



AD PUNCTUM

News Review -- 13th November to 19th November

News is arranged by company and topic. Stories that apply to more than one company or topic are duplicated.

News about the major automakers

BMW

- Pledged that as of 2020, all its global electricity needs will be met from renewable energy, up from 63% today. ([BMW](#))

Daimler

- Opened a new R&D centre in Tel Aviv, Israel, to work on digital technologies, initially with a staff of 25. ([Daimler](#))
- Opened a new R&D lab in Seattle that will eventually have 150 employees. ([Daimler](#))

Ford

- Said it would build the next generation Kuga at its Valencia, Spain plant, investing €750 million in the factory. ([Ford](#))
- Ended production of C-MAX Energi PHEV and will soon stop HEV as well. ([Plug In Cars](#))
 - Implication: The C-MAX was Ford's sole hybrid-only nameplate in the US. Its demise (whilst the European model is still in production) indicates the technology is perhaps mature enough to no longer require differentiated bodystyles. Could this have a bearing on the future of the Prius?

Geely (includes Volvo)

- Bought flying car maker Terrafugia and plans to launch the first product in 2019. ([Ars Technica](#))
- Released details of Lynk&Co intended product line-up. The brand is working towards three crossovers, an SUV, a sedan and an electric scooter. ([Gasgoo](#))

General Motors

- CEO Mary Barra said at an investor conference that the next two all-electric vehicles will be Bolt-based crossovers, one of which will be a Buick. The company will then launch an all-new EV platform in 2021 that it expects to reduce costs by over 30% -- at which stage the company expects EVs to be profitable. ([GM](#))
- Said that its sales of new energy vehicles in China by 2019 would be high enough that it could avoid purchasing credits. ([Reuters](#))
- Issued a recall for fuel leaks in almost 49,000 Sierra and Silverado pick-up trucks. ([USA Today](#))
- The "Book by Cadillac" monthly leasing scheme is expanding to two additional markets (beyond the New York pilot): Dallas and Los Angeles. ([GM](#))

Honda

- Issued a recall for about 900,000 minivans (almost all in North America) to fix problems with second row seat latches not engaging correctly. ([Reuters](#))
- Announced a cooperation with SoftBank to research applications for 5G connectivity in vehicles. ([Honda](#))

Nissan (includes Mitsubishi)

- Issued its report into the final inspection scandal. Following the incidents, Nissan's CEO will forego some of his pay. ([Nissan](#))
- Said that it might need a new factory in the US because existing plants are "maxed out". ([Bloomberg](#))
- Installed a solar roof on its Netherlands distribution centre that has been funded in part by selling long-term claims on the electricity produced to local households. ([Nissan](#))

PSA (includes Opel/Vauxhall)

- Reportedly planning to create work for Opel's Rüsselsheim engineering centre through a massive cull of engineering agency resource (around 1,200 people) that PSA has traditionally used. ([Les Echos](#))
- Said that it has 450,000 users of its Free2Move app and that it is developing a secure internet-of-things platform with Huawei. ([PSA](#))

Renault

- Rated the worst OEM for ethical cobalt purchasing in a report by Amnesty International. Page 78 is the key summary. ([Amnesty International](#))

Suzuki

- Announced a cooperation with Toyota to sell electric cars in India. The current working assumption (at MoU stage) is that Suzuki will make the vehicles and Toyota will sell a badge-engineered version. ([Toyota](#))

Tata (includes JLR)

- JLR announced that it had started testing autonomous vehicles on public roads (with safety drivers). ([JLR](#))
- Was forced to deny that it had taken a stake in Faraday Future. ([Green Car Reports](#))

