

Editorial

What Better Training Than Attending A Congress!

Carlos Tavares has some impressive, memorable things to say with his management messages; find them in this week's in-depth article. Me, I mainly retain that the success happens not on a trickle-down basis, but on a bubble-up basis: the boss decides, but the ideas arrive from employees down below the management levels.

But there's also a message missing from the Tavares interview: In R&D, as in many other activities, management has to help lower-level employees to be able to make improvement proposals. How? by being better trained and informed, and better recognising those employees who put their training and information to innovative use.

Now, I put it to you: the best, most efficient training comes from presentations at congresses. The best information comes from a steady flow of information on technologies, visiting exhibition booths, and attending demonstrations—exactly as presented and facilitated by DVN. That's a value proposition well worth two days' attendance at a congress and your ongoing subscription to DVN.

During my work at Valeo, I created the VISION congress to facilitate training, information, and recognition in the vehicle lighting industry. After I was done working at Valeo, I created Driving Vision News to again allow lighting players to be trained, to be informed and to be recognised.

We have this year the opportunity to attend congresses all over the world: in Germany with **ISAL in April**; in America with the DVN US Workshop in June; in China with the DVN Shanghai Workshop in September; in France with VISION in October...wherever you are, there is a congress close by; jump in and leverage your nearest opportunity:

Managers, send employees to a congress, or better yet, bring them with you.
Employees, be proactive; ask your boss to attend.

Sincerely yours,


DVN CEO

In Depth Lighting Technology

Interview: Stellantis CEO Carlos Tavares

Extract from Automotive News Europe



Automotive News Europe recently interviewed Stellantis CEO Carlos Tavares. Here are some highlights of what he had to say about his company's strategy:

"Dare Forward 2030 is a bottom-up plan developed at the lower levels of the organisation and funneled up through consecutive layers until it reached top management. People do not want to be caught in a dinosaur-like legacy company. Our people are rapidly embracing change. We have been dealing with many startups and tech companies and I can tell you that Stellantis' decision-making speed is the same as theirs, despite many people seeing us as a sort of dinosaur.

"I visited 30 plants last year and I saw that our plant managers and their teams have tons of ideas. The key was to create a context in which they could express their ideas and we could execute their ideas on the shop floor. This way we addressed fixed and variable costs. The synergies we gained in the first year of the merged company helped significantly. The reason to be happy is that those synergies are coming from the bottom up, from what our people are proposing because they understand the purpose of this merger.

"The size of the European market is the real issue, not only for Stellantis but for the entire industry. Sales of passenger cars and light commercial vehicles in Europe fell from 18 million pre-Covid in 2019 to about 15 million in 2020 and 2021. Since we have a market share of about 22 per cent, that means we lost over 600,000 units each year. We do not expect a big rebound this year, with growth of about 3 per cent. With the plan we unveiled this month, we showed we have the product, talent, distribution network and investment strength to maintain our roughly 22 per cent market share. The ideal size of the European market is between 18 million and 20 million units. If we continue to remain at about 15 million, actions on capacity reduction will be required because I have to assure the sustainability of this company.

"My fear is an attitude that I see mostly in Europe, where change is seen as a threat. We should not be afraid of change. Change doesn't have to be painful. Change can be fun, and we should have fun. I always tell my people, "Please go ahead and take risks." I'm here to cover the risks. I have never faced a problem that a group of four or five well-educated, well-intended top executives with open minds could not solve".

Lighting News

The legendary ISAL Symposium opens soon

LIGHTING NEWS



The symposium was founded under the name “Progress in Automobile Lighting” PAL in 1995 and 90 attendees were present in the lecture auditorium of the Chemical Faculty. A big success these times. Since then, more than two decades have elapsed, and the event's location has been changed to the immense and representative congress *Darmstadtium*.

ISAL encourages the exchange between lighting engineers, road safety experts, regulative bodies, and offers the opportunity to present the most recent results of research and development and promotes a bright future for automotive lighting.

