

# SMART DRIVING CARS

<http://smartdrivingcar.com/Chris&Ralf-080816>

**Monday, August 8, 2016**

**The  
New York  
Times**

**[Latest to Quit Google's Self-Driving Car Unit: Top Robotist](#)**

J. Markoff, Aug 5, " A roboticist and crucial member of the team that created Google's self-driving car is leaving the company, the latest in a string of departures by important technologists working on the autonomous car project.

Chris Urmson, a Carnegie Mellon University research scientist, joined Google in 2009 to help create the then-secret effort. ...Mr. Urmson has been unhappy with the direction of the car project under Mr. Krafcik's leadership and quarreled privately several months ago with Larry Page over where it was headed, according to two former Google employees....

Mr. Urmson said he had not decided what he will do next. "If I can find another project that turns into an obsession and becomes something more, I will consider myself twice lucky," he wrote. [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Very unfortunate. What a great job he has done. All the best. Alain*

**[HERE appoints Ralf Herrtwich as Head of Automotive Business Group](#)**

Press Release, July 28, "HERE, the location cloud company, today announced that it has appointed Ralf Herrtwich to lead the company's fast-growing Automotive Business Group.

In his role, Herrtwich will focus on bringing the power of HERE's Open Location Platform into vehicles as well as accelerating the deployment of location technologies to support autonomous driving.

He will start at HERE in the position of Senior Vice President and member of the HERE leadership team on October 1. [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Very unfortunate for Daimler. What a great job he has done. All the best at HERE. Alain*

**[How \\$600 In Auto Safety Features Could Save Up To \\$202 Billion In Crash Costs](#)**

A. Ohnsman, July 20, "researchers at Carnegie Mellon University say widespread adoption of some of the building-block technologies needed for fully autonomous vehicles, short of the artificial intelligence, steering controls and advanced sensors they also use, can meaningfully

and affordably reduce collisions and road fatalities. In particular, three partially automated crash avoidance features – blind spot monitoring, lane departure warning and forward collision-warning systems – can be particularly effective in reducing nearly a quarter of U.S. vehicle collisions annually, say the authors of the just-issued study. [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Very interesting. Also see read full paper by Harper & Hendrickson. This is what is gained by just the warning systems. What additional savings can be gained with Automated versions and when will their costs go down such that they will actually be cheaper than the insurance LOSS that they avoid? Alain*

### [These programmers are trying to teach driverless cars to do what's right](#)

Washington Post, B. Fung, Aug. 2, "What policies should govern a self-driving car when it's faced with an imminent crash — and should it prioritize the lives of the passengers sitting inside, or the many other people outside who may be affected by it?

It's a complex question, one that people tend to answer differently depending on the circumstance. But some engineers are trying to approach it by showcasing several ways a driverless car could handle an object in the road.

[In a new video](#), Stanford University researchers show that by tweaking their driverless car's algorithm, they can get it to respond to an obstacle using three distinct tactics...." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Yup, especially, see video. Alain*



### [Comma.ai open-sources the data it used for its first successful driverless trips](#)

D. Etherington Aug. 8 "Comma.ai, the startup that George Hotz (aka Geohotz) founded to show that making driverless vehicles could be done relatively cheaply using off-the-shelf components and existing vehicles, has [open-sourced a dataset of 7.25 hours of highway driving](#)....Hotz emphasized that what comma.ai wants to do by open-sourcing data sets like this one is to enable the hobbyist community to accomplish more without having to do fairly basic, but time-consuming and resource-intensive work of collecting basic driving data for use in training machine learning systems. He points to [DeepDrive](#), a self-driving car system which uses neural nets to drive virtual cars in [Grand Theft Auto V](#) as a prime example of the kinds of people they're looking to help..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Very interesting. Alain*

## Oxford Robotcar Dataset [Driving Scene Datasets](#)

"The Oxford Robotcar dataset contains over 100 repetitions of a consistent route through Oxford, UK, captured over a period of over a year. The dataset captures many different combinations of weather, traffic and pedestrians, along with longer term changes such as construction and roadworks." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Very valuable. Alain*

### [Pokemon Go Made \\$200 Million in First Month - Report](#)

E. Makuch, Aug 8, "Pokemon Go has been available for a month now--and what a month it was. Now, a new report estimates that the free game has raked in more than \$200 million from its microtransactions over its first 32 days..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...But how many car crashes has it cost society? Now even more driver distractions. Alain*

### [Pokémon Go player crashes his car](#)

USA Today, July 14, "A driver was injured Tuesday night in Auburn after crashing while playing Pokémon Go

Auburn Police responded to an accident around 10:45 p.m. ET to find a vehicle that had gone off the road and struck a tree. The driver admitted to actively playing the Pokémon Go game while driving, which caused him to be distracted..." [Read more](#) *Hmmmm.... Just stupid. Alain*

### Some other thoughts that deserve your attention



### [Even Uber Couldn't Bridge the China Divide](#)

F. Manjoo, Aug 1, "Travis Kalanick, the co-founder and chief executive of the ride-hailing giant Uber, often defended his eagerness to risk billions on winning the Chinese market with a simple question: If you have a chance to become Amazon and Alibaba at the same time, why not try?"

