

TIRES & PARTS

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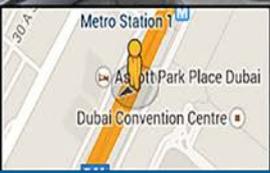
The Middle East's First Automotive, Tires & Parts News Source

Happy New Year

2015



DUBAI BECOMES FIRST ARAB CITY TO APPEAR ON GOOGLE STREET VIEW



MICHEL AYAT
CEO OF ARABIAN AUTOMOBILES



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PUBLISHER'S NOTE



The UAE is one of the world's premier tourist destinations. It caters to the tastes of all kinds of tourists. Those who want to shop till they drop can choose to visit malls like the Dubai Mall, Marina Mall and Mall of the Emirates. Those who have a taste for adventure can try desert safari, sky diving and deep sea fishing. Tourists who love cultural attractions can visit the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi, the Sharjah Heritage area and Al Bastakiya in Dubai.

Visiting Dubai as a tourist has just become a lot easier with the launch of Google Street View last month. Google opted for Dubai as the first choice for this project in view of its importance as a regional tourist and business hub and the huge inflow of tourists into the city.

Dubai thus became the first city in the Arab world in which tourists can use the internet to have a panoramic and street level view of the key attractions of the city and can just use their phone or laptop to find their way around. In view of the fact that more than 85% of UAE's residents are internet savvy, Google Street View will definitely be handy for residents and tourists alike and will undoubtedly boost the tourism, real estate and retail sectors.

Google Street View is just one example of the way in which technology has made a positive impact on our lives. Life today would be unimaginable without the convenience of online banking, online ticket reservations, online shopping and online entertainment, all at the mere click of the mouse. The UAE as mentioned above has a very high level, 85%, of internet penetration while the world average is 35.7%. We are fortunate to live in a country where industry and infrastructure are growing at a truly amazing pace.

Talking of the internet, thanks to support and input from readers like you, we were able to launch our online portal, www.tiresandpart.net earlier last year. If you have not done so already, please do check out our site. Without the constraints of time and space, in addition to the articles that are featured in the magazine, the site is updated on a daily basis and has many additional features including resources, videos and a blog section. There is always room for improvement and any comments or suggestions from our readers to make the site better are welcome. After all, it is readers like you who inspire us to keep looking for interesting stories from the automotive world on a daily basis.

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Publisher

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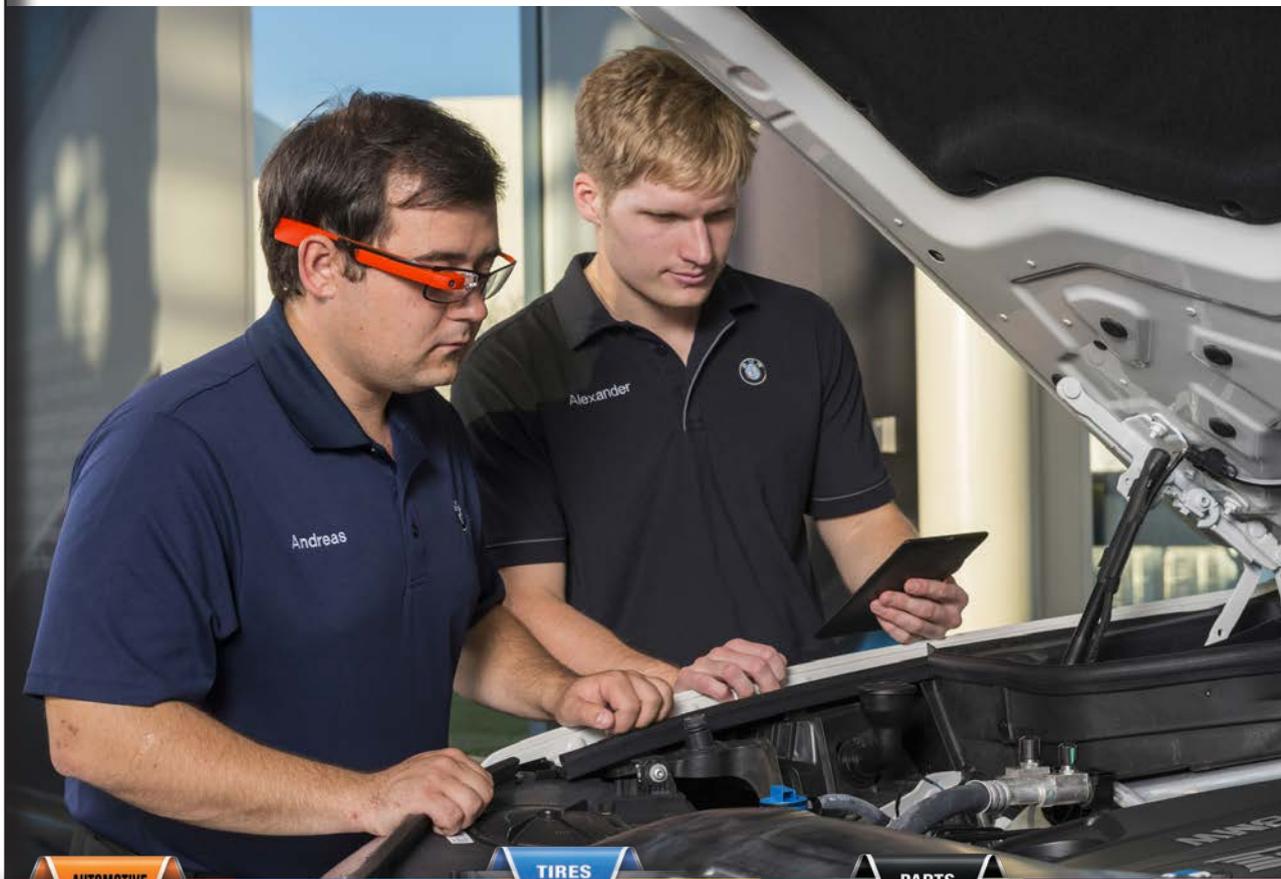
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MICHEL AYAT

CEO OF ARABIAN AUTOMOBILES

We spoke with Michel Ayat, the CEO of Arabian Automobiles and the flagship company of the AW Rostamani Group on the day that the company opened the first Rapid Oil Change center in Umm Al Qwain in partnership with Total.

You are a growing automotive organization and planting your presence in the Northern Emirates. Can you please tell us more about your partnership with TOTAL?

Our partnership with Total goes back five years. Actually, we have represented prime business brands like Nissan and Renault for the last 50 years. And when we decided to expand the portfolio, we looked for the right partners. By right partners, I mean partners that are known and trusted in the market and Elf came out on top. We are honored that they selected us as a partner and we are more than delighted to have Elf in the portfolio. So, together, we are working hard. Looking back, I can see that the progress we have made in the past five years in terms of market share, in terms of gaining customers, the progress was really great. Today we are considered a main player in the lubricant market. And we are confident that this great partnership between Elf and AWR will continue to gain more customers and more market share. This is the key success factor, the right choice of partners.

What can customers expect from this new facility?

Today, the customers are not the same as they were in the past. The rules of the market have really changed. We are a leading automobile company. Elf is a leading oil company. We try to understand the customer's needs. There are a few things that customers here do not compromise on. Quality is the main factor and convenience comes a close second. Other factors are the availability of skilled and talented people to provide quality services. We are familiar with all these aspects. These factors will continue to be important to the customers in the coming years. Customers are really demanding and we are here to cater to their needs, to delight them. The Rapid oil change center that was

opened today provides us with an opportunity to get very close to the customer. The location of this facility is on the main road in Umm Al Quwain. We will attract and welcome all the brands. It is not necessary that you should have an Infiniti, Nissan or Renault. All the brands are welcome. They will find in the Elf Rapid Oil Change facility services and products that they cannot get in other oil change places - the speed, the quality, the service, the people, and more important, the smiling faces of our staff. To add to these factors, we offer very affordable rates in comparison to other providers. So, the rates here in combination with the quality of the service and the image of the Elf brand and AWR, I think this will guarantee to the customers that the service center will provide them with the things that they are really looking for.

Arabian Automobiles was the only automotive distributor that won the Dubai Quality Award recently. What were the factors that helped the company win this award?

It is not easy to grow faster than the organic growth of the market here, as the market is very stable. We forecast that in the automobile market here, the year-on-year growth will be between 9-10%, which is great. In the world, in some mature markets, the automobile market is stagnant and in the best case, they are growing by 5-6%. So, this is the fastest growing market in the world. We have to grow faster than the market. To grow faster than the market, we need to have quality and the right processes. With our belief that we have to improve the process, we use methods like Kaizen to improve quality. We keep changing. We keep trying to understand the market environment. So, operational excellence is the first attribute to deserve and get the Dubai Quality Award.

The second main criterion is the level of the people, the manpower. You need to attract and have talented people. This is only the first part. The second part is to develop their skills by having the right training courses, by giving them the right motivation, the empowerment. This is why every one of our employees is really excited to do his job.

The third one, we have to comply with the quality norms, the regulations, the OEM standards for operations. Every partner has quality standards. So, the compliance with the quality standards is really important.

And finally, we should have a strategic plan in place, on the macro level. Our company normally plans for a three-year period. Now, our strategy map is for six years and we are planning to more than double the business in six years, by 2020.

On top of that, we try to make the values right, the culture of the business organization. All the people that you meet here, they believe in integrity, commitment, adding value, passion and in never being satisfied. If you have all these factors and you continue to do it year after year, the Dubai Quality award will come to you.

What qualities do you think an employee should have to do well in the automotive business?

If you ask me, after many years in the business, I believe that the people - the leadership and the manpower form the base of an organization. All the companies, if they don't have the right people, they need to start looking for the right people, impart training to develop the skills of the people, recognize and reward the good employees and should be fair in their compensation in order to have dedicated and satisfied employees. However, compensation alone is not adequate. Employees should also be offered good training and career development. They should be rewarded for their achievements to keep them motivated and should be able to work in an environment which is free from politics. If you have the right people, these people are capable of setting up processes, implementing them, understanding the customer and becoming the number one in the market. This is how we achieve the quality which is necessary to be recognized in the industry.

How important are academic qualifications in the industry?

Academic qualifications are just a passport. It is important if you want to have a journey. But it does not mean that you have reached. Academic qualifications are necessary. However, personal skills and professional skills are more important than that. We need education, but we also have to develop a positive attitude, communication skills, relationship skills, emotional maturity and sincerity. These are the personal skills. As for professional skills, if you are applying for a sales and marketing position, we have norms as to what the requirements for the position are and what professional skills are needed for the position. So, education is required, but it is not adequate. You need to have personal skills and professional skills in addition to education.

You have been with Arabian Automobiles for about 24 years. What are the significant achievements that the company has made under your leadership?

AWR is a family owned organization. Their understanding of the business, the relationship that AW Rostamani has with their people, the encouragement, the motivation, this is what makes people stay years and years with the company. I have been with the company for 24 years and I am sure that I will stay with them as long as I am able to fulfill the requirements of the job.

As for the significant achievements, when I look back at the year 1990, we were selling almost 3,000 cars a year. Now we are selling almost 55,000 cars a year. So, we have certainly grown in volume, more than 20 times. In terms of market share, we have achieved a significant market share in the automobile market. When it comes to expansion, we expanded the business to cover lubricants with brands like Elf, tires and into the service center business. We are operating in the international markets, in Delhi, India, in Saudi Arabia. We have dealers in countries like Oman and UK. So, the company is no longer a small company operating in a small market. It is becoming more international. Our company has crossed the two billion dollar mark. And based on these significant achievements that we have made over the years, we are confident that in the year 2020 we will be touching the five billion mark.

Are there any major differences between the UAE market and other markets in the GCC region?

The UAE is a very competitive market. The market here is very competitive. All the customers are smart. They know the business. More than 80% of our customers visit the internet. They know the product. So, the customer is knowledgeable, the competitors are working hard. It is not easy to grow faster than the market. Every market has its own characteristics. Daily, we are facing the challenges of the market and we are happy that we are considered as the top, from the point of view of the manufacturer. In fact, in the Saudi market we have established the business and we are very confident that in the coming few years, we will have a company that will be able to provide value to the customer. However, I still feel that the United Arab Emirates with the requirements of the customers, and the competition is one of the toughest markets in the world. And we are delighted that we have been recognized by brands like Nissan, Infiniti, and Renault as one of their top partners in the world.



AUDI PRESENTS NEW DESIGN STRATEGY AT DESIGN MIAMI

Design Miami is one of the premier design events in the United States. This year, this renowned art fair in which some of the leading architects and designers drawn from all over the world participate celebrated its tenth anniversary.

Audi has been a supporter of this show from 2006 and used this event as the venue to showcase its new design strategy. Renowned designers like Moritz Waldemeyer, Clemens Weisshaar and Mirko Borsche have helped to create Audi's exhibits for the Miami show in previous years.

This year, Audi also debuted the Audi prologue concept car, which is the first vehicle created by the Audi design team under the helm of the new design chief, Marc Lichte. The concept car is extremely striking visually. It is based on the typical Audi with quattro drive. All the different elements are in perfect harmony. Some of the features are evocative of previous models like the tail lights being connected by a light strip, as in the models of the 1980s.

According to Andreas Mindt, Head of Exterior Design at AUDI AG, Audi used its participation in the show to give visitors a sneak peek at Audi's new design language. Audi's exhibit was titled "The force within" and the concept car drew all eyes to the Audi booth. The concept car is remarkably different from prior Audi models both internally and externally and incorporates the latest technical innovations in its design.

"Vorsprung durch Technik is the basic stance of the company, and we want to reflect that in our design," added Mindt. "Audi epitomizes the consistent, ongoing evolution of design. Our design language is modern and contemporary, but never modish."

Giovanni Perosino, Head of Marketing Communications at AUDI AG said that Design Miami was

the perfect platform to present Audi's new design language as the visitors to the show are highly knowledgeable. Miami is a vibrant, highly diverse city with an extremely creative art scene. The city has numerous design studios and galleries. Spectacular buildings designed by renowned architects will soon be added to the skyline.



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UBER USERS GET CHANCE TO WIN FREE MCLAREN TEST DRIVE

Is there anyone who would turn down a chance to drive a McLaren which costs more than a million dirhams? Uber, the luxury taxi service that can be ordered through an app and is now available in 240 cities located in more than 50 countries, made waves when it was first launched in the UAE.

Uber users here had a chance to fulfill a lifetime dream when Uber tied up with McLaren to offer them a free 15 minute test drive in the new 650S. All they had to do was request a test drive using the Uber smartphone app.

The promotion was limited to Uber users who are 25 and above and holders of a valid UAE driving license. They had just four hours, from 2 pm to 6 pm on Saturday, December 6 to send in their request for a test drive around Downtown Dubai or the DIFC area in the company of a McLaren Product Specialist.

Commenting on the promotion, Jean-Pierre Mondalek, Uber's General Manager for UAE said that it was great to be part of a promotion that would provide Uber users with a supercar on-demand. This was a world first, giving supercar fans in Dubai a perfect weekend.

Tom Pryor, McLaren Automotive Marketing and PR Manager Middle East & Africa, said that McLaren was proud to cooperate with Uber for this promotion as Uber has been one of the pioneers in using technology to help people move around and connect in cities across the world. McLaren too believes in continuous innovation and delivering top notch technology to users of supercars. He saw the campaign as one more way for McLaren to interact with its customers.

The new 650S is a true supercar with a strikingly stylish exterior that is inspired by the brand's most famous car, the P1, large side intakes to cool the powerful V8 engine and LED headlights. It goes from 0-100kph speed in just 3 seconds, achieving a top speed of 333kph. Now, just how many people are lucky enough to get the chance to drive a car like that?



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315/80 R 22.5 20PR LXR21 TL



Size	Type	Pattern	LI/SS	PR	OD	SW	NSD
315/80R22.5	Tubeless	LXR21	156/150	20 PLY	1076	312	15.5

LAMBORGHINI CHOOSES DUBAI FOR FIRST OVERSEAS LIFESTYLE STORE

Along with Ferrari and Bugatti, the Lamborghini brand rules the roost when it comes to supercars. Even those who do not drive have heard of Lamborghini supercars. The Lamborghini lifestyle stores are an extension of the brand philosophy with clothing collections that are top of the line and extremely distinctive. Collezione Automobili Lamborghini is the division of Italian car manufacturer Automobili Lamborghini which handles the fashion retail outlets of the company.



The company already has two Collezione Automobili Lamborghini stores in Italy. On December 4, it opened its third store and its first overseas one at The Dubai Mall. Abdulaziz Al Rasheed Trading which is based in Saudi Arabia has partnered with Lamborghini for opening fashion outlets in the Middle East. The company has plans on the anvil to open two other stores in Abu Dhabi (Marina Mall and Yas Mall) in addition to stores in Saudi Arabia and other GCC countries.

According to Housam Aslan, the managing director and founder of Abdulaziz Al Rasheed Trading, Dubai was the choice for the first Collezione Automobili Lamborghini in the Middle East since it is renowned as a luxury shopping destination. The Middle East is Lamborghini's third largest market after the US and China. It has grown by a significant margin in 2014 with numerous orders for both the V12 and V10 models.

The Dubai store, will sell Lamborghini branded clothes and accessories including caps, models of cars, wallets, bags and shoes. Prices at the store will range from Dh500-700 for clothes and Dh1,500 and Dh15,000 for the Lamborghini car models.

In order to create more brand awareness, Lamborghini also launched its first driving academy for the company's customers in the Middle East at the Dubai Autodrome. Named the Lamborghini Accademia, it offered a one-day track driving course by the company's in-house Squadra Corse motorsport department from 24 to 26 November.

On each of the three days, 20 Lamborghini owners who received invites through the company's ten dealerships across the Middle East were lucky enough to get a unique driving experience. They spent more than four hours on the track driving a V12 Lamborghini Aventador LP 700-4 and the latest V10 model, the Lamborghini Huracán LP 610-4 after a briefing and theory session.

"The Middle East is a very important region for Lamborghini," said Christian Mastro, Head of Europe, Middle East and Africa for Automobili Lamborghini, "and our clients appreciate the opportunity to enjoy Lamborghini cars on track while also learning driving techniques to best appreciate the dynamic performance of our model range."

MCLAREN AUTOMOTIVE SCORES A HAT TRICK WITH THIRD 'BEST SUPERCAR' AWARD

McLaren Automotive reigned supreme again as the company's McLaren 650S won the award for the best supercar at the maiden Middle East Car of the Year Awards, MECOTY. With this award, the company scores a hat trick as it had won "best supercar" awards in the region for the 12C and 12C Spider in 2012 and 2013 respectively.



The Middle East Car of the Year Awards is indeed a great honor as the scoring methodology is highly transparent and the jury consists of experts drawn from knowledgeable motoring journalists across the region.

Commenting on the award, Ian Gorsuch, Regional Director for Middle East and Africa said that it was indeed a great achievement to be judged as the best in a category that has really formidable opponents. He lauded the efforts of the engineers and designers at the McLaren Technology Centre in UK who played a crucial role by coming up with a car worthy of the award. In view of the fact that it has only been three years since the first McLaren car was delivered to a customer in the Middle East, the hat trick is definitely a noteworthy achievement.

The McLaren 650S is available in Coupé and Spider bodystyles and is hand-built at the McLaren Production Centre in the United Kingdom.

According to Gorsuch, the McLaren 650S represents the pinnacle of 50 years of expertise the company has in road and racing car know-how. All that the team has learned from the 12C, the McLaren P1™ and from 50 years of competing in motorsports has been used in the design and development of the 650 S. Their efforts culminated in a car having the highest capabilities among all production supercars.

He added that there is a great deal of anticipation about the launch of McLaren's Sports Series model in the next year which will make the company's models available to a wider range of customers.

The first McLaren car was sold in the Middle East three years ago, and now the company has eight retailers throughout the Middle East and Africa region, located in Manama, Abu Dhabi, Doha, Dubai, Jeddah, Johannesburg, Riyadh and Kuwait.