ISAL hosts one of the largest and most dynamic international exhibitions focused on automotive lighting bringing together scientists, technologists, and key players. Leading companies in automotive lighting showcase their latest products, hardware, and software solutions to a broad audience of more than 1000 visitors.

In normal times ISAL takes place every 2 years in September in odd-numbered years.

Due to Covid ISAL was postponed to April 4 to 6, 2022, taking place in the Darmstadtium Conference Center which is located beside the Darmstadt University in the City Center.

The good news: Most probable the full capacity of about 1000 seats can be used! (First announcements said only a quarter will be allowed) The exhibition is sold out since long.



THE ISAL 2019 STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The whole Automotive Lighting Branche looks forward to this traditional international conference, which brings science, industry, and authorities together. DVN will be present of course and will publish a paper about ISAL after the event.

See you in Darmstadt!

Kia EV6 is Geneva Auto Show Car of the Year

LIGHTING NEWS



The EV6 is Kia's first BEV, and it has a finely designed exterior lighting system. Models without ADB which includes most or all US/Canada units have static reflector-type LED headlamps.



EV6s with ADB, like the light silver car, have a more sophisticated system with over-and-under ice cube-shaped projectors. The upper projector provides the low beam, while the lower projector produces the ADB + high beam.

The rear lamps are glittering jewelry, as well, and, like the headlamps, they glitter differently depending on country. There's a futuristic, dotted, red-lensed LED band spanning the full width of the car; the left and right extents swoop downward and provide the stop/tail light functions, while a short cantilevered section branches off into the quarter panel as the side marker light and reflector in North America, or a blank red zone elsewhere. Outside the North American regulatory island, a diamond-textured continuation of the LED band's end-wrap lights up amber to provide the turn signals. American and Canadian models just flash the red stop light to approximate a turn signal, and the diamond-textured area is an unlit dummy.

There's a dynamic welcome animation on Korea-spec cars, but not on the European-spec models because it's not (yet?) allowed by regulations. Kia picked up a first-time Car of the Year award at the Geneva motor show, beating out six other (mostly) electric vehicles.

The seven finalists' voting point totals were:

- Kia EV6: 279 points
- Renault Mégane E-Tech: 265 points
- Hyundai Ioniq 5: 261 points
- Peugeot 308: 191 points (not a full EV, but available as plug-in hybrid)
- Škoda Enyaq iV: 185 points
- Ford Mustang Mach-E: 150 points
- Cupra Born: 144 points

NHTSA: To Recall 725,000 GMC Terrain Over Blinding HL

LIGHTING NEWS



NHTSA denied a GM request that's likely going to result in the automaker recalling hundreds of thousands of SUVs over headlights that could cause glare to other drivers. Specifically, 727 thousand GMC Terrains from model years 2010 to 2017.

GMC discovered that its last-gen Terrain headlights did not fully comply with FMVSS 108. It then filed a petition with NHTSA the following month arguing that the issue was inconsequential.

GM's main justification was: "The reflection has no effect on vehicle safety for oncoming or surrounding vehicles. The narrow reflection in question does not create a safety risk for oncoming or surrounding drivers, due to the extreme angle of the reflection. This angle, 80° outboard and 45° upward from each lamp's optical axis, is far above the range where the reflection could cause glare"

The automaker also argued that the too-bright reflection isn't visible from the Terrain driver's perspective either and that the part in question has subsequently been replaced by supplier Stanley with a new one with graining on the affected surfaces that prevents reflection.

But NHTSA wasn't having it. The federal agency agreed with GM on the point that the GMC Terrain driver is very likely unaffected but countered with the notion that "glare to other motorists driving in proximity" may indeed be possible under non-ideal weather conditions such as snow and fog. It also pointed out that the Terrain's bright points came in at about 450 to 470 candela, exceeding NHTSA's maximum of 125 cd by more than triple.

