, President of the Interior Division and Member of the Executive Board of Continental AG, said that India has a great pool of talent which will power Continental's growth, both in Asia and worldwide. Continental has invested heavily in the research center from its inception thus strengthening its commitment to India.

Frank Jourdan, President of the Chassis & Safety Division and Member of the Executive Board of Continental AG said that the Tech Center in India effectively utilizes the availability of local talent to work on the latest innovations and technologies in the industry while offering top-notch services on a global scale. He added that TCI had hired 150 new engineers last year for focusing on software and algorithm development for advanced driver assistance systems.

According to Christian Senger, Senior Vice President Automotive Systems & Technology (A S&T) at Continental AG, TCI was established in 2009 and has since expanded rapidly in scale and capability. Today, TCI engineers are involved in highly specialized research in projects like one channel ABS solutions for two wheelers and Advanced Driver Assistance Systems. The Center has taken advantage of its understanding of the local market and customers to emerge as a 'Center of Competence' for two-wheeler markets and for developing customized products for the BRIC countries.

Raghav Gulur, the Head of Continental's Technical Center India (TCI) said that the headcount at Tech Center India has almost doubled from the time of its establishment, increasing to the current 1,300. There are plans for further expansion in the near future as the Center continues to leverage its local expertise in collaboration with the global teams to deliver solutions to key issues that are faced by the automotive industry, with the main emphasis being on safe mobility and affordability.

## PIRELLI TIRE CORD PLANT IN TURKEY CHANGES HANDS AS PART OF ACQUISITION DEAL



Pirelli had announced plans last year to focus more on its core business, premium tires, by selling its tire cord plants to Bekaert. In December 2014, Pirelli had announced that it had transferred the ownership of the steel cord plants in Sumaare (Brazil), Figline (Italy) and Slatina (Romania) to Bekaert. Both companies have now announced that the process of Bekaert's acquisition of Pirelli's steel cord plant in Izmit, Turkey has been successfully completed. Now that ownership has been transferred, Bekaert will immediately start the process of integrating the Turkish plant into the Bekaert Group.

The agreement that was signed between Bekaert and Pirelli covers yet another steel cord plant that in Yanzhou (China). Once the required regulatory approvals have been obtained, the Chinese plant will also be successfully merged with the Bekaert.

Pirelli has in place a long-term supply agreement and joint product development agreement with Bekaert which will further enhance the status of both companies in the tire industry and help them optimize costs.

With the completion of the acquisition of the plant in Turkey, when the new management takes over, the plant will be renamed as Bekaert Kartepe Çelik Kord Sanayi ve Ticaret A.S. All the financial details and results of the company will henceforth be included in the consolidated statements of Bekaert.

# CONTINENTAL SHIFTS MENA HQ OF TIRE REPLACEMENT BUSINESS TO DUBAI



Continental has relocated the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) headquarters of its tire replacement business from Hanover in Germany to Dubai in order to focus on expansion of its Commercial Vehicle Tire (CVT) and Passenger and Light Truck Tire (PLT) replacement business in the MENA region. The customer services, marketing, controlling and sales functions have been based in Dubai from the beginning of this year highlighting the company's dedication to the motto 'in the market for the market' and taking it one step closer to its customers and partners in the region. With the move, the company hopes to gain better understanding of the local needs of customers in over 15 countries and come up with better solutions. The MENA region has 29 countries.

According to Jon Ander Garcia, Head of PLT and CVT Replacement Middle East and North Africa, all of the Continental employees who had worked for the relevant business units in Hanover had the option of either moving to Dubai or taking up another position within the Continental Group. He added that the company's second base within the region will be in Casablanca in Morocco.

Continental has been following an ambitious growth strategy named Vision 2025 from 2011. As part of this strategy, the company has invested over two billion euros for expanding production capacities, innovations in tire technology and in setting up new processes and systems designed for sustainable profitable growth.

The relocation is in line with the company's long-term "Vision 2025" strategy and with all the company's business units coming under one roof in Dubai, it will help the Continental team to respond faster to customer needs.

# BRIDGESTONE EXPANDS BATTLECROSS RANGE TO COVER ALL BASES

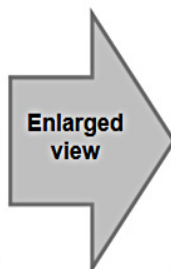
Bridgestone Corporation recently announced it will be shortly bringing to the market a new tire in the Battlecross range named Battlecross X20 for soft terrain. The new tire will be available from April onwards in one size for the front wheel and in 3 sizes for the rear wheel. With this expansion, the company will be covering its bases with tires for all types of terrain.

The Battlecross range already has X30 tires for medium terrain and X40 tires for hard terrain which were launched in 2014. Both tires have received rave reviews from industry experts and customers. The X20 which was developed on the race track in close partnership with professional competitors in top motocross competitions comes with innovative features that make the tire ideal for soft terrain. These include Castle Block technology and a tread pattern which significantly increases cornering grip, traction and the working range of the tire.

With the Castle Block pattern, the tire has notably higher stiffness and can handle firmer ground. The edge component contributes to better cornering ability and higher traction even on slippery sand and muddy, slushy surfaces. Thus riders can handle a wider range of surfaces on the Battlecross X20. With the introduction of the X20 to the Battlecross range, Bridgestone now caters to motocross riders of all skill levels ranging from young beginners to champion professional riders in all kinds of terrains.



Red points: Castle Block



## MITAS EMERGES AS OVERALL WINNER OF 2014 CLAAS SUPPLIER AWARDS



CLAAS is one of the leading manufacturers of farm equipment in the world. Hence, it was a great honour for the Czech tire manufacturer, Mitas to emerge as the overall winner of the 2014 CLAAS Supplier of the Year Awards. CLAAS chose Mitas for this prestigious honor on the basis of the longstanding partnership between the two companies. Mitas was chosen as the winner of the award from over 900 suppliers of serial parts and received the award at a gala event held in January in Harsewinkel, Germany.

Commenting on the award, Čechura, the CEO of Mitas said that the company would try to bag the same prize in 2015 also. He said the award follows on the previous success of Mitas in winning the award for Logistics in 2006 and the CLAAS Supplier of the Year for Innovation with regard to the design and development of the CHO tire in 2011.

Hans Lampert, CLAAS's group executive vice president of finance and controlling said Mitas was a true leader in its class when it came to the supply of tires for CLAAS and had scored well in the past few years on all parameters for evaluating suppliers. He said that this was why Mitas was chosen as the overall winner among suppliers in 2014.

He lauded several qualities that made Mitas a winner including clear communication about the decision to replace Continental tires with Mitas Premium tires for OEM manufacturers, Mitas's presence in all the markets where CLAAS equipment is sold and regular modernization of Mitas plants without any interruption in supply.

The gala awards event which was held in Harsewinkel, Germany on 15 January, was attended by senior executives from CLAAS including Helmut Claas and the representatives of more than 700 companies supplying to CLAAS.



### Tire Fact

The first practical pneumatic tire was developed by John Boyd Dunlop, who was originally a veterinarian.

## PIRELLI PROVES TO BE A WINNER AT AUTOSPORT INTERNATIONAL SHOW



Premium Italian tire manufacturer, Pirelli proved to be a show stopper at the Autosport International show which was held recently at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham. The company received an award for the Best Use of Overall Space from the organizer of the show, Haymarket Exhibitions.

The Pirelli stand at the show won the award by effectively highlighting the company's longstanding association with motorsports, its plans for the future and its new partnership with the BRDC Formula 4 Championship. Appropriately enough, the Pirelli stand was located next to the F1 Racing area at the show. The trademark black and yellow Pirelli colors, the stylish design of the stand, the display of three competition cars and the world-famous P Zero range of tires were all elements that impressed visitors to the trade show.

The Formula One pit stop challenge simulator, which tested the time taken by visitors to change an F1 wheel proved to be a great attraction. Pirelli had used its participation in the show to launch its latest motorsport activities in the UK and to host the awards ceremony for the annual British Rally Championship.

Commenting on the award, Pirelli UK managing director Dominic Sandivasci lauded his team's efforts to optimize space while showcasing a wide range of products and activities. Aptly reflecting the firm's brand values of style, performance, innovation, and technology, the Pirelli stand at the show truly deserved the award.

# DUNLOP OFFICIAL TIRE SUPPLIER FOR GT CATEGORIES AT EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES



Automobil Club de l'Ouest (ACO), the organizer of the European LeMans Series has announced that it has signed a three-year deal with Dunlop Motorsport to supply tires on an exclusive basis for the two GT categories that are a part of the series. The series has two GT classes, LM-GTE and GTC. According to the terms of the agreement that was signed between the two parties, Dunlop will develop a range of Dunlop Sport Maxx GT racing tires exclusively for the GT classes. This announcement came only four months after Dunlop had announced it was going to focus more on GT-style racing.

The GTE (E for "endurance") category is meant for limited-edition GT cars, which should have a production run of at least 100 cars to qualify for homologation. These generally include models like the Porsche RSR, Aston Martin GT, BMW Z4, Ferrari 458, etc. Normally, teams from automotive manufacturers like Audi and the new entrant, Nissan compete in this category.

GTC cars are meant for amateur drivers and should have specifications that are closer to production models. The cars in this category generally follow the FIA GT3 regulations for homologated cars.

The latest reports indicate that there are nine entries in the LM-GTE category and six in the GTC category. The 2015 European LeMans Series will consist of five four-hour races, beginning with the first race on the Silverstone circuit in England on April 10-11 and ending with the Estoril race in Portugal on Oct. 17-18.

In recent years, Dunlop had tire partnerships in GT racing with the winning entries in the 2010 and 2011 American LeMans Series GT2 class, 2010 and 2013 Nürburgring 24 hours, and 2012 European LeMans Series Champions.

Pierre Fillon, President of the ACO, said that the partnership was an ideal fit with Dunlop and Le Mans both being leading brands that have made great strides in the world of endurance. Cars using Dunlop tires have won the European Le Mans series 34 times. He said Dunlop's expertise in building tires for endurance racing will greatly benefit the teams participating in the ELMS.

Dunlop Motorsport Director Jean-Felix Bazelin said, that it was highly gratifying to be chosen as the tire partner for the European Le Mans Series and he said the company looked forward to working with ACO to raise the profile of the prestigious race.

Dunlop had supplied tires for the 2014 championship team in the LMP2 category at ELMS in 2014 and will be supplying all the teams in this category from 2015.

Dunlop Motorsport, which is a business unit of Goodyear Dunlop Europe, designs, develops and supplies tires for two other major touring car races series, British Touring Car championships and the Australian V8 Supercar series.

Dunlop added another feather to its cap when the Aston Club Racing which is organizing a new British series named the "Aston Martin GT4 Cup," chose Dunlop Motorsport to be the official tire partner for the inaugural season of their series. The series will consist of a set of races specifically for Aston Martin V8 Vantage race cars, which will be conducted on several tracks throughout the year in the United Kingdom, according to Aston Club Racing, the organizers. These will include Brands Hatch, Silverstone and Donington.



