

Company-by-company rundown -- 3rd April to 9th April

Daimler

- Mercedes announced that March sales figures were the strongest in its history with sales of 228,296 vehicles, an increase of 14.8% year-over-year ([Source](#))
- Announced a partnership with Bosch to create self-driving vehicles by “the beginning of the next decade” ([Source](#))
- Said to be offering voluntary redundancy in its trucks business. The reported target is up to 2,000 job losses ([Source](#))
- Will produce the next generation Sprinter in Brazil, investing \$150 million in the project ([Source](#))

FCA

- Ferrari CEO Sergio Marchionne said that Ferrari needs to be involved in Formula E (an open-wheeled racing series for battery electric vehicles) ([Source](#))

Ford

- Gave details of its “ambitious” electrification strategy for China including local EV production, and investment of 1.3 billion yuan in the research centre at Nanjing to develop electrified powertrains and “a broad range” of EVs by 2025. Specific product announcements were plug-in hybrids and an all-new fully electric small SUV within five years (estimated range over 450km) ([Source](#))
- Announced a “clever cot” which simulates a car journey so that babies can get to sleep more easily (not an April Fool’s joke) ([Source](#))
- Was ranked as the leading company in autonomous driving technology in a Navigant study. ([Source](#))
- March US sales were down 7 percent although F-series grew 10 percent ([Source](#))

Geely (includes Volvo)

- March sales of 86,952 units, up 74% year-over-year ([Source](#))

General Motors (includes Opel / Vauxhall)

- Following on from similar warnings made by Ford (in 2016), GM warned that used vehicle values are declining faster than anticipated and this will affect profits at its financing unit. ([Source](#))
- Said it set a delivery record for China in March of 345,448 vehicles, up 16% year-over-year. ([Source](#))
- BlaBlaCar announced a scheme where drivers can lease Opel vehicles at discounted levels ([Source](#))
- The relationship between Opel / Vauxhall and the German Works Council seems to have improved and the Works Council has reduced its public statements threatening strikes ([Source](#)). This followed a press release where GM tried to provide reassurance about the process towards the sale. ([Source](#))
- German prosecutors said they had concluded Opel did not use any diesel emission cheating software. ([Source](#))

Hyundai / Kia

- Announced recalls on 1.4 million US and South Korean Hyundai and Kia vehicles with 2.0 and 2.4 litre engines due to knocking (a noise that the engine makes when combustion is incorrect) and loss of power ([Source](#))
- Said that sales in China had been negatively impacted by political tension of anti-missile batteries that the USA was locating in South Korea (last week Hyundai-Kia announced a weeklong plant shutdown) ([Source](#))

Nissan

- Reported March 2017 US sales were up 3% year-over-year. Infiniti brand sales accounted for almost all the increase ([Source](#))

PSA (excludes Opel/Vauxhall)

- Reported that 3 months after its launch, 100,000 people have already used its car-sharing service in Madrid. The service is branded emov under the Free2Move banner and has a fleet of 500 vehicles. PSA said that new customers are registering at a rate of 1,000 per day ([Source](#))

- Announced the first element of its North America relaunch (part of the Push To Pass strategy) with car sharing operations at Los Angeles airport run in partnership with TravelCar. As part of the move, PSA created a new North American legal entity and appointed an ex-TrueCar executive to head it ([Source](#))
- French press expressed concern at the level of management turnover in the scooter business, 49 percent owned by PSA ([Source](#))
- Saw the Algerian prime minister say that approval for a local PSA plant would be concluded during 2017 ([Source](#))

Renault

- Will conduct self-driving car tests with members of the public, similar to PSA's recent event ([Source](#))

Tata (includes JLR)

- JLR reported record sales of 604,009 vehicles in the full year, including sales for March up 21% year over year ([Source](#))
- Said that it will reduce its portfolio in the next 3-4 years by removing nameplates and having only two platforms instead of six. This will reportedly include axing the Nano. ([Source](#))

Tesla

- Substantial media coverage of Tesla overtaking Ford and GM stock market valuations following its Q1 delivery figures ([Source](#))
- Absence of concrete data saw speculation around Model 3 pricing, one analyst reportedly used information on almost 8,000 Model 3 reservation holders to arrive at a revenue of between \$45,000 and \$55,000 per vehicle. Elon Musk has previously spoken of revenue in the low \$40k range. ([Source](#))

Toyota

- Announced a five year research program into the communities of the future ([Source](#))

VW Group

- Ferdinand Piech sold a major part of his stake in Porsche Automobil Holding to his brother Hans Michel Piech, who now owns 25.1% of Porsche SE ([Source](#))
- Gave some further details about the platform sharing arrangement between Audi and Porsche -- this had already been previewed in Strategy 2025 presentations ([Source](#))
- Porsche AG (the car brand) purchased the family's stake in Porsche Design so that it is now a wholly owned subsidiary ([Source](#))
- Works Council head Bernd Osterloh was quoted as saying that VW sees the battery powertrain as making up around 40% of the cost of the vehicle in future and that the Works Council want that work to be in-house ([Source](#))
- Volkswagen group China and local firm Mobvoi have created a joint venture to develop automotive artificial intelligence that uses Mobvoi's voice recognition software. ([Source](#))
- Successfully marketed sterling bonds for the first time since 2015 ([Source](#))

