'Wake Me App' wins Ford's Sync AppLink Developer Challenge in Tel Aviv

The Wake Me App monitors drivers for signs of drowsiness in specific stages, and issues escalating alerts accordingly.

By Autocar Professional Bureau 14 Oct 2015 4726 Views Share -

More than 150 developers participated in the Tel Aviv AppLink Developer Challenge to create original apps leveraging the features of all-new AppLink and SYNC 3.

Ford selected 'Wake Me App', an app that monitors drivers for signs of drowsiness, as the winner of the Ford SYNC AppLink Developer Challenge in Tel Aviv. The 24-hour hackathon (October 11-12), included more than 150 app developers with the winning app chosen by a panel of judges representing Ford's technology development team, venture capital and even auto racing.

"Tel Aviv has an amazing base of tech developers, and the talent and creativity we saw from the participating teams has been remarkable," said Scott Lyons, business and partner development, Connected Vehicle and Services, Ford of Europe. "Wake Me App stood out because of its innovative use of the new SYNC AppLink developer tools that leverage vehicle information to create dynamic apps in the car."

Wake Me App monitors drivers for signs of drowsiness in specific stages, and issues escalating alerts accordingly. Developers Pavel Kaminsky and Shay Mishali leveraged the latest set of AppLink application programming interfaces and the new capabilities of SYNC 3 to create the app.

At signs of driver drowsiness, the App performs an escalating-level of alerts to make the driver aware of his/her condition, including audible chimes, changing the radio volume, and even automated SMS messages and phone calls to the driver's contact list.

Other winning apps included Red Alert (second place), an app which alerts drivers in Israel to a potential national security threat, and Karpoolz (third place), a multi-family carpooling app for parents to manage their kids' afterschool and social activities. One app received an honorable mention, Green Light, which gives a countdown to upcoming traffic signals.

Ford challenged developers to create original apps leveraging the features of all-new AppLink and SYNC 3, including the system's capacitive touch screen, improved voice recognition and image display capabilities to enhance the in-car experience for customers.

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NEXT STORY

Germany to expand hydrogen-filling infrastructure to 400 stations by 2023

The H2 MOBILITY action plan envisages a Germany-wide network of H2 stations by 2023, which would make Germany the first country to offer an inter-regional network where fuel cell vehicles (FCEVs) can fill up with hydrogen.

By Autocar Professional Bureau 14 Oct 2015 6135 Views Share -

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Six industrial companies – Air Liquide, Daimler, Linde, OMV, Shell and Total – have formed a cross-sector joint venture, H_2 MOBILITY Deutschland GmbH & Co KG. The creation of the limited partnership paves the way for a staged expansion of hydrogen (H_2) filling stations across Germany, which will bring the total to around 400 by 2023.

The Berlin-based company has started operations and is working intensively in preparation for Stage One of the joint action plan. This envisages the accelerated set-up of 100 filling stations over the next few years. Senior representatives of the H_2 MOBILITY venture partners met yesterday at launch talks held with the Federal Minister of Transport Alexander Dobrindt and discussed the next steps. The industry and government partners have reinforced their commitment by signing a memorandum of understanding on hydrogen filling stations for Germany.

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Federal Minister Dobrindt said: "E-mobility must be emotional and shall arouse passion for the drive of the future. Electric vehicles powered by hydrogen fuel cells offer the best conditions: You have a long range and can refuel in some minutes. For the market ramp-up of this technology, we now need a comprehensive network of fueling stations for hydrogen. Therefore, I welcome the plans of H_2 MOBILITY to build up 400 hydrogen fueling stations in Germany by 2023."

The H_2 MOBILITY action plan envisages a Germany-wide network of H_2 stations by 2023, which would make Germany the first country to offer an inter-regional network where fuel cell vehicles (FCEVs) can fill up with hydrogen. Therefore investments of around 400 million euros (Rs 3,057 crore) in total are planned.

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As the industrial key player in the expansion of H_2 infrastructure in Germany, H_2 MOBILITY, which is a member of the recently formed 'Hydrogen Mobility Europe' network, forms an integral part of the research project for the further development of hydrogen-powered mobility.

The first automotive manufacturers already have FCEVs in production for the German market. Others are to follow. Germany aims to make itself the leading market for sustainable mobility solutions and efficient technology. Electric mobility with fuel cell-powered vehicles will help to cut CO_2 emissions significantly especially when using hydrogen from renewable energy sources, as FCEVs drive locally emission free.

