



AD PUNCTUM

Autos & Mobility Industry Briefing -- 23rd November to 29th 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)

- The parent company of Brilliance, BMW's joint venture partner in China, filed for bankruptcy. ([China Economic](#))

Daimler (history)

- Daimler's works council head complained that the deal with Geely to share engines, and specifically to make them in China, had been agreed without thinking about the impact on German workers. ([Handelsblatt](#))
- In dispute with unions over the future of the Untertürkheim, Germany, plant. Daimler wants to start making parts for electric cars there as part of a plan to reduce the site's overall size but give it a clearer future. Unions are insisting on no loss of overall activity, a move Daimler says may cause it to revisit the overall plan. ([FAZ](#))

Ford (history)

- Appointed a new marketing chief, poached from eBay. ([Ford](#))
- Contemplating charging suppliers upfront for warranty problems, with the promise of handing money back if they resolve problems quickly. Ford executives believe that they've been giving suppliers an easy ride, suppliers wonder where in Ford's cost estimating framework there is provision for sufficient profit to bear such shocks. ([Reuters](#))
- Journalists putting two and two together, following [Marelli's announcement](#) of a power electronics factory in Cologne, Germany, have concluded that Ford's plant in the same city will build electric vehicles on the VW MEB platform. ([Clean Technica](#))

Geely (includes Volvo) (history)

- Volvo gave notice to terminate its contract with one of the major Swedish dealer groups, prompting speculation that it could be preparing to serve its home market purely through wholly-owned dealers. ([Reuters](#))

General Motors (history)

- Reportedly planning to apply for a US banking charter that will enable a more far-reaching automotive lending business and deposit-taking. ([Reuters](#))
- GM is apparently offering contract buyouts of up to \$500,000 to Cadillac dealers who are reluctant to embrace an all-electric future for the brand (and the six figure price tag for facility investment that comes with it. ([Automotive News](#))
- Dropped its support for a lawsuit started by the outgoing Trump administration against California, which sought to dilute the state's rights to set its own emissions scheme, in favour of adopting national standards. ([Detroit Free Press](#))
- GM and Nikola finalised an agreement to share hydrogen fuel cell technology, but it is narrower in scope than the previous plan to give GM a 20% stake in return for a deeper IP sharing relationship and agreement from GM to contract manufacture the Badger pickup. ([Nikola](#))

Hyundai / Kia (history)

- Hyundai and Kia will pay US fines of \$71 million for taking too long to recall faulty vehicles, with a further \$73 million deferred on the assumption of good behaviour from now on. In addition to the penalties, the brands agreed to invest \$56 million in safety testing facilities. ([Detroit News](#))

Nissan and Mitsubishi (history)

- Unveiled a new version of the Note small car. Nissan will now only sell a motor-as-generator hybrid set up in Japan after the powertrain has proved to be very successful in the outgoing model. ([Nikkei](#))

PSA (history)

- PSA wholly-owned French dealer organisation is going to start working seven days per week, but Sundays will be exclusively for processing online orders and following-up leads from the internet. ([PSA](#))
- German dealers are suing Opel, saying that the brand isn't doing enough to look after their profitability. Opel said it hoped that the matter could be resolved out of court. ([Autohaus](#))

Renault (history)

- Announced that the Flins, France, factory will stop making cars and become a vehicle retrofitting and recycling centre. ([Renault](#))
- The parent company of Brilliance, Renault's joint venture partner in China, filed for bankruptcy. ([China Economic](#))

Tata (includes JLR) (history)

- Unveiled a facelift for the Jaguar XF saloon. ([JLR](#))

Tesla (history)