12.00R24-20PR
LXLS11

- | All position special rib lug design.
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BENTLEY MAKES DUBAI HEADQUARTERS FOR MIDDLE EAST, AFRICA, INDIA AND ASIA PACIFIC OPERATIONS

Bentley Motors has revealed that the Middle East is now home to its new headquarters for operations across the Middle East, Africa, India and Asia Pacific (MEAI & Asia Pac.). The announcement marks a significant commitment to the region from the ultra-luxury automotive manufacturer and highlights the importance of the Middle East to the brand's continuous success.

The Bentley Motors Middle East regional operations team has trebled in size from the three executives who were purely overseeing the Middle East business at the beginning of 2014. Now based at a new headquarters in the Dubai Airport Free Zone, the operation includes sales, marketing, after-sales and business development activities for the four key regions under the management of recently appointed Regional Director for MEAI & Asia Pac., Stephen Reynolds, and Regional Manager for MEAI, Neil Wilford.

This significant move follows a record first three quarters of the year for Bentley Motors Middle East with an increase in deliveries of 25% on 2013, while Asia Pacific reported growth of 50% during the same period. The increasingly important region is renowned for its discerning customers, who appreciate the unique combination of luxury and performance offered by Bentley, along with the almost limitless range of bespoke, hand crafted personalisation opportunities.

Neil Wilford, Bentley Motors' Regional Manager, Middle East, Africa and India, said: "2014 is a pivotal year for Bentley Motors Middle East, Africa and India. While this region has played an integral part in our global business for many years, the move to centralise all operations for these key markets to Dubai, makes a big statement.

"Our team is set to grow significantly before the New Year and will continue to expand in to the beginning of 2015. These developments highlight just how important this region is to our business and we look forward to spearheading the next chapter of success from our new home within the region."

GOOGLE PROVES TO BE THE BEST RESEARCH TOOL FOR CAR BUYERS IN THE UAE

Most of us do not think twice about buying a regular pen or a latte from a café. However, when comes to big ticket items, our attitude is totally different. For any purchase that involves a large sum of money, we like to shop around and ask the opinions of friends and those who have used the product. We take our own sweet time to decide which brand to finally purchase. For most families, the purchase of a car, whether new or used, falls into this category.

Google conducted a study early this year in the UAE for the first time ever to analyze how customers decide which car to buy. This online survey study was done by Google in partnership with Netpop, an international research company.

The results of the study reveals the tremendous role the internet plays in the decision making process. Over 92% of car buyers in the country had no preconceived brand preferences when starting on their search and were influenced by reviews on the web in their final decision. Even 70% of those who thought they knew which brand to buy ended up changing their minds after their online research.

Speaking about the results, Marie de Ducla, the Head of the Automotive industry at Google in MENA, said that the results of the study reflected the changing habits of car buyers. The internet plays a key role in arming the customers with greater knowledge before they visit the dealership and thus indirectly influencing the purchase decision. She added that auto companies will be missing out on a great opportunity to reach out to potential customers if they do not capitalize on chances to increase their presence in the online search process.

It is only a rare 3 percent who never used the web for research prior to buying a car. When asked why they used online search, 64% of the respondents said that reviews and information obtained online helped them to make more informed decisions than any other source. Up to 30% even end up buying brands they discover through their online search. When it comes to the devices used for the online search, over two-thirds of the participants in the study used their mobile devices in comparison to 37% in the US and 36% in the UK. 72% said they would have considered buying a car online if it is possible due to the convenience factor.

A critical component of the online search process proved to be watching online videos of the different cars, as attested by more than three out of four car buyers. 77% of buyers visit online video platforms (compared to 37% in the US and 36% in the UK) like YouTube to search for videos of a particular model, evaluate offers from dealers and to read reviews and feedback from other users.

The actual visit to the dealership takes place at a much later stage in the search process and closer to the time of purchase. About 87% of these users take a trip to the showroom after they have gathered quite a bit of information about the car of their choice online. In addition to having a good ranking for online search, being active on social media and responding quickly to webform and email queries came in handy for attracting more customers. Slackness in responding can backfire as 72% of prospective customers expressed dissatisfaction with the speed and accuracy of responses and consequently switched brands.

The results of the Google study will definitely help companies to modify their digital marketing strategy in order to increase brand awareness and engagement among customers and ultimately get more cars into the hands of the customers.

CAREEM GETS \$10M CASH INFUSION FROM REGIONAL INVESTORS



Faced with the difficulty of finding a taxi on busy streets in Dubai, Mudassir Sheikh and Magnus Olsson, former consultants at McKinsey & Company established Careem in 2012. Careem created an instant impact on the automotive scene in the UAE when it first introduced the concept of pre-ordering a chauffeured car using mobile apps or the company's website. It thus became the first online car booking service in the UAE.

Within just two years, Careem has exhibited growth of more than 30 per cent month-on-month and provides more than 70 jobs. Careem has expanded from Dubai and now operates fleets in Beirut, Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, Lahore, Cairo, Riyadh, Doha, Karachi, Kuwait, Dhahran, Dammam, Jeddah, and Khobar.

Careem has just announced that it has raised \$10 million in funds in the second round of financing from regional venture capital firms such as STC Ventures and Saudi's Al Tayyar Travel Group. Careem has said that the funds will be used to finance the UAE-based startup's expansion to other countries in the region and to develop the technological platform it uses for its operations. Previously, the company had raised \$1.7 million from STC Ventures, the private equity subsidiary of the Saudi Telecoms company in the first round of funding to finance its expansion into Saudi Arabia in September 2013.

Speaking about the infusion of funds, Mudassir Sheikh, the co-founder and managing director of Careem expressed his delight at attracting interest from strategic partners like Al Tayyar. Al Tayyar is a good fit for Careem as the company has a strong presence and considerable expertise in the region. During 2014, Careem had spread its wings to major Saudi cities including Khobar, Jeddah, Riyadh and Dammam.

According to Nasser Altayyar, the vice chairman and managing director of Al Tayyar Travel Group, the company decided to invest in Careem in line with its strategy to invest in companies that promote new technologies.

With the population becoming more tech savvy, Careem is not the only tech start-up that has attracted the interest of investors.

In 2013, the popular daily deals website Cobone.com was taken over by the US firm, Tiger Global Management while the personal finance application Wally which is based in the UAE also raised Dhs1.5 million in its first round of funding.

AL-FUTTAIM MOTORS BRINGS 2015 TOYOTA SUV RANGE TO THE UAE



Al-Futtaim Motors is the exclusive distributor for the entire Toyota range of vehicles in the UAE, including compact, sedan, SUV, MPV and LCV models. The company has now announced that all 2015 Toyota SUV models are currently available in the company's 14 Toyota showrooms across the UAE. The models include the renowned Landcruiser, Prado, Sequoia, Fortuner, RAV4 and FJ Cruiser.

According to Jon Williams, the Managing Director of Al-Futtaim Motors, the new Toyota SUVs have better features ranging from ones that improve performance and fuel economy to interior touches that make a drive more comfortable.

He added that the growth story of Toyota's SUV range started with the launch of the Landcruiser six decades ago. Al-Futtaim Motors has successfully showcased every Toyota SUV produced after that, thus attesting to the high quality of the SUVs.

The 2015 Land Cruiser fully justifies its tagline "Pride of the Land" and is available either with 4.0-litre V6 engines or with 4.6-litre and 5.7-litre V8 engines. The Landcruiser retains the performance and durability that makes it a matchless choice for tough terrain with the 2015 model offering a more comfortable drive with the improved engines and transmissions. The Kinetic Dynamic Suspension System (KDSS) of the Landcruiser helps minimize body roll, stabilizing the vehicle and increasing the ground coverage. In the new model, the V8 5.7L engine that was previously available only on the VXR grade, will now also be available on the EXR and GXR grades.

Other innovations that will make the Landcruiser even more of a hit among customers include the roof spoiler with LED stop lamp, the Blind Spot Detection (BSD) system on the VXR model, rear bumper spoiler with dual chrome garnish, and smoked grey alloy wheels.

The Prado is another model with a proud history that goes back more than 50 years. The 2015 Prado comes with either a 4-cylinder 2.7-litre engine or a 4-litre V6 engine in combination with 4-speed and 5-speed automatic transmissions respectively. This time round the engine has been refined and fine-tuned for a better ride and the interiors are more sophisticated with components like the optional rear seat entertainment system. The chrome front grill adds a touch of class to the vehicle which is known globally for its superior superior 4WD performance.

The Fortuner too has been revamped with more luxurious interiors, a more powerful engine (whether the 2.7 liter one or the 4.0 liter one) and a full-time 4WD system that can handle any type of terrain to provide a stable and comfortable ride. The smoked grey alloy wheels, matching rear smoked tail lamps and fog lamp chrome bezels along with the two-tone leather seats and the display audio screen with reverse camera are the highlights of the new Fortuner.

Toyota had pioneered the cross-over sports utility segment with the RAV4 and the 2015 RAV4 is even better with its chrome highlights, light colored interiors, a top of the range audio and entertainment system having Bluetooth, USB, AUX and navigation components. The 2.5-litre four cylinder engine is paired with a 6-speed super-intelligent ECT transmission for better fuel economy and a more dynamic drive.

The 2015 Sequoia maintains its image of being one of the most formidable SUVs on the road with a more muscular style and better performance. Fitted with a 5.7-litre i-FORCE V8 engine and a multimode four wheel drive, the SUV is equally at ease both on-road and off-road with class-leading acceleration, performance and fuel consumption. The interior has many luxurious details including a large 7-inch screen and a top-notch 12-speaker audio and entertainment system. The new features in the 2015 Sequoia include steering column and door mirrors, underbody lights, display audio systems and Memory Function Package for the driver's seat. The VXR variant comes with the all-new Blind Spot Detection (BSD) system.

The FJ Cruiser can handle all types of terrain and has an eye-catching retro design. Fitted with a V6 engine that is as powerful as the one in a Prado, it is available as a part-time 4x4 when paired with a 5-speed transmission and a full-time 4x4 when paired with a 6-speed manual transmission. The 2015 model comes with an all-new crawl package and a built-in air compressor to inflate tires for off-road purposes, a better navigation system, an audio controller and new fog lamps.

Al-Futtaim Motors has a longstanding partnership of more than 60 years with Toyota Motor Corporation and this partnership will scale even greater heights with the new 2015 range of Toyota SUVs.

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INAUGURAL EDITION OF MECOTY SHOWCASES LEADING CAR BRANDS



The first edition of the Middle East Car of the Year (MECOTY) awards proved to be the apt platform to showcase some of the world's leading car brands. The awards were given away at a gala event held at the Meydan Beach Club in Dubai. The winners included leading brands like Audi, BMW, Cadillac, Infiniti, Jaguar, Mercedes, Toyota, and Rolls Royce. The high-profile event was attended by senior executives from all major automotive brands in the Middle East.

Speaking about the MECOTY awards, its Chairman, Saeed Al Marzouki said that he was overwhelmed at the response received by the first ever edition of the awards. He added that it was important for car manufacturers to be recognized by an award body that decided on winners independently and without any hint of commercial bias. This would give motorists an opportunity to read authentic reviews from professionals on the models they liked. The extent of the response and the turnout at the awards event attested to the success of the MECOTY awards. They will continue to be a platform for leading automotive brands in the Middle East.

The awards ceremony was accompanied by an exhibition of all the cars which won the awards in different categories over the weekend. The exhibition had thousands of visitors drawn from car lovers across the UAE. The cars exhibited at the venue included brands like Jaguar, Maserati, McLaren, Mercedes, Toyota, Kia and Rolls Royce.

The MECOTY awards will serve as an indicator to customers as to which cars are truly popular in the Middle East region and are in line with consumer needs. All the cars nominated for the award were evaluated based on stringent criteria by a select panel of expert judges, drawn from countries across the region. Consumers too had a voice and were given the opportunity to select their favourite car by voting for their choice through a custom facebook app. As many as 11,300 independent consumers voted for their favourite cars.

The Audi RS7 won the award for "Consumer Car of the Year in addition to being named as the Best Premium Performance Sedan. Commenting on the win, Trevor Hill, Managing Director, Audi Middle East said that he was thrilled that the car won not just in one but two very special categories. He added that the dual awards highlighted the Audi RS 7's presence as a family car that combines elegance and performance with cutting-edge engineering.

Commenting on the fact that the S-Class won the 'Car of the Year' and 'Best Luxury Sedan' awards, Mike Belk, the CEO of Daimler Middle East and Levant said that it was indeed a great honor for Mercedes-Benz to get two awards at the Middle East Car of the Year awards. He added that since its inception, the S-Class had always set the benchmark in the luxury segment and the awards attested to the company's leadership position in the luxury automotive segment.

The awards were not just about cars that were popular, luxurious or performance oriented. They duly recognized technological innovation and the sustainability factor with the BMW i8 winning the special award for the "future" category.

Best Small Sedan : Honda City

Best Mid-Size Sedan : Toyota Corolla

Best Large Sedan :Ford Fusion

Best Executive Sedan :Infiniti Q50

Best Luxury Sedan: Mercedes S-Class

Best Premium Performance Sedan:Audi RS7

Best Compact Utility Vehicle (CUV):Ford Eco-Sport

Best Small SUV:Jeep Cherokee

Best Midsize SUV:Hyundai Grand Santa Fe

Best Midsize Premium SUV :Porsche Macan

Best Large Premium SUV :Cadillac Escalade

Best Premium Performance SUV:Range Rover Sport

Best Hatchback :Nissan Tiida

Best Premium Hatchback : Mini Cooper

Best Sports Coupe:Alfa Romeo 4C

Best Performance Coupe :Chevrolet Corvette Stingray

Best Premium Performance Coupe : Jaguar F-Type Coupe

Best Grand Tourer :Rolls Royce Wraith

Best SuperCar:Mclaren 650S

Special Award – The Future BMW i8

Consumer Car of the Year: Audi RS7

Jury Selected Car of the Year:Mercedes S-Class



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AL-FUTTAIM MOTORS MARKS UAE NATIONAL DAY WITH WEEK LONG CELEBRATION



The UAE may be one of the youngest countries in the world but it has been an unprecedented growth story ever since it was formed through the federation of the seven emirates in 1971 under the leadership of the “Father of the nation”, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. It has firmly established itself as the hub of commerce and tourism in the Middle East with its ports, free zones, sprawling malls and tourist attractions like the Burj Khalifa.

Al-Futtaim Motors has an equally illustrious history. Established back in 1955, it is the largest subsidiary of the Al-Futtaim Automotive group, with an extensive network of showrooms and service centers throughout the country. The company is the largest distributor of automobiles and automotive products in the United Arab Emirates with exclusive dealership rights for Lexus, Toyota, Hino trucks and Toyota Material Handling equipment.

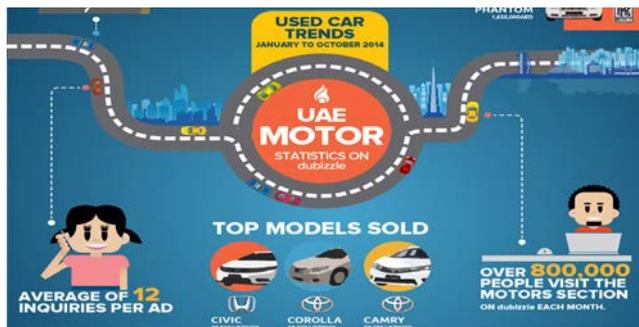
It was therefore fitting that Al-Futtaim Motors marked the 43rd anniversary of the formation of the UAE with a weeklong celebration that involved the distribution of commemorative cakes and gifts to customers and associates. The company also raised 43 national flags, one for every year, at its Toyota, Lexus and Hino facilities across the nation.

Al-Futtaim Motors conducted a number of activities as part of the celebration, in association with strategic partners like Dubai Municipality, Dubai Government Workshops, and Dubai Taxi Corporation, as well as the CNCF Family Day in association with Hertz.

Al-Futtaim Motors is one of main players in the automotive industry in the region and a key driver for economic growth and prosperity. As one of the country's earliest businesses that was established even before the formation of the UAE, Al-Futtaim Motors is a large scale provider of jobs and mobility solutions to individuals, government organizations like the Dubai Police and the fleets of private companies.

Jon Williams, Managing Director of Al-Futtaim Motors, commented that Al-Futtaim Motors was proud of the fact that it is an integral part of the fabric of the nation, as the company has been one of the leaders of the automotive industry in the UAE ever since its inception.

AUTOMOTIVE REPORT FROM DUBIZZLE REVEALS UAE PASSION FOR CARS CONTINUES TO THRIVE



The auto trends reports published by dubizzle, one of the leading classifieds websites in the MENA confirms what we have always suspected. The UAE's passion for cars continues to thrive despite the rising cost of living. The dubizzle automotive report confirms this based on extensive data obtained from the postings for the sale of used cars on the site from January to October 2014. According to the report, more than 693,000 car ads were placed for this period on dubizzle, with a monthly average of 72,000 automotive ads per month.

The report is based on the traffic to the automotive section of the site and the ads posted on dubizzle. Dubai has been confirmed as the place having the highest number of cars per person, with 1.86 cars per person.

The most popular model for sale proved to be the Toyota Camry, with an average resale price of Dhs 30,000 and more than 23,000 listings. The top three colors featured in the searches for used cars were black, white and red while the top three brands were Toyota, Honda, and Nissan for the Dubai and Abu Dhabi listings.

The listings reveal the tremendous growth of the auto industry in the region. The market for both new and used cars is thriving and the UAE auto market is growing at a faster pace than in any other country in the region. Based on the research data, by 2016, 8 out of 10 people would buy a new or pre-owned car in the UAE.

The listings are not limited only to sedans and cheaper cars. Listings of luxury cars like an Aventador with a price tag of AED 1,950,000, a Mercedes-Benz G63 AMG 6x6 with an asking price of AED 1,890,000 and a Rolls Royce Phantom for AED 1,635,000 attracted significant interest from visitors to the site. These luxury cars were the three priciest cars that were listed on dubizzle in the period from January to October. Another factor that is unique to the UAE market is the demand for unique number plates. In fact, one of the most expensive number plates listed on dubizzle was O 80000, which was listed for AED 550,000.

According to Osman Bhurgri, Product Marketing Manager – Autos at dubizzle UAE, though there has been concern about the increase in the cost of living in the country and the effect it would have on the market for new and used cars, more than 800,000 people visit the autos section of dubizzle on a monthly basis. This highlights the fact that the passion for cars, both new and used, still reigns supreme in the UAE.

“The automotive section on dubizzle continues to grow year on year, dubizzle's Automotive Report is a useful tool that gives an overview of the latest trends in the automotive industry in the UAE. We chose to share this report; as part of dubizzle's on-going efforts to disrupt consumer exploitation and give the UAE residents relevant info to help them manage their motoring assets.” concluded Bhurgri.

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LAND ROVER MENA DEBUTS DISCOVERY SPORT AT EXCLUSIVE EVENT



All auto lovers have been eagerly awaiting the launch of the new 2015 Discovery Sport in the MENA region after the impact it made when it was first revealed to the world at the Paris Motor Show. The exclusive behind the footage of the Land Rover team testing the vehicle prototype at the Jaguar Land Rover Engineering Center in Dubai as a prelude to the launch has only served to whet our appetites further. The tests checked different aspects of the vehicle's performance including transmission calibration, off-road desert capability and brake noise in the tough terrain and soaring temperatures of the Middle East. The results of the tests only served to confirm what we have known all along – that the Discovery Sport truly is one of the best vehicles in its class.

The 2015 Discovery Sport was designed with a novel approach that gives it a sleek and sporty exterior and introduces the concept of versatile 5+2 seating for the first time in the premium SUV class. The innovative rear axle coupled with the flexible long-travel suspension ensures that the ride is smooth and comfortable. At the same time, in line with all Land Rover vehicles, the Discovery Sport too comes with class-leading all-terrain capability.