Numerous associated partners support the activities of the H_2 Mobility. Via the H_2 Mobility advisory, car manufacturers BMW, Volkswagen, Honda and Toyota, as well as the technology company Intelligent Energy are involved in the joint venture.

The H_2 Mobility is also in close partnership with the Clean Energy Partnership (CEP), the largest hydrogen mobility project in Europe. CEP members include Air Liquide, BMW, Daimler, EnBW, Ford, GM/Opel, Hamburger Hochbahn, Honda, Hyundai, Linde, Shell, Siemens, Stuttgarter Straßenbahnen SSB, Total, Toyota, OMV, Volkswagen and Westfalen Group.

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NEXT STORY

UK auto industry driving toward record vehicle production in 2020

Annual production to hit all-time record of two million vehicles in 2020, beating former 1970s high.

By Autocar Professional Bureau 14 Oct 2015 3425 Views Share -

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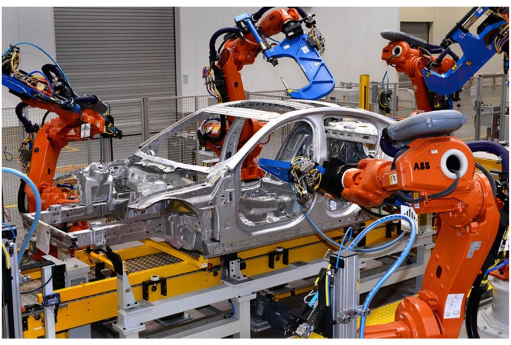

The UK automotive industry is on course to break manufacturing records by the end of the decade, according to a new forecast report launched today by The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). Annual car production is expected to pass the two million milestone by 2020 – breaking the current record of 1.92 million cars which was set in 1972, when the most popular car was the Ford Cortina rather than today's top-seller, the Ford Fiesta.

More than 1.5 million cars were built in the UK in 2014, and acceleration in productivity and production volumes towards the end of the decade will see the UK consolidate its position as the third-largest maker of cars in Europe, behind Germany and Spain but ahead of France and a strengthening Eastern Europe.

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What will be the primary battery technology powering mainstream EVs five years from now?

○ Lithium-ion
○ Sodium-ion
○ Solid-state
○ None of the Above
○ Not Invented Yet

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The report also predicts a rise in employment, with jobs growth in the sector driven predominantly in the supply chain. Up to 9,500 jobs will be created at source by vehicle manufacturers, but that could generate a potential extra 28,000 at component supply companies as UK manufacturers' demand for home-grown components increases.

Key to the sector's success is the 'shift to premium' – in other words, the increasing value of the vehicles made in – and exported by – British manufacturers. In 2010, 37% of UK car production was by premium manufacturers; this is projected to rise to 54% by 2020. This reflects increasing global demand for premium vehicles and benefits the whole economy, with more value generated for each vehicle exported. The UK is already Europe's second-highest producer of premium cars, behind only Germany.

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The report – *The Future of UK Automotive Manufacturing in 2025 and Beyond*[1] – was launched yesterday at the SMMT International Automotive Summit in London, and provides a comprehensive long-term outlook on the future of the UK automotive industry.

Since the recession, the UK automotive sector has undergone a renaissance with significant recent investments – including a cumulative £2 billion to-date in 2015 alone. Car production for the year-to-date passed the one million mark last month, its best annual performance since the recession.

The prospects for the UK automotive sector are well grounded – although as the report makes clear, this is dependent on global market conditions and the prospect of future investments which assume the UK's continued membership of the European Union.

Speaking at the Summit, Mike Hawes, SMMT chief executive, said, "This report is further proof of the growing stature of the UK as a global destination for high quality vehicle manufacture. The automotive industry has made tremendous strides in recent years, as significant investment, along with partnership with government, has driven huge growth in production and employment.

"The prospect of further jobs growth, particularly in the supply chain, is extremely encouraging, while the UK's consolidation as a global hub for premium production is testament to our prowess in design and precision engineering. This success, built on improvements in productivity, workforce flexibility and skilled people, has been hard-fought for; we cannot be complacent. Future growth in a fiercely competitive global market will rely upon continued government support, as well as an attractive business environment which drives investment and stimulates innovation."

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NEXT STORY

Toyota unveils bold new environmental targets to reduce carbon footprint

With an aim of contributing to global environmental sustainability, Toyota has developed an ambitious set of goals to be achieved over the next 35 years.