Tesla

- Unveiled the Semi truck. Tesla will offer a "Mega Charger" network that adds 400 miles of range in 30 minutes, leading to speculation about the charger's power output being well in excess of 1,000 MWh. Truck production begins in 2019. Tesla say that they will guarantee a wholesale electricity price of \$0.07 per kWh and the truck will have cheaper per mile economics than diesel trucks -- and even trains if a convoy of autonomous vehicles headed by a single human driver is used. The truck was hailed as having a drag coefficient of 0.36, comparing favourably to a Bugatti Chiron. Tesla were silent on why they didn't choose the Toyota Prius's 0.30 cd as the benchmark. ([Tesla](#))
- At the same event as the truck, Tesla also showed off the next generation Roadster. The 2+2 vehicle has a claimed 0-60mph time of 1.9 seconds and top speed above 250mph "for the base model", thanks in part to 10,000Nm of torque and power from a 200kWh battery with a claimed 620-mile range. It costs \$250,000 to reserve one of the first 1,000 Founders Series models. Production begins in 2020. ([Tesla](#))
 - Implication: The roadster performance figures, if true, will send some electric sports car manufacturers back to the drawing boards. Following the example of Tesla Model S, many had been planning vehicles with quick 0-60 times but top speeds below the 200mph level that is the de-facto standard for luxury grand tourers. Ad Punctum's volume assessment? Less than 4,000 units per year. If that sounds too harsh then just remember that would be double the volume of competing products from Aston Martin and McLaren. By the way, how much will this thing weigh?
- Almost lost in the aftermath of the Roadster and Semi-truck reveals, Tesla is now selling mobile phone top-up chargers. At \$45 each, it's probably the cheapest way to tear down a Tesla 18650 cell. ([Tesla](#))

Toyota

- Announced a cooperation with Suzuki to sell electric cars in India. The current working assumption (at MoU stage) is that Suzuki will make the vehicles and Toyota will sell a badge-engineered version. ([Toyota](#))
- Recalling around 29,000 C-HR and 40,000 Prius in the US for problems with the parking brake and fuse system respectively. ([Toyota](#))

- Launched a scheme in partnership with Launch Mobility aimed at ride-hailing drivers to offer used vehicles for short term rentals. ([Toyota](#))
- A senior executive predicted that internal combustion engines would power only 10% of new vehicles by 2040 and have been phased out of production entirely by 2050. ([Autocar](#))

VW Group

- Will add a new model in South American markets called the Virtus, a small sedan. Between investments in Argentina and Brazil, the company says it is spending around €2.4 billion on new products that will launch before 2020. ([VW](#))
- German officials raided the offices of several VW executives. The issue under investigation is reportedly the nature of payments made to works council head Bernd Osterloh. ([Der Spiegel](#))
- Announced VAG spending targets for the period 2018 to 2022. The company will spend more than 34 billion on new technologies and is aiming for capex and R&D each to be 6.0% of revenue from 2020 onwards -- an amount that the company calls “competitive” (they might want to check Carlos Tavares’s opinion). ([VW](#))
- Will move production of Golf from Zwickau to Wolfsburg and Passat production from Zwickau to Emden. Zwickau will then become a “pure e-mobility facility”, building the ID and other derivative products. ([VW](#))
- Issued an update on the Future Pact saying that 94% of the 2020 voluntary redundancy target (9,200 positions) had been met. The company will continue to reduce jobs in “working areas which are not viable for the future”. ([VW](#))

Other

- **Aston Martin** will make a track-only version of the Valkyrie hypercar called the AMR Pro. Only 25 examples will be produced. ([Auto Express](#))
- Executives at **Great Wall** said that the company was intending to launch the Haval and Wey brands in Europe at the beginning of the 2020s. ([Autocar](#))
- A **Subaru** executive said that the company’s boxer-engine “can simply not exist in the future”. ([Autocar](#))

News about other companies and trends ...

Economic / Political News

- **European** passenger car sales of 1.169 million units were 5.9% higher on a year-over-year basis. ([ACEA](#))
- **Daimler** and **Toyota** championed a study by **McKinsey** saying that hydrogen was indispensable to 2030 energy mix, powering 10 to 15 million cars and 500,000 trucks. ([Toyota](#))