The safety factor too has played a crucial role in the development of the new vehicle and it comes with several advanced safety features including a top-notch body built of ultra-strength steel and lightweight aluminum, autonomous emergency braking, and a first-in-class pedestrian airbag. Other innovations that customers would love include an 8 inch touchscreen infotainment system, a Head-Up Display unit and rear seats which have tilt-and-slide options to give customers a lot of leeway when it comes to the seating configuration.

The 2015 Discovery Sport was launched with a bang in the MENA region at an exclusive event held at the Hamdan Sports Complex in Dubai. It is expected to get an overwhelming response from customers in the region when it goes on sale early next year. The gala event was attended by over 500 guests, including customers, senior executives from Land Rover and member of the media and featured several live acts including traditional Arabic drummers from the UAE, Parkour groups and BMX riders.

Guests had the option of pitting their skills in sandboarding and mountain bike riding against the new vehicle at a fun interactive zone in specially created "capability pods". This aptly showcased the Discovery Sport's spirit of adventure and its ability to handle a range of different terrains.

The Discovery Vision Concept which was unveiled at the New York Motor Show and comes with pioneering technological features and a new design language was also on display at the event, thus indicating Land Rover's vision for the future family of Discovery vehicles.

Commenting about the launch of the Discovery Sport, Bruce Robertson, MD of Jaguar Land Rover MENA said, "We are extremely proud to be revealing the new Discovery Sport here in Dubai following the huge amount of attention it has received globally and here in the region since the official unveiling in Paris. This vehicle combines premium dynamic design and versatility which I am confident will resonate on an emotional level with our MENA customers, and we expect this to deliver solid results when sales start early next year."

The new Discovery Sport range of four-cylinder turbocharged petrol engines will be available in Jaguar Land Rover showrooms across the MENA region from early next year with prices starting from AED 159,000.

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Car dashboards are much snazzier than they used to be. The concept of a dashboard was originally developed to prevent mud from splattering the driver of a horse-drawn carriage.

DUBAI BECOMES FIRST ARAB CITY TO APPEAR ON GOOGLE STREET VIEW



Navigating the streets of Dubai can be a tricky affair. Street numbers and building numbers seem to follow no logical pattern. Using the GPS system in your car does help but even the maps on which these systems are based get outdated very fast in a city that is changing day by day. There is plenty of construction activity with new roads, bridges and buildings being added on a regular basis.

This is where Google Street View can really make a difference. Street View was first launched in the United States in 2007. Depending on user's requirements and preferences, Google Street View gives internet browsers a 360 degree, panoramic and street level view of the main areas of a city.

According to Abdul Hakim Malik, director of geographic information systems at Dubai Municipality which gave Google the required permissions, Google will be shortly launching its panoramic map service in the city. Google Street View will now make accessing the city's public areas much easier for tourists, business visitors and even residents who are not very familiar with the city.

Though residential areas and free zones will not be covered by the system, all key tourist and shopping attractions like Burj Khalifa, Gold Souk and Mall of the Emirates will be available on Google Street View. This will make Dubai the first city in the Arab world to be accessible to the public through this project.

The entire process of implementing the project took nine months from start to finish. The process involved not only the process of photographing the streets of the city, it also needed time spent on the smooth transfer of data. There were many teams to handle the different tasks involved like driving the car mounted with the camera for the 360 degree view, dealing with government departments for approvals, working on the system to put the images together and to make sure they were linked to the relevant data and that it was going to the data center.

Google selected Dubai as the first Arab city for Street View on the basis of its importance as a regional hub and tourist attraction.

"We decided to start with a city that is receiving large numbers of visitors so this can help them," said Najeeb Jarrar, Product Marketing Manager for Middle East and North Africa (Mena) at Google he added.

He added that Dubai is also a city with high levels of internet penetration and most of the residents here use maps for their daily travel. UAE is among the top countries in the region for internet penetration, with over 6 million of the 9.2 million population using the internet. To protect the privacy of residents, people's faces and license plates will be blurred.

With the option to understand what Dubai is really like and to have a 360 degree look at the popular attractions, many more tourists are likely to visit the city. The facility is likely to benefit the real estate industry and government services also as it will cut down on the time and necessity to directly visit sites.

Google which has its Middle East headquarters in Dubai had been in talks with Dubai Municipality for more than a year before approval was obtained to implement the project. Earlier in the year, Google had launched special footage of main tourist attractions in the UAE including the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, Burj Khalifa, and the desert of Liwa. Footage of the desert of Liwa, was obtained with a Trekker device mounted on a camel.

Google plans to implement the Street View Service shortly in Abu Dhabi and other emirates. The company also hopes to expand the service to cover more cities in the Middle East.

OMAN GETS FIRST EXCLUSIVE LINCOLN SHOWROOM IN THE MIDDLE EAST



Ford has been increasing its efforts to increase brand awareness of its luxury automotive brand, the Lincoln in the Middle East. As part of this drive, the company launched the all-new MKZ at the 2013 Gitex in Dubai and the 2015 Lincoln MKC at Gitex 2014. Now, Ford has taken its efforts to push the Lincoln brand one step further by opening the first ever standalone Lincoln showroom in the Middle East in Oman. The showroom was opened by Elena Ford, Ford Motor Company's vice president for Global Dealer and Customer Experience.

The high profile opening ceremony was attended by eminent dignitaries like H.E. Said bin Saleh bin Said Al Kyumi, the chairman of the Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry and senior executives of the Ford Middle East and Africa team. The occasion also witnessed the launch of the all-new Lincoln MKC premium compact SUV in Oman.

The new 469 square-meter exclusive Lincoln showroom is located in Wattayah, Muscat and will showcase the brand to maximum effect with the promise of a luxurious customer experience backed by world-class service levels.

On the occasion, Elena Ford congratulated Arabian Car Marketing team, Ford's partner in Oman, on accomplishing the feat of developing a truly world-class facility under the leadership of Sheikh Mohammed Saud Bahwan. She expressed her pleasure at the support the Lincoln brand was receiving from dealers in the region and said the showroom will open a new chapter in the story of the Lincoln brand in the Middle East. "Lincoln is a luxury brand that clients will be proud to own," she added.

Commenting on the opening of the showroom, Sheikh Mohammed Saud Bahwan, chairman of Arabian Car Marketing Co, said that this year marked twenty six years of successful partnership between Arabian Car Marketing Co and Ford. He said that he was proud to partner with Ford to open the first stand-alone store for Lincoln in the Middle East.

Kalyana Sivagnanam, Ford Middle East & North Africa's director for Marketing, Sales & Service spoke about the future plans for the Lincoln brand in region. The brand has a longstanding history of more than 90 years that is marked by a passion for innovative technology and stylish design. He said that Ford has plans to deliver several new Lincoln vehicles to the dealerships in the region including the all-new Lincoln MKZ, the compact premium SUV Lincoln MKC and 2015 Lincoln Navigator which will be launched shortly.

"Lincoln customers will be pleasantly surprised as they see these exciting products that boast compelling designs and technologies while offering a bespoke experience," Sivagnanam added.

In September 2014, Lincoln had announced a capital outlay plan of more than \$2.5 billion of capital for the five-year period from 2014 to 2019 through 2019, as part of a drive to revamp the image of the Lincoln brand and convert it into a world-class luxury brand. By 2016, Lincoln would add four all-new models to its range, starting with MKZ which was introduced in 2013, the recently launched Lincoln MKC, and the forthcoming launches of the MKX, which was unveiled as a Concept in Beijing earlier this year, and a new full size luxury sedan in 2016.

RALF BISSINGER NAMED NEW SALES AND MARKETING DIRECTOR OF BMW GROUP IN THE MIDDLE EAST



The BMW Group has announced that Ralf Bissinger will be taking over as the new Sales and Marketing Director for the company in the Middle East from January 2015. He will replace Alexander Eftimov who will be moving on to a leadership role in the company's corporate headquarters as a department head handling International Corporate, Direct and Special Sales.

Alexander Eftimov's had taken the BMW brand to great heights during his tenure in the Middle East, with the company experiencing growth in the double digits in the Middle East. The company had record sales in 2013, with 24,596 cars being delivered to customers. This was an increase of 15% over the 2012 sales figures. 2013 was the third successive year in which the BMW had record sales in the Middle East and it looks like the company is again set to surpass sales records in 2014 based on figures for the first ten months. In the period from January to October, BMW sales for the Middle East had increased by 21% as compared to the corresponding period in 2013.

Bissinger is a veteran of the automotive industry and has more than 25 years' experience within the BMW Group. For the past four years, he has been the Sales and Marketing Director for the BMW Group in Thailand. Prior to that, he worked in a number of senior marketing roles spanning a wide number of key markets including that of Sales and Marketing Director for BMW Group India, Marketing General Manager for BMW Group M in Munich, Germany, and Product and Market Planning Manager for BMW Australia.

According to Johannes Seibert, the Managing Director for BMW Group Middle East, Ralf will be an asset to the BMW Middle East team due to his international expertise, in-depth knowledge of the BMW Group brands, and his marketing skills. He is expected to play a key role in helping BMW to strengthen its position as the leading brand in the premium automotive segment in the Middle East in 2015 and in the years to come. With Ralf at the helm of the sales in the Middle East, the BMW Group is set to go places in the Middle East region.

AL HABTOOR MOTORS APPOINTS NATIONAL MOTORS COMPANY AS THE DEALER FOR MASTERCRAFT TIRES FOR THE GCC



Al Habtoor Motors Tires & Batteries Division, the exclusive distributor of Mastercraft Tires has appointed National Motor Company as the first Mastercraft Tires Authorized Dealer in the G.C.C., one of many more to follow. The official signing took place on 11th Dec 2014 and was attended by Mr. Simon Austin – General Manager, National Motor Company Bahrain, Mr. Nader Ebrahim- Head of General Motors Brand, Mr. Karl Hamer – Managing Director of Al Habtoor Motors, Mr. Neil Coolledge – General Manager of SpeedFit and Al Habtoor Motors Tires & Batteries Division along with the Senior Management of Al Habtoor Motors.

National Motor Company will be receiving the full marketing support of Al Habtoor Motors Tires & Batteries team to establish, build and increase brand awareness within Bahrain market. "We wish National Motor Company all the best to elevate the brand in their market and look forward to a long lasting partnership for years to come." said Mr. Coolledge.

Mastercraft Tires are manufactured by the parent company of Cooper Tires, the Cooper Tire & Rubber Company, the second largest tire manufacturer in the United States.

Since 1909, Mastercraft Tires have been crafted for durability and design. Its compounds and tread patterns designed to maximize tread life without sacrificing traction or ride quality—all at a price that'll keep the customer moving. Since the past 100 years, Mastercraft Tires have earned a reputation for building high mileage tires. Offering a wide variety of tires for various automotive applications, Mastercraft tires are built to today's highest quality standards to achieve a smooth ride without sacrificing performance.

From Courser and Avenger to Strategy and SRT Touring, Mastercraft tires come with features like rubber rim protectors to keep the wheels scuff-free and low rolling resistance for better fuel economy. It's a combination that makes Mastercraft tires a great value no matter where the road takes the driver.

Mastercraft Passenger car tires are designed for drivers who want optimum ride comfort, all-season traction and attractive styling. They are available for a diverse range of vehicles including passenger cars, minivans, small sport utility vehicles and crossovers.

Its Sport utility tires with the perfect balance of brawn and beauty are perfect touring tires designed to deliver higher levels of wet traction, ride comfort and appearance.

Mastercraft Light truck tires are for those who want all-season performance and who demand the utmost in off-road traction. These tires are available for many vehicles including light trucks and vans up to 1 ton.

For the convenience of the customers, National Motor Company plan to have specific sales locations for Mastercraft Tires and has plans to expand its sales network within Bahrain.

APOLLO BEGINS MOVES TO SET UP BASE IN SINGAPORE

It is not easy to break into the Asian tire market. Apollo Tyres has hitherto been concentrating on the European market but has now turned its eyes towards the market in the Far East. The first move has been to relocate the current president and chief financial officer Sunam Sarkar to Singapore. Along with the relocation, Sarkar's designation has also been changed from chief financial officer to chief business officer.

Sunam Sarkar is a veteran of the tire industry. He joined Apollo in 1999 as the head of marketing, subsequently moving on to successfully tackle roles in corporate strategy, operations and finance. These stints culminated in a position as a member of the Board of Directors in 2004. Even after the move to Singapore, he will retain his position as executive director and continue to work as the chief financial officer until a replacement is announced.

Sarkar will now be overseeing corporate strategy, greater china operations, production planning and supply chain operations including sourcing, logistics, corporate communications, information technology and corporate social responsibility.

The objective of his relocation to Singapore appears to be two fold. Subsequent to his move there, Sarkar is likely to start working on setting up an office in Singapore. Another aim would be for Singapore to become the hub for sourcing rubber from the region as neighboring Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand are the major producers of rubber. Though the tariffs on rubber imports into India are quite high in comparison to that for finished tires, Indian tire manufacturers are highly dependent on imported rubber and the subject of sourcing rubber is a thorny issue.

Commenting on Sarkar's move, Neeraj Kanwar, the vice-chairman and managing director of Apollo Tires said that the move is the outcome of Sunam's successful spell as the CFO and his role in strengthening Apollo's balance sheet. In his new position, Sarkar will spearhead Apollo's growth and expansion into new markets and use his strategic skills to develop new links with suppliers of rubber in neighboring countries.

There has also been speculation, based on recent comments by Neeraj Kaanwar, that Apollo might possibly be considering a Greenfield tire factory project in Southeast Asia, making Singapore the ideal location for a regional office.

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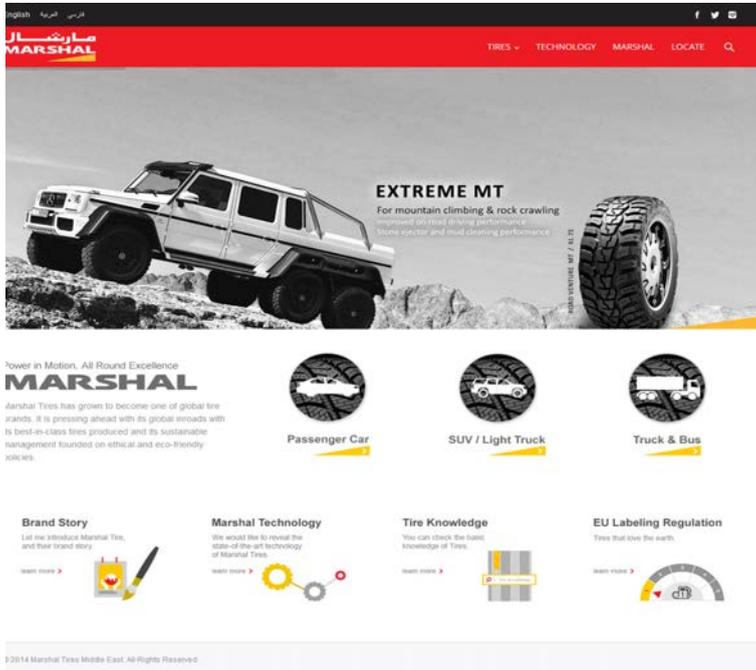
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MARSHAL TIRES CREATES MIDDLE EAST WEBSITE IN BID TO INCREASE BRAND AWARENESS



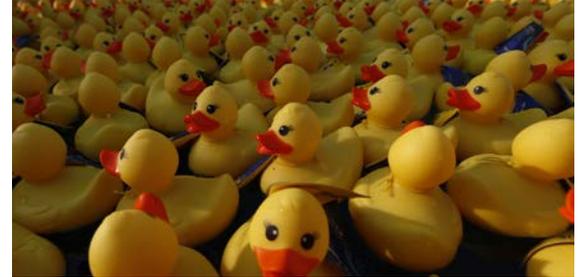
The Marshal brand of tires belongs to the Korean tire company, Kumho, which has over 50 years of expertise in the tire industry. Marshal tires offer exceptional performance at really reasonable prices. New tires are added to the range on a regular basis to incorporate the latest technological innovations in the field. Marshal will now be expanding its digital presence in the Middle East region with the launch of its new website.

Commenting on the launch of this new website, Alireza Moaref, the managing director of Varga Trading Co. LLC, the trading partner of Marshal Tires in the Middle East said that the market for tires in the Middle East is experiencing tremendous growth. With the region acting as the gateway to three major markets— Asia, Africa and Europe, it has developed into a hub for the import and re-export of tires. Many of the developing countries in the region are spending heavily on infrastructure and industrial development. The region is also home to a growing population of young people with high levels of disposable income and a passion for cars. With Dubai having one of the highest rates of car ownership in the world, the launch of this new website tailored for the Middle East region is part of the company's drive to significantly increase its market share in this key market.

The new website is highly useful friendly with sections in both Arabic and English and a simple layout for easy navigation. The site has been optimized for viewing on all devices including laptops, mobiles and iPads. The dealer locator and complete details of products on the website makes the research process highly convenient for customers.

With consumers today depending on online searches for all kinds of purchases, this website will serve as a crucial tool for Marshal Tires to enhance the company's presence in the region.

RAIN MUSIC VIDEO HELPS GOODYEAR CHINA PR CAMPAIGN WIN SABRE AWARD



Rubber ducks helped Goodyear win the Sabre Award for its public relations campaign to launch the Goodyear Assurance TripleMax tire in China. The PR campaign won the award in the category "Specialist Audience: Marketing to Men".

The Sabre awards are one of the most prestigious awards in the world of public relations and marketing strategy and recognize the 50 most outstanding PR campaigns that are notable for their creativity and effectiveness on a global level. They are organized by the Holmes Report and the jury members of the expert panel of judges are some of the leading marketing experts in the world. This year, the awards received more than 5,000 entries from over 60 countries.

According to Ben Chao, the vice president of marketing for Goodyear China, the Goodyear Assurance TripleMax tire, which was launched last year, is particularly suitable for driving on wet roads as it delivers much shorter braking distances. For this reason, the company opted to distribute yellow rubber ducks to symbolize the higher safety offered by the tire even in wet driving conditions. As part of the campaign, over 1.3 million Goodyear-branded yellow rubber ducks were given away to motorists in six major cities across the country. Motorists only had to scan a QR code on the rubber duck to get access to a mobile website that detailed all the characteristics of the new tire. The PR campaign also emphasized enjoyment of rainy weather with an 'Enjoy the Rain' music video depicting a driver happily dancing in the rain with yellow rubber ducks.

The campaign was carried out across multiple channels including radio broadcasts, online video sites, and the mobile site with information on the tires. The 'Enjoy the Rain' music video proved to be a viral hit and received as many as 13 million views.

Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company was one of the first major tire manufacturers to invest in China with the establishment of the Goodyear Dalian Tire Company Limited to produce a wide range of radial passenger and light truck tires. The company has an extensive distribution network with 65 distributors and almost 1,600 branded shops across China.

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TOYO TIRES LAUNCHES INSTAGRAM CAMPAIGN TO PRODUCE FAN FILM ON AC MILAN



It is the dream of football fans worldwide to get the replica football kit of their favorite team. Getting one that is signed by all the players in the team is next to impossible. However, Toyo is set to change all that with its upcoming promotional campaign. The campaign will give one very lucky fan the chance to get the replica kit of the AC Milan team with the signatures of all the players.

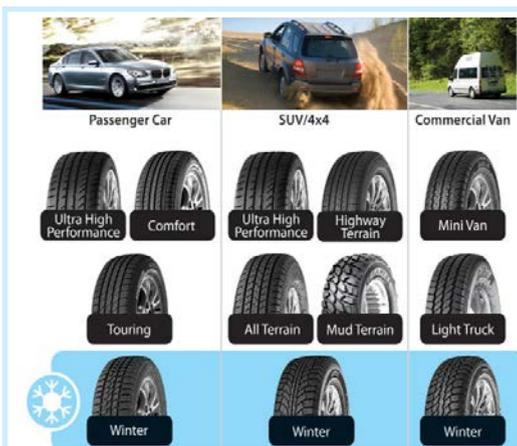
Toyo Tire & Rubber Co., Ltd. is one of the premium sponsors of the renowned Italian soccer club, AC Milan. Takuji Yamamoto, the president of Toyo recently announced that the company is planning to produce an original film made up of clippings submitted by club fans with the title "Driven to perform. To SAN SIRO". The film is meant to promote support for both the Toyo brand and AC Milan. This will mark a world first as a club sponsor has never created a worldwide fan movie in this manner.