By Autocar Professional Bureau 14 Oct 2015 3026 Views Share -

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With an aim of contributing to global environmental sustainability, Toyota has developed an ambitious set of goals to be achieved over the next 35 years.

Addressing key global environmental issues such as climate change, water shortage, resource depletion, and degradation of biodiversity, the Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050 aims to reduce the negative impact of manufacturing and driving vehicles as much as possible. The challenge is composed of six individual challenges across three areas: Ever-better cars, ever-better manufacturing, and enriching lives of communities.

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In addition, as a key step toward achieving these long-term targets, Toyota is announcing its **Sixth Toyota Environmental Action Plan**, which will be enacted between April 2016 and the end of March 2021.

Ever-better cars
New Vehicles Zero CO2 Challenge: This is aimed at reducing global average new-vehicle CO2 emissions by 90 percent by 2050 (compared to Toyota's 2010 global average).

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- Developing next-generation automotive technologies and encouraging their widespread use from the standpoint of energy conservation and diversification of fuel sources.

- Reducing global average new-vehicle CO2 emissions by more than 22 percent by 2020 (compared to Toyota's 2010 global average).

- Launching (worldwide, in 2014 and 2015) a new series of 14 engines that achieve top-level thermal efficiency and fuel efficiency improvement of more than 10 percent (JC08 cycle) over current models.

- Developing and launching high-performance powertrains based on the Toyota New Global Architecture (TNGA), an innovative, integrated, development program for powertrain components and vehicle platforms.

- Launching hybrid models in all categories on a global basis; exceeding cumulative sales of 8 million hybrids in July 2015.

- Broadening the appeal of hybrids through improved performance and a broad product lineup; achieving sales of 1.5 million hybrids annually and 15 million hybrids cumulatively by 2020.

- Achieving fuel efficiency of more than 40 km/L (selected grades) with the new Prius, thanks to a more sophisticated hybrid powertrain and improvements stemming from TNGA.

Diversification of fuel sources: This will involve improving electrified powertrains and developing next-generation models based on hybrid technologies. Pushing for further advances related to electrified powertrains in order to develop next-generation models; promoting development of next-generation batteries, such as solid-state batteries that have higher energy density, easier increase in voltage and excellent high-temperature durability, in order to improve the range of EVs and the electric range of PHVs. Toyota will also promote downsizing and improvement of power control units in hybrids and PHVs.

The carmaker will also foster a hydrogen-based society. It has launched the hydrogen-powered Mirai in Japan, followed by Europe and the U.S and promoted widespread use of fuel cell vehicles, including making 5,680 fuel cell patents freely available and collaborating with other automakers to support the development of hydrogen infrastructure.

It will also foster a hydrogen-based society by putting fuel cell vehicles on the road, aiming to achieve annual global sales of over 30,000 fuel cell vehicles—a ten-fold increase from 2017 production volume — around or after 2020; boosting production and improving production technology to meet this dramatic sales increase, and offering a broader lineup.

Eliminating all C02 emissions

Toyota plans to completely eliminate all CO2 emissions, including materials, parts and manufacturing, from the vehicle lifecycle and has targeted zero CO2 emissions at all plants by 2050.

This will involve reducing CO2 emissions through day-to-day continuous improvements and introduction of low-CO2 production methods; cutting CO2 emissions per car from new plants and new production lines to roughly half of 2001 levels by 2020, and roughly a third by 2030; using renewable energy and hydrogen-based power generation to completely eliminate CO2 emissions from our plants by 2050.

The company will also enact effective wastewater management and minimize water consumption, taking into account the conditions in each country and region.

Other areas include promoting global rollout of end-of-life vehicle treatment and recycling technologies developed in Japan by establishing two recycling projects in 2016. It involves using resources more efficiently by using eco-materials, using parts for longer, improving recycling technologies, and building cars from end-of-life vehicles.

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NEXT STORY

Volkswagen to cut investments by €1 billion per year

VW sets out its recovery plan: new Phaeton EV; more hybrids based on new electric architecture; streamlined diesel range and €1bn investment cuts.

By Darren Moss, Autocar UK 13 Oct 2015 3705 Views Share -

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Volkswagen will cut spending by €1 billion per year in the wake of the dieselgate emissions scandal as well as re-focusing its development plans, as the firm seeks cut costs and reaffirm its environmental credentials among car buyers. VW traditionally invests around €10bn per year on research and development alone.