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Size extensions in progress. Information correct at the date of publication. For more information, see [www.michelin.com](http://www.michelin.com)

\*Compared to its predecessor, MICHELIN LATITUDE Sport, TÜV SÜD test 2013 on a wet road (235/65 R 17). MICHELIN LATITUDE Sport 3 has an «A» rating for wet grip in the majority of its sizes.



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## AL DOBOWI PROVIDES PARTNERS WITH THAI TRIP FOR 2015 INFINITY PARTNERS MEET

The Infinity Group holds a meet every two years for the company's partners. It is a biennial event that all partners eagerly anticipate as it provides them with an opportunity to interact closely with the senior officials of the company and learn more about the products they handle. This year, delegates from over 40 companies based in Middle East, Russia, Africa and the Middle East flew in to attend the Partners' Gathering which was hosted by the Al Dobowi Group in Pattaya and Bangkok from 22nd to 26th January, 2015.

The purpose of the gathering was to highlight the company's support and appreciation for its Global partners and give them an opportunity to spend quality one-on-one time with each other and senior company officials to develop mutual trust and respect.

The gathering began with a gala dinner at the Dusit Thani Hotel where Surender Singh Kandhari, Chairman of Al Dobowi Group offered the participants a hearty welcome. The evening began with a slow, traditional Thai dance that rapidly evolved into a faster, foot tapping rhythm with performers inviting the guests to join them onstage to enjoy the evening.



The partners were then taken on a tour of the US\$115 million car and light truck tire factory located in Thailand's Rayong Province, 95 away from Bangkok, which is owned by Shandong Linglong, Infinity's strategic partner. They were personally welcomed to the state-of-the-art factory which was opened in March 2014 by Wang Feng, Chairman/CEO/President of Shandong Linglong. The factory is currently expected to manufacture 2 million car and light truck tires on an annual basis with capacity being eventually ramped up to 10 million tires every year. The visitors to the factory were definitely impressed by the completely automated tire manufacturing process, the strict testing and quality control process and the use of top-notch technology for all aspects of the manufacturing process ranging from preparation of the compound to curing to sorting. Every guest had plenty of opportunities for resolving their queries and for one-to-one discussions with factory representatives.

The business aspect of the tour continued with the Infinity Conference where Vikas Anand, Al Dobowi's General Manager made a presentation on the key highlights of Infinity's journey in the past two years and the plans for the Infinity brand and products in the forthcoming years. This included detailed interactive discussions on topics that were raised at the last Partners Meet Conference in 2013, the progress made in resolving them and how Infinity is striving to overcome the challenges in the market through constructive improvement. Surender Kandhari highlighted Infinity's three touchstones for success- the three C's- Continuous, Commitment, and Consistency. He encouraged all stakeholders to follow the same principles to reap the benefits of Infinity's growth and share in its success.

The conference also provided Infinity with the opportunity to announce the names of the top 10 Dealer Partners, which included the top 5 performers for 2013 and 2014 respectively. These 10 partners were awarded with certificates of recognition for their contribution to the total sales and expansion of the Infinity brand.

It was not all just about business. Dinners ranged from organized events with a 5-man band and dance performances to a casual al fresco affair at a restaurant perched on a cliff with a view of the beach below.

A tour of Pattaya included trips to enjoy the greenery of Noong Noch Village and the nearby coral islands, elephant rides, traditional Thai folk shows, and shopping at the renowned Gems Gallery which showcases a wide range of local jewelry and precious stones. A trip to Bangkok provided the partners with plenty of scope for shopping, and visits to temples and other famous landmarks.

The gala dinner held on the last night was notable for having a Timpani and Lung Drum Show, a traditional Thai drum and dance show with synchronized lights as the entertainment. It was an appropriate finishing touch for a gathering that was definitely an event to remember and left participants eagerly looking forward to the Infinity Partners Meet in 2017.

## AL HABTOOR MOTORS CELEBRATES GROWTH STORY OF GENERAL TIRE IN THE UAE



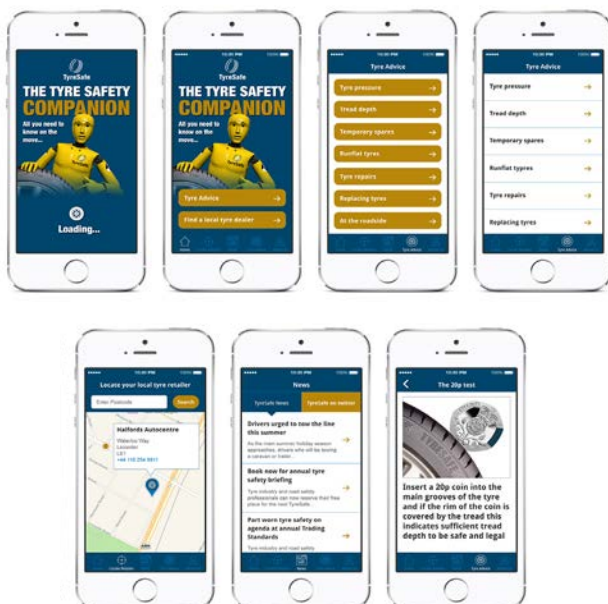
Al Habtoor Motors - Tires & Batteries Division, which is a subsidiary of Al Habtoor Motors and belongs to the renowned Al Habtoor Group of companies in the UAE is a company that offers customers all they need when it comes to automotive parts and accessories. The company acts as the distributor for a wide range of batteries, accessories and tires belonging to leading global brands and added General Tire to its portfolio in 2013. The official partnership agreement between the two companies for exclusive distribution of General Tire in the UAE came into effect from 7th November, 2013 with a signing ceremony at Dubai World Trade Centre.

General Tire is a reputed brand of tires that is still going strong after 100 years. The company has a range of top quality tires for every terrain and condition. It is known for its focus on innovation, continually introducing new products and technologies in tune with changing needs of customers.

General Tire initially began as an offshoot of the US company, the Western Tire & Rubber Company, which was established by two young businessmen from Akron named "W.O." and Fouse. They believed that though there were many tire companies, there could establish themselves as a major tire manufacturer if they produced quality tires. General Tire makes tires for all kinds of vehicles and has currently emerged as a leader in the design and production of top-notch tires for trucks, cars and industrial applications in addition to specialty tires for SUVs. Though the company was acquired by Continental in 1987, it continued to function as General Tire, Inc. till December 31, 1994 when it was renamed as Continental General Tire, Inc. It went through another name change and became Continental Tire North America, Inc from May 1, 2000 onwards.

Commenting on the success of General Tire in the UAE, Neil Coolidge, General Manager of SpeedFit Group & Head of Al Habtoor-Tyre & Battery Division, said that ever since Al Habtoor Motors was appointed as the sole distributor for General Tire, there has been a tremendous growth in the sales of the brand. This growth has occurred primarily due to the quality of the tires, the value they offer to customers and their country of origin. He is fully confident that the brand will continue to grow in the years to come. With the company having a wide range of tires to cater to all kinds of customers, the brand will be targeted at fleet, wholesale and retail customers for both passenger vehicles and SUVs. Another point in favour of purchasing the brand is that SpeedFit, another Al Habtoor subsidiary that offers fast fit servicing for all brands of tires is currently offering free tire checks and 15% discount on General Tire products.

## TYRESAFE GETS 'BEST APP' ACCOLADE FOR TIRE SAFETY COMPANION



TyreSafe is an organization in UK that is dedicated to increasing awareness about the need for tyresafety. Last year during October, which is designated as tyresafety month in the UK, TyreSafe had launched a smartphone app named the TyreSafety Companion. The leading motoring magazine "Auto Express" has named this app as one of the best motoring apps for 2015.

TyreSafety Companion is a free app that is available both on Apple's iTunes and on Google's Play store. It helps motorists have a safer drive by giving them reminders, tips and practical advice that can help improve their safety on the road. These tips range from advice to check the tyre pressure on a regular basis to steps to take when you experience a puncture.

Stuart Jackson, chairman, TyreSafe said that having TyreSafety Companion named as one of the best apps for 2015 was a fantastic accolade. He added that the app is a real lifesaver as it provides drivers with easy access to accurate advice on tyresafety even while they are on the move.

The TyreSafety Companion is expected to contribute significantly to reducing the number of tyrerelated accidents in UK. In 2013, almost 1,000 casualties occurred due to the use of defective, illegal and under-inflated tires. It was also reported by AA that tyrerelated issues were the second most common cause of breakdowns, accounting for about ten per cent of the breakdowns.

In addition to getting a lot of tyrerelated information on the go, users of the TyreSafety Companion can sign up to receive regular push notifications directly to their mobile phones about periodic checks to prolong the life of their tires and increase their safety on the road.

In view of the fact that a recent survey revealed 19 per cent of drivers had never checked their tyre tread depth, such an app is indeed the need of the hour.

## INTERVENTION BY THAI GOVERNMENT LEADS TO DECLINE IN GLOBAL RUBBER SUPPLY



Intervention by the Thai government has made a big difference in the supply of natural rubber in the world market. Thailand is the world's largest producer and exporter of natural rubber. The Thai government has intervened in the market for natural rubber in a major manner to keep rubber prices up and mopped up extra supply to keep supplies low in the global market.

In October 2014, the military government in Thailand had approved a budget of up to 30 billion baht (\$919 million) for buying rubber aggressively from smallholders at the country's central rubber markets. They propose to use the rubber thus obtained for infrastructure projects like construction of sports facilities and roads. However, this buying pattern has already exacerbated the current supply shortage of natural rubber in the market caused by falling production levels in both Thailand and in the country that is the second largest producer of natural rubber in the world, Indonesia.

### MOTORISTS NEED TO KEEP AN EYE ON THEIR WHEELS AS WELL AS TIRES

We pay a lot of attention to our cars – to their design, their performance, the space in the boot for our luggage, to the sunroof. We make sure we get the best car possible for our money. Once we buy them, we spend hours getting them cleaned, polished and just looking at them.

What we forget in the process is that is that even the best car cannot move on the road without tires. If motorists gave their wheels and tires as much attention as they do to their cars, there would be far fewer accidents. AA reported that tire related problems caused at least 10 per cent of breakdowns in the United Kingdom.

In some cases, after you drive over a pothole, the wheel rim may get damaged and the air will slowly leak out of the tire. Thus, pothole damaged wheel rims may result in slow punctures that can lead to dangerous tire failures.

TyreSafe is an organization in the United Kingdom which is dedicated to raising awareness about road safety. They recently advised motorists to increase the frequency of tire pressure checks after they got feedback from their retail members that more and more customers are turning up with slow punctures. Many of these punctures were caused by cracks in wheel rims which occurred when the cars were driven over potholes. These cracks caused air to escape gradually from the tires.

Hence, drivers not only need to keep an eye on their tire pressure, but should also check it on a more frequent basis as slow punctures lead to a gradual drop in tire pressure and may not be easily noticed. If they hit a pothole or notice that tires are showing signs of under inflation, they should immediately go to the nearest tire fitting center to make sure that both their tires and the wheel rims are in good condition.

