



AD PUNCTUM

Autos & Mobility Industry Briefing -- 16th November to 22nd November 2020

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)

- Mini unveiled the Urbanaut concept. Equipped with a sliding side door and top-hinged windscreen, Mini hasn't yet been brave enough to make an actual model of the design. ([Mini](#))
- Announced that internal combustion engine production in Europe will be directed to only two plants in future: Hams Hall, UK, and Steyr, Austria. The Munich, Germany, plant will lose its engine manufacturing role, but get a new production line for all-electric vehicles instead. ([BMW](#))
- Created a subsidiary called IDEALworks to sell automated logistics robots that BMW developed in-house. ([BMW](#))
- Confirmed that the next generation Mini Countryman will be built at the Leipzig, Germany, plant. The move sends a warning to the UK government that British production of the car should not be a given in future. ([BMW](#))
- BMW sales executives in South Africa wondered aloud whether the direct sales model the brand has piloted there should now be rolled out to other markets. BMW in the UK said it wasn't planning any changes. ([Autocar](#))

Daimler (history)

- Unveiled the Maybach version of the new S-Class with a rose gold and burgundy paint job that is either fetching or gauche, depending on your point of view. Hopefully customers will at least appreciate that it takes a week to convert a standard S-Class painted body to a two tone finish. ([Daimler](#))
- Daimler and Geely will work together to design and build smaller internal combustion engines to use in hybrid electric vehicles. Engines will be produced at factories in Europe and China. Daimler appeared to warn its European workforce that should they become complacent, it might simply ship in more Chinese-produced engines. ([Daimler](#))
- Sources said that Daimler and Renault's cooperation would continue despite the Geely news. ([Reuters](#))
- Daimler is reportedly hoping for hundreds of millions in annual cost savings from the engine deal. ([Handelsblatt](#))

FCA (history)

- PSA and FCA released the prospectus for their merger. ([PSA](#))

Ford (history)

- Ford wowed North American dealers with an unnamed whitespace product (rumoured to be a small pickup). ([Ford](#))
- The much-heralded new CIO won't be joining Ford after all, instead he will spend more time with his family. ([Ford](#))
- Launching an online portal for selling used vehicles in the USA. ([Detroit News](#))

Geely (includes Volvo) (history)

- Daimler and Geely will work together to design and build smaller internal combustion engines to use in hybrid electric vehicles. Engines will be produced at factories in Europe and China. ([Daimler](#))

General Motors (history)

- Launched an insurance product that uses data from GM's OnStar telematics suite. ([GM](#))
- Presented an updated strategy for electric vehicles. GM now plans to have 30 all-electric models by 2025 with annual sales above the 1 million units level it previously set for 2026. By mid-decade, GM expects battery costs to have reduced by 60% from today's levels and energy density to have doubled, so batteries from the next generation of technology will be smaller and cheaper. By 2025, 40% of GM's North American portfolio will be electric-only; it isn't yet clear how this translates into volumes. ([GM](#))
- Says that the benchmark time to develop a new vehicle is now 26 months. ([GM](#))
- Unveiled a minor refresh for the Buick GL6, which now will be equipped for V2X (vehicle to everything) communication so that the car can talk to traffic lights. ([GM](#))
- Revealed the SUV variant of the all-electric Hummer, supposedly by mistake. ([Detroit Free Press](#)) Then (and you're not going to believe this), they did it again. ([CNBC](#))
- GM president Reuss said that the firm has carefully evaluated whether to spin off its electric vehicle unit, but decided against it due to "dyssynergy", but GM will report the group's performance separately. ([CNBC](#))
- US regulators forced GM to recall 5.9 million vehicles to replace faulty Takata airbags, a move that the company had argued against. ([Reuters](#))
- South Korean workers have been striking over pay. GM executives said it was "basically being held hostage" and the company's long term future in the country was under threat. ([Reuters](#))

Hyundai / Kia (history)

- Recent withdrawals from short term car rental haven't put off Hyundai, which is launching a new scheme for all-electric cars in Spain called VIVE. ([Hyundai](#))
- Kia's South Korean workers started partial strikes over wages and product allocations. ([Reuters](#))

Nissan and Mitsubishi (history)

- Nissan denied that it was interested in selling down its stake in Mitsubishi. ([Nissan](#))
- Rumoured to be contemplating an all-electric powertrain from full size electric pickup startup Hercules Electric to create an all-electric version of the Titan pickup. ([Detroit News](#))

PSA (history)

- PSA and FCA released the prospectus for their merger. ([PSA](#))

Renault (history)

- French unions approved Renault's job cuts plan. ([Les Echos](#))
- Unveiled a "concept" version of the Kiger, a small SUV / crossover aimed at emerging markets. The vehicle clearly shares many components and some exterior bodywork with the Nissan Magnite. ([Renault](#))

Subaru

- Unveiled a new BRZ sports car. ([Subaru](#))

Tata (includes JLR) (history)

- Took legal action against VW Group's SUVs in the USA, claiming that they infringed on JLR's terrain response system (which makes it easier to drive off-road). ([Detroit News](#))
- Will test driver assistance and connected vehicle technologies in a new facility being built in Ireland. ([JLR](#))

