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Autos & Mobility Industry Briefing -- 12th August to 18th August 2019

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 (history)

- New CEO Oliver Zipse urged employees not to blame the economy for the company's tough times and said BMW needs to be "far better than our competitors in everything we do". ([Reuters](#))

FCA (history)

- Will keep the third shift at Windsor Assembly going until at least the end of the year, rather than ending it in September as previously announced. ([Detroit News](#))

Ford (history)

- Extending the warranty on older US Fiesta and Focus cars with dual clutch transmissions because of problems that Ford has struggled to fix. ([Reuters](#))
- Recalling almost 110,000 cars to fix problems with seatbelts. ([Ford](#))

General Motors (history)

- GM's OnStar service was criticised after operators refused to unlock the vehicle of a customer with an expired account who had left their baby inside the vehicle. ([Detroit News](#))
- Leaked shots suggest that GM is set to release a Bolt-based car in China called the Menlo. ([CNET](#))

Honda (history)

- Will stop making cars at the Campana, Argentina, plant in 2020. ([Honda](#))

Hyundai / Kia (history)

- Hyundai has taken several down days at the Irungattukottai plant due to weakness in the Indian market. ([The Hindu](#))

PSA (includes Opel/Vauxhall) (history)

- Two thirds of the 300 jobs at the Rüsselsheim parts centre are being removed, but Opel says that no layoffs are required and new roles will be found internally. ([Handelsblatt](#))
- The Astra facelift will be unveiled at the Frankfurt show. ([Opel](#))
- Opel says that converting a cars lighting to LEDs can save 1.3 g / km of CO₂. ([Opel](#))

Suzuki

- Maruti Suzuki says it has made around 3,000 workers redundant due to a sales slowdown. ([Economic Times of India](#))

Tata (includes JLR) (history)

- Standard & Poors maintained Tata's credit rating but continued to worry about the firm's outlook, citing cash burn at JLR as its biggest concern. ([Economic Times of India](#))
- JLR plans to create a new UK parts distribution hub to take the place of 10 different sites. ([Business Live](#))

Tesla (history)

- A German rental fleet generated a disproportionate amount of press for its decision to cancel an order for 85 Model 3 cars, citing poor quality. ([Detroit News](#))

Toyota (history)

- Recalling about 7,000 cars to fix problems with the brakes. ([Green Car Reports](#))

VW Group (history)

- Porsche issued a €1 billion green bond. The proceeds will be used for the Taycan. ([Porsche](#))
- Bugatti unveiled the Centodieci, a 10 unit limited edition rebodied Chiron with a \$10 million price tag. ([Bugatti](#))

Other

- **Aston Martin** says 4,500 hours of labour are required for each "continuation edition" car. ([Aston Martin](#))
- When using a Boston matrix, **Aston Martin's** CEO segments the luxury sportscar space with two axes of versatile to focused and emotional to rational. He says GT cars sit in the highly emotional, versatile box. He says the forthcoming DBX SUV will be emotional and versatile unlike the **Lamborghini** Urus (emotional, not versatile in his opinion) and the **Bentley** Bentayga (boring but versatile). ([Motor Trend](#))
- **McLaren** is making a roadster with a 399-unit run and a price tag (probably) north of £1 million. ([McLaren](#))
- **Rezvani** put the Tank, a high-powered SUV, on sale retailing at \$180,000. ([Rezvani](#))
- **Ecuri Ecosse** are planning a 25 unit run of a supercar based on the Jaguar XJ13 racing car. ([Ecuri Ecosse](#))
- **Detroit Electric** was revealed as the company behind **Aston Martin's** IP-related bad debt. ([Bloomberg](#))
- The Welsh government remains hopeful that **Ineos** will choose to build the Projekt Grenadier 4x4 at or near **Ford's** Bridgend plant, saying talks are "very advanced". ([Daily Mail](#))
- One of **Nio's** co-founders is retiring, and the company is cutting 1,000 jobs. ([FT](#))
- The CEO of **Canoo** (aka Evelozcity) is leaving. ([The Verge](#))

News about other companies and trends ...

Economic / Political News

- **Ghana** is offering 10 year tax holidays to companies that set up carmaking plants. ([Detroit News](#))
- **UK** used car sales fell (2.8)% on a year-over-year basis in Q2. ([SMMT](#))

Suppliers

- **Bharat Forge** won't commit new capital spending for the rest of 2019, and a large part of 2020, as the firm responds to the threat of recession in India. ([Economic Times of India](#))
- Carbon Fibre supplier **SGL** fired its CEO and pushed back financial targets after a series of contractual and forecasting errors. ([Manager Magazin](#))
- **Grammer** reported first half revenue of €1.05 billion and EBIT of €50.2 million. Although the full year revenue forecast remains the same, EBIT expectations are slightly less rosy than at Q1. ([Grammer](#))
- **Amtek** looks set to be wound up after **Liberty House** pulled out of a rescue bid. ([Economic Times of India](#))

Dealers

- Malaysian used car website **Carsome** is hoping to raise \$40 million. ([Deal Street Asia](#))
- **Scout24** will investigate options for its car sales arm. ([Reuters](#))

- Indonesian used car website **BeliMobilGue.co.id** raised over \$30 million. ([Deal Street Asia](#))

Ride-Hailing, Car Sharing & Rental (history)

- Ride hailing service **Ola** acquired artificial intelligence start-up **Pikup.ai**. ([Autocar](#))

Driverless / Autonomy (history)

- After experiments in autonomous cars **communicating intent** to pedestrians using combinations of flashing lights and computer-generated expressions, one research team is trialling video feeds of remote drivers. ([IEEE Spectrum](#))
- **Velodyne** is suing fellow lidar developers **Robosense** and **Hesai** for patent infringement. ([Velodyne](#))
- Delivery firm **UPS** bought a minority stake in self-driving truck start-up **TuSimple**. ([Reuters](#))
- **Aurora's** CEO says autonomous driving will phase in over 30 to 50 years. ([Velodyne](#))

Electrification (history)

- **Shado Group** hopes to sell 1,000 ultracapacitor powered 3 wheelers each month in India. ([Autocar](#))
- A quarry operator in Switzerland says they have a dumper truck that **never needs recharging**. Because it carries a heavy load downhill and returns empty, the regenerative braking apparently harvests more electricity than the uphill drive consumes. ([Green Car Reports](#))
- **Urban Electric**, developers of electric charging stations that can be hidden in the ground when not in use, launched a crowdfunding campaign to create a demonstration site. ([Industry Europe](#))
- **Mahle** says that a new design of battery pack allows for a 40% reduction in battery size. With the industry currently fixated on kWh as a measurement of performance, it isn't clear whether any manufacturers will push for the upper end of Mahle's claims soon. ([Mahle](#))

Connectivity

- **Nvidia** says it has discovered a brilliant new way of training artificial intelligence to have conversations with human beings. ([Nvidia](#))

Other

- **SG Bike** is buying **Mobike's** Singaporean operating licence (for 25,000 bikes) for \$1.85 million. ([Deal Street Asia](#))
- On-demand refuelling app **FuelBuddy** is hoping to raise \$2 million. ([Economic Times of India](#))
- **Ninebot** has developed electric scooters that can drive themselves to charging stations. ([Reuters](#))