GM reportedly said it would "review NHTSA's decision and explore potential next steps," with those next steps very likely being a recall on all affected GMC Terrains. This would involve informing owners and arranging for them to have the headlight parts replaced free of charge by a dealership.

NHTSA has refused GM's request to sidestep a recall of 2010 through 2017 models, even though there aren't reported safety problems with the lights on the SUVs.

In 2007, Ichikoh had to manage a similar case for around 100 000 cars delivered more than 5 years ago. Ichikoh at the end was very close to bankruptcy, so it will be very difficult for Stanley even if they are bigger.

Deliveries to the USA are perhaps not integrating enough the corresponding risk that could sentence even big companies as it was the case for the Japanese seat belt manufacturer Takata who disappeared in 2018.

Elmos' Standalone Driver for LED Animation

LIGHTING NEWS



Elmos have a new standalone driver chip that affordably enables new lighting options for vehicle tail lights. The E522.88 can store individual channel current animation sequences; an external microcontroller is not required, reducing the cost of the LED control unit.

According to the manufacturer, the E522.88 is the industry's first standalone multi-channel LED controller that provides a comprehensive set of diagnostics to obtain a system-level ASIL-B safety rating without using a microcontroller. It has 16 channels and drives a maximum output current of 100 mA per channel. It supports Elmos' patented power management methodology that enables a wide supply voltage range and ensures constant high light intensity of the LEDs. Animation sequences can then be programmed at the end by the customer and triggered by separate signals in the application.



Elmos' lighting manager Jatin Thaker (photo) gave a talk on dynamic rear lighting at a DVN Workshop. He calls the new driver an important step in the company's expansion of their range of multichannel LED taillight drivers, which enables automakers to "realise animated taillight systems that outperform other premium models". An Elmos [online video](#) does some effective show-and-tell about the company's dynamic-taillight driver offerings, while [another](#) shows off the capabilities as applied to a prototype LED taillamp.

Acura Reprises Integra Name for New Sedan

LIGHTING NEWS



Honda's premium Acura brand is replacing their ILX for 2023 with the Integra—the name of an early Acura model that helped quickly elevate the new brand in the mid-late 1980s. The new car tracks closely with the prototype shown last November. There's an integra callout on the front bumper fascia below the offside headlamp, and another below the nearside taillamp—another homage to previous Integras—and proud acura callouts in the headlamps and rear lamps themselves.

The headlamps are designed as a flowing-triangle shape containing with a new iteration of Acura's familial horizontally-arrayed "Jewel Eyes" and checkmark-shaped DRL indicator wrapping tidily under the triangular side marker light + reflector. The taillights echo the headlamp's design cues

Hella Expand, Retool Austria Plant

LIGHTING NEWS



Hella continue to expand their plant at Großpetersdorf, Austria. The supplier's Austrian branch, HFA (Hella Fahrzeugteile Austria) are building a new tool warehouse on three levels with around 450 m² and a logistics hall with 600 m². In addition, the machinery is being renewed and expanded. The measures are scheduled for completion by the end of this year.

HFA managing director Thomas Meisinger says "In order to be prepared for new projects, we need more storage space as well as additional space for tools and semi-finished products. In addition, we are upgrading our facilities and infrastructure to the latest technology (...) at the same time, we are sending out clear signals in the direction of sustainability by making the charging infrastructure available to our employees and visitors on a temporary basis".

The new tool storage facility offers space for up to 60 large jigs and 150 injection moulding machines. The warehouse has a state-of-the-art LED lighting system and special temperature and humidity control to minimise tool rust due to condensation. In addition, the ventilation and exhaust systems in the existing production and assembly halls will be renewed. Among other things, this allows the waste heat from the injection moulding machines in plastics production to be dissipated more effectively, creating an optimal working environment for humans and machines alike. In this context, the shower and break rooms were also modernised.