AC Milan fans worldwide were asked to submit their photos and video clips featuring a soccer ball through the instagram photo-sharing service from December 1 to December 21. The best clippings will be chosen through an online voting process from December 8 to January 4. The clippings that receive the highest votes on facebook and Twitter will be edited into a film that makes it look as though fans drawn from all over the world are passing the ball to each other in a show of support for AC Milan.

The film will be completed by end of January next year. Toyo Tires will screen the film to drum up support for the team during AC Milan home games in the second half of the 2014-2015 season at the renowned San Siro stadium.

From all the fans who submit the video clips through Instagram, one will be selected through a draw to receive a replica football kit signed by all the members of the AC Milan team.

UNITED STATES MOVES TO LEVY PRELIMINARY COUNTERVAILING DUTY ON CHINESE CONSUMER TIRES



As the outcome of a petition submitted by the United Steelworkers Union and subsequent investigations, the U.S. Department of Commerce has decided to implement preliminary countervailing duties on Chinese consumer tires at 15.69 percent. The final decision will be announced on April 6, 2015. According to the Dept. of Commerce, countervailing duties are imposed when foreign governments give substantial subsidies to companies in a particular sector which are tied to export performance or to the use of domestic goods in preference to imported goods.

The United Steelworkers union had filed the petition in June at the US Department of Commerce stating that the import of these cheap Chinese tires was effectively destroying the tire manufacturing industry in the US and leading to loss of jobs as the market was flooded with cheap Chinese tires.

As a result of the decision, Commerce will be instructing U.S. Customs and Border Protection to require tire importers to submit cash deposits based on the rates decided. The decision will be effective from the date the notice appears in the Federal Register. According to a spokesman of the Commerce Department this would be sometime early next week.

The countervailing duties will be retroactive 90 days from the date the decision is published in the Federal Register except for two companies - Giti Tire

Fujian Co. Ltd., and Cooper Kunshan China Tire Co. Ltd. These two companies have been given separate rates for the countervailing duties, 17.69 and 12.5 per cent respectively as they did not increase their exports after the US Department of Commerce opened the investigation like other companies did. In addition to these exceptions, Commerce implemented a separate duty amounting to 81.29 percent for the Shandong Yongsheng Rubber Group Co. Ltd.

Commerce is also considering the prospect of levying anti-dumping duties, and the preliminary decision for that will be announced on January 21, 2015. Taken together with the countervailing duties, the total import duties on the Chinese consumer tires could be as high as 45 to 50 percent, according to Robert Higginbotham, an analyst with SunTrust Robinson Humphrey Inc.

Depending on the outcome of further investigations, Commerce could change or decide to totally remove the duties.

Commenting on the decision, USW President Leo Gerard said, "The Commerce Dept. is right to neutralize the negative effects of the unfair subsidies the Chinese government has granted to tire exporters." He added that these illegal subsidies have caused thousands of American workers in the tire manufacturing industry to lose their jobs. If duties are not imposed, many more jobs would be lost as more and more motorists opt for the much cheaper Chinese tires."

HANKOOK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF TIRE DESIGN CHALLENGE AT ESSEN MOTOR SHOW



Hankook is one of largest and fastest growing tire manufacturers in the world and produces high-quality and high-performance radial tires for passenger cars, SUVs, buses, light trucks, RVs, trucks, and even for motorsports. The company has as many as five R&D centers spread across the world and places a high premium on research and continuous innovation in order to give customers the highest possible levels of driving satisfaction.

In line with this strategy, every two years the company conducts the "Hankook Tire Design Challenge" in partnership with leading international universities. It accepts entries from design students depicting their ideas for realistic tire design concepts for the future that can solve the current problems faced by the tire industry and promote sustainability, recycling and tire efficiency. In 2012, Hankook tied up with the University of Cincinnati in the US for the competition. The 2014 Hankook Tire Design Challenge was open to students enrolled in the Master of Arts course for Transportation Design at the celebrated University of Design, Engineering and Business in Pforzheim, the only such course in Germany. The design students drawn from different countries of the world had one semester to come up with sketches and 3 D computer animations of their entries. The winners of the contest were selected by an expert panel of tire and design experts and announced at the opening of the Essen Motor Show.

Samir Sadikov won the first place with his "Dakar" racing tire concept which presented the novel idea of using a truck tire for racing in extreme conditions with a hexagonal block design for the tread. The blocks can be attached and detached from each other in different combinations for offroad and onroad conditions and to get better grip on flat surfaces. The blocks have their own individual air and suspension and this concept minimizes the impact of a puncture as only the block with the puncture needs to be replaced. The block concept also gives more scope for customizing the style and color of tires.

Andreas Hartl who placed second in the competition came up with an intelligent "Vent Tire" tread which is split into two portions to reduce the risk of hydroplaning. One portion is a solid rubber area with excellent grip for dry and normal conditions and the other portion is made of small rubber vents fashioned like a turbine wheel for wet and slick roads. The blades of the turbine channel water inwards from where it is evacuated using an intelligent tunnel system. Thus, the tire has maximum grip and there is risk for aquaplaning only at much higher speeds. The arrangement of the vents also gives the tire a better grip in snowy conditions.

Lucia Lee won the third spot with "Concept Winter" which is not only an airless tire but is also a super winter tire for extremely snowy weather. It consists of 14 hinged polyurethane units that are closed in normal mode and open for the snow mode. The space between the units increases in snow mode and the car is pushed upwards giving the vehicle greater height and traction in bad weather conditions.

Hankook built prototypes of all three winning entries which were showcased at the company's booth at the Essen Motor Show.

MRF STRIVES TO MAKE BRAND GLOBAL THROUGH PARTNERSHIP WITH INTERNATIONAL CRICKET COUNCIL



Cricket is one of the great passions of people in the Indian subcontinent. There have been many cricketing greats from the region including Sachin Tendulkar, Imran Khan, Wasim Akram and Sanath Jayasuriya. Any kind of association with cricket will significantly boost awareness about a brand in the hearts and minds of the public. This is probably the reason why one of India's leading tire manufacturers, MRF Tyres has announced that it has signed a deal to become the global partner of the International Cricket Council, the ICC. The deal will include sponsorship of the ICC Cricket World Cup in 2015. The audience at the high profile event held to announce the partnership also had the fortune to witness

the unveiling of the ICC Cricket World Cup Trophy. In addition to the 10 full members of the ICC, 4 qualifiers including the UAE, Afghanistan, Scotland and Ireland will be taking part in the 2015 ICC World Cup.

The company has a longstanding association with cricket and has long been the bat sponsor for cricketing greats like Steve Waugh and Sachin Tendulkar. It also subsidizes the "MRF Pace Foundation" which operates in different countries to spot and train promising young players and to improve their fast bowling skills.

MRF had previously been concentrating on making its presence felt in the large Indian tire market. By joining hands with the ICC, the company will be able to reach out to potential customers in all cricket playing nations. MRF has been ranked as one of the 10 fastest growing companies in India and with this move it hopes to increase its presence on the global scene.

Speaking about the new partnership, the ICC chairman, Narayanaswami Srinivasan, said that through the partnership with the ICC, MRF will be able to reach out to customers across the world. MRF is already an active promoter of cricket and by tying up with ICC as a global sponsor and supporting the ICC Cricket World Cup 2015, MRF will continue to highlight the growing importance of the ICC and its flagship event.

According to K. M. Mammen, the chairman and managing director of MRF Limited, the sponsorship deal marked a historic moment for MRF. As the ICC World Cup Cricket 2015 is considered by many to be the pinnacle of one-day cricket, he said it is a matter of pride for MRF to be associated with the organization as a global sponsor. Through this sponsorship, MRF Ltd was re-affirming its passion and commitment for the game of cricket in both the national and international arenas and hoping that it will help the brand go global.

DJ DANNY DRIFTS TO A DIFFERENT TUNE WITH KENDA SUPPORT



Dany Neville, the UAE born Lebanese DJ/radio presenter became a household name in the music industry in the UAE at a very young age. One of the youngest professional DJ/ radio presenters in the Middle East, he started out at 17 by working on the graveyard shift from 2 am to 6 am at Radio 1. His Show "The Edge" is still going strong after 14 years and is one of the longest running shows in the Middle East. Known for his extensive knowledge of music, Dany has been called the 'Ambassador of Urban Music to the Middle East' for consistently featuring upcoming international artists on "The Edge". For them, the show has been a stepping stone into the Middle East market. The Edge was also the first show in the UAE that took up the cause of promoting local talent.

Dany has created many firsts in the music industry. He was the first local DJ to perform at the MTV Europe Music Awards 2008, which was held in Liverpool that year. Thus, he became the first DJ from the UAE to appear on such a prestigious platform. In addition to being a DJ, Dany also turned producer and received a Gold Disc in Canada for producing international singer-songwriter Karl Wolf's track, 'Mash It Up' and has been involved in several television projects like Wrigley's 5 Gum (Arabia) 'Sound of 5' competition and Ford Arabia's GCC Rally competition.

Dany brings his fierce competitive streak to another passion of his, pro drift racing. He has been able to indulge his quest to become a champion in this field with support from the global tire manufacturer, Kenda Tires. Kenda is Dany's exclusive supplier for all drifting events across the UAE.

Speaking about the support he receives from Kenda, Dany said, "I would like to thank Kenda for believing in me and for making this partnership possible. This support is very important to me. Drifting can be a very expensive sport. I do not have to worry anymore about getting the right tires and kit for drifting events and can instead focus exclusively on practicing my skill. Being supported by such a leading tire company is a real honor."

As a competitor in the 2014-2015 drift UAE season, Dany Neville will be participating in four events which will be packed with fans of both his music and his racing ability. The first race will be held on the oval circuit of the Dubai Autodrome on December 12. The second round will be held on the North Circuit of the Yas Marina racetrack in Abu Dhabi on January 24, 2015. The third race will be held on the Club Circuit of Dubai autodrome on February 13, 2015. The north circuit of the Yas Marina Circuit will be the venue for the final round of the drifting season on March 28, 2015.

The drifting events in the UAE are bound to attract significant interest as they will have several local touches and drifters will come from far and wide to participate in these events. Drifting may look like organized mayhem but it is a sport that calls for great courage and control. With a popular celebrity like Dany Neville being endorsed by Kenda, the brand is set to go places in the UAE, and indeed in the entire Middle East. Kenda Tires is distributed exclusively in the UAE by the company's local partner, Varga Trading Co.

TOYO REVEALS R888R TO THE WORLD AT ESSEN



Toyo Tire Europe GmbH, the European subsidiary of the Japanese tire company, Toyo Tire revealed the new Proxes R888R track tire to the world at the Essen Motorshow in Germany.

The tire will be made available in the market during 2015 and is the successor to the popular Proxes R888. The Proxes R888 has powered many champions to victory at racing events including the recent 2014 Toyota Sprint Series in the UK.

Though the Proxes R888 has set a high benchmark with its performance as a proven race winner, the Proxes R888R is more than equal to the task. It provides optimal track steering and grip and is the ultimate track tire with a short warm up time, better dry grip and more consistent performance over multiple laps and heat cycles.

The tire comes with a rayon "super-high" turn up ply in some sizes backed by steel side plies to deliver more precise steering response and feedback to the driver. This gives them better control in the quest to get the best performance from their race car. Initially, the new Proxes R888R will be sold in 32 sizes.

Audi Sport TT Cup Opts for Hankook as Exclusive Tire Supplier



Audi has opted for Hankook Tire as the exclusive supplier for the new Audi Sport TT Cup. The motorsport competition will be based on the Audi TT racing version and will include a few selected events within the framework of the DTM from 2015 onwards. The Cup will serve as a stepping stone for younger, less experienced drivers to break into field of professional motor sports. The racing cars used in the events will be modified versions of the Audi TT and will be fitted with Hankook Ventus Race racing tires.

Hankook is not just supplying tires for the Audi Sport TT Cup but is also the OE fitment for the racing version of the new Audi TT. With the new TT and TTS Coupé and Roadster road legal versions of the car being fitted with Ultra-High-Performance Hankook Ventus S1 ev² tires, the partnership between Audi and Hankook will definitely be a longstanding one.

The racing version of the third generation of the Audi TT model has a kerb weight of only 1,125 kg while the output of the two-liter TFSI engine is 310 hp. It can be increased to 340 hp with a push-to-pass function. The tires used for the Audi TT will be the rain tires of the Hankook Ventus Race range in the size 260/660 R 18.

According to Audi's project manager Rolf Michl, the Audi Sport TT Cup has received an overwhelming number of entries from all parts of the world and has attracted significant international attention. The quality of the drivers promises an interesting field of racers for the Cup's first season. The role of tires is highly crucial in motorsports. Hankook has considerable expertise when it comes to tires for racing and is therefore an ideal partner for the Audi Sport TT Cup.

Manfred Sandbichler, Motor Sports Director at Hankook Tire Europe stated that the new deal with Audi to become the supplier for the Audi TT Cup underlines Hankook's commitment to motor sports.

He added, "The tires we are supplying as original fitment to the Audi TT road cars are derived from technologies used in the DTM, where we have been cooperating very successfully with Audi Sport for years. Participants in the new Audi Sport TT Cup will also benefit from this experience."



Tire Fact

Underinflation, by as little as 6 psi, can cut gas mileage by 3%.

NEXEN TIRES GETS OE FITMENT FOR NEW RAM 'PROMASTER'



Nexen Tire Corporation has added another brand to its growing list of OE fitments. Fiat Chrysler Automobiles has opted for the company's Radian CT8 HL tires as the factory fitment for the 2015 version of the "Ram ProMaster" commercial van. The vans will be manufactured at the company's factory in Saltillo, Mexico, plant for supply to the entire North American region.

The Ram brand did not have any van models for the past three years and the launch of the 2015 Ram ProMaster, which is based on the popular Fiat Ducato van marks Ram's re-entry into this segment after the long break. According to Nexen, the Radian CT8 HL tires used for the ProMaster will be LT225/75R16, load range E.

The ProMaster is a front-wheel-drive van and this permits FCA to offer the vehicle in two different roof heights, three different wheelbases and four different body lengths - as many as 13 different configurations to suit the needs of all types of customers.

In addition to the great number of configurations, the front-wheel-drive offers many other benefits including greater space for cargo, better mileage, lower load floor and lower weight in comparison to other models in the same segment. The massive sliding doors on the side and rear doors that are flexible enough to open up to 260 degrees make it possible to load full-sized pallets into the van using a forklift.

Fiat had announced earlier this year that the ProMaster will be fitted with either Chrysler's 3.6-liter Pentastar V-6 engine or customers can opt for a 3 liter inline four-cylinder turbodiesel engine. It can carry a payload of 5,145 pounds, depending on the configuration of the van.

This is not FCA's first fitment using Nexen tires. The company's Ram 3500 pickup has been fitted with Radian HTX RH5 and Radian AT Pro RA8 tires, in size LT235/80R17, load range E. FCA also said it is considering Nexen tires for OE on the Ram ProMaster City, which is a smaller van that be used for deliveries and is based on the Fiat Doblo delivery van.

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BKT LAUNCHES MAGLIFT RANGE OF PREMIUM SOLID TIRES



India-based Bal Krishna Tyres or BKT has established its reputation in the tire industry as a manufacturer of specialty tires. Within a short period of two decades since its inception in 1994, BKT has become a global brand and the company's off-road tires are now exported to over 130 countries spread across five continents including Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, North and South America. The company is a major foreign exchange earner as it is the largest exporter of tires from India.

The company has now announced that it has expanded its range of solid tires for material handling equipment.

These tires which are meant for machines like platform trucks, forklifts and vehicles which are used in ports, airports, logistic centers and scrap yards are normally highly vulnerable to punctures and damage.

The new BKT tires named BKT MAGLIFT solid tires however are resistant to cuts and require lower maintenance while at the same time offering a long service life, better stability and driving comfort. The most notable feature of these tires is that they have three layers consisting of a tread, cushion and base.

The tread is fashioned from a superior compound that makes it more durable and gives better braking, stability and traction in dry and wet conditions. The cushioning layer in the middle minimizes overheating and improves ride comfort. The base layer too is made from a tough compound that gives the wheel rim a better grip and prevents slippage. Nevertheless, with prolonged use, there are chances for slippage as the base layer becomes elongated. To reduce the scope for slippages, the base layer is buttressed with steel wire beads making the tires more rigid.

BKT will be launching the tires in as many as 18 different sizes in standard black and lip black colors.

With the introduction of the new tires, it looks like BKT is well on its way of achieving its aim to get a global market share of 10 per cent in the off-highway tire range by 2015 and total sales of US \$2bn by 2020.

“BIG 3” AGREE TO CONTROL EXPORTS IN BID TO REGULATE SUPPLY OF NATURAL RUBBER

The subject of the volatility of the price of natural rubber has recently become a thorny issue for tire manufacturers. There has been a glut in the supply of natural rubber with the price going into free fall in recent years. In spite of subsidy schemes implemented by local governments, the ultimate sufferers have been the small scale farmers who sometimes even resorted to protests in countries like Thailand to make their voice heard.

Now, in a bid to control the supply of natural rubber in the global market, the three major producers of natural rubber, namely Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia have reached an agreement not to expand the area under cultivation and to “manage” exports of natural rubber until 2020. This agreement was reached at a meeting of the ministerial committee of the International Tripartite Rubber Council (ITRC) in Kuala Lumpur.

Similar to the manner in which OPEC operates with regard to the supply of crude oil, the three countries have agreed to provide regular updates to the ITRC regarding their export statistics. Thus, they can “manage” the flow of rubber into the global market and keep the price under control by ensuring that there will be no excess supply.

In order to increase the domestic consumption of rubber by at least 10 percent, the three countries also identified a few focus areas where natural rubber could be used to greater extent, including the construction of roads and dams and promoting the use of latex bedding and rubber gloves in government clinics and hospitals. According to the ITRC, such “Trade Integration Mechanism” policies would also help to control exports.

Another measure the ministers agreed on was to keep working on steps to set up a Regional Rubber Market. The Market would act as a platform that could benefit market players, producers and consumers through the provision of better price discovery and effective hedging functions. The ministerial committee agreed on a timeframe of 18 months to make the Regional Rubber Market a reality.

From the planting perspective, the committee agreed that the target set for the allowable planted area under the Supply Management Scheme (SMS) for the duration from 2015 – 2020 for the TIM countries will not be exceeded. They have also agreed not to expand the area under cultivation of natural rubber.

The “Big 3” produce two-thirds of the global supply of natural rubber and account for 79 percent of global NR net export. Most of the rubber produced by these countries comes from the farms of rural smallholders, with about 4.6 million rubber cultivators in these three countries.

The ministers have decided that it would be prudent to develop ties with other rubber major producers of rubber in the region including Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam in order to implement measures to increase the price of natural rubber in the global market. Other topics discussed at the ministerial meeting included current stock levels, price trends, the latest developments in rubber market, and supply fundamentals.

DEESTONE OPENS FIFTH TBR FACTORY IN DRIVE TO INCREASE GLOBAL MARKET SHARE



Deestone recently opened its fifth factory to produce truck and bus radial tires in Thailand in a bid to increase manufacturing capacity and increase market share. With the opening of this new plant, the company hopes to increase production by 20% in order to become one of the leading tire manufacturers in the world in 2015.

