



# AD PUNCTUM

## Autos & Mobility Industry Briefing -- 28<sup>th</sup> December 2017 to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018

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

### News about the major automakers

#### **FCA** (history)

- An executive said that the next all-new Alfa Romeo product, an SUV, will be a “little bit bigger” (by around 200 kg) than the recently launched Stelvio. They also implied that the likely powertrain is a 48V 2.0 litre gasoline engine, citing some DNA problems with a plug-in hybrid. ([Detroit Bureau](#))

#### **Ford** (history)

- Experienced industrial unrest in Craiova, Romania -- employees staged an impromptu strike just before Christmas and this may continue in the new year. A recent internal memo reportedly asked whether workers wanted “a higher salary increase or to secure the future of this factory?”. ([World Socialist](#))

#### **Hyundai / Kia**

- Union leaders in South Korea pencilled in strike action beginning on January 2<sup>nd</sup> after talks on a new labour agreement failed to reach an agreement by the end of 2017. An earlier tentative agreement was rejected by workers in a ballot. ([Wards](#))

#### **PSA (includes Opel/Vauxhall)** (history)

- Reportedly meeting with French unions to discuss a new labour law that came into force during December. There is speculation that PSA wish to use the new regulations to make it easier to separate employees. ([Les Echos](#))

#### **Renault** (history)

- Reported final 2017 French market registrations of 673,869 units in total -- 554,505 Renault cars and LCVs and 119,357 Dacia vehicles. The total share was 26.4%, slightly down on 2016. ([Renault](#))

#### **Toyota** (history)

- A director at Toyota’s Indian JV said the government’s plan for all-electric vehicle sales by 2030 was “not practical and not the way forward”, calling for more leeway in meeting the underlying environmental aims. ([Times of India](#))

#### **VW Group** (history)

- Will reportedly create a new brand in China with joint venture partner JAC Motors with a portfolio made-up of re-badged SEAT vehicles. As part of the plan, some models may launch in China before traditional markets, including SEAT’s first electric vehicle. ([Autofactil](#))
- Porsche sources told a reporter at a recent test that the Mission E all-electric sports car will have three power levels: 300 kW, 400 kW and 500kW, with the higher power levels delivered through upgraded rear wheel drive units. The target starting price was said to be \$75,000 - \$80,000 with an annual sales goal of 30,000 units. ([Automobile](#))

- The German constitutional court ruled against VW's attempts to stop a special auditor appointed by shareholders from looking into the diesel scandal. ([Der Spiegel](#))
- Confirmed that the VW brand manufactured more than 6 million units in 2017, setting a new record and marking a return to form following the diesel scandal. ([VW](#))

#### Other

- **Ssanyong** announced global sales of 143,685 units in 2017, a decrease of (7.8)% from 2016. A 3% increase in South Korea partially offset a (29)% fall in export markets, mostly a c.(13)k drop in Tivoli. ([Ssanyong](#))

## News about other companies and trends ...

### Economic / Political News

- **China** acted to improve emissions levels by banning 553 vehicles from sale effective 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018. ([Xinhua](#))
- **Spain's** passenger car market had 1,234,931 registrations in 2017, an increase of 7.7% over 2016. ([ANFAC](#))

### Ride-Hailing, Car Sharing & Rental (history)

- **SoftBank** said it had successfully closed its tender offer for 15% of **Uber**. Based on the share sale, Uber is valued at around \$48 billion. ([TechCrunch](#))

### Driverless / Autonomy (history)

- **Didi Chuxing's** CEO said that he believes the company could be the second-best developer of self-driving cars -- behind only **Waymo/Google**. ([QZ](#))
- **Velodyne** said it was reducing the price of the VLP-16 lidar unit by "up to 50 percent". Although the press release contains no specific pricing, this implies unit costs of around \$4,000 for the 16-line unit. ([Velodyne](#))
  - Implication: In addition to being a market share grab / defence following on from a number of recent lidar announcements, recent improvements in signals processing hardware may mean that some groups are interested in using an array of 16-line units rather than waiting for more capable products to fall in price.

### Electrification (history)

- **Shenzhen** completed the transition of its public transport bus fleet to 100% all-electric vehicles, meeting an earlier target commitment. The Chinese city has around 16,500 buses in service. Taxis are next on the list. ([EV Obsession](#))

### Connectivity

- **Zurich Insurance** acquired telematics hardware supplier **Bright Box**. ([Telematics News](#))

#### Other

- **Repair bills** in the 2020s could be lower thanks to advances in self-healing glass by Japanese researchers. ([Autocar](#))