A semi-automated production line is currently being started up to produce Hella's S-Series LED work lamps. The new 600-m² logistics hall, which will increase storage capacity at the site to 2,400 m², will mainly store semi-finished products with a high-bay warehouse system. All in all, the upgrades to the Großpetersdorf site will increase in-house production and thus contribute to an extension of the value chain.

With over 600 employees, HFA is one of the largest employers in Burgenland. On a production area of around 6,000 m², state-of-the-art lighting systems for agricultural machinery, construction machinery, motorcycles, snowmobiles and the mining sector are produced and supplied to customers all over the world.

Driver Assistance News

Inceptio Complete Unmanned L4 Road Test

DRIVER ASSISTANCE NEWS



Inceptio Technology are a China-based company who describe themselves as having "a vision to build the most trustworthy autonomous freight service network". Now they're said to have completed an unmanned road test of an L⁴ heavy-duty vehicle—a development of Inceptio's existing production L³ solutions.

According to the relevant national regulations, the test was carried out on a closed expressway test section about 24 km long in Laiwu, Shandong. The test section included typical high-speed road structures such as large curvatures; long tunnels; bridges; on- and offramps with various slopes and speeds, and toll stations. A large number of other vehicles were added to simulate real traffic flow.

The vehicle is said to have completed the road test smoothly without human intervention, and calmly carried out automatic following; automatic lane change; identification and avoidance of construction vehicles and cones; automatic avoidance in the lane; automatic follow-up and entry at typical scenes such as toll stations.

The L⁴ self-driving heavy-duty truck for the full driverless test was based on a mass-produced model jointly developed by Inceptio and an unidentified vehicle manufacturer. Upgrades for L⁴ included algorithm software and appropriate expansion of lidar and computing power.

Inceptio CTO Dr. Yang Ruigang says "This [was] a technical verification of L⁴ unmanned heavy trucks with mass production genes. The vehicles can cope with the natural traffic flow in various high-speed scenarios with ease, showing excellent perception and control stability. In terms of perception, we have followed the mass production scheme of multi-sensor fusion, only adding 2 lidars as supplements, and appropriate computing power expansion, and the fully redundant wire-controlled chassis has not been changed".

Inceptio's autonomous driving technology architecture has been designed for L⁴ from the start; its evolution has greatly benefited from the development and data accumulation of L³ mass-produced models.

BMW, Qualcomm, Arriver in AD Tech Pact

DRIVER ASSISTANCE NEWS



Arriver

BMW, Qualcomm, and Arriver—the latter itself a collaboration between Veoneer and Qualcomm—have entered a strategic cooperation on joint development of next-generation AD technologies including L² ADAS, L³ AD, and NCAP optimisation. The co-development of software functions is based on the current BMW automated driving software stack first launched with the BMW iX last year.