The factory is equipped with state-of-the-art technology and equipment and will also cater to local demand. Deestone invested USD 106.45 million in this factory that covers 320,000 square meters in Banglame district, Nakorn pathom province. The factory will produce tires for commercial vehicles for both local and export markets. The tire market in Thailand is highly competitive as it is a manufacturing base for many brands and all these are available locally. However, Deestone has a longstanding history of 38 years in the country and has gone from strength to strength since inception. Deestone manufactures over 1000 products including PCR, AG tire, motorcycle tires and bicycle tires in different brands and sizes. Backed by innovative technology and an effective team, Deestone was the first manufacturer of radial tires in Thailand to venture into the overseas market. Now, the company exports about 60 per cent of its total production, over four million tires annually to as many as 115 markets.

Commenting on the opening of the new plant, Kirk Wongsariyanich, the vice president of the company said that the output of the factory will contribute cater to customers looking for the most modern truck and bus radials including off road tires at reasonable prices.

He added that the company focuses heavily on research and development to make tires of the best quality and this is maintained right through to production. "Siam truck radial" tires use natural materials sourced from all over the world to produce quality tires.

The demand for tires in the Asian market and in the global market is tied directly to the growth of the automotive industry. As one of the world's leading producers of natural rubber Thailand has an edge when it comes to the production of tires. It is one of the leading exporters of automotive tires in Asia, and in 2013, export figures crossed 103,926 million bath, an increase of 2% over the previous year. In 2014, this is expected to increase to 110000 million bath.

With the new plant becoming functional, Deestone hopes to increase its production capacity to 195,000 tons per year thus joining the list of leading tire manufacturers in the world. Till now, the company has been focusing a lot on the domestic market, though its products are exported to 115 markets. Now, with the quality of Deestone's tires being at par with the best in the world and providing value for money, the company's senior executives are confident that Deestone will become one of the companies that will play a key role in making Thailand one of the world's leading industrialized countries.

TRELLEBORG BACKED VENTURE CONQUERS SOUTH POLE

Headed by Dutch actress and 'Tractor Girl', Manon Ossevoort, the expedition to Antarctica backed by Massey Ferguson and Trelleborg finally reached the South Pole. This was the first time ever that a tractor had conquered the South Pole. With this, the first half of the 5000 kilometer round trip to the Pole has been completed.

The aim of the Antarctica 2 Team was to take a Massey Ferguson MF 5610 tractor on a 5000 kilometre return trip to the Pole. Trelleborg which specializes in complete wheel systems for agricultural and forest machinery had created a customized multi-purpose set of tires and rims for the expedition, and when challenged by bad weather for the last stretch of the trip to the pole, these tires helped the MF 5610 to negotiate the terrain successfully.

The agricultural tires used for the tractor underwent stringent tests before the trip as the extreme weather conditions and terrain in Antarctica make it crucial to have a tire which offers high fuel efficiency and excellent traction. A tire with premium floatation would increase the pressure distribution on the ground and provide superior traction, thus reducing fuel consumption and providing greater grip, better driving comfort and handling.

The tires used for the MF 5610 were a modified version of Trelleborg's ProgressiveTraction™ tire. The company's expert engineers adapted its tread pattern by reducing its height and rounding the tread at the shoulder, in order to help the tractor handle the soft and slushy ground conditions in the region. The tire's carcass was also modified to make it capable of functioning even at pressures as low as 0.3 bar. The rim profile was altered to make sure the beads stayed in place and that there would be no slippage or rim roll-off.

During the 18 days it took for the expedition team to reach the South Pole, the team faced quite a few challenges including deep crevasses, soft snow, steep slopes and temperatures that were as low as minus 56 degrees Celsius.

It took tremendous grit and determination on the part of the crew members to complete the trip to the pole backed by the superb performance of both the MF 5600 tractor and the ProgressiveTraction™ tire from Trelleborg.

The ProgressiveTraction™ tire proved equal to the task, remaining soft even at the low temperatures and providing great driver comfort. Only the steep climbs on glaciers were a bit challenging due to the high traction needed to maintain the grip. However, the reinforced carcass and the tire's wide footprint helped handle this task due to the additional grip they provided. The tractor had only minor slippages in the mountainous region.

Piero Mancinelli, R&D Director Agricultural and Forestry Tires at Trelleborg Wheel Systems, commented: "To ensure the tire performed as required across each of the varying conditions throughout the expedition, the pressure of the tires was altered to gain greater traction and floatation, as and when the conditions dictated. For instance, in the hard packed sastrugi, the tires performed best at 12psi, while in deep snow the tire's performed best between 4 and 6 psi, increasing driver comfort and handling."

He added that the Antarctica2 expedition has proved to be a truly useful platform to showcase the performance of the ProgressiveTraction™ tires in one of the toughest terrains on earth.

MICHELIN OPENS FACTORY FOR COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION OF TWEELS



The concept of the airless Tweel (a combination of a tire and wheel) had made waves when it was first launched by Michelin. In fact, it was named by TIME magazine as "One of the Most Amazing Inventions of 2005". The Tweel essentially consists of a rigid hub connected to flexible polyurethane spokes which support an outer rim in lieu of the compressed air in a traditional tire. Due to its lack of dependence on a bladder full of compressed air, there are no chances that it will burst, leak or get a puncture. In addition to the safety and convenience of never getting a puncture, it offers less scope for hydroplaning and can last two to three times longer than a conventional tire.

According to Michelin, the Tweel is the first commercialized airless radial solution and will reduce the frequent punctures experienced in the agricultural construction, landscaping, contracting and recycling industries by a significant margin. It is true that with regard to some aspects, pneumatic radial tires are still better than Tweels for passenger cars. However, in the case of low-speed applications, punctures are far more common and Tweels are more beneficial and cheaper in the long run.

The new factory opened by Michelin is located in Piedmont, South Carolina, USA, and will help the company to begin production of the new X Tweel Turf which has been chosen as the original equipment for John Deere's Ztrak 900 Series of commercial mowers. The factory will also increase Michelin's output of its X Tweel SSL skid-steer tires. Michelin spent USD 50 million on this 135,000 sq.ft facility which is Michelin's 16th plant in the US.

Commenting on the opening of the new plant, Pete Selleck, Michelin North America chairman and president said that the new plant is yet another example of Michelin's commitment to technological innovation. It is truly fitting that the Tweel will be manufactured in the Greenville area as the Tweel concept was initially developed at the Michelin Americas Research Company in Greenville, one of the company's three global technology centers.

Ralph Dimenna, the head of Michelin Tweel Technologies said that the Tweel airless radial tire will help Michelin to break into new markets and expand its reach in the low-speed application category.

Innovations for radial passenger car tires have reached the point where punctures are much rarer, with one occurring on average every 70,000 miles. So, right now the commercialization of Tweels for passenger cars is not a priority. However, the company will keep working on developing Tweels for passenger cars.

"Over time we'll put both technologies in competition with each other and the best technology will win," he said. According to him, the Tweel may be useful in some "developing economies where bad roads dictate slow-moving passenger cars. "Use there, he added, "can lead the way to broader passenger car applications."



FALKEN EXPANDS WILDPEAK H/T LIGHT TRUCK TIRE RANGE



Falken Tire has added new sizes to its range of Wildpeak H/T light truck tires. With the introduction of the new tires in the range, the Wildpeak H/T product line will now have as many as 44 total sizes ranging from 15" – 20" in both P and LT-Metric. The tires will be available in Q, S, and T speed ratings. The range will now expand to cover fitments for popular CUVs, which have a growing market share in North America.

The Wildpeak H/T tires come with multi-wave lateral sipes and symmetric non-directional 5-rib tread design. This adds significantly to the dry handling and responsive wet braking characteristics of the tires. The tread compound has been infused with silica giving the tire greater strength and durability and increasing ride comfort. The carcass of the tire is crisscrossed with stiff, wide steel belts and the casing is made of high-tension ply. These elements in combination with rigid variable pitch shoulder design give the tire the maximum possible traction and control.

According to Rick Brennan, Falken's Executive Director of Marketing, Wildpeak H/T tires are some of the most versatile truck tires available and have garnered 84% coverage of the total light truck market. In view of the value they offer and their suitability for use in all seasons, many customers choose Wildpeak H/T tires for their light trucks and CUVs.



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A force that grows with the expectations of all professional workers: superb traction, cut resistant compound, highly protected casing from cut penetrations thanks to the multi-layer steel belts, fuel efficiency resulting in an extremely longer tire life.

Earthmax range represents the synthesis of the BKT's radial technology for the Industrial & OTR applications: a valuable choice, developed to meet the specific needs of professional users.

BKT's Industrial & OTR tires: the innovative answers of a wide, complete and competitive tire range.

OFF-ROAD TIRES

POTENTIAL AND CHALLENGES



V. Krishnaram

CEO and Joint Managing Director of Emerald Tires

Mr. V. Krishnaram, the CEO and joint managing director of Emerald Tires proved to be a fount of knowledge when it comes to OTR tires. In his session at the Automechanika Academy, we got a concise but comprehensive overview of the different types of OTR tires, current and future trends, the challenges faced by the sector and the future potential.

The OTR tire market offers tremendous opportunities. The market for tires is approximately a \$230 billion market, of which 65% is dominated by the car and truck tire manufacturers. Of the balance 35%, almost 15% is dominated by the OTR industry.

First, we need to understand what an OTR tire is. Essentially according to international classifications, there are five types of tires for land transport - passenger car, commercial vehicle, agricultural equipment, cycle and motorcycle tires, tires for earthmovers and tires for industrial equipment. A few people make the mistake of thinking that agricultural tires and forestry tires too are OTR tires. Nevertheless, according to international guidelines, only tires for earth moving equipment and industrial equipment are considered as OTR tires.

Emerald tires is one of the largest players in the industrial tire segment and the firm is the seventh largest producer of OTR tires for industrial equipment, with exports to over 120 countries spread across the world.

OTR tires are used in vehicles meant for surface mining, underground mining, construction, industrial use, ports and ground support. Earth moving equipment includes vehicles like rigid dump trucks, articulated dump trucks, loaders/dozers, graders, scrapers, cranes and compactors. Lift trucks and skid steers are used for industrial purposes. Port vehicles comprise tractors, trailers, stackers, empty container handlers and straddle carriers. Ground support vehicles consist of baggage tractors, aircraft tow tractors and other special purpose machines.

Mr. Krishnaram then proceeded to demystify the TRA nomenclature for tires. According to the alpha numeric system used by the TRA, the letter refers to the type of equipment and the number refers to the kind of tread used. For example, L-5 would refer to a loader with tires having tread that is extra thick.

OTR tires have to handle a variety of surfaces ranging from gravel to mud to rocks and log strewn terrain. Since they will not be functioning on smooth roads, they need to be highly resistant to cuts and abrasions. Due to continuous braking, heat is likely to build up and they need to be designed to minimize heat buildup. Mud and slippery surfaces demand tires with excellent grip and traction. Tires should also be able to support relatively heavier loads, should offer less rolling resistance and should be self-cleaning to remove debris. Tires should have good floatation as they should be able to move easily over muddy environments. Load carrying capacity increases as the inflation increases. So, OTR tires need to take maximum inflation pressure in order to support high loads. OTR tires should generate less heat and ensure there is more dissipation of heat in long haul/high speed applications like mining.

With the tires in these sectors facing difficult terrain and tough operating conditions, many OTR tire manufacturers are switching from bias to radial tires as the radial tires provide a better footprint and the tread is independent of the sidewall which gives better stability. In bias tires, the load is transferred from the beam to the sidewall to the base reducing the footprint. The move from the bias to the radial market is one of the challenges the industry is currently facing.

OTR tires need to perform in all kinds of work environments even when pushed to the limit. Hence the market is dominated by legacy brands. There are some applications where these legacy brands have done extensive research and they are able to provide some of the best tires that are required for this application. Today, in view of high customer expectations, manufacturers of vehicles like Caterpillar and Komatsu are highly exacting about the kind of tires they need for their vehicles. They liaise directly with the tire manufacturers about the kind of tires they have in mind right from the design stage of a vehicle depending on its purpose and structure. For example, BKT has over 160 different types of OTR tires. Hence the OTR tire industry is a highly investment oriented industry where the vehicle manufacturers and tire manufacturers have to work hand in hand to get optimal results.

Meeting customer expectations is a definite challenge in this sector. Customer expectations from OTR tires include meeting a variety of application requirements and completing work within deadlines, especially in the mining industry. Efficiency with regard to fuel usage, productivity, durability, reliability, safety and profitability are the key criteria customers use to evaluate OTR tires. To this end, they want tires that are more durable, cut and puncture resistant, have greater tread life, and have the capacity to support maximum loads. At the same time the operating cost, maintenance cost, and down time should be minimal. Just like the car tire industry and truck tire industry are driven by the economy, the OTR tire industry is also driven by the growth of the economy. Other critical factors which have an impact on this sector are the rate of growth of industrial development, mining and infrastructure growth. These are the four major determinants that drive the growth of the OTR industry

OTR tires cannot be sold off the shelf. The size, tread design, compound and construction of the tire have to be customized based on the size of the vehicle, the load it has to carry and the terrain in which it operates. For example, the tread design may be smooth, block or ribbed. Construction too may be bias or radial depending on the requirements though more and more OTR tire manufacturers are switching to radial tires in view of the increased stability they offer. There may be a few countries in which bias tires are preferred, but to become a global player and to be taken seriously in the OTR tire industry, a company has to switch to radial tires.

Another major challenging aspect of the OTR tire industry is retreading. Retreaders around the world are trying different methods to cut costs. A quality retreaded tire offers all the benefits of a new tire at 40 per cent of the price of a new tire. Manufacturers like Panda offer retreaded tires which offer almost as much mileage as an original tire. Retreading is both a challenge and an opportunity as it has the potential to reduce costs but at the same time you need to have different molds and capacities to retread the tires.

Another challenge is to work towards performance optimization so that no time is wasted on useless tasks. Service demands too pose a challenge as people have to be trained to manage the fleet effectively with proactive service checks to reduce the downtime needed for repairs and service. Inventory control is highly crucial as OTR tires are very expensive and can cost as much as USD 100,000. Spares should be available without too much funds being blocked in inventory. Tabs have to be kept through the entire lifecycle of a tire by tracking it effectively right from ordering and delivery to the end of its life.

Earlier, only the legacy brands had the capacity to develop, design and market OTR tiers. The situation has changed today with plenty of tier II suppliers of OTR tires including Chinese, Indian and East European manufacturers having large production capacities, most notably BKT and Techking. Even those who used to buy legacy brand tires are now switching to tires from these tier II suppliers because their tires are just as good. The life of the tires may be slightly shorter, but they can handle the challenges equally well. The tier II manufacturers use the latest technology and keep the costs down passing the savings on to the customers. This emergence of the tier II suppliers is both a challenge and an opportunity. Customers have more options when it comes to price and availability. Earlier, customers had to wait for up to three months to get the tires after placing the order. Deliveries are made well within deadlines. Now, the tires can be obtained from tier II suppliers practically off the shelf, closing the demand-supply gap. The plants too are located in strategic points close to where the mines are, and not necessarily only in developed countries.

Nowadays, tire management systems and tire pressure management systems have come under increasing scrutiny. When it comes to monitoring the performance of the tires, they can now be monitored on a continual basis. Through a tire management system, users are able to monitor the different aspects of a tire including its heat buildup, the inflation pressure, the loading pattern, the operation cycle, the number of hours it has been used, the maintenance schedule, the distance covered and other factors which affect the life of the tire. The tire management system industry is a very big industry and in view of the major role it plays in product support and optimal use of OTR tires, it is closely connected to the OTR tire industry

Today, an OTR tire can weigh up to 16,000 pounds and can be as much as 30 ft high. The challenges involved in making these tires are far more complex than those in making commonplace tires for passenger cars and trucks. Environmental concerns pose another major challenge in view of the size of the tires as scrap disposal is not easy.

Coming to opportunities, the main demand drivers for OTR tires are the mining industry, economic growth, infrastructure growth, industrial growth and the development of the construction industry. The global potential for tires in units is 3.3 billion with an expected year-on-year growth of 4.7%. In value terms, it is USD 220 billion with an expected growth at 6.5%. The potential for OTR tires is expected to be USD 10 billion with a growth rate of 5%.

All the major economies of the world like India, Mexico, Russia, Brazil, the United States, South Africa, EU countries and China are growing at a relatively fast pace. All these countries are focusing on developing their infrastructure as well.

The major sources of concern are government regulations and taxes that may affect the mining industry negatively like in Mexico and Indonesia. The outlook for the coal mining industry may be affected by the trend of people switching to cleaner, greener fuels as they do not want to deplete fossil fuels and power plants too are switching to natural gas. The price of gold has been steadily dropping for more than a year and this may affect the gold mining industry. Accelerated growth in BRIC countries is however a positive trend. The global economy is likely to push the demand for metals and energy up to new highs at a moderate growth and if these two factors outweigh the negatives, prospects look bright. Studies reveal that the construction industry is expected to grow by 70% by the year 2025 to the tune of USD 15 trillion. The growth of construction is expected to outpace the growth of the global economy. Infrastructure sector is also expected to boom, especially in the BRIC economies as it is linked to the economy which are on the growth track. The expansion of the housing sector and global sports activities are also expected to spur the market for OTR tires.

Hence, in spite of the numerous challenges it faces, the outlook for the OTR tire industry is undoubtedly very bright.

EVENT	DATE	INFORMATION	LOCATION
Professional Car Damage & Exhibition Gorinchem	03-05 Feb 2015	Professional Car Damage & Exhibition Gorinchem is a three-day international trade show which highlights the modern techniques required for the automotive industry.	Evenementenhal Gorinchem, Gorinchem, Netherlands
Retromobile Paris	03-05 Feb 2015	This year's edition is anticipated to have more than 100,000 visitors worldwide. Attendees will have a time of their lives feasting their eyes on unique and extraordinary car models. Plus, they can also get a chance to make investments, gain information regarding the latest industry trends, and meet manufacturers, sellers of scale models and spare parts, as well as restorers.	Paris Porte de Versailles, Paris, France
Automessen	04-07 Feb 2015	Automessen, a four-day event for automotive suppliers, is one of the most crucial meeting places of the sector throughout the Scandinavian region. The show gathers decision-makers from agricultural machinery, construction machinery, bus, truck and automotive industries.	Norway Trade Fairs, Lill-estrom, Norway
Portland International Auto Show	05-08 Feb 2015	Portland International Auto Show is a grand exhibition which showcases the hottest cars and other products related to the automotive industry. Exhibitors in this event will get a chance to achieve brand awareness for their products and meet potential customers and business partners.	Oregon Convention Center (OCC), Portland, USA
Michigan International Auto Show	05-08 Feb 2015	This four-day show is one of the grandest automotive industry trade events in the USA. More than 300 vehicle varieties are exhibited here and business participants are offered with adequate scope to get in touch with a huge number of qualified purchasers.	DeVos Place, Grand Rapids, USA
Autofruhling Saar	06-08 Feb 2015	Autofruhling Saar is an exciting automotive event which brings together under one roof the biggest car brands. Here, visitors will get a chance to feast their eyes on wide-ranging cars such as vans, sports cars, SUVs and sedans.	Messezentrum Saarbrücken, Saarbrücken, Germany

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88% International Exhibitors

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*2014 actual figures

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EVENT	DATE	INFORMATION	LOCATION
Tire Technology Expo	10-12 Feb 2015	This offers attendees an exciting technology showcase covering equipment and materials through the complete range of the tire manufacturing process. The 2015 edition of this show is something that everyone who is involved in the tire industry should look forward to.	Koelnmesse, Cologne, Germany
Isfahan Auto	12-20 Feb 2015	Isfahan Auto is a huge event that will take place at the Isfahan University in Tehran, Iran. Presenting a variety of automotive-related products, the show gives visitors a chance to check out the latest automotive trends and technologies.	Isfahan University, Tehran, Iran
Automotoretro	13-15 Feb 2015	Drawing a huge number of exhibitors on every edition, the organizers of this much-anticipated show have decided to add the popular OVAL hall of Lingotto Fiere to its setup. Thus, it will have a total exhibition area of 58.000m this year. 2015 is also a special year as the 51th anniversary of Lamborghini will be commemorated.	Lingotto Fiere, Torino, Italy
Osaka Auto Messe	13-15 Feb 2015	This is a perfect event designed for car enthusiasts as it will unveil products and services such as car design, automotive accessories, electronic technology and many more. With a lot of exciting things in store, it is expected to draw several visitors from the different parts of the globe.	Intex Osaka, Osaka, Japan
Canadian International Auto Show	13-22 Feb 2015	CIAS is touted as the most exceptional event covering the automotive industry. As one of the leading car shows in Canada, it creates a new base for trade exhibitors to present their latest products.	Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, Canada
Automotive Auto-components	20-22 Feb 2015	This a megashow of wide-ranging automotive products and services such as parts and accessories; components; load and attachments; fuel; tires and wheels; tuning; chemistry; machinery; cars; garages; repair services; custom clearance services; and freight forwarding services.	Expo-Kama, Naberezhnye Tchelny, Russia

SAYAN Tires



SA495



SA595



SA695



SA895



IMRAN KHALID

Head of Business Development – Lubricants, A-MAP

What is the meaning behind the name “XTeer”? What is its relevance to the product?