According to Pongsak Kerdvongbundit, the managing director at Von Bundit Co., one of Thailand's biggest exporters of natural rubber, the Thai government is currently purchasing 5 percent to 20 percent of daily rubber sales in the local market. Global benchmark natural rubber futures on the Tokyo Commodity hit a one-month high on February 4 before settling 1.2 percent lower at ¥206.4 a kilogram on the next day.

With rubber prices falling by as much as 30 per cent last year, many farmers abandoned rubber cultivation. In Thailand, the production of rubber had decreased by 4.1 percent in 2014 as compared to 2013 figures while in Indonesia, for the corresponding period, rubber production had slumped by 2.6 percent, based on statistics compiled by the Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries.

Rubber exports from Thailand and Indonesia constitute two-thirds of the world's supply of natural rubber. Kerdvongbundit said the output of rubber sheets had fallen by about 50 percent as compared to last year with farmers cutting down on harvesting activities due to lower profitability. The prices of Tocom rubber has gone up in the stock market for deliveries from March to June. This low supply situation is expected to continue until July when the market is expected to recover fully, according to an analysis conducted by Tokyo-based expert Gu Jiong at brokerage Yutaka Shoji.

Though prices have improved to some extent as an outcome of intervention by the Thai government, they are still about 25 percent lower than the closing price in 2013 and 60 percent lower than the record high attained by rubber in 2011.

The International Tripartite Rubber Council is an organization that was formed by major rubber producers like Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia based on the OPEC model to regulate the price of natural rubber in the global market for the benefit of the farmers in their respective countries. These three countries account for over 70 per cent of the world's natural production of natural rubber. However, their previous attempts to regulate prices were undermined by increasing exports of rubber from other emerging producers with lower wages. According to an online post by the inter-government group, they planned to meet with other producers of natural rubber in the region like Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam and Laos to discuss the current situation in the market. They would explore avenues for cooperation in order to stabilize the price of natural rubber at prices that are fair for small farmers in these countries.



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EVENT	DATE	INFORMATION	LOCATION
Autoworld	01-05 Apr 2015	Autoworld is a 5-day event approved by the Global Association of Exhibition Industry (UFI) and the Russian Union of Exhibitions and Fairs (RUEF) due to its high level of organization and the big role it plays for the economy of the region.	Saint-Petersburg Sports and Concert Complex (SKK Peterburgsky), St. Petersburg, Russia
Seoul Motor Show	02-12 Apr 2015	This year's edition of Seoul Motor Show is anticipated to showcase various novelties and the latest technology in the automotive sector. Visitors to the event will get a chance to see a display of environment-friendly vehicles and different kinds of sports cars.	(Korea International Exhibition Center) KINTEX, Goyang, South Korea
New York International Auto Show	03-12 Apr 2015	New York International Auto Show is one of the leading automobile trade events in the USA. It serves as a perfect business interaction platform for renowned industry professionals. Held for 10 days, the show features a large number of exhibitors that showcase wide-ranging automobile equipment, safety devices, auto accessories, cars and trucks, alternative fuel systems, maintenance tools and spare parts.	Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, New York, USA
Automec	07-11 Apr 2015	It offers workshops, distributors, wholesalers and retailers direct contact with industry representatives, with the goal of offering an environment for networking and exchanging experiences through product launches and demos. This year's edition is said to have more things in store for visitors.	Anhembi Show Pavilion, Sao Paulo, Brazil
Taipei International Auto Parts & Accessories Show	08-11 Apr 2015	This is by far one of the grandest and most important automotive industry-related trade events in Taiwan. The show serves as a medium to help all the attendees know the newest innovations and happenings in this industry.	Taipei World Trade Center, Taipei, Taiwan
Tuning & Car Care Taiwan	08-11 Apr 2015	This show is anticipated to take the country's automotive sector to the next level and provide the attendees with huge business opportunities.	TWTC NANGANG Exhibition Hall, Taipei, Taiwan

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EVENT	DATE	INFORMATION	LOCATION
Automechanika Istanbul	09-12 Apr 2015	Automechanika Istanbul is a leading trade show dedicated to the global automotive equipment manufacturing industry. It is hailed as one of the most ideal platforms for the European and Turkish industries to share new strategies and ideas in the sector. I	Tüyap Fair Convention and Congress Center, Istanbul, Turkey
Manila International Auto Show	09-12 Apr 2015	Manila International Auto Show is a yearly automotive trade fair held for four days at the World Trade Center Metro Manila. This is by far the grandest motor show in the Philippines in terms of exhibitors, cars on display and visitor count. Aiming to promote the country's automotive manufacturing industry	World Trade Center Metro Manila, Manila, Philippines
Mostra Scambio	11-12 Apr 2015	Held for two days, visitors will get a chance to check out the widest range of automotive products such as heavy duty equipment, commercial vehicles, go karts, dune buggies, 4WDs, vintage cars, coupes, sedans, luxury limousines, vintage motorcycles and spare parts.	Messe Essen GmbH, Essen, Germany
Auto Shanghai	15-19 Apr 2015	"This ten-day event will give people a chance to check out wide-ranging automotive-related products and services. Since China is one of the most thriving automotive markets in the world, Auto Shanghai is anticipated to draw thousands of local and foreign exhibitors. This year, this trade show will be bigger and better than ever.	China Expo Complex, Hongqiao District, Shanghai, Shanghai, China
Tires & Rubber Expo	20-29 Apr 2015	"Tires and Rubber Expo is by far the most significant and successful tire manufacturing technology exhibition and conference in the globe. It offers attendees a grand technology showcase covering equipment and materials through the complete range of the tire production process. This year, the event has more things in store for both visitors and exhibitors. "	Expocentre Fairgrounds, Moscow, Russia



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## NEW RADAR TECHNOLOGY TO REDUCE RISK OF MISHAP IN UAE ROADS



A technological breakthrough, which will soon be standard on wide-ranging cars sold in UAE showrooms, promises to address the 'blind spot' issue and reduce the risk of one of the common causes of fatality on the country's roads.

A recent study conducted by Zurich Insurance and RoadSafetyUAE.com found that frequent lane changing was one of the leading causes of road accidents in the UAE last year, while 47 percent of accidents in Dubai were a result of blind spot incidents.

Aiming to bolster road safety in the country, Bosch developed Multi Mode Radar technology—a new generation of rear-end radar sensors that make drivers more aware of adjacent vehicles and prevent mishaps caused by lane changing. The system warns the driver against the impending danger of crash by issuing a timely visible or audible signal.

According to Andreas Bodemer, Vice President for Bosch Automotive Aftermarket, Middle East and Africa, the MMR rear means motorists are effectively looking over their shoulders all the time, because it dependably and accurately identifies other road users in their vehicle's blind spot. Comparing the sensor to other 24-gigahertz solutions available on the market today, he said that it is more accurate, with up to three times the ability to recognize between objects and up to five times more precise measurement of distances and speed.

"A motorist's blind spot is big enough for a minivan to disappear from view, and not be picked up by a glance over the shoulder. That creates a major accident threat when someone is changing lanes."

The easy to fit MMR system, which is hidden behind a car's rear bumper, can do more than just assisting with lane-changing. The sensors also form part of the German supplier's cross-traffic alert system, which supports motorists reversing out of perpendicular parking spaces when their rear view is blocked. This groundbreaking technology can recognize cyclists, cars and pedestrians crossing behind the reversing vehicle from left or right at a 50-meter distance.

A premier European automaker will reportedly use the Multi Mode Radar technology in all of its latest models.

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## DRIVING SAFETY CONCERNS TO PROPEL AUTOMOTIVE BRAKE SYSTEMS' GROWTH WORLDWIDE



The European automotive market reached a whopping 12.6 million vehicle sales in 2014, escalating for the very first time since the global recession started. As several countries start to see a rise in consumers' disposable income, this is anticipated to cause an upsurge in the global automotive market.

Nowadays, there is a huge inclination towards more safety-conscious models, with a growing number of consumers investing in better quality braking systems. In fact, the global market worth of the automotive brake system is projected to reach \$31.6bn by 2019, escalating at a CAGR of seven percent from last year to 2019.

Majority of the developments in the automotive industry focus on manufacturing vehicles which are fast and comfortable, while maintaining safety. Developments in drivetrain, powertrains and other aspects of the vehicle have significantly addressed the former two criteria, while the vehicle's safety aspect greatly depends on the quality and ability of the brakes used.

Following the huge number of vehicle recalls last year, it is anticipated that the safety issues surrounding the global automotive brake system market will tighten this year. In Australia alone, over 114 recall bulletins were issued for around 1.1 million vehicles—an increase from the previous record of 855,000 in 2001—totaling the same amount of cars recalled as new cars sold. Worldwide, more than 55 million vehicles were recalled, the most serious of which has been associated to 42 fatalities. Several governments are now calling for strict safety regulations for vehicles, such as demanding shorter stopping distances and compulsory use of technologies such as TCS, ESC and ABS, thereby increasing pressure for automotive brake manufacturers.

In spite of this, Australia's crash test authority announced in October that safety standards will drop this year, rendering less safe cars to get a five star rating easily. With the seemingly slackening safety standards in a number of countries, consumers are becoming more concerned in the safety of their vehicles, which analysts anticipate to render growth in the global brake system market.

Currently, the global brake system market uses two different braking technologies: the drum brake and the disk brake. The drum brakes market is anticipated to grow by 2019 at 4.03 percent. Meanwhile, offering better heat dissipation and shorter stopping distance, as well as easier maintenance with less wear and tear, drum brakes are currently growing at a faster pace in the global brake system market. They are projected to remain as the leading braking method in the market for the next five years, and are estimated to reach 284 million units by 2019—a growth of 7.87 percent compared to 194.43 million units last year.

## SHELL INAUGURATES GTL BASE OIL HUB IN UAE

Shell is further establishing its presence in the Middle East with its recently inaugurated Gas-to-Liquid (GTL) base oil hub in an industrial site in Jebel Ali, Dubai, UAE.

The new Jebel-Ali facility, which is geographically centered in the region and close to markets with increasing lubricant demand, is Shell's fourth GTL base oil storage center along its existing centers in Hong Kong, Hamburg and Houston. It is connected with a road gantry and jetty to enable a smooth product arrival from Qatar and efficient distribution to Shell's network of lubricant blending facilities in the region. This latest addition completes the global reach and coverage of the company's GTL base oil supply. Apart from the Middle East market, the new hub will also cater to Pakistan and India.

In a statement, Dennis Cheong, Shell Vice President Supply Chain, said that Shell Lubricants comes with a strong and reliable global supply chain, which produces high-quality products and offers consistent delivery to their customers; citing the GTL base oil hubs as important part of it. He added that Shell is the sole company with a reliable GTL base oil supply, and the new hub achieves the full integration of their transportation and storage of GTL base oil on a global basis. "This is a clear demonstration of where Shell's integration and innovation add value for Shell's customers."