Other

- Aston Martin announced that the site for its new factory in St Athan, Wales had been formally handed over by the UK Ministry of Defence ([Source](#))

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Economic / Political News

- Deutsche Bank wrote that US market conditions, such as the increase in the number of vehicles (due to higher sales and lower scrappage) give rise to concerns about a significant year over year SAAR drop ([Source](#))
- The SMMT reported that UK sales had seen a record number of diesel car sales ([Source](#))

- Colombia agreed to relax tariff restrictions on bi-lateral trade in vehicles with Brazil and Argentina ([Source](#))
- German passenger car registrations were up 11% in March ([Source](#))
- The EU parliament voted in favour of a draft bill to change the way vehicle emissions are certified and increase fines for rule breakers. European Commissioner Elzbieta Bienkowska said that she saw these new rules as hastening the end of diesel ([Source](#))
- The UAW said that its membership rose by 1.8% in 2016. It now has 415,963 members ([Source](#))

Suppliers

- Delphi announced the purchase of minority stakes in Valens (semiconductors) and Otonomo (data from connected cars) and a strategic partnership with Rosenberger (connectivity for driverless vehicles) ([Source](#))
- Gestamp's IPO valued the company at €3.2 billion ([Source](#))
- Magna hosted an event where they repeated that they have 48V, full hybrid, plug-in hybrid and battery electric vehicle powertrains under development ([Source](#))

Dealers / Rental Companies

- UK dealer Desira Group purchased MR King and Sons dealership in Lowestoft ([Source](#))
- Enterprise Rent-A-Car in Ireland has purchased Dooley Car Rentals, which has a 1,400 vehicle fleet ([Source](#))

Ride-Hailing

- A judge in Seattle issued a temporary block on a new city law that would have allowed drivers for companies such as Uber and Lyft to unionise ([Source](#))
- BlaBlaCar announced a scheme where drivers can lease Opel vehicles at discounted levels ([Source](#))
- Lyft raised \$500 million for a latest valuation of \$7.5 billion ([Source](#))
- Ola said that it will pilot using electric vehicles this year, with an eventual target of 1 million electric Ola vehicles in India over the next five years ([Source](#))
- Uber was criticised by UK politicians for the terms it requires drivers to sign. One MP called the contract "gibberish" and pointed out that although Uber have resisted English language tests for drivers, the contract was long and complex ([Source](#))
- The New York Times published an investigation into how ride hailing companies create incentives for drivers to stay available ([Source](#))

Driverless / Autonomy

- The Waymo vs Uber case around IP allegedly taken from Waymo by Anthony Levandowski (now head of Uber's driverless program via a start-up called Otto that he helped found and then sold to Uber) continued. Uber received several negative comments from the judge, who threatened injunctions barring them from using disputed technologies ([Source](#)). Documents filed under the case also revealed that Google have started legal proceedings against (Otto cofounder) Lior Ron - this had been speculated previously.
- Online education start-up Udacity has launched its own self-driving technology company called Voyage ([Source](#))
- The Trump administration said it plans to nominate Derek Kan, currently a general manager at Lyft, as under secretary of transportation for policy. He is expected to help in reviewing rules for driverless cars ([Source](#))
- A research analyst has used data from California's Department of Motor Vehicles to compare the autonomous driving performance of different companies. Note that the data may not be directly comparable ([Source](#))
- Navigant released a comparison of companies working on self-driving vehicles, rating Ford first. ([Source](#))
- Aurora, the self-driving company started by ex-Google autonomous vehicle boss Chris Urmson has reportedly received \$3.1 million in funding ([Source](#))
- Speculation about Apple's ongoing driverless program were spurred by its latest release of supplier information ([Source](#))

Electrification

- The team behind Future Mobility Corporation (FMC), a Chinese-backed electric car start up with some high profile ex-BMW i executives was profiled in Manager Magazin ([Source](#))

- Battery company A123 Systems announced that it would be moving its headquarters from Livonia to Novi and eliminating around 200 jobs ([Source](#))
- The CHAdeMO Association (electrical charging standard used by Nissan) announced a revised standard (v1.2) to increase maximum current from 125A to 400A ([Source](#))
- Hydrogen fuel cell company Plug Power said that Amazon had signed a supply contract that would allow it to take a 23 percent stake if contract performance targets were met. The contract will provide power units for forklifts in Amazon warehouses ([Source](#))
- UK sales of battery electric vehicles grew 34.2% year over year in March ([Source](#))
- Ola said that it will pilot using electric vehicles this year, with an eventual target of 1 million electric Ola vehicles in India over the next five years ([Source](#))