The name “XTeer” is derived from the Dutch word “teer”, which means “tenderness”. XTeer means “Extra Tenderness” or extra care for your engine, vehicle or any other equipment in which the oil is used. It reflects on the technology used by Hyundai Oilbank in formulating the range. The API SN specification is designed to provide extra protection to the engine by being soft on the seals and enhancing the engine life of cars, whether old or new.

What do you think are the factors that helped A-MAP gain Hyundai’s trust to be its official distributor?

Hyundai’s trust in A-MAP is a result of the market reputation and goodwill it earned in the GCC market by providing customers with quality products backed by strong after sales services. Hyundai Oilbank and A-MAP have joined hands in launching Hyundai XTeer in order to further the association of A-MAP with Korean brands.

What is the technology behind the Hyundai XTeer?

The XTeer range is formulated using Hyundai Oilbank’s state-of-the-art technology. The base oils used are carefully selected and blended with additives that are proven to protect the engine of vehicles, whether old or new. All gasoline lubricants are blended with API SN specification that is meant to be soft on the weaker parts of the engine, like seals and gaskets.

Is there a specific type of vehicle which the XTeer can be used?

Hyundai XTeer is suitable for all types of vehicles, and not limited to any specific make, model or year.

How many viscosities does XTeer have? Could you tell us more about the applications of each of these viscosities?

Hyundai XTeer is available in all types of viscosities recommended by original equipment manufacturers. Low viscosity oils such as 5W30 and 5W40 are used in gasoline cars equipped with the latest technology, while older vehicles require 10W30 or 10W40. 20W50 is still in use on age-old vehicles plying the roads of the Middle East. All the aforementioned types of viscosities are a part of the Hyundai XTeer range. Moreover, in the diesel oil segment, the widely used 15W40 and 10W40 are available.

How compatible is this new engine oil to the vehicles in the UAE, taking into account the country's extreme weather condition?

Extreme weather does play a role in the vehicles' performance, but at the standard operating temperature of any vehicle, the recommended viscosity of the lubricant should be used. A quality lubricant such as Hyundai XTeer is suitable for all vehicles irrespective of the weather. It is formulated to perform under extreme temperatures and heavy load conditions.

What makes XTeer unique among the other engine oils available in the market today?

A good question that I am very happy to answer. Hyundai XTeer is one of the few brands in the market backed by an OEM Group. The range is not just for Hyundai or KIA vehicles but is blended and made available to all consumers across the automotive aftermarket. Hyundai Oilbank, the blender for Hyundai XTeer, is a state-of-the-art refinery under the ownership of Hyundai Group of Korea.

Hyundai is a world-renowned automaker, and it seems like this is the first time it is making a name for itself in the engine oil industry. How do you think the automaker's popularity will be a huge contributor to XTeer's high global sales?

Hyundai's popularity will of course be a huge contributor to XTeer's high global sales. The automaker is ranked amongst the top global brands and has earned a reputation of making durable products for the market. The brand enjoys similar success in the GCC market, and this will surely help push the range in this market.

Given that Hyundai is a household name in the automotive industry, how do you assess marketing for the XTeer in the UAE?

UAE is home to some of the world's most expensive cars, so consumers are willing to pay the price to maintain them in the best way possible. Given the technology used to develop the Hyundai XTeer range, it puts our brand at par with other premium multinational companies who have been dominating the market. As a new addition in the top quality segment, I am confident that our brand will gain wide acceptance among consumers.

Could you please share with us the marketing strategies or approach that you intend to use for the XTeer?

As mentioned earlier, Hyundai XTeer is a premium product and will be positioned alongside other premium brands. It will be targeted to consumers who insist on top quality driving experience, while maintaining the value of the car and safety of their passengers. Maintaining a car, whether

brand new or second hand, is important for most people, and we aim to provide them with a product that will give them peace of mind while on the road.

With several engine oil brands available in the UAE market, how do you think will the XTeer thrive here?

Our main competitors are the traditional top multinational lubricants brands. With the backing of Hyundai and the efforts of our sales and marketing team, we are confident that Hyundai XTeer will become one of the preferred lubricant brands in the UAE automotive market. We aim to bring about the change in the mindset of consumers by targeting mechanics—the main influencers in the decision process.

In your assessment, which brand will be XTeer's toughest rival in the UAE?

In my opinion, Hyundai Xteer does not face direct competition from any specific brand. While other OEMs do have their own brands, their focus is on servicing their own vehicles. This gives us a unique opportunity to be launching a brand like Hyundai Xteer in the market. As I said earlier, our main competitors are large multinational oil brands and that's our main challenge.

Most engine oil manufacturers use motorsports as a way to establish brand awareness for their products and to get the trust of global OEMs. Do you also plan to do the same?

We do have aggressive marketing plans and since Hyundai XTeer is backed by the Hyundai group, we are looking into various motoring events that will promote synergy with the Hyundai Xteer brand name.

In the UAE, it seems that driving is as normal as breathing. However, not all drivers know how to choose the right engine oil for their vehicle. How will you educate or raise their awareness about this?

As you rightly said, a large number of consumers are unaware of the viscosity of engine oil to be used in their cars. The main influencer is either the service center in the case of new cars or the mechanic in the case of older out-of-warranty vehicles. Our findings show that consumers usually end up using low quality 20W50 engine oils with a view to change it early. Regardless of the model of the car, OEM-recommended viscosity oil should be followed for better performance, less maintenance cost and high fuel efficiency. Our marketing campaigns will be aimed towards educating and changing end consumer perception.

With the increasingly stringent environmental regulations nowadays, there is a tough rat race among manufacturers when it comes to offering products that combine both performance and eco-friendliness. How do you think XTeer will ace the competition when it comes to this?

Very relevant question indeed! Our marketing campaigns in the UAE and across GCC will be aimed at positioning Hyundai XTeer Gasoline Ultra 5W30 and Hyundai XTeer Gasoline 10W30 for passenger cars. Both these variants meet the ILSAC GF-5 requirement, which is the standard enforced by environment protection authorities. Another advantage we will achieve by promoting these two viscosities is fuel economy—thinner oils call for less fuel consumption.

When people hear the name "XTeer", what is the first thing you want to come to their mind?

'Extra Care' or 'Tender Loving Care' for your vehicle.

What challenges do you anticipate to face after launching the XTeer?

The main challenge would be the subsequent reaction from our immediate competitors. We expect them to become aggressive to protect their domain.

Automechanika Dubai's 2015 edition is sure to be bigger and better than ever. Could you give us an overview of your plans?

We have been an active participant at Automechanika Dubai and we will continue to do so. Next year, visitors can be rest assured that we will be present with the complete range of our products.

LUKOIL APPOINTS AL HABTOOR MOTORS AS ITS EXCLUSIVE UAE DISTRIBUTOR

In a quest to expand its growing product portfolio in the UAE's automotive industry, Lukoil, one of the largest oil companies in the globe, has joined force with Al Habtoor Motors to be the exclusive distributor of its automotive oils and lubricants in the country.

The partnership was announced at a press conference held at the Waldorf Astoria Dubai in Palm Jumeirah last month, in the presence of Sultan Al Habtoor, President, Al Habtoor Motors; Karl Hamer, Managing Director, and other senior management executives from the company.



Present from the Russian oil giant was Maxim Donde, global head of Lukoil Lubes; Victor Zhuravskiy, CEO, Marine Lubes; June Manoharan, Regional Director, Marine Lubes and Joginder Singh Dahiya, Sales Director of Auto Lubes.

Listed on the London Stock Exchange, Lukoil is engaged in the exploration, production, refining, marketing and distribution of oil.

During the event, Karl Hamer, Managing Director, Al Habtoor Motors, said that when they were approached by Lukoil, he was surprised that one of the largest oil companies in the globe was not present in the UAE automotive market. He revealed that they have partnered with the company to bring a fresh dimension to their business, adding that more and more business partners are turning to Al Habtoor Motors knowing their achievements in the industry.

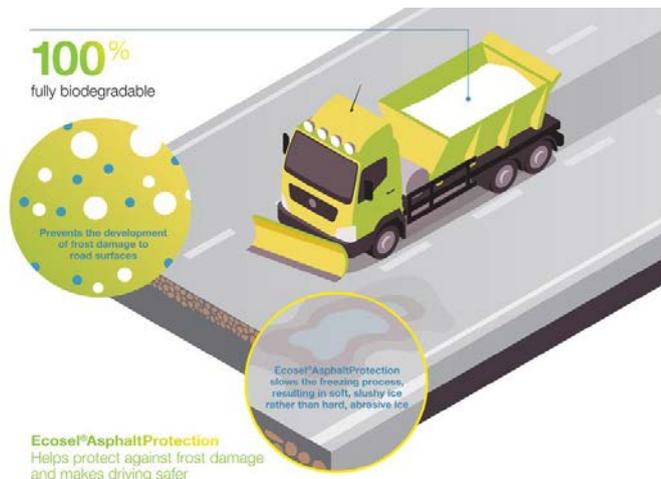
Commenting on the partnership, Sultan Al Habtoor, President, Al Habtoor Motors, said that Al Habtoor has teamed up with some of the most well-known brands in the business. "Lukoil is a major global brand to add to our portfolio and we look forward to a strong partnership."

Lubricant and oil production and sales are a significant part of Lukoil's business. 100 percent owned by the Russian conglomerate, LLK-International (Lukoil Lubricants) was formed in 2005, and lubricants became an independent business unit.

Currently, the oil giant controls the manufacturing of over 40 percent of all lubricants produced in Russia, amounting to approximately 1.2 million tonnes. The company sells over 1,000 various kinds of lubricants for different sectors such as automotive, mining, heavy-duty transport, general engineering and power generation in more than 40 countries.

Included in Lukoil's exhaustive product range are industrial oils, brake fluid, circulating oils, turbine lubricants, transmission oils, marine lubricants, metal working fluid, hydraulic oils, ATF, coolants, diesel engine oils, motorcycle oils and passenger car oils. Apart from being API-approved, Lukoil lubricants also have OEM approvals from premier OEMs, including Detroit Diesel, ZF, Wartsila, Siemens, Renault, General Motors, Ford, Volkswagen, Cummins, Scania, Mercedes-Benz, MACK, MAN, BMW and Porsche.

AKZONOBEL ROLLS OUT ADVANCED ADDITIVE FOR SAFE WINTER ROAD TRIP



Dutch specialty chemicals expert AkzoNobel has recently taken the wraps off its additive for road salt, which is designed to protect the vehicle against frost damage, thereby making driving safer than ever.

Ecosel®AsphaltProtection is a biodegradable additive for de-icing brine, which works by slowing down the freezing process, leading to soft, mushy ice, rather than the hard, rough one.

Werner Fuhrmann, member of the AkzoNobel Executive Committee responsible for Specialty Chemicals, explained in a statement that Ecosel®AsphaltProtection can reduce frost damage by about 50 percent when added to normal winter road salt. He also added that municipalities and governments will significantly benefit from the results such as greater road safety, lower maintenance costs, fewer traffic jams and less need for road repairs.

Extending the service life of roads will also reduce CO2 emissions, not only due to fewer traffic tailbacks, but also because less materials and energy for maintenance will be required.

The new Ecosel additive from AkzoNobel works by inhibiting the water trapped inside the asphalt pores from turning into hard, abrasive ice. It facilitates the formation of mushy ice, which is weaker than the asphalt, thus significantly reducing the risk of damage. The new product also passed rigorous testing, making it a leading contributor to the Sustainability and Transportation pillars of AkzoNobel's Human Cities initiative.

DANCING TRAFFIC LIGHT MAKES PEOPLE WAIT AT SIGNALS



Nobody hates the little red man representing 'do-not-cross' sign at traffic light as much as a rushing pedestrian. With every second counting, waiting for the light to turn green can be a painful experience. Often you see people breaking rules and zigzagging across the road even as oncoming vehicle swerve to avoid collision.

While it is impossible to eliminate the wait completely, Smart, a car manufacturer, has found a way to keep you distracted. Last summer in July, pedestrians in Lisbon, Portugal, were amused to see that the electronic red man on the traffic light was no longer standing stiff. On the contrary it was grooving energetically. Christened 'The Dancing Traffic Light', the concept was appreciated and served its purpose as pedestrians got absorbed in watching the moves as they waited. According to Smart, during the time the signal carried this stunt, jaywalking dropped by 81 per cent.

The concept was simple, yet brilliant befitting Smart that was earlier known to introduce ultra compact cars. Not far off from the traffic light stood a black mini-theatre where volunteers – one at a time – were dancing to their favorite music. As people grooved to the music in the 'Dance Box', the moves were captured on video and relayed in real time to the lights in low resolution, bringing the sign to life. The impromptu performances were timed well with the signal and with varied dance moves there was little danger of monotony. A live video also relayed people's feedback of the volunteer's dancing skills. A giant installation of the traffic light was built outside the Dance Box as well for people to watch.

The project was a part of Smart's WhatAreYou campaign that encourages people to let loose their imagination and think outside the box.

BOOKING CARS WITH AUDI UNITE APP



One of the more practical ways to reduce rush hour traffic is by doing carpool with colleagues and friends. In this regard, digital car-sharing has picked up pace, if we were to go by the examples of Uber taxi app, Lyft, and RelayRides. However, the new Audi unite app takes personalized micro-sharing to another level altogether.

The booking app was developed by the German automotive brand Audi in partnership with the Swedish German design firm Kram/ Weisshaar. Developed over a year, unite allows up to five people to reserve a shared Audi in advance. Users can make hourly bookings with the help of the Audi unite app calendar, cancel the reservation anytime before the car ride, and even shorten it conveniently. They can also keep tabs on its fuel levels and the car's current location.

Each user in the group will own an Audi unite beacon – a small Bluetooth-based keyring tag which has a digital signature unique to the user. The beacon, which keeps an account of car usage, is remotely connected to a small computer inside the car, which helps in recognizing individual users when they are inside the vehicle. This is particularly useful since the app records data of each user's share of maintenance, tire replacement, cleaning, insurance, and fuel usage and traffic charges depending on individual mileage. A bill is automatically sent to the users on monthly basis.

The Audi unite app also provides round-the-clock immediate support through the app in case of emergencies. The dedicated social chat platform linked to the app facilitates communication between the members of each group. The privacy settings ensure that the members have control over visibility and engagement.

The app will be launched in Stockholm after trials with a small group of cars and 38 drivers.

VOLVO SELECTS TENNECO'S LATEST CVSAE GENERATION FOR ITS XC90 FIRST EDITION

Just recently, Tenneco announced that Swedish automaker Volvo Car Group has selected the new generation of its Continuously Variable Semi-Active suspension (CVSAe) as a standard feature on its XC90 First Edition.



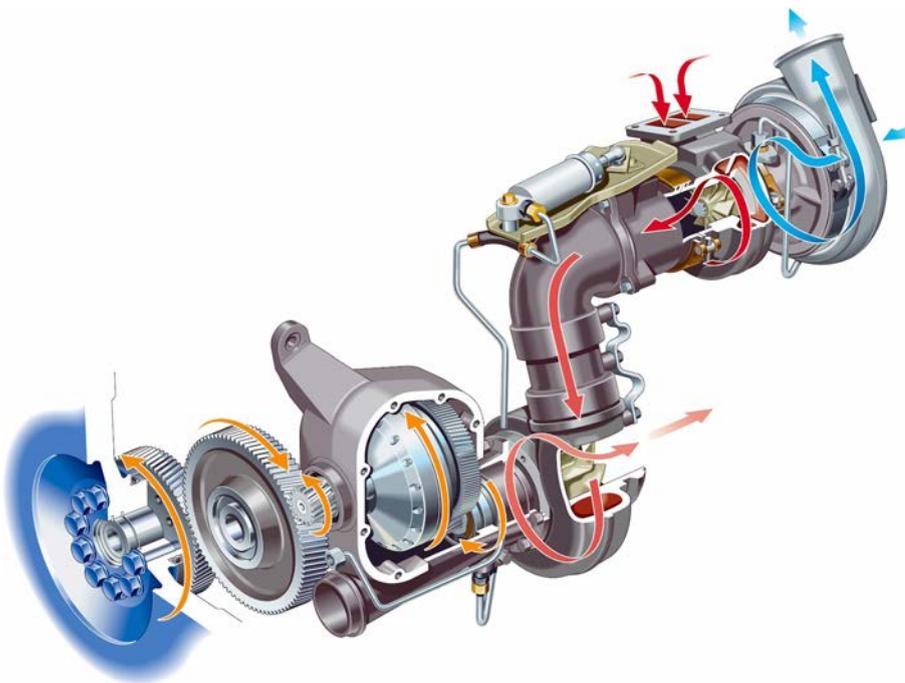
CVSAe dampers are designed to improve the handling and comfort of a vehicle's ride by constantly adjusting all four shock absorbers up to 100 times per second to varying road conditions and dynamic driving situations such as braking, acceleration, lane changes and cornering. Another great thing about these dampers is that they can be switched from standard to comfort or sport mode at any time in accordance with driver preferences for a more dynamic, comfortable or sporty ride.

Volvo was the very first automaker to debut Tenneco's electronic damping technology as standard on its V70R and S60R performance models in 2002. According to Sandro Paparelli, Vice President and General Manager, Ride Performance Europe, their relationship with Volvo has continued through several subsequent models and generations and they are honored to have been selected to supply the high-end XC90 First Edition.

The CVSAe suspension will be offered as an option on all XC90 models manufactured from now on as Tenneco continuously supplies the Swedish automaker's new Scalable Product Architecture (SPA) modular chassis technology platform. Paparelli added that they share Volvo's commitment to constant innovation to develop technologies that help boost comfort, safety and performance.

The innovative CVSA technology is in production on 37 vehicle models from a number of various global brands, and applications for nine latest vehicle models are presently under development.

TURBO COMPOUNDING COULD BE THE NEXT BIG TREND IN POWERTRAINS



Turbo compounding is a process which entails using a turbine for heat recovery from an engine's exhaust system. It is not a fresh technology as it has been introduced by the aerospace industry way back in the 1940s, but according to reports, this could be the next big thing in automotive engines' energy recovery.

Turbo compounding is an excellent way to benefit from wasted exhaust gases to give the engine more power. The compressor is powered by the turbine wheel to send enhanced intake air to the engine. However, the turbine also sends exhaust gas down the plumbing to the left, where another turbine connected to a shaft drives a gear set, basically a high-ratio transmission eventually connected to the crankshaft.

According to Bowman, a company which engineers electrical compounding systems for heavy vehicle and power generation industries, the solution it offers can boost efficiency by up to seven percent without negative impact. Mechanical compounding supplies around five percent gains, but can have a negative effect depending on the load of the engine.

Renowned engine maker Detroit Diesel bagged the Truck Writers of North American Technical Achievement Award for its DD15 engine that utilizes mechanical compounding, and automakers Volvo and Scania also use the technology for their truck engines.