Base oil is a primary component in finished oils, and GTL base oil enables the development of premium oils for engines, as well as in specialty products, which include transformer fluids and process oils. Shell's GTL base oil is made at the Pearl GTL facility in Qatar, a collaboration between Shell and Qatar petroleum. The facility, which does not only cater to Middle East but to other markets such as South Africa, Pakistan, India and Egypt, is the largest source of GTL products in the globe.

According to Sheikh Thani Al Thani, Deputy General Manager for Qatar Shell, GTL products embody a revolutionary innovation to boost the supply of highly-demanded liquid hydrocarbons. He explained that they provide huge benefits in multiple applications as they are odorless, colorless and sulfur-free. "These attributes of GTL-based products make them very attractive to help meet the growing requirements of consumers and we are extremely proud to be at the leading edge of innovation that produces these and future superior products."

Commenting on the inauguration, Mounir Bouaziz, Country Chairman Dubai and Northern Emirates, VP Commercial, said that they were very proud to open the Shell GTL base oil hub in the UAE. He revealed that the decision to establish a hub in the country shows Shell's constant dedication to the region and demonstrates the rising demand for premium lubricants. Bouaziz concluded that the hub would cater to customers across the Middle East and would support Shell's vision to be the most pioneering energy company by offering innovative products, including motor oils made from natural gas.

Shell is a top global oil company which offers international access to the latest advancement in transformer, process and motor oils. This is reinforced by its strong and bespoke supply chain. The company's premium motor oils made from natural gas—two of which are Shell Helix Ultra made with PurePlus Technology and Pennzoil Platinum—are now offered in more than 95 markets worldwide, including within the Middle East.

# VEHICLES DRESSED IN ALCANTARA INTERIORS STAND OUT IN 2015 NAIAS

The new vehicle models of Lincoln, BMW, Tesla, Acura and Audi that made their debut at this year's North American International Auto Show had one thing in common: elegant Alcantara interiors. This lightweight and carbon-neutral material is the leading choice for the world's high-performance and sporty vehicles.

Lincoln's all-new ultra-premium Black Label vehicle collection, including the MKC and the MKZ, was dressed in Alcantara interiors. The door panels, headliner and seats of the MKC which was presented at the show featured jet black Alcantara, and the material's special version—perforated black Alcantara with red contrast backing—was used on the seats.



The second Lincoln MKC displayed at the show presented "oasis" beige Alcantara on the center section of its headliners and seats. Ultra-premium materials and limited-edition design themes are just among the trademarks of the Black Label collection. The MKX featuring dark grey Alcantara on the headliner also proved to be a limelight-stealer.

BMW also chose Alcantara on two of its 6 Series vehicles. The 650i Gran Coupe featured brown Alcantara on its headliner and door panels while the M6 Coupe's headliner and steering wheel were dressed in black Alcantara. Now on its third generation, the BMW 6 Series sets a high benchmark for elegance, technology and comfort.

The all-new 6 Series is part of the German automaker's innovative "individual" customization program managed by Design Works. Alcantara is a partner of the program. Other BMW models that featured the material at the show were the BMW 235i with Alcantara on its pillars and steering wheel and the BMW 750i with brown Alcantara on its rear deck and headliner.

Another automaker that showcased Alcantara interiors was Tesla. Its Dual Motor Model S (85D and 85D Performance) was accentuated with beige and gray Alcantara on the headliners and dashboards. The car represents an enhancement on standard AWD systems with a motor on each axle independently regulating torque to front and rear wheels.

For the premiere of its hybrid NSX high-performance sports car, Acura chose gray Alcantara with contrast stitching for the car's headliner, control panel, door panels and the central section of its seats.

German automaker Audi selected Alcantara for the launch of its Q7. Featuring a curb weight of 4,398.2 pounds, the second-generation SUV is by far the lightest in its class. To highlight the Q7's sporty yet sophisticated nature at the show, its headliner, door panels and pillars were accentuated with beige Alcantara.

Other automakers that displayed their vehicles dressed in Alcantara interiors at the show were:

Dodge - SRT versions of Dodge Challenger and Dodge Charger were shown with black and red Alcantara on seats.

Maserati - For the headliner of the Quattroporte GTS model, this Italian luxury automaker used carbon-neutral Alcantara in light gray.

Porsche - Majority of the vehicles of this automaker that were showcased at the NAIAS featured interiors with dark gray Alcantara. Included in these vehicles were the Panamera GTS, the Cayman GTS, the Boxster GTS and the 911 Targa 4 GTS.

Alcantara is an exceptional Italian-made material that provides designers with various benefits due to its excellent properties such as washability, breathability, resiliency, durability and softness. It is headquartered in Milan with research and production facilities in Nera Montoro, Umbria.

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## ALL-NEW POLISHED BLACK AEZ STRAIGHT EXUDES JACKPOT SPIRIT



Combining a two-color design and featuring superior quality, AEZ's new Straight alloy wheel will give any car a winning edge. Its name originates from the game of poker and features a polished black finish, strongly exuding a jackpot spirit.

The AEZ Straight displays a beautiful interplay of polished and dark surfaces, making the 10-spoke layout perfectly straight and elegant. Apart from this, the alloy wheel's designers also had other aces up their sleeves. The concave shape lends the Straight much presence and plasticity, specifically when combined with the dark rim well. Plus, it comes with one-sided accompanying edges that make the struts look asymmetrical – an exhilarating visual dynamism.

Owing to its ultra-modern look, the Straight is the perfect choice for cars by leading global automakers: Mercedes, BMW and Audi. It accentuates the sophisticated design of the Mercedes C-, E- and CLS- Class, enhances the A4, A5 or A6 and highlights the assertive look of the BMW 3, 4 or 5.

In addition, the Straight can do more than just enhance cars' wow-factor; it also boasts advanced technology. For instance, its range of dimensions makes it an ideal choice for high-performance vehicles with a staggered fitment.

Apart from black, the AEZ Straight is also available in alternative versions such as graphite matt and silver, making it a real limelight-stealer on the road. Featuring 10 spokes, eight dimensions and three color variations, it reaches Black Jack's 21. So, it is worth placing bets.

## ANONYMOUS OEM SELECTS GURIT AS AUTO CARBON FIBER SUPPLIER

Gurit, a leading Swiss developer and manufacturer of cutting-edge composite materials and technologies, has been chosen as the official supplier of carbon fiber composite automotive body panels to an unnamed OEM at a total contract value of over US\$34 million, estimated on a multi-year basis.

Slated to begin in the fourth quarter of this year, Gurit will produce exterior Class-A carbon fiber body panel parts using its existing open-mold manual process and its new patented, cutting-edge press technology.

The press technology is a result of constant research and close partnership with premier automakers. Gurit claims that its hot compression molding production technology considerably reduces curing time, thereby facilitating efficient production of small-scale series, which are fully compatible with the existing OEM production and assembly methods. Additionally, the technology features Class-A surface quality, top quality carbon fiber look and parts accuracy.

According to Gurit CEO Rudolf Hadorn, winning the project represented a crucial milestone in the strategic advancement of their automotive exterior body panel business. He added that they have been working hard to demonstrate the superiority of their press technology, and Gurit's selection for the contract due to such new technology vividly showed that their effort to industrialize composite parts production ideally meets the needs of OEMs.

Since 2007, Gurit has been supplying carbon fiber-based Class-A car body panels to OEMs.

## STUDY FINDS ZERO LUNG CANCER RISK FROM MODERN DIESEL ENGINES

A multi-year, scientific study conducted by Health Effects Institute (HEI) proved that emissions from modern-technology diesel engines do not pose health risks. Called Advanced Collaborative Emissions Study or ACES, the study found no trace of pre-cancerous changes or carcinogenic lung tumors in lung tissue after laboratory animals were examined by exposing them to new-technology diesel engine exhaust over their lifetimes. It concluded that diesel exhaust exposure did not increase the risk of lung cancer or other serious health effects in the animals.

According to Jed Mandel, EMA President, the study confirmed that new-technology diesel engines do not boost the risk of lung cancer, and that modern diesel engines have reduced emissions to near-zero levels. He said that ACES offers the stringent evidence required to assure policy makers and the public that modern diesel emissions control technologies are attaining their intended results.

Earlier stages of the study established that emissions from modern diesel engines are not only at levels below those mandated by U.S. EPA standards, but also contain near-zero levels of the diesel exhaust components that were thought to be dangerous such as PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons)

and particulate matter. The state-of-the-art technologies that were used in the ACES test engines have been fitted to on-highway buses and trucks since 2007.

Mandel continued that EMA and its members have worked closely with the California Air Resources Board and the U.S. EPA to chart a new path forward and to come up with and implement fresh, advanced technologies that reduce emissions, thus enhancing air quality and public health. "The HEI study provides the sound, science-based data necessary to conclude that today's diesel engines do not contribute to an increased risk of cancer."

With the complete approach used in the ACES study, its independent peer review, and HEI's reputation for sound science and integrity, EMA anticipates the study's results to play a huge role in the upcoming assessment of diesel technology health effects by regulatory agencies globally.

The Truck and Engine Manufacturers Association is the trade association which represents global manufacturers of medium and heavy-duty trucks and internal combustion engines used in applications such as marine vessels; locomotives; construction and farm equipment; buses and trucks; and utility, garden and lawn equipment. EMA works with the industry and government to help the country attain its target of enhanced safety, cleaner air, more efficient engines and cleaner fuels.

# CHEVROLET'S FORWARD COLLISION ALERT TECHNOLOGY HELPS PREVENT REAR CRASHES

Tailgating is something fun done by fans before the football games, but when it comes to driving, this is a big no-no. In accordance with National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), rear-end crashes make up more than one in four of collisions reported to the police yearly.

The advanced Forward Collision Alert technology, which is available in numerous 2015 Chevrolet models, including Traverse, Equinox, Malibu and Silverado, warns customers in everyday car-following situations if they may be following too closely or seconds away from a collision.

In the 2015 Chevrolet Suburban, Tahoe and Impala, the Front Automatic Braking goes beyond just an alert to stop or slow the vehicle automatically under certain conditions, for instance, if the driver does not quickly respond to an alert.

"Many of us have been in driving situations where the car ahead of us suddenly slows – or we momentarily look away at the wrong time – and we have to slam on the brakes to avoid a collision," said General Motors Active Safety Technical Fellow

Raymond J. Kiefer. He explained that Front Automatic Braking offers a layer of driver assistance beyond Forward Collision Alert systems to help avoid the crash situation.

Depending on the car model, the Forward Collision Alert system utilizes a camera mounted behind the windshield in front of the inside rearview mirror or a radar in the front grille area. When engaged, it generates an amber icon when a driver follows too closely and a green one when a vehicle is detected ahead. When the driver is approaching a vehicle ahead quickly and seconds away from a crash risk, a red "Collision Alert" warning will flash along with a quick, high-pitched beeping. In Chevrolet models featuring the Safety Alert Seat that is turned on, the driver will be alerted with vibrations on both sides instead of beeps.

High-speed rear crashes cause moderate-to-severe injuries and worse, casualties, while low-speed rear crashes cost millions yearly in repair costs. In a recent report, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety projected that when forward collision alert technology is applied across the entire fleet of passenger vehicles, this could prevent 879 deadly crashes annually.