Suppliers

- **Delphi** announced it will spin off the powertrain division to 4th December 2017 -- earlier than expected. ([Delphi](#))
- **Aptiv** (Delphi as will be) gave a presentation about autonomous and connected vehicle technologies. Probably the most interesting slide was number 12. Despite the example of Tesla, Aptiv is not planning to have many over the air updates in service until 2019. ([Aptiv](#))
- **Federal Mogul** acquired powertrain engineering company **Controlled Power Technologies**. ([Federal Mogul](#))
- **Michelin** signed an agreement with **Hyundai** to develop all-weather tyres for EVs. ([Yonhap](#))
- Battery supplier **CATL** said that it was planning for an IPO by June 2018 that would raise \$2 billion. ([Reuters](#))
- **ClearMotion** has purchased **Bose’s** suspension technology. ([Xconomy](#))
- **Lear** said that their CEO would retire at the end of February 2018. ([Press Release](#))
- **GKN** said that their CEO-designate would leave the company with immediate effect and appointed an interim-CEO instead. ([The Guardian](#))

Ride-Hailing, Car Sharing & Rental

- **Lyft** bought streaming start-up **Kamcord** to hire its engineering staff. ([Kamcord](#))
- **Lyft** saw some of its financial details published (after a leak), including medium-term growth targets. ([Bloomberg](#))
- **Lyft** has chosen Canada Toronto for its first international location. ([Lyft](#))
- **Softbank** completed its much-anticipated investment in **Uber**. ([TechCrunch](#))

- It looks like **Uber** is safe in London for a while yet. The mayor said that the appeals process could “go on for a number of years”. ([BBC](#))
- Media reports questioned the popularity of **Autolib**, the car sharing scheme in Paris run by **Bolloré**, saying that subscribers have fallen 5% since the start of the year and only 17 new vehicles have been registered to the scheme this year, compared to 941 last year. ([Journal Auto](#))
- French carpooling start-up **LESS** said that it had raised €16 million. ([Journal Auto](#))
- **Toyota Financial Services** launched a scheme in partnership with **Launch Mobility** aimed at ride-hailing drivers to offer used vehicles for short term rentals. ([Toyota](#))

Driverless / Autonomy

- **Renovo** announced that it would work with **Velodyne** and use the latter’s lidar as the reference sensor for the bolt-on driverless vehicle solution it is developing. ([Press Release](#))
- Israeli vision company **Newsight Imaging** and Chinese laser maker **LeiShen Intelligent** will partner to create solid-state lidar for automotive application. ([Press Release](#))

Electrification

- **WiTricity** and **Texas Instruments** will collaborate on wireless charging products with improved vehicle to infrastructure communication. WiTricity says that microcontrollers supplied by Texas Instruments will be able to overcome some of the practical problems of first generation wireless charging such as misalignment and inefficient transfer rates. ([WiTricity](#))
- **Fisker** announced that it was applying for patents on breakthrough solid state battery technology that it believes can be commercialised by 2023. Fisker says that the new battery could charge in one minute. ([Green Car Congress](#))
- **eMotorWerks** has created a partnership with **Autochargers.ca** to make a sell an electric vehicle charging platform aimed at the Canadian market. ([Press Release](#))
- A report by **Amnesty International** into ethical sourcing of cobalt in batteries ranked **Renault** lowest of a (non-exhaustive) group of automotive OEMs. **BMW** and **Tesla** were joint first, but still only merited half marks. Page 78 is the key summary. ([Amnesty International](#))
- **Toyota** and **Suzuki** announced a cooperation to sell electric cars in India. The current working assumption (at MoU stage) is that Suzuki will make the vehicles and Toyota will sell a badge-engineered version. ([Toyota](#))
- **GM** CEO Mary Barra said at an investor conference that the next two all-electric vehicles will be Bolt-based crossovers, one of which will be a Buick. The company will then launch an all-new EV platform in 2021 that it expects to reduce costs by over 30% -- at which stage the company expects EVs to be profitable. ([GM](#))

Connectivity

- **Honda** announced a cooperation with **SoftBank** to research applications for 5G connectivity in vehicles. ([Honda](#))
- **Huawei** have won the contract to supply connected vehicle hardware and software to **PSA** ahead of several more established names. ([Les Echos](#))

Other

- **Bluegogo**, operator of around 700,000 bicycles seems to be shutting down operations. ([TechCrunch](#))
- **Varhana**, **Airbus’s** in-house flying car effort, said it was intending to carry out its first test flight this year. ([The Verge](#))
- **Geely** bought flying car maker **Terrafugia** and plans to launch the first product in 2019. ([Ars Technica](#))