Among the most radical decisions is an overhaul of the VW Group's approach to diesel engines. From now on, the group will only use modern diesel engines with selective catalytic reduction and AdBlue injection in Europe and North America – the two regions most heavily affected by its emissions scandal. Volkswagen brand's newly formed Board of Management took these strategic decisions at a special meeting today.

Development and modification of the group's standardized MQB platform will also be accelerated, with a focus on bringing a new generation of plug-in hybrid vehicles to market. VW says it wants to produce hybrids with greater range, as well as developing new mass-market electric vehicles with a range of more than 186 miles. Alongside the new models, VW will also develop a new 48-volt mild hybrid system, as well as creating more efficient petrol, diesel and CNG engines.

Further, the next-generation Volkswagen Phaeton has been confirmed for production as an all-electric rival to the Tesla Model S.

The new car will "be the flagship of the brand's profile over the next decade", the company has said. The Phaeton is expected to reach production in 2020.

Revealing details of the car's specification for the first time, Volkswagen says the car will feature "a pure-electric drive with long distance capability, connectivity and next-generation assistance systems."

Wolfsburg insiders with knowledge of Volkswagen's future model plans say the electric Phaeton will share its platform architecture, drive system and battery technology with the upcoming Audi Q6 etron – as previewed by the etron Quattro concept at the recent Frankfurt motor show.

Volkswagen will also create a new modular electric toolkit – dubbed MEB - which will be used across the VW Group brands. The toolkit be used for both passenger cars and LCVs and will be designed for all vehicle and body types. VW says the MEB toolkit will allow for "particularly emotional vehicle concepts, and will enable an all-electric range of 250-500km (155-310 miles)

Hinting that the Group is also well on the way to developing purely autonomous vehicles, the statement also says that: "A new standard with regard to connectivity and driver assistance systems is to be defined."

Volkswagen will also accelerate its current efficiency programme. Company chairman Dr. Herbert Diess said: "The Volkswagen brand is repositioning itself for the future. We are becoming more efficient, we are giving our product range and our core technologies a new focus, and we are creating room for forward-looking technologies by speeding up the efficiency program."

"We are very aware that we can only implement these innovations for the future of the Volkswagen brand effectively if we succeed with our efficiency program and in giving our product range a new focus.

"We are working at top speed on these issues. The Volkswagen team has proved it stands united and is fully focused on shaping the future. We have now laid the further foundations for that."

More from VW Emissions Crisis:

- *Carmaker's UK boss confirms EU emissions test results were affected*

- *The routine study that led to the discovery of the VW scandal*

- *Company chalks out plan to refit cars affected by emission scandal*

- *6 things the carmaker could cut*

- *11 million vehicles worldwide could be affected*

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NEXT STORY

Royal Enfield bets big on Europe, opens exclusive stores in Spain and France

The new stores in these countries are a part of the company's growth strategy in Europe and focused international thrust of leading and expanding the global mid-sized motorcycle segment.

By Autocar Professional Bureau 13 Oct 2015 6618 Views Share -

Royal Enfield Paris Store

Motorcycle-maker Royal Enfield today announced the opening of its first exclusive stores in the cities of Madrid, Spain and Paris, France. The new stores in these countries are a part of the company's growth strategy in Europe and focused international thrust of leading and expanding the global mid-sized motorcycle segment (250-750cc).

Speaking on the announcements, Arun Gopal, international business head, Royal Enfield said, "France and Spain represent two of the most important markets for us in Europe. We have witnessed immense growth in both France and in Spain, which is fuelled by our close proximity to the customers in these regions through a wide distribution network and increasing dealerships in the past few months. The exclusive stores are part a of Royal Enfield's new retail strategy, showcasing our brand philosophy of 'Pure Motorcycling' in every aspect of the Royal Enfield ownership experience. In future we are also looking at other cities in these countries to expand our distribution network, in addition to a strong aftermarket network and infrastructure to ensure full service support."

While launching its exclusive retail stores in Paris and Madrid, Royal Enfield also unveiled its gear collection, and showcased its limited edition motorcycle range available in three colour variants - Battle Green Despatch, Desert Storm Despatch, Squadron Blue Despatch. The gear collection and the limited edition motorcycle range has been inspired by the motorcycle '**Despatch Riders**' from the World Wars.

Royal Enfield is on track to expand its presence in these markets with over 80 dealerships across France, and 25 in Spain. In France, the brand has plans of opening close to three more such stores in the coming year. Meanwhile in Spain, the two-wheeler market has grown by 23%.

Also read: *Royal Enfield rides into Indonesian market, sales to begin soon*

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