The implication was simple. Over the last couple of decades, Amazon, Facebook, Google and other American technology giants have each followed a similar script for world domination. Like an imperial armada rolling out from North America's West Coast, these companies would try to establish beachheads on every other continent.

But when American giants tried to enter the waters of China, the world's largest internet market, the armada invariably ran aground.

Plagued by opaque and ever-shifting regulations and a culturally abstruse way of doing business, American companies fell to a series of local giants. Instead of Google, Baidu. Instead of Facebook, WeChat, owned by the giant Tencent. And instead of Amazon, Alibaba.

That has left us with a divide: Today, there is the Chinese internet, and there is the internet of the rest of the world. A network seen in its early days as a tool to foster financial and political unity across a fragmented planet has irrevocably cleaved into two completely separate spheres...[Read more](#) *Hmmm...Most interesting. Also read [Uber to Sell to Rival Didi Chuxing and Create New Business in China](#) Alain*



### [Introducing the self-driving bicycle in the Netherlands](#)

Google Netherlands "This spring, Google is introducing the self-driving bicycle in Amsterdam, the world's premier cycling city. The Dutch cycle more than any other nation in the world, almost 900 kilometres per year per person, amounting to over 15 billion kilometres annually. The self-driving bicycle enables safe navigation through the city for Amsterdam residents, and furthers Google's ambition to improve urban mobility with technology. Google Netherlands takes enormous pride in the fact that a Dutch team worked on this innovation that will have great impact in their home country. [See Video](#) *Hmmm...Enjoy every 1st of April. Alain*



### [The Man Who Invented Intelligent Traffic Control a Century Too Early](#)

L. Vinsell, July 21, "On a cool December day in 1925, Charles Adler Jr. stood beside Falls Road, a state highway on Baltimore's north side. He was there to test his latest invention: an electromagnetic apparatus that would automatically slow cars traveling at unsafe speeds. Adler had embedded magnetic plates in the road where it led into a precarious curve, and he was now waiting for a specially prepared car to drive over the magnets. The magnets would activate a speed governor connected to the vehicle's engine, slowing it to 24 kilometers per hour..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Very interesting. Alain*

#### [On the More Technical Side](#)

<http://orfe.princeton.edu/~alaink/SmartDrivingCars/Papers/>

Half-baked stuff that probably doesn't deserve your time:

## HYPEBEAST

### [China Has Actually Built an Elevated Bus That Straddles Traffic](#)

"Earlier this year, a concept for a public transport bus that straddles traffic emerged. Named the Transit Elevated Bus or "TEB," the futuristic vehicle debuted as a scale model at the Beijing International High-Tech Expo in May. Well now, a real-life functioning TEB has been built for trial purposes, with its first test run held on Tuesday in the northeastern city of Qinhuangdao, in the Hebei province..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...See video and sure hope a garbage truck doesn't come along. Alain*

Older stuff that I had missed:



***Videos that I couldn't find last issue:***

[Mercedes-Benz "Future Commercial"](#)

[Mercedes Vision Self Driving Car World Premiere](#)

[Take a look at the self-driving Mercedes E-Class in action](#)

[Mercedes-Benz Concept Car Powered by NVIDIA DRIVE at CES 2016](#)

**C'mon Man!** (These folks didn't get/read the memo)

**Autonomous Cars Could Boost Alcohol Industry By \$100 Billion: Study**

Aug 3, "...Business Insider notes that the researchers from Morgan Stanley believe that drivers could consume even more than one extra drink per week if they reside in cities where shared mobility is accessible. The circumstances would imply more self-driving cars on the roads, as well as the possibility of hailing self-driving ride-sharing services. According to Morgan Stanley researchers, autonomous vehicle technology will go through a significant leap beyond 2025, which will bring greater opportunities for the alcoholic beverage market..." Don't read more *Hmmm...This isn't even C'mon Man. It's just stupid. Alain*

**One man turned his Tesla into a giant 'Pokémon GO' machine**

Tech Insider, D. Muoio, Aug 2, "The hack lets Jeff drive his Tesla to locations where Pokémon have been spotted and easily catch them on his giant screen. Except there is one minor problem: he can only catch the Pokémon when the car is in reverse since the only camera is in the back bumper. ..." Don't read more *Hmmm...Just more stupid stuff. Please STOP! Alain*

Calendar of Upcoming Events:

**NEXT GEN**  
TRAIN CONTROL

[Sept 15 & 16, 2016](#)

[Arlington, VA](#)



[Sept 19-21, 2016](#)

[Antwerp, Belgium](#)