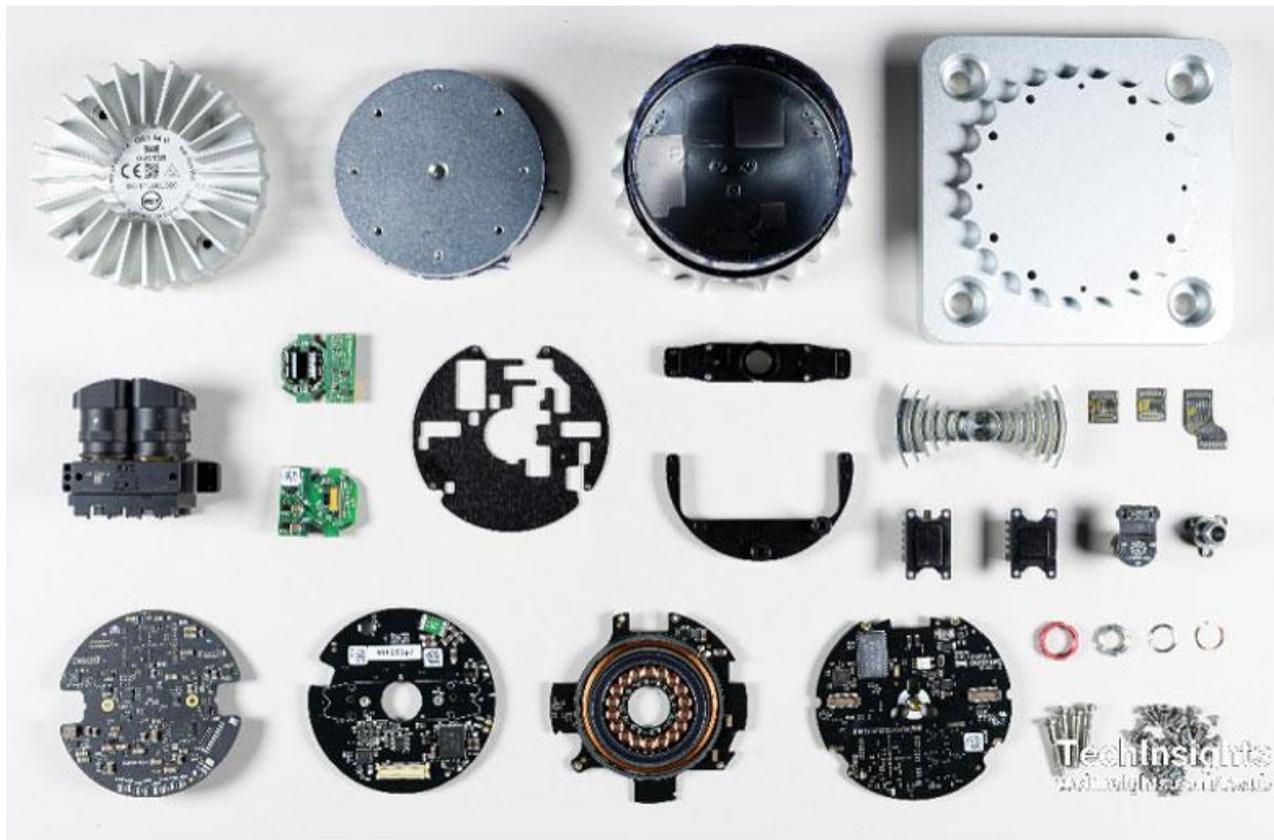
The cooperation will focus on creating a scalable platform for automated driving based on a common reference architecture, sensor-set specifications, and safety requirements with joint development, toolchain, and a data center for storage, reprocessing, and simulation. More than 1,400 specialists will work together in locations worldwide.

BMW Group senior VP of driving experience Nicolai Martin says the joint development is "an important milestone for the BMW Group with regards to our next generation Automated Driving platform. To enable sophisticated and safe functionalities in a vehicle you need state-of-the art software in all components of the digital value chain. This forms the backbone for intelligent driver assistance systems. The BMW Group is excited to further extend our partnership with global technology leaders Qualcomm Technologies and Arriver to include a long-lasting strategic co-development cooperation in order to continue delivering world-class driving experiences to our customers".

A Look Inside Ouster's OS1-64 Lidar Sensor

Excerpt from *Electronics360*

DRIVER ASSISTANCE NEWS



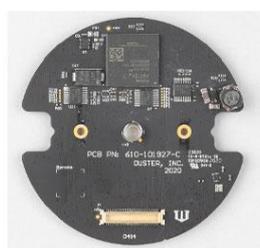
TechInsights recently took apart an Ouster OS1-64 lidar sensor, which is an automotive-grade item with a going price of around €2,500. They scrutinised and catalogued the components they found. The main board, for example, contains a Maxim 12-bit analog-digital converter and limiting amplifier; a Marvell gigabit ethernet transceiver; Micron multichip memory (8 gb MLC NAND flash, memory controller, DDR3L SDRAM); a Texas Instruments DDR Termination regulator and adjustable slapdown converter; an Analog Devices RF power detector, and 16mb serial NOR flash memory from Macronix.