Formula One engine makers are eyed as the first to implement turbo compounding, as the all-new 1.6-liter turbo V6s utilize electrical compounding in running the MGU-H motor/generator to power a battery offering additional boost during a lap.

AL-FUTTAIM MOTORS SPEARHEADS COMBAT AGAINST FAKE AUTO PARTS



In a quest to combat the proliferation of counterfeit automotive products in the UAE, Al-Futtaim Motors, the exclusive distributor of Hino, Lexus and Toyota in the country, has performed more than 97 raids in the first nine months of this year. The distributor's collaboration with the UAE Economic & Development Departments and several law firms led to the seizure of fake car parts worth over AED 34.2 million.

53 raids were performed during the third quarter of this year alone, leading to over AED 13.5 million of seized stock, which accounts for more than 184,000 fake products.

SGL EYES GROWING INTEREST OF AUTOMAKERS IN CARBON FIBER PRODUCTS

Reports say that SGL Group, the materials supplier for carbon fiber reinforcement parts in BMW's electric cars, is now in talks with many other automakers to supply carbon fiber for a wider array of automotive components.

According to SGL CEO Juergen Koehler, Volkswagen, in particular through Lamborghini and Audi, also depends on high-volume use of carbon components. He revealed that GM has also recently expressed their desire to use more carbon, and Porsche is extremely active.

Koehler also noted that the proposed new supply contracts were not as huge as the BMW venture, where SGL signed an agreement to manufacture carbon fibers for the German automaker's i3 full-electric hatchback and i8 plug-in hybrid supercar.

This is why the use of SGL's carbon fiber in cars has yet to establish itself as a huge business. As shown in SGL's annual report, transport and automotive industries accounted for only two percent of 2013's group sales at the company.



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Cadillac's New Massage Chair Offers a Relaxing Road Trip to Drivers

CADILLAC XTS AND ESCALADE **MASSAGE SEATS** 22 Ways to Help Knead and Roll Away Stress



A fast-paced lifestyle defines the 21st century. Nowadays, it seems like most working people no longer have time to go to the spa or visit a massage therapist due to their hectic schedule. Cadillac understands this, so it is now offering its two 2015 models with front driver and passenger seats that can roll, knead and relax car occupants' back as they go on a road trip.

Initially offered for the Escalade Platinum Collection and the XTS Premium and Platinum Collections, the 22-way adjustable heated and ventilated seats now come with a luxury option coupled with a massage seat that seamlessly works in the upper shoulder area, cushion or back lumbar.

Dr. Leena S. Gupta, board chair, National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork, revealed in a statement that several Americans have the common misconception that massage is a luxurious way to relax and it has different benefits for jobs involving monotonous daily grinding behind a desk or the wheel of a car.

While it is true that the revolutionary seat is not able to offer the same massage quality as an expert practitioner, at least, it can offer some relief for both the driver and passengers.

According to Elizabeth Hayes, General Motors engineering group manager, this feature offers customers another way to enhance their drive. She explained that upon saving a massage setting, the driver simply needs to push the button and employ the luxury option. "It is our goal to always find ways to make getting from point A to point B a little more pleasant."

Just like the seat positions, the settings of the massage seats can be saved in the car's memory. With an activation button or a toggle switch, both on the outboard base of the seats, the driver and front seat passenger can direct the adjustments' illustration on the infotainment screen. Also, the desired intensity and massage can be controlled from the screen.

Upon finding the optimal massage, the driver can save the rolling, kneading or anti-fatigue setting by simply pushing the memory button on the door. To reactivate, the driver just needs to press the button on the seat base.

Meet the Possible Ford Steering Wheel of the Future



Italy-based Auto & Design Magazine made a loud buzz among students and amateur designers last year when it presented them a tough challenge: shape the steering wheel of the future. The winner got a chance to spend a day with Ford engineers at the company's Cologne Design Center in Germany.

French design student Jean-Thomas Mayer successfully came up with this, which according to critics, perfectly fits the criteria. The concept of Mayer's design is plain and simple: combine the functions and features of today's cars and make them accessible on the steering wheel. However, instead of offering set arrangements for all drivers, the system would enable every driver to personalize the interface to meet their needs.

Some modern systems enable similar customization, but none offers such an emphasis on putting all those features directly on the steering wheel.

The concept is not far off the smartphone arrangements of today as it combines driving information, phone, and dual touchscreens display infotainment, which can be flicked through and interchanged without the need for the driver's hands to leave the wheel.

According to Mayer, the huge interactivity of today's cars starts to obstruct our habits behind the wheel. By enabling those interfaces to be customizable to suit the needs of drivers—in an arrangement that they are used to—it would offer a better user experience and promote a higher level of safety.



In a quest to take drivers' road trip and listening experience to the next level, The Lincoln Motor Company has recently signed an exclusive 10-year partnership with Revel® that will add the premier loudspeaker brand to its luxury vehicles. The collaboration will make Lincoln the sole automotive brand to offer advanced Revel audio systems.

Revel, HARMAN International's finest loudspeaker brand, has been providing its audiophile customer base with advanced home audio equipment since 1996. Highlighting science-based acoustic precision and speaker architecture, Revel systems are specially designed to recreate a musical performance as accurately and purely as it was recorded.

To satisfy the cravings of audiophiles for a crisp, surround sound, Revel designed both a premium Revel Ultima™ system and a Revel audio system for Lincoln. The brand's audio systems will be seen and heard for the very first time in the next-generation Lincoln MKX midsize utility. Featuring intuitive technologies and uncompromising acoustics, Revel audio will offer Lincoln a solid brand differentiator in the luxury market.

Matt VanDyke, global director, Lincoln, said that Lincoln's partnership with Revel is the next step in their commitment to produce vehicles that surpass quality expectations. He also added that Revel is tantamount to the best home speaker systems, and it is that excellent audio experience they want their Lincoln drivers to enjoy.

Immersive Sound Experience

In an attempt to simulate the Revel home audio experience in Lincoln vehicles, Revel engineers worked closely with Lincoln engineers and designers. Combining innovation, function and form, the teams used what Revel calls the Science of Sound in the vehicle design process. The number of speakers, calibration, tuning and placement are unique to every Lincoln model to ensure outstanding audio accuracy and quality.

According to Phil Eyler, senior vice president and general manager, HARMAN global car audio, the Revel system for Lincoln sustains that standard by incorporating architecture to the design of the vehicle, thus enhancing the accuracy of midrange and high-frequency reproduction, an important element to a true high-fidelity system.

Also, tweeters are strategically positioned within custom Revel Waveguides to enhance high-frequency dispersion, enabling a smooth combination between the midrange speakers and tweeters. This design approach ensures that every single detail of a song reaches the ears of a passenger at the same magnitude and time, for the purest and most genuine listening experience.

Revel's patented hybrid amplifier strategy utilizes Class A/B and D amplification to offer remarkable fidelity at any volume.



The Technology Behind Revel Audio Systems

Lincoln's Revel audio systems feature QuantumLogic Surround®, a next-gen surround-sound technology that delivers a genuine, multi-dimensional experience while eliminating the smearing effects that often impede surround-sound systems.

With the MyLincoln Touch™ screen, Lincoln owners can choose from three different listening modes: On Stage, which offers a surround-sound experience that puts listeners in the middle of it all and places individual musical elements and instruments throughout the cabin; Audience, which provides an intimate concert experience where the vehicle's boundaries seemingly vanish; and Traditional Stereo.

Clari-Fi™, a popular patented HARMAN technology that works in real-time to restore audio details lost in digitally compressed music, is included in Revel Ultima. Several audio details originally recorded in a music track might be lost in the process of compression. With Clari-Fi, the digitally compressed music is intelligently and smoothly restored for an enhanced listening experience irrespective of the source.

Flawless Lincoln and Revel Craftsmanship

Putting a spotlight on Lincoln's and Revel's commitment to craftsmanship and quality, every Revel component is carefully tested before vehicle production. This includes calibrating every Revel amplifier to within 0.2dB channel-to-channel to ensure accurate system balance.

Revel and Lincoln designers worked closely in establishing a speaker grille design that suits deluxe Lincoln interiors while passing exhaustive acoustical testing for superior performance. Vehicles featuring a Revel Ultima sound system will include upgraded aluminum speaker grilles for a luxury experience.

VanDyke concluded that Revel and Lincoln have so much in common when it comes to their dedication to craftsmanship, quality and performance. "This collaboration is such a natural one."

As the next-generation Lincoln MKX nears its debut, further details about Revel automotive audio systems for Lincoln will be available.

Mercedes-Benz Gives Sneak Preview of Its Next-Gen Headlight Technology



Mercedes-Benz took the automotive world by storm when it unveiled the MULTIBEAM LED headlights that will launch on the 2015 CLS-Class, but with the unending German headlight technology rat race, the automaker will not stop there.

The newly rolled out system utilizes 24 individual LEDs in its high beam that can be controlled electronically. This “gridding” enables the light distribution on either side of the headlights to be more securely controlled, keeping the light fully focused straight ahead as much as possible. It is operated by a camera that is positioned behind the windscreen and four control units, which fine-tune the lighting pattern up to a hundred times per second.

According to Mercedes, the setup is smart enough to direct the light away from oncoming cars, so the high beams can stay on all the time. To prevent drivers from getting blinded, other cars are concealed of the beam's path.

The automaker aims to take the new technology further, though, so that requires addition of more LEDs. It explains that headlights are just like digital cameras in that matter, where more points of pixels or light equals better. This is why Mercedes-Benz is now working on a MULTIBEAM setup with 84 individual LEDs, and is confident that a 1,024-pixel resolution will be achievable in the next few years. It also anticipates more individual lighting elements to yield more control, to the point where lighting can be controlled digitally, without the need for mechanical actuators to physically reposition things.

Furthermore, Mercedes also intends to unveil a ‘High Range’ LED high beam that is designed to cast light up to 600 meters ahead. The German automaker reveals it can attain this performance with LEDs at a less expensive cost than the innovative laser headlights developed by its tough rival, BMW.

So far, Mercedes has not set any timeline yet for this future technology. Meanwhile, it does not seem like the MULTIBEAM LED lights will penetrate the US market due to regulations mandating headlights to have separate low and high beams.

Shell's Synthetic Lubricants Set to Give MEA Lube Market a Boost



Shell, one of the key players in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) lubricants market, with huge manufacturing plants in South Africa and the UAE, among other countries, constantly develops an array of synthetic lubricants that offer better engine oiling potential than their counterparts.

The synthetic base oils of the oil and gas company dramatically improve engine performance, thanks to a special manufacturing process that involves chemical processes which thoroughly control their molecular structure, and thus properties.

Shell Helix Ultra claims to clean the engine up to five times better than a standard mineral oil, to minimize engine wear by up to half and to offer three times more protection. The fully synthetic oil also flows more smoothly at the engine's start up temperature when most wear occurs, is more resistant to the extreme heat buildup inside the engine and is less volatile than mineral oils, enabling it to perform even under the most extreme conditions than a regular mineral oil. It has these qualities given that the synthetic nature of its manufacture means it has a higher purity level than mineral oils and comes with a more regular molecular composition. With these qualities, the lubricant enables manufacturers to tailor the product to satisfy varying contemporary engine requirements.

Shell has a strong influence in over 70 international markets, including those in South Africa and the Middle East. Given the UAE's ready oil supply, the company is involved in every phase of the petroleum manufacture chain in the country, from exploration and production of gas and oil to its distribution and marketing. With advances in the lubricants market, it is well on its way to further reinforcing its position in this market.

In 2013, the MEA lubricants market was worth US\$14.7 billion and is anticipated to climb \$17.9 billion by 2019, escalating 3.4% CAGR over the estimated period. This market has experienced huge growth in the past few years and is anticipated to further thrive due to the rising demand for lubricants in applications, including commercial vehicles, passenger vehicles, aviation, industrial machinery and marine sectors. The continuous development of mining, tourism and quarrying sectors in Africa, and the natural gas, crude oil and construction industries expansion in the Middle East are also key drivers for the region's rising lubricant demand, with the transportation industry hugely contributing to the market.

Lubricants are headed towards sustained high demand in the booming transportation and industrial industries. Synthetic lubricants development from giant companies such as Shell, significantly helps enhance production efficiency by protecting and enhancing engine output.

GROWING CAR SERVICES PAVE THE WAY FOR BOSCH'S MIDDLE EAST EXPANSION



The steady growth in Bosch's aftersales car services business served as the ticket for it to achieve its expansion targets across the Middle East. Driven by the huge sale of auto parts, it is no wonder that the automotive sector is by far the highest earner in the region.

The premier German engineering group already operates a total of 180 service stations in the Middle East. In the UAE in particular, Bosch has three service centers: one in Dubai and two in Abu Dhabi through its agent Central Motors and Equipment.

According to Mohamed Kamel, service manager at Central Motors, they service around 120 cars per month in Dubai while in Abu Dhabi, the two stations see 500 to 600 cars every month. He also added that their labor is 50 percent more affordable than the dealership and Bosch spare parts are 70 percent more affordable than the original auto parts.

The service centers cater to all car makes with tire, spark plug, and brake replacement, as well as oil change the most in-demand services. Fake auto parts are one of the most commonly seized items by Dubai Customs, and in accordance with Nissan, the GCC market is estimated to be worth \$2 billion. Aiming to meet the needs of cost-conscious customers, Bosch is committed to offering a safer and more affordable alternative.

Volker Bischoff, general manager and vice president of Bosch Middle East, said in a statement that for Bosch, the Middle East has been an interesting and vital region. He also revealed that they have been doing business in the region for over 90 years with their partners. "When you look at the last couple of years we have posted strong growth in line with the economic development of the region."

V-KOOL DEBUTED 55 FILM AND OFFERED GOLD COINS AT OMAN MOTOR SHOW



V-KOOL® Oman, the leading provider of innovative automotive window tinting films, has taken this year's Oman Motor Show by storm with a double bonanza. The company took the wraps off its new 55 film and offered visitors a chance to win up to five grams of gold coins during the show, which was held last month at Z 301 stand in Muscat.

As the latest addition to the Solitaire series, V-KOOL® 55 film is the globe's first and only ten-layer sputtered stack. The ten-layer stack of rare metals fortified with precious gold allows rejection of over 97 percent of infrared light and up to 60 percent solar energy, while maintaining the auto-glass' clarity without creating a mirror reflective effect. It also enables 57 percent of visible light to pass through while almost fully preventing the penetration of infrared radiation.

Days before the show, Saravana Natesh, General Manager, V-KOOL® Oman, said in a statement that it was a great opportunity for them to unveil their newest technologies during a great show such as the Motor Show Oman. He also added that they were excited to provide their customers in the country with the opportunity to know more about their product range.

V-KOOL® products are offered in around 30 countries worldwide with over 1,200 retail touch points covering Europe, South America, North America, Middle East, Pacific Rim region and Asia. The company's advanced technology and automotive interior cooling solution is the choice of premier global automakers such as Toyota, Volvo, Audi, Mercedes-Benz, and BMW among others—a testament to its success.

New Toyota Models to Feature Latest LED Array Lighting Starting This Year



Toyota is one of those automakers that will start 2015 with a bang—some of its new models will be equipped with a newly-developed adaptive high beam technology that enables a more accurate control of light distribution through independent LED control.

Using multiple independently controlled LEDs arranged in a single row, the all-new LED Array Adaptive High Beam System (LED Array AHS) offers a wider illumination range than the earlier systems without dazzling the motorists of oncoming and preceding vehicles. For instance, LED Array AHS can illuminate the gaps between the oncoming and preceding vehicles, making the detection of pedestrian crossing the road easier than ever.

In addition, the technology also adapts the light distribution to wide-ranging driving circumstances. For instance, in an urban setting, a wide area will be illuminated, whereas long-distance illumination is utilized during high-speed driving. Plus, it regulates the light distribution based on the steering wheel's operation, thus enhancing visibility ahead of curves. Next-generation LED Array AHS blends these functions to offer consistent, dependable illumination when driving at night.

In 2013, traffic accidents in Japan caused a total of 4,373 casualties. Although the number of yearly casualties has reduced for 13 consecutive years, pedestrians accounted for the largest group of casualties, and around 70 percent of pedestrian casualties occurred at night. The development of next-gen illumination technologies is part of Toyota's goal to help prevent road accidents especially at night. Furthermore, the Japanese automaker's Safety Sense to be launched from this year onwards will feature Automatic High Beams as standard.

Toyota considers that the definitive target of a society that puts high value on mobility is to eliminate any traffic-related injuries and fatalities. Its Integrated Safety Management Concept steers the direction for vehicle and safety technology development, and covers all driving aspects by incorporating vehicle safety systems and technologies rather than just viewing them as independently functioning units. This approach is mirrored in research and development activities focused on safety systems and devices.

Toyota is fully dedicated to different initiatives that address traffic safety, ranging from the development of safer technologies and vehicles to creating a safe traffic environment, and taking part in educational activities.

ASELSAN and IBM Join Hands to Develop Metal-Air Batteries for EVs



Turkish defense company ASELSAN and IBM Research have reportedly penned a partnership agreement to develop Metal-Air Batteries that will extend the journey of electric vehicles cars for up to five times.

The agreement was penned by IBM Vice President Kenneth J. Keating Jr. and ASELSAN General Manager Faik Eken to carry out R&D activities together on the new batteries for use in EVs during the preliminary stage.

According to a joint statement, the new batteries will have five times more power storage capacity than a Li-ion battery, thus making them a breakthrough in resolving an array of problems in electric cars.

Today, EVs equipped with Li-ion batteries can travel only around 160 kilometers after being charged, but the new Metal-Air technologies promise to enable these vehicles travel for up to 800 kilometers.

Apart from the Metal-Air Batteries' development, the two leading companies will also collaborate on the development of Millimeter Wave Integrated Circuits for a series of various radar technologies.

LATIN AMERICA FORECASTED TO HAVE THE GLOBE'S MOST SUSTAINABLE VEHICLE POWERTRAIN MIX



Latin American countries have powertrain markets of diverse structure. Manual transmission and flex-fuel-engine vehicles significantly contribute to a key proportion of overall sales in Brazil. In contrast, gasoline leads the markets in Chile, Colombia and Argentina, where diesel is also gaining traction. These trends, alongside Paraguay's diesel-led market and Venezuela's and Argentina's active participation in compressed natural gas (CNG) conversion have boosted the assortment of the region's passenger vehicle powertrain space.

New analysis from reputable growth consulting firm Frost & Sullivan, titled "Strategic Analysis of the Latin American Powertrain Market", covers the small, medium, van, pickup and high-end vehicle segments and takes into account powertrains that run on flex fuel, diesel, gasoline, and liquefied petroleum/CNG bi-fuel/gas. Of these segments, gas engines are anticipated to lead the market by 2020, with a 46 to 48 percent share.

According to Frost & Sullivan Automotive & Transportation Industry Analyst Yeswant Abhimanyu, critical regulations that specify emissions restrictions are reshaping the way in which the Latin American markets react to powertrain demands. He also added that most countries in the region lagging behind the emissions standards predominant in Europe and the United States will implement Euro 5 by 2020, and thereby need the right powertrain technologies that fully comply with these regulations.

Apart from emissions guidelines, energy efficiency and fuel economy goals that have been set or are being discussed in many Latin American countries, will support market development. For instance, Brazil's INOVAR energy-efficiency goal of 1.82 megajoule/kilometer and Mexico's SEMARNAT fuel-economy goal of 14.6 km/liter will inspire OEMs to launch next-gen powertrain technologies.

However, powertrain manufacturers must address challenges distinct to each market in the region. In Peru, poor fuel quality inhibits the growth of the market. Meanwhile, in Brazil, the expensive cost of vehicles makes the incorporation of newer, cleaner powertrain technologies unachievable in a price-sensitive market. The good thing is that these trends point to opportunities for market participants to invent and embrace cost-effective models to debut the right powertrain technologies. In fact, Latin America is an ideal region to carry out research and development on affordable transmissions and flex-fuel engines.