For decades, the automotive industry has focused on reducing the number of rear crashes. The Center High Mounted Stop Lamp system has been used since 1986 in passenger cars and 1994 in light trucks. NHTSA claims that in the long run, it has helped cut down crashes by around 4.3 percent yearly.

As for GM's Forward Collision Alert technology, it is designed to encourage car owners to accept and use it.

Kiefer concluded that their system enables customers to choose either near, medium or far when it comes to the timing of the alerts. "Our goal is that our customers leave safety systems on every trip so they can take advantage of the potential safety benefits."



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# HARMAN Partners with Baidu for Vehicle Networking Solutions



HARMAN, the leading audio, visual, infotainment and enterprise automation group, has recently joined hands with Baidu, the premier Chinese language Internet search provider, to launch CarLife vehicle networking solutions. The partnership will offer cutting-edge Internet capabilities, location-based services and entertainment features on HARMAN's in-vehicle infotainment head units designed for the Chinese market, leading to a better and more immersive connected car experience.

According to Sachin Lawande, President, HARMAN Infotainment, they were extremely excited to merge Baidu's powerful Internet search capabilities and user experience with HARMAN's embedded connectivity expertise to present motorists in China with safe, easy and intuitive access to their preferred content.

David Jin, Chairman and President, Northeast Asia and Greater China, HARMAN, said that succeeding in the rapidly developing in-car technology segment needs a platform that can be easily updated and adapted, and the collaboration with Baidu would enable HARMAN to offer flexible, advanced solutions and content to OEMs that have been tailored to suit the Chinese automotive market.

Commenting on CarLife, Liu Jun, vice president of Baidu, said that it is the first cross-platform solution with best efficiency for the Internet of Vehicles in China, and follows the most compatible international vehicle networking standard, offering in-vehicle interface and services with rich data and applications. He also added that the natural synergies of the partnership with Harman would enable them to use internet resources and quickly come up with innovations that offer OEMs with the security, customization and flexibility they demand, leading to the best connected car experiences for their drivers.

CarLife, jointly unveiled by Baidu and HARMAN, offers smartphone compatibility with user smartphones, such as iOS and Android, covering more than 95 percent of smartphone users. Utilizing HARMAN's technologies and Baidu Maps in navigation infotainment system, CarLife provides the best online navigation experience, helping drivers with the most precise distance estimation, location search, and route planning. With the real-time updates offered by the solution, motorists can avoid getting stuck in a traffic jam. Moreover, it offers advanced functionality, such as a hands-free voice activated control system, seamless navigation, speed alerts, and real-time parking location information.

CarLife will also work with in-vehicle networks to provide users with a fully integrated user experience and connected services with high speed data flow and rich applications. HARMAN's automotive consumers can employ CarLife and inexpensively launch connected car solutions to drivers in China. Together, the two companies' CarLife solutions will offer millions of drivers with a more open and smarter vehicle networking experience.

## Dotz's New Alloy Wheel Brings 'Way of the Sword' onto the Road



Kendo, a Japanese martial art, is rooted in sword combat training such as the world-renowned Samurai—and is also regarded as a special lifestyle. Aiming to accentuate vehicles with the combined spirit of Japanese martial art and sword combat, Dotz has recently pulled the wraps off its all-new Kendo alloy wheel, which brings the "way of the sword" onto the road.

When the vehicle is in motion, the double spokes—featuring an extremely edged design—turn into whirling blades that rotate around the beautifully polished center part. The jaggedly and aggressively kept angle connectors of the struts are also an attraction. Arranged in pairs each with varying thickness, they display dynamism and individual character. The firmness of the wheel hub area also fully ensures low dead weight, which in turn highlights the wheel's sharp effect and epitomizes the highest possible agility.

Given that Kendo is all about having moral strength and a tough character, the Dotz alloy wheel of the same name has a general operating permit for numerous vehicles and is fit for sensor installation for tire pressure monitoring systems.

In addition, just as remarkable as Japanese sword steel are the skills of the metallurgists who meticulously manufacture the alloy wheel in Dotz's leading wheel factory in Neuenrade, Germany. To live up to customers' expectations, each Kendo alloy wheel is manufactured in accordance with the highest quality standards.

# HYUNDAI OFFERS A BIG SURPRISE FOR MUSIC LOVERS

With Hyundai's new infotainment system called Display Audio that is built around Google's Android Auto and Apple's CarPlay interfaces, CD players will just be a thing of the past in mainstream cars such as the Sonata and the Elantra. The South Korean automaker's infotainment strategy is based on the certainty that consumers are ready to get their music and maps from smartphones, rather than using car-based systems for those features.

According to Michael Dietz, senior group manager for the connected car at Hyundai Motor America, Hyundai will save space and money by eliminating the disc drive. With those savings, the automaker will be able to spend more freely on customers' demands: a high-resolution display screen and access to new smartphone apps.



Designed to reduce driver distraction, CarPlay and Android Auto are software packages that help connect the vehicle to the driver's smartphone and reflect auto-appropriate smartphone apps on the display screen of the vehicle. Those apps can be operated through the car's knobs and buttons and touch and voice controls, rather than with the phone.

Dietz said that this is a way for them to offer people a huge screen, provide them with a rich content delivery, and do it at a more affordable price that is available across more models.

Hyundai is not the first-ever carmaker to discard CD drives. In fact, some car models geared towards younger customers, such as the Kia Soul and Chevrolet Spark, are already offered without a CD driver even as optional equipment. However, no carmaker has announced a phaseout as quick as the one Hyundai is planning.

Dietz revealed that Hyundai intends to add Display Audio to several models this year. According to him, the system will go into over 60 percent of the cars the automaker sells. Well-known models such as the Santa Fe, Sonata and Elantra crossover will feature the system as they are redesigned.

Consumers will still be able to find a CD player in some cars, such as the Genesis sedan. In some models, a CD player will also be bundled into a step-up trim package. However, automakers are itching to do away with CD players as they add unnecessary weight and create problems for interior designers. Meanwhile, purchasing digital maps for on-board GPS systems can cost them hundreds of dollars per car.

Dietz emphasized that CarPlay and Android Auto are the best way for Hyundai to deal with the phaseout of the CD player and the growing number of online streaming services. He concluded that the audio market is becoming highly fragmented, and it is the best way to provide more content to customers.



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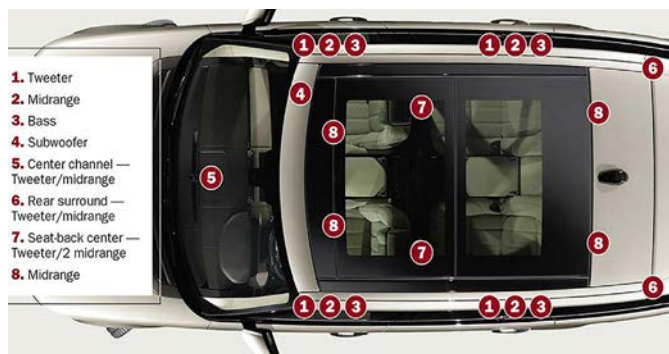


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## JAGUAR LAND ROVER-MERIDIAN COLLABORATION INTENSIFIES COMPETITION FOR LUXURY AUDIO BRANDS



Just recently, Jaguar Land Rover teamed up with British audio systems leader Meridian, to enhance the sound system in the 2015 Range Rover's Autobiography edition—a partnership anticipated to stir up the competition among luxury automakers to use high-end audio brands to make their vehicles more appealing.

The Meridian Audio sound system's amplifiers featured in the top-of-the-range edition are powered by 1,700 watts and deliver 3D sound via 29 speakers in the cabin. This gear is more than just about increasing the volume. In the cockpit, it gives the driver and passengers a one-of-a-kind experience of standing in the position of the conductor in front of a symphony orchestra. This is

what makes the music enveloping and addictive at the same time—a testament to Meridian's unrivalled expertise and engineering credentials, having designed the first digital signal processing speaker and the first-ever audiophile CD player in 1983.

In December, Lincoln became the latest participant in the competition, announcing a ten-year collaboration with Revel, a leading speaker brand of Harman International Industries. The first Lincoln car to feature a Revel system is the 2016 Lincoln MKX crossover.

Mercedes-Benz and Porsche feature systems engineered by Burmester Audiosysteme, a German high-end company. Meanwhile, Audi customers can choose a premium Bang & Olufsen system with tweeters that dramatically rise from the instrument panel.

Also in the competition is Bentley, with audio system engineered by Naim Audio, a British boutique house. Cadillac customers can opt for a system by Bose, while Lexus has Mark Levinson.

According to IHS Automotive analyst, Mark Boyadjis, the trend can be explained in one word—exclusivity. He said that there are several ways premium vehicle manufacturers could shape their offerings, and one of them is audio system. "Audio systems carry a brand that sets their system further apart."

Boyadjis noted that the best known brands are Sony, Alpine and Bose. However, while they make excellent systems, a company such as Jaguar Land Rover went with Meridian because of the ability to say only the automaker has that brand.

Such collaborations benefit both parties. Audio companies specializing in home audio are given a chance to showcase their wares to new customers. For automakers, they can claim exclusive technology while gaining profits.

"When you consider a \$6,300 Bang & Olufsen sound system in an Audi, they're earning margin on it. It's not insignificant," Boyadjis concluded that branded premium audio still remains as the highest margin option underneath infotainment's umbrella.

## EINT AUTOMOTIVE AND PHILLIPS 66 JOIN HANDS FOR LUBRICANT DISTRIBUTION IN OMAN

Phillips 66 Lubricants, one of the largest and leading finished lubricant suppliers in North America, has recently appointed Eint Automotive LLC, the automotive aftermarket division of WJ Towell Group, as the official distributor of its lubricant products in Oman.



In January, Eint Automotive started offering a comprehensive selection of high quality lubricants, including 76 Lubricants and Kendall Motor Oil throughout the country. The partnership represented the first-ever distributor agreement for Phillips 66 Lubricants in Oman, and is part of the lubricant supplier's growth strategy throughout the Middle East region.

Bryan Faria, Phillips 66 Manager, Finished Lubricants, said that Oman has a solid, positive business climate, budding industrial opportunity and knowledgeable customers that they believe would appreciate the value of their high quality products that are made in the USA. He added that they couldn't be more delighted to be associated with such a well-known and well-respected business as Eint Automotive as they lead growth and expansion in the region.

Commenting on the partnership, Shajahan Azeez, Business Operations Manager at Eint Automotive, said that their company was proud to align with a world-class supplier such as Phillips 66 Lubricants and launch its high-quality lubricants in Oman for the very first time. According to him, its reputation for leading products and technology, as well as best-in-class service made the arrangement a win-win for all of them.

Eint Automotive presents Kendall motor oil with Liquid Titanium protection additive for both diesel and petrol automobiles, as well as high-performance Kendall transmission fluids. The company also offers a complete selection of 76 Lubricants' industrial and commercial greases, and lubricants designed for wide-ranging applications from cars and trucks to construction equipment and demanding industrial applications.

