



# AD PUNCTUM

## Autos & Mobility Industry Briefing -- 15<sup>th</sup> March to 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021

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)

- BMW published its annual report of 2020 performance. ([BMW](#))
- Unveiled the all-electric i4. ([BMW](#))
- Mini will become an all-electric brand by the early 2030s, about in line with the timing executives had [suggested in earlier interviews](#). ([BMW](#))
- From 2025, BMW will start producing vehicles with next generation software and electric drivetrain that the company calls “neue klasse”. Although the cars will offer both fully electric and internal combustion engine alternatives, BMW says they will be “electric first”. ([BMW](#))

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

- Raised \$2 billion in convertible debt that will mature in 2026. The money will probably be used to repay more expensive debt Ford already has. ([Ford](#))
- UAW union officials gave Ford a public dressing down following a decision to allocate a new product to a plant in Mexico rather than one in Ohio, USA, and threatened “action” if things didn’t change. ([Detroit Free Press](#))
- Will probably sell some office buildings after the company has decisively shifted to at home working for office staff in the wake of coronavirus. ([Detroit Free Press](#))

#### **Geely (includes Volvo)** (history)

- Kandi has sold its shareholding in Fengsheng Automotive to Geely due to continued heavy losses and the companies are ending their affiliation. Kandi said it will be freed from non-compete clauses. ([Kandi](#))
- Geely is reportedly set to launch an EV-only premium brand called Zeekr. ([Reuters](#))

#### **General Motors** (history)

- Australian politicians criticised the manner of GM’s closure of the Holden brand. ([The Guardian](#))
- Although GM has kept pickup truck production going through chip shortages, the company has had to forfeit cylinder deactivation devices, which are reducing the fuel economy of the trucks it can make. ([Detroit Free Press](#))

#### **Hyundai / Kia** (history)

- Hyundai showed some teaser images of the Staria MPV, which appears positioned to compete against the Mercedes V-Class. ([Hyundai](#))

#### **Nissan and Mitsubishi** (history)

- Nissan is rolling out a new online sales system that will be dealer led. ([Nikkei](#))

## Stellantis (formed via the merger of PSA and FCA)

- Unveiled a new Peugeot 308. ([Peugeot](#))
- Opel teased an all-electric coupe called the Manta ElektroMOD inspired by the 1970s vintage competitor to the Ford Capri. It isn't clear whether the car is scheduled for production. ([Opel](#))

## Tata (includes JLR) (history)

- Tata Motor's new CEO won't be joining the company as planned. ([Autocar](#))
- Invested in a new round for online automotive sales start-up Digital Motors. ([JLR](#))

## Tesla (history)

- Chinese authorities have banned Teslas from sensitive locations because the cars have onboard cameras which can beam images back to the company. ([Reuters](#))
- Tesla stated in a regulatory filing that, alongside their existing roles as CEO and CFO, Tesla's two top officers will become "Technoking" and "master of coin" respectively. There was no apparent explanation, other than it being a slow news day. ([Reuters](#))
- Memos revealed what many had suspected: Tesla has lobbied governments to make fossil fuels more expensive and improve the whole life cost of its cars. ([The Guardian](#))
- Tesla is rumoured to be looking to shut down its assembly facility in Tilburg, Netherlands, although work will continue at the site. ([Electrek](#))

## Toyota (history)

- Unveiled the Aygo X, a concept which presumably presages the launch of Toyota's next generation city car. The concept suggests that Toyota will create a crossover, although it isn't clear how the model will be consistent with the low prices of the current model, given the normal price list difference between cars and crossovers. ([Toyota](#))
- Reported itself to US authorities for possible violation of anti-bribery rules by its Thai subsidiary. ([Reuters](#))
- Invested in the \$500 million round of Momenta. ([Nikkei](#))