The rotor board has an Xilinx Artiz-7 field-programmable gate array; a Microchip 125-MHz MEMS oscillator; a dual-supply translating transceiver from Nexperia, a 12-bit ADC from Maxim, and a TI current shunt monitor. The motor board contains memory and communication components, including compensator, current shunt monitors, and power MOSFETs from TI; a MOSFET driver from ON Semiconductor, and 2kb serial EEPROM memory from Microchip.

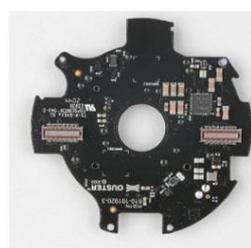
TechInsights totalled up the prices of the major components and arrived at a figure of just under USD \$105.



MAIN BOARD



ROTOR BOARD



MOTOR BOARD

Pony to Recall Self-Drive Software

DRIVER ASSISTANCE NEWS



Self-driving technology startup Pony.ai have agreed to recall some versions of their self-driving system software, after a Pony self-driving car was involved in an accident in California last October.

Three vehicles use the software being recalled; NHTSA say it is the first recall of self-driving systems.

On 28 October in the Silicon Valley town of Fremont, California, a Pony autonomous test vehicle slammed into a street sign after making a right turn, leading the state to suspend in December the unmanned self-driving test licences for Pony's ten Hyundai Kona EVs.

Pony said the vehicle crashed less than 2.5 seconds after the ADS was turned off, and that on very rare occasions, vehicle system diagnostic checks "may produce 'false-positive' indications of geographic mismatches". NHTSA decided some versions of Pony's self-driving software have safety flaws and asked the company to issue a recall; Pony say they have updated their software code and the three affected cars have been updated.

Honda, Renesas Expand ADAS Collaboration

DRIVER ASSISTANCE NEWS

RENEASAS



HONDA

Honda have selected Renesas R-Car and RH850 for use in the Honda Sensing 360 omnidirectional safety and driver assistance system, which builds on the knowledge and expertise gained through R&D work on earlier technology. The first car equipped with Honda Sensing 360 is scheduled for release in China this year, with a broader range of models and markets to follow.

For the newest version of Honda Sensing 360, Honda use the R-Car S4 as the main SoC in the electronic control unit. Through this, Renesas and Honda are expanding their collaboration in the ADAS field to improve safety technologies.

Honda's chief of electronic control development Yutaka Tamagawa says Honda are "a global innovator in R&D work on safety technologies aimed at the realization of a society with zero traffic collision fatalities; Renesas' semiconductor devices optimised for automotive applications are extremely reliable, backed by a solid system of software and support, and provide superior power efficiency. The expansion of our collaborative efforts will speed up the development of Honda Sensing and help lead its widespread adoption".

In the Honda Sensing Elite advanced technology system, the Renesas R-Car automotive SoC processes sensing data from cameras, millimetre-wave radar, and lidar as well as data for 3-dimensional high-definition maps and the global navigation satellite system (GNSS). The SoC also monitors the vehicle's position and the road conditions, and computes route plans in real time. The RH850 automotive control MCU provides support for driving operations and collision avoidance by receiving signals from R-Car and performing advanced control of the accelerator, braking, and steering systems.

The application of Honda Sensing 360 is expected to expand globally, and Renesas' R-Car is helping to enable omnidirectional safety and driver-assistance systems by 360-degree sensing with processing sensing data from cameras and millimeter-wave radar.

Renesas Electronics Corporation deliver trusted embedded design innovation with complete semiconductor solutions that enable billions of connected, intelligent devices to enhance the way people work and live. A global leader in microcontrollers, analog, power, and SoC products, Renesas provide comprehensive solutions for a broad range of automotive, industrial, and infrastructure applications.