## VALVOLINE UNVEILS FULL SYNTHETIC MOTOR OIL WITH MAXLIFE TECH



Valvoline has recently launched its Full Synthetic High Mileage motor oil featuring Maxlife technology. The all-new lubricant, which is a reflection of the brand's innovation, technology and years of continued research, provides a high level of engine protection against the three leading causes of engine stress: wear, deposits and heat.

Pairing the company's award-winning additive chemistry with high quality synthetic base oils that meet its standards, Valvoline chemists have come up with a more durable full synthetic formulation that offers 40 percent more anti-wear film than Mobil 1 Synthetic. Such formulation is validated through a three-stage assessment processing, including engine wear tests, chemical analysis and lab bench tests.

According to Alexey Stiop, Valvoline research scientist, motor oil has been their main focus at Valvoline for more than 140 years. He said that they constantly push themselves to reinvent the category with one goal in mind: offering new levels of engine protection that surpass industry standards.

Apart from offering more anti-wear film, the new motor oil is proven to stand out in multiple categories, including emissions systems compatibility, reduced fuel consumption and suitability for all model years.

Aiming to raise awareness about the Full Synthetic High Mileage oil, Valvoline has unveiled [www.SeeADifference.com](http://www.SeeADifference.com), an online resource designed to educate motorists how synthetic motor oil works through video series showing Valvoline technology as well as to help them compare the product to other competitors in a side-by-side evaluation.

The company also enlisted the help of famous NASCAR driver Jimmie Johnson to further demonstrate the superior protection offered by the Full Synthetic High Mileage.

Jamal Muashsher, director of Valvoline Global Brands, explained that through [SeeADifference.com](http://www.SeeADifference.com), they present all of the information regarding synthetic motor oil - with straightforward, engaging content - to help motorists see for themselves that not all synthetic motor oils are the same.

## Toyota Supplier Mulls Increasing Airbag Capacity as Demand Soars

Reports say that Toyoda Gosei Co., an auto parts supplier part-owned by Toyota, is mulling an increase in its airbag capacity to address the growing demand for the safety devices worldwide.

According to Toyoda Gosei President Tadashi Arashima, demand from budding markets such as China, India and Southeast Asia should rise as more vehicle manufacturers install airbags as standard features in vehicles sold there. He said that the trend would not be impacted by the crisis including tough competitor Takata, whose airbag inflators have been associated with five fatalities and prompted global recalls by vehicle manufacturers spearheaded by Honda Motor Co.

In an interview at Toyoda Gosei's headquarters in Kiyosu, Arashima revealed that they have recently made some investment in Mexico, Indonesia and India related to airbags, but he thinks that the market is going to grow bigger. He added that their current capacity is tight, so they might need to boost capacity in the next few years, probably in India or some other budding markets.

In 2014, vehicle manufacturers recalled over 60 million vehicles in the United States. As estimated by the new head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), this will be exceeded this year due to public attention on automotive-safety defects.

The investigation in developed markets stands in disparity to the lack of directives in countries like India, where the absence of requirements for airbags and crash tests in vehicle are the exemption rather than the custom.

Arashima continued that Toyoda Gosei started the production of airbag inflators about three to four years ago, because they were costly components and more affordable to produce in-house. He also noted that it was hard to gain expertise in making airbags without manufacturing the inflators.

The company began manufacturing the inflators in its plant in Inazawa city, Aichi and also manufactures them at its plant in Missouri. Arashima concluded that Toyoda Gosei considers increasing the volume of inflators it manufactures.

## JEEP AND ALPINE JOIN HANDS ON WEATHERPROOF AUDIO FOR WRANGLER



Whether Jeep Wrangler crosses a doors-deep stream, carries a washable interior hosed down or is held in a freezing rain without doors and roof, this off-road SUV will stay as rugged and sophisticated as it is even when water finds its way to its cabin. This condition is distinctive to a Trail-Rated Jeep. Thus, when conceptualizing the reward audio system of the 2015 Wrangler, Jeep teamed up with Alpine to develop a stereo that is perfectly compatible with a timeless SUV.

The Alpine nine-speaker complement is an option to all 2015 Jeep Wrangler models that adds a 500-watt amplifier to an audio system. The complement comes with a 12-channel DSP that facilitates opposite audio profiles for both tip on and tip off driving. Pumping the tunes around the cabin are eight speakers, including four 6.5-inch full-range drivers and four tweeters.

So far, the best component in the new complement is a weatherproof 8x12-inch subwoofer that is mounted in the building of a back load area. Resistant to water, sun, dirt and snow, it is built to stand the test of time.

Ensuring that the subwoofer could deal with even the most severe weather and road condition, Alpine has tested an orator caked with silt, sand, rocks and ice, then submerged it in water for more than 90 hours during full power. The test's success is a testament to the company's unrivalled expertise in audio development.

Alpine's revolutionary nine-speaker reward audio complement is now accessible on all 2015 Jeep Wrangler models as a customary underline or option on top-tier trim levels.

## KIEKERT PRESENTS ADVANCED AUTOMOTIVE LED LATCH SYSTEM



In an effort to bolster driving safety, Kiekert AG, the global expert in automotive locking systems, has developed an innovative, industry-first LED door latch with a range of product-branding, security and safety features.

Compared to standard warning-light systems, the new system from the German company comes with a LED warning light that is built into the latch itself and is more visible to other pedestrians and drivers when the door of a vehicle is being opened and closed. In addition, the new design is lighter and simpler to install during assembly operations.

To improve brand awareness, adapt to individual customer preferences, and support different vehicle design themes, the brightness and LED color of the latch system can be varied. There are also emergency- and child-lock options and what's more, the door-latch LEDs can be made to flash to further improve safety and visibility.

According to the company's CEO Dr. Karl Krause, Kiekert is the first OEM supplier to integrate LED lighting directly into a door latch. He claimed that their new LED latch is another example of the company's smart and energy-efficient technology that blends lightweight design and safety. The CEO added that the patented LED latch system could be integrated into the design of any vehicle and is currently being mulled for introduction by a number of leading automakers.

Kiekert's attention to research and development enables it to recognize and instantly respond to market trends such as the popularity and increasing use of LED lighting.

Apart from its all-new LED latch system, Krause revealed that Kiekert has recently made numerous other major product announcements. This includes a tonneau cover latch for pick-up trucks which is slated to go into production this year as well as the expansion of Kiekert's Beta latch platform for the growth markets in Asia Pacific and the South American region.

Krause explained that the new Beta platform blends their product knowledge from decades of experience in the development of advanced locking systems with the company's expertise in global high-volume operations.

With over 1,200 patents, Kiekert is the chief development partner for automakers worldwide. In fact, one in three cars around the globe uses a locking system based on the company's design. With more than 150-year history, the company has developed and manufactured over 1.5 billion automotive locking systems.

## SAFETY SEAT ALERT STEPS UP ROAD SAFETY USING VIBRATION



Safety Alert Seat has found its way to select 2015 Chevrolet models, including Tahoe, Suburban and Silverado, in just a matter of two years—a testament to its superior performance. A luxury-exclusive feature of General Motors, it works with a number of other collision-avoidance warning technologies to vibrate the bottom cushion of the driver's seat in the event a crash threat is detected.

The innovative Safety Alert Seat is geared towards providing customers with a better substitute to auditory alerts such as beeps, as well as offering hearing-impaired motorists with crash avoidance system warnings. In accordance with researchers from John Hopkins University, one in five Americans—equivalent to 48 million—suffer some degree of hearing loss.

Using haptics, a tactile feedback technology that re-creates a sense of touch by utilizing right and/or left “tapping” vibration pulses, the Safety Alert Seat can direct the driver to the crash risk's location. Similar technology is utilized in military and space applications.

GM Active Safety Technical fellow Raymond J. Kiefer explained that utilizing the tactile sense in communicating crash risk direction can help cut through the mess of auditory and visual sensory that motorists routinely experience. He also added that the best kind of safety protection they could provide are customer-focused features that enable drivers to keep away from the crash altogether, and which are kept turned on for every road trip.

Here's how Chevrolet's Safety Alert Seat functions in a vehicle featuring a lane departure warning system: when the camera spots that the vehicle is leaving a lane without an active turn signal in that direction, small motors produce a vibration pulse in the right or left seat bolster that directs the focus of the driver to the lane encroachment's side.

Meanwhile, when a vehicle comes with forward collision alert technology and the system senses that the driver may strike the vehicle ahead, both sides of the seat will vibrate. Apart from seat vibrations, drivers can also opt to get beeping alerts.

Kiefer concluded that safety technologies are only as effective as the ability and willingness of customers to use them. According to him, if the Safety Alert Seat inspires their customers to get crash-risk warnings or provide hearing-impaired motorists a chance to experience such warning, it is good for them as well as other drivers.

## First Auto Start-Stop Ford F-150 to Have Johnson Controls AGM Battery



Glendale-based Johnson Controls will reportedly supply its advanced absorbent glass mat (AGM) battery technology to Ford's 2015 line of F-150 trucks.

When used in a start-stop system—which shuts off the vehicle's engine at a red light or when stuck in traffic—the AGM battery will help to significantly reduce fuel consumption. The battery keeps the vehicle's accessories with electronic systems on, and then restarts the engine when the brake pedal is released or the clutch is engaged.

According to Lisa Bahash, vice president and general manager of the Original Equipment Group for Johnson Controls Power Solutions, AGM batteries are designed for customers with huge power demands as the technology has up to four times the cycling durability of a regular battery. She also added that these batteries help their customers enhance fuel efficiency and environmental performance, thus offering customers with instant, cost-saving benefits.

Apart from batteries, Johnson controls also manufactures the seats and supplies the interior hard trim for the 2015 Ford F-150.

## Frost & Sullivan Sees Steering Technology Advancements as Key to Automated Driving

As the automotive industry journeys towards vehicle automation, OEMs and suppliers will continue investing in steering innovations for both automated and manually-driven vehicles. However, the focus will be more on instructing the vehicle to drive like a human being, which places heightened significance on being able to steer in a near-human manner.

A recent analysis from Frost & Sullivan titled "Strategic Analysis of Key Focus Areas for Steering Technology Development" reveals that steer-by-wire is anticipated to enter a wider array of premium vehicles in the future, although its success greatly depends on how OEMs deal with the loss-of-steering-assist issue. At the same time, the pickup, multi-purpose vehicle (MPV), and sport utility vehicle (SUV) segments will crossover to electric power steering (EPS) systems.

According to a Frost & Sullivan Automotive and Transportation Research analyst, developed regions such as Europe and North America have a high rate of EPS fitment, and consumers are constantly demanding advanced technologies. As an outcome, advanced EPS functions such as crosswind compensation and lane keeping assist will make inroads into these markets.

In the meantime, budding markets are searching for the same features at a more affordable cost, as customers find EPS costly compared to rival technologies such as electro-hydraulic or hydraulic power steering. These regions provide a huge scope for affordable column EPS since customers are willing to sacrifice noise, vibration and harshness (NVH) characteristics for price.