Tesla (history)

- An announcement that Tesla will join the S&P 500 index sent its shares racing. ([TechCrunch](#))

Toyota (history)

- Invested in virus testing start-up SummerBio. ([Toyota](#))

- Patented the concept of a drone that will refuel cars. ([Futurism](#))

VW Group (history)

- Lamborghini and Bugatti will be run by the same person after Lamborghini's prior CEO left to run Formula 1 and VW decided to hand the reigns back to the prior boss, who currently heads Bugatti. The announcement implied that in other respects the two brands will be independent, but there is no guarantee. ([VW](#))
- Opened a production line for electric motors in Tianjin, China. ([VW](#))
- Audi's Silvercar rental brand is shutting down operations at airports and will concentrate on cars located at dealerships instead. ([Auto Rental News](#))
- CEO Diess said VW was working on a different legal structure for Ducati and Lamborghini and would unfortunately slightly miss its 2020 European CO₂ target, implying large fines. ([Reuters](#))
- Porsche SE is calling for improved financial performance from start-ups it has invested in. ([Handelsblatt](#))
- Porsche invested in Drivably, a developer of data analysis tools for car dealers. ([Drivably](#))

Other

- **Morgan** confirmed that it will wave goodbye to the 3 Wheeler in 2021. ([Morgan](#))
- **Lordstown** expressed confidence in its ability to put the Endurance pickup truck into production in 2021, saying it has 50,000 orders. ([Lordstown](#))
- **Nio** reported financial results for Q3 2020. Revenue of 4.3 billion RMB (about \$630 million) jumped 146% versus prior year, whilst a loss from operations of (946) million RMB (about -\$140 million) improved versus prior year's loss of more than double that amount. ([Nio](#))
- Electric commercial vehicle company **Arrival** will list via a merger with a special purpose vehicle in a deal valued at \$5.4 billion that will see the company receive \$660 million in cash. Arrival hopes to be profitable by 2023. ([Arrival](#))
- **Aston Martin** is rumoured to be supplying safety cars for Formula 1 races next year. ([Autocar](#))
- **Rivian's** CEO says the company is planning a series of smaller vehicles. ([Reuters](#))
- **Ineos** might make a version of its Grenadier SUV with **Hyundai's** hydrogen fuel cell technology. ([Autocar](#))
- **Alpha Motor Corporation** plans to start production of a new range of electric vehicles in 2023. ([Alpha](#))
- **BYD** unveiled an electric car designed for ride hailing operations. The innovations seem to consist of a sliding door and screens for the passengers. ([The Verge](#))

[News about other companies and trends ...](#)

Economic / Political News

- The **UK** government announced an already rumoured plan to ban the sale of new gasoline and diesel cars by 2030. The scheme leaves open the door for hybrid electric vehicles to stay on sale. ([SMMT](#))
- Passenger car sales in Europe during October of 1.02 million units fell (6.4)% versus prior year. ([ACEA](#))

Suppliers

- **Schaeffler** held a capital markets day. ([Schaeffler](#))

Dealers

- Nigerian online service booking company **Autochek** raised \$3.4 million. ([TechCrunch](#))

Ride-Hailing, Car Sharing & Rental (history)

- **Ride Vision**, a developer of driver assistance systems for motorbikes, raised \$7 million. ([TechCrunch](#))
- **Senmiao Technology** launched a ride service in China called Xixingtianxia. ([Senmiao](#))
- Recent withdrawals from short term car rental haven't put off **Hyundai**, which is launching a new scheme for all-electric cars in Spain called VIVE. ([Hyundai](#))

Driverless / Autonomy (history)

- **Local Motors** selected **Velodyne** to supply lidar unit for its self-driving vehicles. ([Velodyne](#))
- Mobility company **Via** will use autonomous vehicles from **May Mobility**. ([Via](#))
- **Mobileye** will use **Luminar** lidar to augment its camera sensors for machine vision. ([TechCrunch](#))
- **Uber's** CEO said the company may partner with others on autonomous vehicle technology. ([Reuters](#))
- **Panasonic** is collaborating with **Phiar Technologies** to develop better vehicle location technology. ([Phiar](#))
- Autonomous simulation company **Morai** raised \$1.8 million. ([Morai](#))
- South Korean autonomous testing company **Autonomous a2z** raised \$1.9 million. ([Autonomous a2z](#))

Electrification (history)

- **GM** now plans to have 30 all-electric models by 2025 with annual sales above the 1 million units level it previously set for 2026. By mid-decade, GM expects battery costs to have reduced by 60% from today's levels and energy density to have doubled, so batteries from the next generation of technology will be smaller and cheaper. ([GM](#))

Connectivity

- **GM** unveiled a minor refresh for the Buick GL6, which now will be equipped for V2X (vehicle to everything) communication so that the car can talk to traffic lights. ([GM](#))

Other

- Electric scooter rental company **Lime** says it could make a profit in 2021. ([TechCrunch](#))