Steering Wheel, Pedals No Longer Required in Fully Autonomous Cars

DRIVER ASSISTANCE NEWS



NHTSA have issued a final rule dropping the requirement for automated vehicles to contain manual driving controls. Automakers and tech companies have faced significant hurdles to deploying automated driving system vehicles without human controls, because of outmoded safety standards written with the assumption of a human driver.

The rules revise regulations that assume vehicles "will always have a driver's seat, a steering wheel and accompanying steering column, or just one front outboard passenger seating position." "For vehicles designed to be solely operated by an ADS, manually operated driving controls are logically unnecessary," the agency said.

The new rules, which were first proposed in March 2020, require automated vehicles to provide the same levels of occupant protection as human-driven vehicles. "As the driver changes from a person to a machine in ADS-equipped vehicles, the need to keep the humans safe remains the same and must be integrated from the beginning," said NHTSA Deputy Administrator Steven Cliff.

NHTSA said existing regulations do not currently bar deploying automated vehicles as long as they have manual driving controls, and as the agency continue to consider changing other safety standards, manufacturers may still need to petition NHTSA for an exemption to sell their ADS-equipped vehicles.

General News

Russia's Attack on Ukraine Hamstrings Car Wire Harness Builds

GENERAL NEWS

Automobilwoche

A lot of vehicle wiring harnesses are made in Ukraine—or at least they were, until Russia decided to bomb its neighbor. Volkswagen have a large number of wiring system suppliers in Ukraine, and BMW and Mercedes are also very exposed.

Due to a lack of parts, several major auto factories in Germany have had to halt production. Volkswagen, for example, face interruption the assembly lines at their Wolfsburg factory, for lack of parts usually imported from Ukraine.

The information, reported by the specialized media "Automobilwoche", points up the vulnerability of German automobile production to Russia's ongoing belligerence. For these manufacturers, the main consequence is not the de facto closure of the Russian market, but the disruption of supplies from their suppliers based in Ukraine.

These include specialists in wiring systems, which require several kilometres of cable for each vehicle. The groups Fujikura, Aptiv, Nexans, and Leoni all have (had?) Ukrainian plants; Leoni's two factories there employ(ed?) 7,000 people. The activity of these factories was suspended as soon as the invasion began. The consequences for the company's customers, who operate with just-in-time supply as is the rule in the sector, were almost immediate, in particular for Volkswagen.

According to the count of IHS Markit, VW have nearly a dozen suppliers in Ukraine—nine of them, including Leoni, for cabling systems. They therefore had to put their Zwickau factory, still manufacturing in the launch phase, on partial unemployment last week until 18 March. The situation seems more complicated than expected because the shutdown of production in Wolfsburg, initially announced for next week, had to be anticipated. The group's other brands are not spared, either; Audi halted assembly at their plants in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm. And Porsche halted production of Macan and Panamera models in Leipzig until the end of the week. BMW are suspending production at their main Dingolfing plant, as well as that of the Mini brand in the UK. Mercedes will reduce production rates but hope to avoid a total production stoppage.

According to an assessment by IHS Markit, war on Ukraine could depress car sales by 3.5 million units worldwide this year, a figure which adds up the production shortfall due to supply problems, the impact on the Russian and Ukrainian markets, and the consequences on household purchasing power.

As Western Brands Flee Russia, Chinese Makers Spy an Opening

GENERAL NEWS



CHERY JETOUR W70

Chinese automakers could benefit in Russia after global brands halt exports to the country and suspend production at Russian factories in response to Russia's attack on Ukraine. Volkswagen, BMW, Hyundai, and Toyota are among automakers that have halted output at their Russian plants after Western governments imposed sanctions on the country following its invasion of Ukraine. Others including Porsche and Bentley have stopped exporting to Russia.