Another segment with remarkable undiscovered potential is heavy duty EPS. Most commercial vehicles are still utilizing the electro-hydraulic or hydraulic system since conventional EPS was not able to breach the 15 kilonewton (kN) barrier. Though the Ram 1500 and Ford F150 have used the EPS, manufacturers are advised to invest further to make large-scale adoption in heavy vehicles possible.

The analyst concludes that OEMs with a vivid and practical strategy for loss-of-assist mitigation are more likely to succeed in the development of steering systems that are tuned towards automated driving; noting that while the overall focus in developing advanced, driver-out-of-the-loop steering for all vehicle segments will speed up, innovations to enhance the steering feel of manually driven vehicles will also advance steadily.

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## TENNECO UNVEILS LIGHTWEIGHT TECHNOLOGIES FOR VEHICLE EMISSION REDUCTION

Just recently, Tenneco pulled the covers off its lightweight technologies at the opening of the American Lightweight Materials Manufacturing Innovation Institute (ALMMII) in Detroit. The technologies are designed to enhance fuel economy and reduce vehicle emissions by helping vehicle manufacturers reduce total vehicle weight.

According to Tim Jackson, executive vice president, technology, strategy and business development for Tenneco, as vehicles become more sophisticated, the need for technology solutions that reduce vehicle mass, enhance fuel economy and meet emissions targets without sacrificing vehicle performance has become crucial for automakers. He added that Tenneco was proud to collaborate with ALMMII to drive innovation that helps make their products and the vehicles they support, not only lighter, but also more sustainable and cleaner.

### Electronic Valves

Tenneco's electronically controlled exhaust valves offer a compact, lightweight and cost-effective solution for noise control and accurate sound design in pipeline applications, as well as adaptive exhaust control in vehicles which feature cylinder deactivation. When used in exhaust system designs, electronic valves can reduce the muffler's mass, leading to total system weight savings. Recently, the company's electrical valve was rolled out in an acoustic tuning application on the 2014 Chevrolet Corvette Stingray.

### Complete Exhaust System

Leveraging its engineering and systems integration capabilities, Tenneco is able to design comprehensive exhaust systems that are tailored to customers' demands for weight and performance. Ford Focus is one example of this, for which the company supplies diesel particulate filters, catalysts, underbody converters, resonators and cold-end emission control systems. This system, which has been in production since 2012, integrates innovations such as aluminum body side mounts, hollow rod hangers, a lightweight spun catalytic converter and thin wall tubing.

### Fabricated Manifolds

Ensuring that the exhaust system's thermal management properties and overall mass are balanced is critical as it is the key to meeting emissions requirements without adding more weight. Compared with standard cast manifolds, Tenneco's fabricated manifolds provide up to 50 percent weight reduction. As confirmed by test data, fabricated manifolds can also reach 50 degrees Celsius, which can lead to faster catalyst light off and enhanced overall catalyst efficiency.

## Smart Fortwo's Panorama Roof Boasts Infrared Absorption Function



It seems that Daimler's Smart Fortwo is the center of much innovation these days.

The third generation of the two-door city car now features heat-absorbing panorama roof made of polycarbonate (PC) plastic. Apart from bringing more light into the interior and offering a sense of spaciousness in the Fortwo, it also reduces heat buildup in the cabin. As a result, the car achieves better fuel economy via reduced air-conditioner load.

German parts manufacturer Webasto is manufacturing the panorama roof for the city car in its competence center in Schierling, Germany. Measuring 1.2 square meters, the transparent roof panel is made of Makrolon PC from Bayer MaterialScience, and is an extension of the front windshield.

The PC material is extremely shatterproof, weatherproof, impact resistant and lightweight. In fact, a roof made of polycarbonate can be up to 50 percent lighter than its glass equivalent. The new Fortwo weighs just 9.8 kilograms, which in turn reduces fuel consumption and positively affects driving dynamics, as it shifts the vehicle's center of gravity down.

Webasto claims that the technological highlight of the groundbreaking roof system is its solar energy absorption ability, which helps prevent the interior from heating up too much due to absorption of IR radiation. Thanks to infrared absorbers that are integrated in the polycarbonate, more particularly into the resin pellets that the panels are molded from.

The roof panorama is manufactured utilizing two-component injection-compression molding. The second component is ABS blend; Bayblend T95 MF, a black-colored polycarbonate which enables the addition of more functions such as screw bosses on the bottom side of the roof. A fabric roller blind is attached on them to regulate the interior's brightness. Furthermore, the panorama roof comes with a coating layer that makes it resistant to scratches and weather influences.

# CONTINENTAL CELEBRATES A DECADE OF SUCCESS FOR ITS INJECTOR TECHNOLOGY



Through the years, the gasoline engine with port injection has remained as the leading type of combustion engine in cars worldwide, even though direct injection is on the upswing in several markets.

Global automotive supplier Continental has been positively driving the optimization of PFI technology for decades. This has been reflected in an anniversary, with more than 200 million units of the 7th generation of the company's PFI injectors sold between 2004 and 2014. To meet more recent requirements of downsized and turbocharged engines, a subsequent 9th generation has already been rolled out in the market. A 10th generation is also currently under development not only for Twin Port engines, but also for engines with a combination of PFI and direct injection.

Speaking at the product anniversary, Gunnar Lowack, Head of Product Line Injector, Engine Systems Business Unit, Powertrain Division, said that when they developed the 7th generation of their PFI injectors, they expected a broad combination of application needs, and this is why the 7th injector generation continues to be successful. He added that for several applications, the injector generation still offers an attractive mix of competitive price and clean technology, which can be easily and flexibly adapted to a variety of engine designs.

Following the German company's strategy of "In the market – for the market", the 7th generation of PFI injectors is manufactured in Changchun, China; Pisa, Italy; and Newport News, USA to supply the respective world regions. Since the production began in 2004, this heavy-duty, lightweight and compact injector type has found its way into several engines and engine families because of its numerous design benefits. Given that the 7th generation injector is a modular product, engine designers and developers can freely integrate three body and nozzle length options to perfectly match the injector dimensions to the intake manifold's geometry. Whichever combination is selected, the resulting unit will provide a fine fuel atomization. Depending on the nozzle and fuel pressure plate, the fuel spray droplets have a mean diameter of just 60 µm. This supports a clean and quick combustion process with a minimum of raw emissions.

Mike Dallmeyer, Head of Research & Development Low Pressure Components, Engine Systems Business Unit, Powertrain Division, said in a statement that by combining proven and standardized components with a continuous product development, the Continental PFI injector portfolio comes with the most cost-effective solutions for the extended lifetime of cleaner and more efficient PFI engines worldwide.

Another huge benefit of the injector is the broad choice of potential spray patterns, including the spray cone's bent angle. By using this design freedom, engine developers can adapt the injector spray cone shape to the intake port geometry with the target of avoiding wall-wetting, and therefore control hydrocarbon emissions.

Unknown to many, the early versions of PFI injectors are still being produced globally to meet specific consumer needs. Continental's PFI technology is part of a complete gasoline injection technology portfolio, which includes innovative direct injection solutions for high-performance and highly efficient engines.






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## Wulf Gaertner Launches Newly Improved MEYLE Water Pumps for VAG Models

A broken water pump can cause huge damage to any vehicle. This is why Wulf Gaertner Autoparts engineers, aiming to take garage repairs to new heights, have redesigned their water pump range for the first time. This new range includes six new MEYLE-HD water pumps, which cover different VAG models such as: 113 220 0011/HD (suitable for VW petrol engines 2.0 TFSI), 113 220 0023/HD (suitable for VW petrol engines 1.8 TSI | 2.0 TSI), 113 012 0033/HD (suitable for VW petrol engines 1.6i | 1.8i | 2.0i), 113 220 0005/HD (suitable for VW diesel engines 2.5 TDI), 113 012 0042/HD (suitable for VW diesel engines 2.5 TDI), and 113 220 0018/HD (suitable for VW diesel engines 1.9-2.0 TDI).

The high quality pumps bear the seal "Made in Germany" and offer more than the standard quality found on the free market for spare parts. They also feature a new material design for the mechanical seal which – by contrast with OE parts – perfectly addresses the demands of used vehicles.

Sven Nielsen, Technology Manager at Wulf Gaertner Autoparts, revealed in a statement that the reason for applying their HD philosophy of enhancing on parts to water pumps is the huge demand from garages. He explained that as the sealing ring plays a huge role in a water pump's durability, Wulf Gaertner Autoparts uses silicon carbide/silicon carbide seal faces (SiC/SiC) as well as a high-quality bearing in OEM quality for the new MEYLE-HD water pumps. "This combination is primarily designed for the stresses in used vehicles in which the cooling system already shows signs of wear and corrosion, and where the cooling agent may also be contaminated."

The mechanical seal with (SiC/SiC) is significantly resistant to abrasive substances such as dirt and different cooling agent additives. Meanwhile, the secondary seal is made up of peroxide-cured HNBR, which offers extremely high resistance to weathering and temperature. With these product properties, the water pumps are not affected even by high operating temperatures of up to 130°C.

The new MEYLE-HD water pumps are offered with a four-year warranty, enabling customers to save costs on repairs.



## Wood Fiber Could be the Next Big Thing in Auto Components



It seems that nature will play a huge role in the future of automobile development. At the Nature.tec trade show held in Berlin in January, a team of wood technology researchers from Fraunhofer Institute showcased a wood fiber form-pressed into components for the automotive industry.

Nowadays, a growing number of automakers are counting on fiber reinforced synthetics as lightweight alternatives for aluminum or steel. The fibers embedded into the synthetic make the material more durable. This is why carbon fiber is mainly used in Formula 1 racing cars, but its high cost is a major downside. As a result, carbon fiber-reinforced plastics (CFRPs), which are used in airplanes, have still not yet reached wide-scale mass production. While it is true that glass fibers can also be used and are less costly, their downside is weight.

In an attempt to address this issue, scientists at the Fraunhofer Institute for Wood Research in Braunschweig, Germany, unveiled a solution they discovered in natural fibers from wood, cotton, or hemp. Based on findings, bio-based carbon fibers and textile are extremely light yet extremely durable components.

Variants obtained from wood, cotton, flax and hemp are as affordable as glass fibers, but have a lower density than carbon or glass. If burned at the end of their life cycle, these bio-based fibers produce extra energy - without leaving any residue. However, their stability and durability don't yet reach that of carbon fibers.

According to Prof. Dr.-Ing. Hans-Josef Endres, head of the Application Center for Wood Fiber Research, depending on the application, they are combining carbon with a variety of bio-based textile fibers. Typically, these natural fibers exist as fabrics that are placed on each other and are embedded by the plastic matrix.

The surface of the fibers is then treated so that they can be run smoothly through textile equipment, and can be easily processed into fabrics. This treatment process is called sizing, which enables the fibers to bond.

Endres explained that by ensuring that the fibers bond to the matrix optimally, they could boost the materials' durability by up to 50 percent. Scientists are also looking into how the processing procedures for these materials can be employed on an industrial scale.