- Recalling around 9,100 Model X cars because parts of the roof trim might fall down because they were glued in without the metal surfaces being properly prepared and 400 Model Y as suspension parts may detach because bolts weren't properly tightened. ([Reuters](#))
- A researcher managed to fool Tesla's Model X into letting him drive it away without a key. The attack required some special hardware and a particular set of skills but highlights vulnerabilities in the security design. Tesla said it will rectify the problem ASAP. ([Wired](#))
- Setting up an assembly line in Shanghai, China, to make charging points. ([China Daily](#))
- CEO Musk wondered aloud about developing and building a compact car in Europe, a project he has previously wondered aloud about developing and building in China. ([Reuters](#))

Toyota (history)

- Invested in Carbice, a company developing cooling systems using carbon nanotubes. ([Toyota](#))
- Stopped production at the Karnataka, India, plant after a series of wildcat strikes. ([Reuters](#))

VW Group (history)

- Truck maker Scania acquired a local Chinese brand, indicating that it will soon begin local assembly. ([Reuters](#))
- Audi wants its factories to be CO₂-neutral by 2025 but accepts that this won't include emissions from the supply chain -- particularly those involved in producing batteries. ([VW](#))
- Trouble seems to be brewing between CEO Diess and unions again, with Diess making several remarks about the need to continue applying pressure to transform the company and seeking an early extension of his mandate (currently he is contracted until 2023) as a way of obtaining a vote of confidence from the supervisory board. The board themselves are reportedly taking their time with the decision with some citing concerns over giving him an extension that would take him beyond the normal retirement age of 65. In the meantime, several of Diess's preferred candidates for internal promotions (such as a new CFO) have reportedly been blocked. ([Handelsblatt](#))
- Might only sell the Passat as a station wagon in Europe to save on investment cost. ([Bloomberg](#))

- VW's plan for its small electric car, dubbed ID 2, reportedly led by Chinese joint venture partner JAC, is to import the vehicle from China for several years before starting a European plant. ([Handelsblatt](#))
- VW's product development chief says the firm is developing an MEB-Lite derivative of its platform for small cars and will have batteries with capacity of up to 45 kWh. ([Autocar](#))
- CEO Diess said that cars with batteries that are “too large and heavy are not good” for overall emissions. He indicated that a range of about 250 miles is reasonable. He also confirmed that the company had ceased its interest in a Turkish factory. ([Automotive News](#))
 - Significance: Diess's comment is less straightforward than it seems; owners with particularly hot or cold weather see far lower electric range than counterparts in more moderate climates.

Other

- **McLaren** announced the name, and some teaser shots, of its forthcoming hybrid sports car: Artura. ([McLaren](#))
- **SAIC** and **Alibaba** are creating a \$1 billion fund to invest in smart car technologies. ([The Star](#))
- **GM** and **Nikola** finalised an agreement to share hydrogen fuel cell technology, but it is narrower in scope than the previous plan to give GM a 20% stake in return for a deeper IP sharing relationship and agreement from GM to contract manufacture the Badger pickup. ([Nikola](#))

News about other companies and trends ...

Suppliers

- **Grupo Antolin** reported Q3 2020 revenue of €1.1 billion and EBIT of €18 million. ([Antolin](#))
- Widely-used data provider **IHS** is merging with **S&P** in a \$44 billion deal. ([Fox](#))

Dealers

- Indian used car website **Cars24** raised \$200 million. ([Deal Street Asia](#))

Ride-Hailing, Car Sharing & Rental (history)

- Car rental start-up **Envoy**, which specialises in creating schemes for apartments, offices and hotels, raised \$11 million and received a secured loan to buy more vehicles. ([Auto Rental News](#))

Driverless / Autonomy (history)

- Autonomous delivery company **Gatik** raised \$25 million. ([FINSMES](#))
- Radar developer **Lunewave** raised \$7 million. ([Lunewave](#))
- **Zoox's** co-founder is back with a new self-driving start-up, **HYPR**, and has raised \$10 million. ([Forbes](#))

Electrification (history)

- Hydrogen powertrain supplier **Plug Power** raised \$1 billion. ([FINSMES](#))