Russia has become an important market for Chinese brands including Great Wall's Haval, along with Chery and Geely, mainly for sales of crossovers and SUVs. "In the event that U.S. and European Union sanctions on Russia stay for a prolonged period of time and U.S. and European carmakers become effectively prohibited from doing business in Russia, there is potential for Chinese automakers to gain share in the Russia market," Eunice Lee, senior analyst focusing on Asian autos at bankers Bernstein, a bank, said in a report.

Great Wall build vehicles in Russia at a plant in Tula state, close to Moscow, while Geely has a factory in Russia-aligned Belarus. Haval was Russia's 12th best-selling brand in 2021 with 39,000 sales. Chery was 13th with volume of 37,000 and Geely was 16th with 25,000. Renault-owned AvtoVAZ leads the market with the locally produced Lada brand and 24 per cent of the market in February, AEB figures show. Kia was second with a share of 14 per cent. Renault have not publicly discussed their strategy in Russia, their second-biggest market globally, but options are not good as production collapses.

Tesla Tops American Luxe Market in January

GENERAL NEWS



Tesla overtook luxury-car leader BMW in new vehicle registrations for January in the U.S. market, according to data from Experian.

Tesla narrowly lost to BMW last year in vehicle registrations. But Tesla's January registrations rose 49 per cent from a year earlier to 37,000 vehicles, while BMW registrations rose 8 per cent to 30,000. Lexus saw a 5 per cent decrease in registrations to 25,000 in January, while Mercedes-Benz suffered a 20 per cent drop to 22,000. The registration data includes all models from the luxury automakers, including gasoline-powered vehicles, hybrids and full-electrics.

BMW barely won the registration race for luxury vehicles last year at 347,000, compared with 342,000 for Tesla, but that data also showed that Tesla had greater momentum, with a 71 per cent sales gain last year compared with BMW's 24 per cent growth.

Tesla have some advantages this year, analysts say, including a new Texas plant coming on line that will help satisfy demand. Likewise, Tesla claim they will produce 600,000 vehicles this year at their plant in Fremont, California, which would make it the biggest auto factory in the U.S. by volume.

Tesla's official sales numbers from last year showed an 87 per cent increase globally to 936,000 vehicles. The company expect an increase this year of at least 50 per cent, which would put deliveries above 1.4 million, 2 million in 2026, and more than 2.5 million units in 2029 (900,000 from the US, 700,000 from Germany and 950,000 from China).

VW's €2bn EV Factory Project

GENERAL NEWS



As a response to Tesla, Volkswagen have announced the construction of a new €2bn plant on the same day Tesla got approval to bring their Grunheide plant near Berlin onstream. After producing the Beetle and the Golf, the historic Wolfsburg headquarters should deliver the future all-electric Trinity models from the world's second-largest manufacturer within four years. The future factory will begin to emerge from the ground in the spring of 2023 in the Warmenau district of Wolfsburg, to be completed in 2026. At cruising speed, the chains should then produce up to 250,000 models per year. Union victory Announced as the new generation Volkswagen, the future Trinity will not only have to be quickly rechargeable but also allow L⁴ autonomous driving on the highway. The much-discussed decision to build a factory from scratch next to the current buildings will keep production of combustion vehicles such as the Tiguan and Tayron, as well as the upgrade of the Golf.

This decision is also a victory for the house unions after the heated debates on the underutilised capacities of the factory due to the shortages of semiconductors. The president of the works council, Daniela Cavallo, welcomed this "historic turning point" which reinforces the importance of the historic stronghold of Volkswagen. The pressure had mounted since the boss of the group, Herbert Diess, had mentioned the elimination of 30,000 jobs. In the end, there should be no social plan and 5,000 people are announced on the new site, including possible transfers among the 13,000 employees of the current factory. Synchronization between the two sites should be facilitated by standardising the future automotive SSP platform and reducing the number of possible variations. This simplification is also designed to allow Volkswagen to catch up with the current tempo of Tesla, who build a car in ten hours versus VW's 20.