# SanDisk Unveils First Auto-Grade Flash for Connected Cars

SanDisk Corp., a leading designer, developer and manufacturer of flash memory storage solutions and software, is dynamically expanding its horizon to the automotive industry, with its first-ever automotive-grade NAND flash products designed for automotive infotainment systems and next-generation connected cars.

Martin Booth, director of Product Management & Marketing at SanDisk, revealed in a statement that the American company dipped into the automotive market before through third-party vendors' storage solutions which utilize its commercial-grade flash memory. However, now with its memory chips AEC-Q100-certified, SanDisk anticipates to make automotive a key focus.

As the connected car starts to catch on, chip vendors who are active in multimedia, connectivity and mobile markets are looking at the open road as their next border. NAND flash memory suppliers such as SanDisk and Micron are going along for the ride.

For instance, Micron introduced in November 2014 its M500IT solid state drive (SSD), touting it as the first automotive-grade SSD in the industry with AEC-Q100-compliant NAND flash memory components and system-level qualification in select automotive conditions and applications.

In late January, Gartner issued predictions, projecting that 4.9 billion connected things would be used this year, up 30 percent from last year, and would reach 25 billion by 2020. The market research firm underlined that the increased consumption and development of digital content within the vehicle would increase the need for more high-end infotainment systems, thereby creating opportunities for HMI technologies, displays, graphics accelerators and application processors.

According to SanDisk's Booth, when conventional cars had just the basic car radio, they required no NAND flash. As automakers began to add in-vehicle entertainment, soon merging it with a navigation system, the amount of flash memory required inside a car jumped from 4/8GB of embedded memory to high-capacity flash 8/16/32GB or embedded memory.

He added that once car OEMs choose sophisticated entertainment systems, including rear-seat video/audio systems, they would need a hard disk drive of over 64GB. These storage systems are now starting to find their way to SSD.

Booth continued that as more applications such as 4G LTE connection, ADAS, augmented reality in navigation systems and 3D mapping of the road ahead start to surface, they propel the amount of memory required inside a car above and beyond what is seen today. SanDisk eyes this growth to reach as much as 128GB of embedded memory.

The company is launching automotive SD cards and iNAND, an automotive embedded flash drive. The SD cards have up to 64GB capacity, featuring sequential up to 20MB/s Write/Read speed and high-speed interface. Meanwhile, the iNAND is offered to automotive manufacturers with also 64GB, featuring optimized power immunity, including write abort handling and voltage detection.

Both embedded SD cards and flash drive meet AEC-Q100 specifications and are capable of withstanding -40°C to +85°C operating temperature. Plus, they are enhanced for particular automotive applications. For instance, compared to smartphones, automotive flash products are more read-intensive and have 10- to 50-year lifespan.

Utilized in connected car and data-intensive automotive infotainment applications, these new memory products allow maps to load fast, enhancing touchscreen responsiveness and reducing potential intervention from driving on rough or uneven roadways.

By making its products automotive-grade, SanDisk anticipates to provide captive supply and dedication to support the automotive market, meeting the design and supply demands of car OEMs and Tier Ones.

Over the last few months, the company has been sampling its iNAND and SD card products. Booth concluded that they are ready to start mass production as soon as they get orders.



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## Olympus Air A01 Smartphone Camera

Clicking pictures using your smartphone and instantly uploading them is certainly convenient. But for some, the satisfaction of taking a picture comes from using a digital camera.

Olympus Air A01 Smartphone Camera combines the two, making it easy to click an image and uploading it immediately after. Compatible with Android and iOS, the camera can be paired with your smartphone via Bluetooth connectivity technology and Wi-fi, which can be authenticated using a QR code. It works with eight specifically designed apps each offering special features and settings and boasts of around two dozen filters and art effects.

The is ultra lightweight at approximately 147 grams and features a 16-megapixel sensor that can use multiple supported lenses. With a shutter speed of up to 1/16000, it can easily shoot fast-moving subjects at 10 frames per second, and the lens can zoom up to three times. The camera also comes with a tripod mount, a physical shutter button and a slot for a microSD card.

The Air A01 will can be purchased online through the company's online store from March and for now, will be available in Japanese stores. The body only version of the camera will be priced at \$289 and the 14-42mm lens kit version will cost \$425.



## Toshiba Encrypted USB Flash Drive



When storing data, security is our biggest concern. While cloud and micro-SD cards have addressed the issue to some extent, how do we protect the data we carry on regular USB Flash Drives?

Toshiba's new encrypted flash drive is the answer for those who prefer to use a USB, yet fear a breach of security. With its AES 256-bit hardware encryption, it gives new meaning to safe data storage. According to Toshiba, the device –compatible with a 2.0 USB port –boasts of “one of the highest encryption standards available on the market”.

The device is easy to use. You simply have to set up a secure code using its built-in mini keyboard, plug the drive to a port, and load the content. The content is automatically sealed when the flash drive is unplugged, and can only be accessed when you enter the correct PIN again. The drive is equipped with a Brute Force Hack Defense Mechanism that destroys the secured data after 10 repeated unsuccessful attempts at entering the PIN – a sound defense against thieves and hackers.

The dust- and water-resistant aluminum sheath protects the three LED indicators: 0-9 buttons, a couple of lock icons and a 'lock' button. The flash drive is compatible with Windows 8.1, 8 and 7, Linux, Mac OS X 10.6, 10.7, 10.8 and 10.9 and certain embedded systems. Certified for government use, the device is priced from \$95 to \$200 and is available in 4GB, 8GB, 16GB, and 32GB capacities. It also comes with a three-year limited warranty.

## Bondic

Using glue to fix broken things can literally land you in a sticky situation. You end up making your hands messy, there will be obvious signs of repair work and the glue often dries before the broken pieces have been properly aligned. With Bondic, the world's first liquid plastic welder, all these issues will become a thing of the past.

Bondic is certainly not a glue stick. It is your DIY answer to fixing plastic just the way you want it, and as conveniently as it can get. There are four simple steps to follow. The first step is to thoroughly clean the surface you want to fix and depending on how strong a bond you want, you can create a rough or a smooth surface. Next comes filling, when you apply the liquid plastic to the broken area using a needle-type applicator. The liquid plastic hardens only when you shine the UV light on the surface to be fixed, which takes all of four seconds. Last of all, you give it finishing touches by filing, sanding, molding and/or painting according to your wishes.

Bondic is even suitable for material made out of fiberglass, wood and metal. The technique has been used in high-tech industry and medicine for many years, but this is the first time it has been marketed for everyday use.

The entire kit including an applicator, a 4-gram tube of liquid plastic and UV light is available for US\$22.

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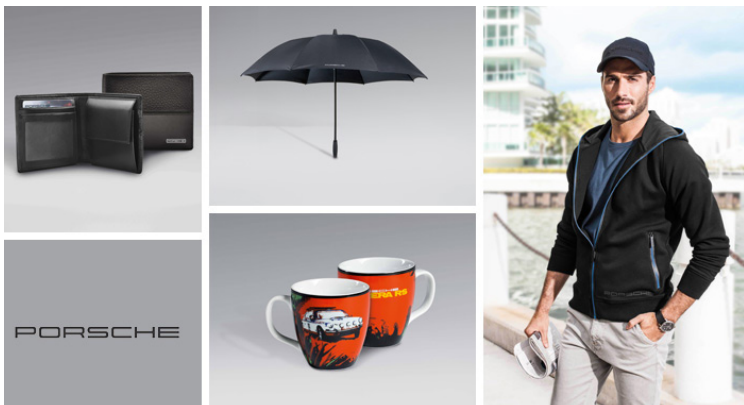
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# HOT PRODUCTS



## Porsche Driver's Selection Range

Porsche has expanded its Driver's Selection range with four more products for Porsche fans in the Middle East.

The new People Fashion Metropolitan sweat jacket is both stylish and comfortable. Inspired by the cabriolet, the black jacket comes with a fashionable hood, and flaunts a sporty cut. The fabric used for the jacket is 65 percent cotton and 35 percent polyester. Priced at AED 709, this will excite many Porsche aficionados.

If a cup of tea is your beverage of choice, the new limited-edition collector tea cup is a must for your collection of teacups. Made from bone china, the cup is a tribute to the Porsche classics, and features a vintage racing poster of a Carrera RS. It even comes with a unique serial number and is selling for AED 79.

With the Porsche logo on the outside, the Sport Classic wallet (priced at AED 505) is another cool new addition to the line. Made from 100 percent genuine grained cowhide leather, the black folded model comes with a coin pouch, two note compartments, and several credit card slots and slit pockets.

Protect your complexion from the glaring sun in the Middle East with the Porsche's Umbrella XL. It has an aluminum shaft with fiberglass spokes, besides a protective cover and an automatic mechanism. The Senosoft coated handle makes it easy to hold. The 100 percent polyester, 48-inch-diameter umbrella can be bought for AED 403. All the products are available either online at [www.porsche.com/shop](http://www.porsche.com/shop) or at the Porsche Centres in Dubai, Sharjah and Fujairah.



## PopSLATE

If you think your iPhone case is cool, think again. PopSLATE, the phone's true partner has arrived. As the name suggests, this case is a blank slate fitted at the back of your phone which you can customize with any image you like sourced from your phone. Using this 4-inch e-ink screen you can now have anything from boarding passes to maps to important lists to calendars available at a glance – without having to fiddle with your phone's keypad.

All you have to do is send the required image from your phone to popSLATE via its dual-mode Bluetooth. To change the image, just tap the screen twice, or you can even have a slideshow. The gadget also comes with on-board memory and a microcontroller. You can use popSLATE app to find your favorite designs and images from rich content channels (even Instagram), take pictures and share images with the global popSLATE community.

The battery requires low power, staying on for around a week on a single charge (the case itself draws its energy from the iPhone's lightning power port). The e-paper display ensures that the images can be easily read under direct sunlight, which is certainly an asset when outdoors. There is also a micro-USB charging port on the popSLATE that passes charge through to the iPhone. The case is thin and lightweight but durable enough to protect your phone and even the screen is described as "indestructible" by the makers.

## Burnie Grill



Make the best use of the winter here by grilling all the way. However, one of the worst bits about the grilling is the pre-planning it calls for with the need for supplies and the post grilling cleanup. These requirements spoil what would otherwise be a fun activity. This is where the portable Burnie Grill makes its mark. Light-weight and super convenient, the disposable grill halves the time and effort needed for a standard grill.

The biggest USP of the grill is that it lights very quickly with just a single match – courtesy a removable wick in the middle. The smart wood stump design is made out of 100 percent alder wood and includes charcoal. There are no chemicals involved, which ensures that nothing bad flavors your food. Inspired by the ancient Nordic technique for burning wood stumps, Burnie Grill can fit by-and-large most standard sized grill grates, kettles and pans. So all you have to do is unwrap it, strike the fire with a match stick, and let the grilling begin.

The grill is available in medium size (3.5lbs) and large size (5.5lbs). Depending on the size, it can burn from one-and-a-half hours to two-and-a-half hours. The wood eventually burns out by itself, saving you from cleaning up the remnants. A great idea for grab-and-go, hassle-free grilling experience.

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