## VW Group (history)

- VW Group reported full year 2020 results, with the VW brand and key subsidiaries (e.g. [Porsche](#), [Audi](#), [Ducati](#), [Lamborghini](#)) all reporting separate financial results. ([VW](#))
- The VW brand aims to sell 450,000 electric cars in 2021, double to 2020 figure. ([VW](#))
- Porsche is planning its own network of filling station-style high power chargers with lounges to run alongside the Ionity charging network. ([Porsche](#))
- Bentley reckons that it is on course to be the World's most sustainable car maker. ([Bentley](#))
- VW Group hailed its approach to cars of the future saying that they would succeed through application of mega platforms. There are four key elements in VW's view: hardware (the platform), connectivity and software, batteries and charging and mobility services. There was no mention of internal combustion engine vehicles, except that even in Europe they will likely feature in around 40% of VW's sales in 2030 and the company "refused to commit to a fixed end date". ([VW](#))
- CEO Diess expects that the transition from internal combustion engines to battery electric vehicles will take two product cycles. In 2035, he thinks the majority of cars will be electric and 40% will be autonomous. ([VW p. 14](#))
- Škoda unveiled the new Kushaq, a small SUV bound for the Indian market. ([Škoda](#))
- VW bought Northvolt's share in the Salzgitter battery factory hitherto named "Northvolt Zwei" and raised its ownership stake in Northvolt. ([Reuters](#))
- Audi has stopped developing internal combustion engines. ([Golem](#))
- Porsche aims for a double digit percentage of sales to come from digital services by 2025. ([Porsche CFO p. 14](#))
- Several of VW's battery suppliers reportedly expressed surprise that the company's announcements about its future state battery strategy (which may exclude some of them because of the design required) had come out of the blue, rather than being shared with them first. ([Economic Times of India](#))

- VW's rapidly rising share price, following the firm's battery day and annual report, piqued the interest of market regulators. ([Handelsblatt](#))

## Other

- **Mullen** is building a new factory in Memphis, Tennessee, USA. ([Mullen](#))
- **Lordstown** intends to sell pickup trucks directly to consumers. ([CNBC](#)) The firm is facing regulatory scrutiny over a report issued by a short seller. ([Reuters](#))
- **Arrival** is setting up another micro factory in the USA, this time for vans. ([TechCrunch](#))
- **Foxconn** and **VinFast** are reportedly in talks, with the Chinese company apparently keen to buy VinFast's factories, but the Vietnamese company prefers a partnership. ([Reuters](#))
- **Foxconn** says it is trying to decide whether its North American electric vehicle factory should be in Wisconsin, USA, or Mexico. ([The Verge](#))
- Solar powered car maker **Sono Motors** is reportedly in talks for a US listing that would see the firm valued at more than \$1 billion. ([Reuters](#))
- **Kincsem** is launching a hypercar as a route into an all-electric SUV brand. ([Autocar](#))

## News about other companies and trends ...

### Economic / Political News

- **European** passenger car registrations of 850,170 units in February fell (20)% versus prior year. ([ACEA](#))

### Suppliers

- **ZF** announced final 2020 financial results (after announcing provisional figures). Although 2020 sales fell to €33 billion, ZF said it had a far order book for electric drives worth over €14 billion and that this gave the company confidence that it will bounce back in 2021. ZF sees 2030 as a crossover point for electric vehicles, with the powertrain topping 50% of the mix. By 2040, ZF thinks internal combustion engines will take only 7% of sales, and will be 1% in 2050. ([ZF](#))
- Shortages of chips weren't helped by news that **Renesas** had suffered a fire at a Japanese factory that could take up to one month to repair. ([Nikkei](#))
- **Panasonic's** outgoing CEO says the company needs to reduce its reliance on **Tesla**. ([Reuters](#))

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

- **Uber** drivers in the UK will now be workers after the company lose a supreme court region. ([TechCrunch](#))

### Driverless / Autonomy (history)

- **Momenta** raised \$500 million from investors including **Bosch** and **Toyota**. ([Nikkei](#))

## Other

- Scooter rental firm **Bird** is spending \$150 million to expand in Europe. ([TechCrunch](#))
- Scooter rental firm **Unagi** raised \$10.5 million. ([TechCrunch](#))