Abhimanyu noted that tough global strategies are important when tackling the huge cost of powertrain technologies and attaining economies of scale so that more fuel-efficient technologies could be made available to a wider customer base. He also stressed that powertrain OEMs should tailor their strategies to every Latin American market to taste maximum success.

Global powertrain strategies have already played a crucial role in the arrival of modern technologies. These strategies are actually the reason for top variants of B- and C-segment models and current high-end segment models using state-of-the-art powertrain technologies.

Among the different powertrain technologies available in the market today, turbocharging, direct injection and variable valve timing are expected to become the most popular. In addition, manual transmission will continue to dominate the market, while continuously variable transmission and dual clutch transmission are anticipated to expand their market share by 2020.

KEN-TOOL UNVEILS THE T385B METRIC VALVE BREAKER 35938



The challenge and fatigue entailed in removing valve stems from small valve stem holes will just be a thing of the past with Ken-Tool's newly launched valve breaker.

The patented T38B Metric Valve Breaker is 45" long and weighs 16 lbs. It is designed to quickly and easily remove valve stems from smaller 10mm valve stem holes, which are common on heavy duty alloy and aluminum wheels. Featuring a specially designed, heat treated, steel punch measuring 9mm in diameter, it effectively removes brass, steel and nickel plated valve stems from alloy, aluminum and European style wheels without contacting the wheel. The punch is also spring-loaded, thus reducing vibration and user fatigue.

The valve breaker enables retreading shops, truck tire service centers and wheel refinishing shops to have the right tool to remove stubborn and corroded valve stems without spending hours hunched over a wheel using a hammer and wrench.

Based on the original T36B Valve Breaker, the T38B Metric Valve Breaker uses a solid steel ram bar, high-grade steel tube construction and a pinch-preventing rubber safety grip. With all the features this tool has in store, it can remove hundreds of valves before requiring service.

In addition, Ken-Tool offers the Metric Valve Breaker Repair Kit (pn 35937), which includes a new punch, retention pin and spring. With only three components, it can do the work in just a snap.

GM to Unveil Android-Based Infotainment System in 2016



Not wanting to lag behind today's car infotainment rat race, General Motors is reportedly planning to roll out its own Android-based infotainment system.

Sources say that the advanced system will be developed by premier American audio and infotainment equipment company Harman International as part of a \$900 million contract signed with the automaker in 2012, and will launch on production cars starting in late 2016.

The system is designed to provide GM with an up-to-date infotainment interface that is not linked to a smartphone. While CarPlay and Android Auto are touted as the next big thing in automotive electronics, they cannot work without a smartphone. Both systems reflect the displays and features on the smartphone, enabling the driver to control them with the use of a car's voice controls, touchscreen or dashboard buttons. However, they can only control those that are on the phone as none of the data accessed is built-in to the car, and onboard systems such as climate control are left out.

Apart from offering a digital interface that does not need an Android phone or iOS, GM will also get an OS that it can use across several models. The American automaker utilizes various infotainment systems for each of its brands, but even certain models within those brands do not share operating systems. For instance, the Chevrolet Cruze and Malibu use BlackBerry QNX, while the Spark and Sonic use a Microsoft system, and the Impala and Tahoe use Linux.

Both GM and Harman are keeping mum on the details of the new infotainment system, but reports say that one of the requirements is that it automatically boots up upon starting the car.

If the Android-based system proves simple to use and becomes a trend, it would be an infotainment standard on select GM models, with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto offered as an additional functionality for smartphone users.

GKN Land Systems Bolsters Electric Flywheel Hybrid Technology Production for Buses

Following the successful completion of the Gyrodrive electric flywheel hybrid technology's test series in London, GKN Land Systems is now aiming to take its production to the next level.



Designed for buses, the technology uses a high-speed composite flywheel, coupled with a GKN EVO electric motor, to capture the energy that is lost during the process of braking. Instead of the energy being lost, a traction motor on the axles slows the vehicle, while also producing electricity. Then, this electricity charges the flywheel—spinning it at up to 36,000 rpm.

As the driver accelerates, the system reverses its function using the electricity in the flywheel to power the traction motor. According to reports, this reduces the work carried out by the engine enough to enhance fuel economy by up to 25 percent.

According to Green Car Congress, the Gyrodrive system is a more affordable alternative to standard battery hybrids and the upfront investment is just a fraction of the cost of existing hybrids. The newsfeed website also reveals that with real-world fuel savings of up to 25 percent, the payback period for bus operators is only three to four years, adding that the system is smaller than standard battery or super-capacitor hybrid units, meaning it does not compromise passenger or seating capacity and can be retrofitted to existing fleets.

The GKN Gyrodrive system was initially used in June when it was utilized to help Audi Motorsport's hybrid race car's third consecutive win in the Le Mans 24 Hour endurance race. One of the key possible applications of the technology is for several commercial vehicles commonly used in cities today—construction vehicles, delivery vehicles, garbage trucks, etc.

GOOGLE GLASS IS BMW'S NEW BESTFRIEND IN PRE-SERIES VEHICLE TESTS



Lately, Google Glass has been slammed by users and industry critics due to its flaws. However, though it seems that the world is against the wearable device, BMW has some love for it. The German automaker is currently running a program at its plant in Spartanburg, South Carolina to see how the device can enhance the quality control of its pre-series vehicles as they switch from prototype to full production.

Cars that start life as concepts and then go on to become working prototypes still need to go a long way before they can be completely sold to the public. This is where pre-series cars enter the picture. A crucial link in contemporary car manufacturing, these are production prototypes put together in a production-like setting to check if the design has the capability to be dependably and economically mass produced instead of handmade in a machine shop.

It's a crucial step because building the pre-series cars can expose all the flaws that would not have been visible until the car went into production. However, the problem is that assessment of the pre-series cars requires a lot of communication between the design engineers and quality testers to identify how the cars are swerving from the plan. This is complicated since the problems are often unclear and hard to explain. Therefore, BMW claims that photographs and written reports are less than enough in approximately one out of four cases.

BMW is hopeful that by utilizing a fresh technology like Google Glass, showing rather than telling what is wrong would be possible. The idea is that the wearable device will use a background video mode in recording video feeds in two-minute segments, which can be permanently saved at a touch of a button for later reference and discussion between the design engineers and quality testers instead of simply depending on handwritten notes or similar methods. Furthermore, the technology enables testers to remain with the vehicle and to sign off on a test with the use of voice control.

BMW's pilot program is part of its campaign to launch the latest technologies to simplify planning and production. According to the automaker, the trial, which can comprise between ten and 25 individual tests for every car depending on its equipment package, has been so promising that it is thinking about using the system in the series vehicles' final assembly.

IMPROVED MULTI-FILTER IN NEW XC90 GIVES DRIVERS BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Aiming to refine its CleanZone initiative, Volvo Cars has launched a bigger, more efficient multi-filter in the cabin of its new XC90. CleanZone is the Swedish automaker's exceptional approach to regulating interior air quality and offering a better driving environment through groundbreaking solutions for improved health and well-being. Since microscopic, harmful "fine dust" particles will now be inhibited from penetrating the car, motorists can breathe easier.

Designed exclusively for the SPA platform, the multi-filter will initially appear in the new XC90 starting next year. It has a larger design that prevents the entry of more pollen and particulates, as well as an active charcoal layer that effectively eliminates contaminants that can affect the health of motorists.



PANASONIC AND POLYPORE TO JOIN FORCE ON NEW BATTERY TECHNOLOGY

North Carolina-based Polypore International Inc. has recently confirmed in a statement that its Celgard LLC subsidiary and Panasonic will collaborate on the development of a component for use in cutting-edge lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries.

Polypore, an American manufacturer of chemical separators and membranes, revealed the two companies will develop coated and uncoated Celgard brand separators for Panasonic's next-gen cylindrical battery cells.

The Japanese electronics corporation expects the collaboration to reinforce its battery business as it aims to meet the increasing demand for Li-ion batteries for electric vehicles (EV), which it considers as its key growth area.

Currently, Panasonic's automotive and industrial systems division is boosting the supply of Li-ion batteries to Tesla Motors while at the same time pushing the sales of the batteries for use as emergency power sources for mobile phone base stations in developing markets.

In 2013, Polypore posted sales of around ¥73 billion.

A standard component test showed impressive results for the multi-filter. In a car equipped with it, the amount of "fine dust" particles smaller than 0.4µm can be as much as 70 percent in a car without the filter. This is a huge improvement, as research has revealed that dust particles smaller than 10 µm can lead to health problems, including lung infections and difficulty in breathing.

Peter Mertens, Senior Vice President Research and Development, said in a statement that up to 45 percent of the population of the industrialized globe is now suffering from some form of hypersensitivity or allergy, where more than ten percent has asthma. He stressed that at Volvo, their commitment to safety goes beyond just airbags and seat belts, as it is all about ensuring that every minute drivers and their family spend in a Volvo is as safe as it can be, and that includes breathing. "With this filter we are now at the forefront of the industry in terms of particle separation."

The filter is just one of the many elements of Volvo's advanced Interior Air Quality System (IAQS). A sensor tracking the incoming air for harmful substances is another important element. In the event the level of toxic substances becomes extremely high, such as when driving through a tunnel, the air intakes of the car will close automatically. Working hand in hand, the sensor and multi-filter prevent the entry of a number of noxious pollutants, including gases and bad odors, ground-level ozone, hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides.

Filtering the outside air only accounts for 50 percent of CleanZone's approach to enhancing the environment of the driver. The other half, which reduces emissions within the car, is also vital. Aiming to achieve this, Volvo Cars has programs lined up.

For instance, drivers appreciate that when unlocking their cars using the remote control, the remote cabin ventilation system automatically vents out the interior air in just a minute, preventing emissions and odors before motorists enter. However, the work to reduce interior emissions starts long before the cars are built, with stringent controls on the substances that may be used in the car interior. Volvo Cars is spearheading the switch to fresh, less harmful materials with fewer toxic additives.

In addition, Volvo Cars has implemented a stringent test program to track and regulate emissions. This includes assessments by the Volvo Cars Nose Team, whose members smell a variety of objects to figure out whether their odor is acceptable or very strong. Low emission levels from materials are known today as the 'new car smell'. The good news is that the levels do not pose a risk but during hot days, concentrations that might irritate hypersensitive people may occur.

The sun simulator test is another important aspect of the program. This entails heating the car until the interior reaches 65°C - simulating parking in the sun during summer. Then, the aldehydes and Total Volatile Organic Compounds (TVOCs) emissions are measured. Given that high levels of TVOCs in interior air result in dizziness, nausea, and headaches, which trigger asthma, Volvo has an extremely stringent limit for them. Also, aldehydes are restricted because they, specifically formaldehyde, can result in contact and respiratory allergies. The automaker also limits nickel, another common source of contact allergies when emitted from metallic surfaces.

With a commitment to improving health and well-being, CleanZone stands for the spirit of Volvo's human-centric approach to its work. This is perfectly synchronized with new sensibilities—consumers worldwide are now becoming more knowledgeable of how air quality can affect health, and are calling for cleaner, fresher air in their vehicle interior.

MAGNETI MARELLI'S TECHNOLOGY HELPS BOOST ALFA 4C'S PERFORMANCE



Magneti Marelli is one of the companies responsible for the enhanced performance of the Alfa Romeo 4C's six-speed dual clutch transmission.

The Italian automotive components manufacturer supplies electro-hydraulic actuators and electronic control unit that are designed to ensure power delivery maintenance during more aggressive shifting when the roadster is in performance mode, as well as to smooth gear changes during cornering, which enhances vehicle stability. A subsidiary of Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, Magneti Marelli also supplies the 4C with exhaust pipe, shock absorbers and LED rear lights.

Meanwhile, BorgWarner supplies the sports car's turbocharger, which features a turbine and manifold made from microcast steel so that it can fully operate at temperatures of over 1000°C. Alfa reportedly made the requirements as they help lower fuel consumption during highway driving at medium-high speeds. The fuel usage of the 4C is just as low as 5.0 liters per 100 kilometer.

Weighing only 895kg, the 4C is by far one of the lightest production cars available today. It is equipped with one-piece carbon composite monocoque, making up the chassis' central, load bearing cell. Designed by Alfa Romeo and manufactured by Adler Plastics, it weighs only 65kg.

Plus, thanks to brake pads from ITT Italia and brake calipers from Brembo, the car can go from 100kph to a full stop 36 meters, which perfectly matches the performance of more expensive supercars.

The striking 4C is manufactured at Maserati's Modena plant in Italy. Output began in June last year and is anticipated to climb over 3,500 this year, in accordance with IHS Automotive.

TRACER PRODUCTS LAUNCHES UNIQUE AUTOMOTIVE LEAK SEALER



Just recently, Tracer Products has rolled out a new, advanced additive that quickly and permanently seals leaks in hoses, O-rings, accumulators, evaporators, condensers and compressors.

With a non-polymer, oil-soluble formula, Cool Seal A/C Leak Sealer works safely for A/C system components and recovery equipment, and seals leaks as big as 0.20-inch. It also meets SAE J2670 standard for mobile A/C system additives, making it compatible with well-known refrigerants, including Honeywell's R-1234yf.

In addition, the new leak sealer is an ideal alternative to costly parts replacement on older and high-mileage vehicles. It can stay secure in the system to protect against future leaks, making it perfect for preventive maintenance.

Compared to aerosol can-type leak sealers, Tracerline's Cool Seal is non-flammable, does not have any storage-related issues, does not require system pump down, and enables the technician to see the contents injected into the system. Plus, it can be injected to any A/C system using different delivery methods.

Included in the TP-2210CS Cool Seal Syringe Kit are a purge fitting, coupler/hose with check valve, and a pre-filled, disposable syringe. Meanwhile, the TP-2270-0102CS Cool Seal BigEZ Cartridge comes with a large, pre-filled cartridge, which works in combination with EZ-Shot, BigEZ and other caulking gun-style injectors. Technicians can also use this with the EZ-Ject injector using a coupler/hose and adapter. A full BigEZ cartridge can service two vehicles.

The most inexpensive way to add Cool Seal is the TP-2200-0102CS Cool Seal bottle, which needs a refillable injector (TP-9882).

Bluesmart Bag



With the number of cases of lost and misplaced luggage, it was only a matter of time someone thought of developing smart luggage. And now it has arrived, in the form of the Bluesmart bag, which is more than just a piece of luggage. It is a smart bag that connects with your android or iOS smartphone via a special app. Using the app, you can keep track of the bag, check the weight of its contents and locking and unlock the bag as needed. The bag is even smart enough to automatically lock itself if you wander too far away leaving it unlocked. Using Bluetooth and the app, worrying about lost luggage will become a thing of the past. Even if you are outside the proximity range, the on board GPS locator will guide you back to your Bluesmart bag. Those who travel often will love storing details like airports you have been to, air miles covered and the time spent in the countries they have visited using the app.

But the best feature is the built-in battery that allows you to charge your smartphone up to six times. The Bluesmart is a sturdy carry-on bag complete with waterproof zipper, spinning wheels and handles made of anodized aluminum. A special compartment at the front is customized for laptops and tablets, making it easy to whisk them out for scanning at airports. The bag can take up to 34 liters and weighs 8.5 pounds, with the makers promising a lighter version. They also plan to expand their phone base and add support for other smartphones and smart watches.

iFingerLock

Security is no joke and keeping your belongings under lock and key no longer provides satisfactory protection. Now, iFingerLock gives you a sense of reassurance that no one but you can literally put a finger on your possessions. Unlike a typical padlock, iFingerLock eliminates the need for keys or even a combination lock. Instead, it solely depends on your fingerprints for verification. All you have to do is slide your finger under the lock to open it.

Using biometric technology, the padlock runs on 2 AAA batteries, which means it works best indoors. It also sends several alerts when batteries begin to run out. The lock can store up to 10 fingerprints – one of the owners would be the administrator. The administrator could even allow temporary access to guests and then change the settings. Even when it runs out of charge, the lock will continue to store prints. The padlock also comes with a matching USB to manage the stored fingerprints and add another layer of protection.

Although it needs to be recharged often, iFingerLock is a great alternative since it does away with the bother of keeping a key, or memorizing a combination. You will also never have the risk of losing keys with the iFingerLock. Besides using it to secure contents shared by family or friends, iFingerLock is particularly useful when travelling. You don't have to keep searching your pockets for the elusive key to your suitcase.



Porsche Limited Edition Watches

Porsche watches have always been a byword for accuracy and style. They have technically perfect movements and they are carefully crafted by expert watchmakers from the most exclusive materials including titanium, stainless steel and sapphire glass. Porsche had collaborated with many companies to produce these exclusive watches with the latest partner being Swiss Eterna watches. Now, however, Porsche will be designing the watches inhouse. The first two watches to be developed totally inhouse, the Porsche Chronograph Titanium Limited Edition and the Porsche Design Timepiece No.1 have strong, sport finishes and 42 mm titanium cases. The matte black watches have contrasting bright white numerals for easy readability and pushbuttons for optimum control. The cases are treated instead of painted for a better finish. Even if you are not able to afford a Porsche, you can still sport a look of luxury with the new Porsche watches. They are available in limited edition versions of 500 watches each. The all black Porsche Design Timepiece No.1 has a rubber strap, while the Chronograph Titanium Limited Edition will appeal to those who prefer leather straps.



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HOT PRODUCTS



Magnat LZR 980

European audio system manufacturer Magnat in partnership with Italian design company Pininfarina has developed a premium, high-end headphone, Magnat LZR 980. The headphones, the first in the series that the team plans to launch, promises acoustic precision and optimal sound, mainly because of the Magnat Laser-Tech-Driver. The super-fine laser used in the development of the headphone driver ensures great performance. Makers also claim that the laser measurement system used for speaker area is far superior to conventional measuring methods. The high-end technology used adds up to an impressive sound experience. The headphone's cable with its combination of high-end inner conductor and gold plated connector is durable, easily foldable, tangle free and has excellent signal transport. The ear pads are made of memory foam, and can easily adjust to different shapes and sizes. They cover the ears completely blocking out unwanted sounds. Once used, they can simply be folded and fitted into a case that comes with the headphones for future use.

Available in two colors, pearly white and rubberized black, the LZR 980 is a great combination of looks and state-of-the-art technology. The headphones work well with all smartphone operating systems. Using the integrated microphone allows free speech by simply pressing a button control on the integrated cable remote.

Talkase Phone

Larger-than-life smartphones are pretty to look at. But what if you need a phone that you can carry around in your pocket, or even wallets? Talkase, the new GSM mobile phone is the perfect answer. This 5.5mm thick gadget with 100 hours of standby time is the size of your credit card and an ideal travel companion. In addition to acting as a backup cell phone, its Bluetooth module allows you to sync contacts with your smartphone so that you can make and receive calls from your smartphone on Talkase. It also has the capacity to store additional flash cards/memory cards/SIM cards. What is more, it comes with a multi-purpose iPhone protection case that snaps on to your existing smartphone and keeps your Talkase safe. You can even use it as card holder. The package includes the phone, a protection case, a micro USB cable and a silicon case. Available in four colors –white, black, blue and orange – this is a great device for long rides and outdoor activities. For parents who may be uncomfortable with their kids using smartphones, Talkase provides a good alternative.



Meisterstück Moon Pearl

Inspired by the iridescent luster of a pearl reflected in the moonlight, Montblanc Meisterstück Moon Pearl combines the classic design attributes of the iconic writing instrument with the beauty and elegance of natural mother-of-pearl. The precious resin of the cap and barrel is inlaid with seven elegant stripes of natural mother-of-pearl sourced from the Tahitian Black Lip oyster, found in the warm waters of the southern Pacific Ocean. To ensure perfect consistency in color and texture, each inlay is created from one individual piece cut out from the inside of the shell. The polished appearance of the mother-of-pearl and the black precious resin is enhanced by the writing instrument's platinum-plated fittings. Every detail is designed according to the Maison's codes of sophistication, with a rhodium-plated Au750 gold nib. The Montblanc emblem is also made of mother-of-pearl crowning the writing instrument.



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