

SMART DRIVING CARS



<http://smartdrivingcar.com/Dime-090416>

Sunday, September 4, 2016



[How Do You Buy a Million Cars When You Can't Make a Dime?](#)

B. Simpson, Aug 25, "Isn't this supposed to be a quiet time for business? ...Not in transportation technology.

For instance, Ford announced it was working to launch fully autonomous automobiles by 2021. BMW, Intel and Mobileye joined to say they will have vehicles in production for the same target date. Ridesharing titan Uber says it will launch this month driverless vehicles in Pittsburgh, though some employees will be in the car to ensure safety.

Forget the 10 years down the road baloney. We'll be Level 4 Autonomous in three to five years.

Yet for all the excitement there's been some downer news.... Lyft was seeking a buyer, despite the \$500 million that GM pumped into it ...Earlier this year Lyft pledged... to keep its U.S. losses under \$50 million a month....Uber told its investors it lost \$520 million in the first quarter, and more than \$750 million in the second. This after losing about \$2 billion in 2015....It's valuable to keep in mind the shaky foundations of Uber and Lyft because the two have been touted as an important foundation for the growth of autonomous vehicles. [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Do read more! It may well be that those that can't make a dime won't even have the opportunity to buy the driverless vehicles that would allow them to "make a dime". The real value of the driverless vehicles may well be in their ability to generate operating cash without needing any of the \$10B + expertise/intellectual property amassed by Uber/Lyft in managing self-employed part-timers that aren't needed. If that is the case, then the makers of those vehicles will manage them for their own account rather than selling them at cost-plus (or the price of those vehicles will be such that only their maker is making any money). Alain*



[Tesla drivers who abuse Autopilot could lose](#)

[Autosteer function](#)

R. Milton, Sept. 4. "On Wednesday morning, electric-car maker Tesla Motors (NASDAQ: TSLA) said it would announce "major improvements" to its driver assist technology, Autopilot, later that day. Autopilot will not permit itself to be reactivated until the vehicle is put into Park.

Previous reports suggest that aside from new software, the changes will include extra sensors in each corner of the auto, as well as a front-facing "triple" camera system which Tesla has already started implementing in production of the latest Model S. As well as support for highway interchanges version 8.0 will make Autopilot's steering smoother and the radar cruise control more responsive..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Absolutely... Use it appropriately or loose it. Your choice! I love it. Alain*

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL



[Alphabet Executive David Drummond Leaves Uber Board](#)

G. Bensinger, Aug 30, "Uber Technologies Inc. on Monday said a longtime Alphabet Inc. executive has left its board as the two tech companies increasingly clash over the future of transportation and logistics...." [Read more](#) *Hmmm....Not surprising. Automated elevator trumps elevator with operator. Alain*



[Alphabet Expands Car-Pooling Project, Casting Shadow on Uber](#)

D. Wakabayashi, Aug 30, "Alphabet and Uber are inching closer to a showdown. Alphabet, ..., is broadening the scope of a car-pooling program that could challenge ride-hailing services like Uber and Lyft. The pilot program, operated through Google's navigation app Waze, is limited to employees of companies near Google's headquarters in Mountain View, Calif.

In the fall, Waze plans to expand the program to users in San Francisco, where Uber is based, according to a person briefed on the matter who was not authorized to speak publicly about it. Waze promotes the service as [Waze Carpool](#) on its website, recruiting drivers and riders to commute together in the Bay Area...." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Another shoe is dropping! Alain*



[Car Makers Scrutinized on Self-Driving Claims](#)

M. Spector, Sept 4, "A Mercedes-Benz magazine ad this summer described a new sedan as a "self-driving car from a very self-driven company." ..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm... All old news. Of course there should be truth in advertising and capabilities should not be over-hyped. Also, these companies should do what it seems that Tesla is beginning to do... If you abuse it, you'll lose it. If you aren't using the feature properly, then the car should tell the driver that if the system isn't going to be used properly (hands back on the wheel or whatever...) it will begin to slow down, pull over to the shoulder and stop by itself and then turn on its emergency blinkers and do just that as soon as it can safely do it. (Of course it should not just turn itself off because the driver may in fact be incapacitated.)* Alain



[The Future of Farming: Meet The Driverless Tractor](#)

J. Creighton, Sept 3, "...At Iowa's Farm Progress Show earlier this week, Case IH showed off some remarkable tech. It's tech that they assert will, one day, culminate in a fleet of driverless tractors. Notably, this gear isn't meant to be completely autonomous. Rather, it is actually a remote controlled tractor.

At this stage, it is still just a prototype, and it is known as the Case IH Autonomous Concept Vehicle. Check it out in the [video](#) .." [Read more](#) *Hmmm... Video is very interesting.* Alain



[Latest findings from human factors research on automation in vehicles to be presented](#)

Sept 2, "Many human factors experts are studying effects of automation in vehicles to help ensure the safe application of technology for drivers, passengers, pedestrians, and infrastructure. More work needs to be done in this area as vehicle and technology developers rush to bring products and systems to market in what has become a highly competitive area in transportation.

Automation in vehicles is the topic of a number of presentations at the [Human Factors and Ergonomics Society 2016 Annual Meeting](#), to be held September 19-23 at the Washington Hilton...." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Should be very interesting!* Alain

The Telegraph

[World's first driverless bus service begins carrying passengers in French city of Lyon](#)

D. Chazan, Sept. 3, "The world's first driverless bus service began carrying passengers in the French city of Lyon this weekend, attracting curious onlookers keen to photograph the vehicles.

Two electric minibuses with a capacity of 15 passengers each are now operating a 10-minute route with five stops in the city centre at an average speed of 6 miles (10km) per hour... "Neither the current technology nor the legislation allow this type of vehicle to operate in the midst of cars or other traffic," said Jean-Pierre Farandou of the Keolis transport group that operates the service.... [Read more](#) *Hmmm... Again, another CityMobil2-type preliminary step. Congratulations! (but we are not yet close to taking the first real driverless-step.) Alain*

Saudi Gazette

[Dubai debuts driverless minibus](#)

Sept. 3, "DUBAI has unveiled its first driverless bus service, launching a month-long trial period for the electric vehicle with a view to expanding it across the futuristic Gulf city state. The 10-seat vehicle made its first trip on Thursday along a 700-meter (2,300-foot) stretch of road in downtown Dubai, near to the Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest tower...." [Read more](#) *Hmmm... Ditto. Alain*

The New York Times

[How Driverless Cars May Interact With People](#)

J. Markoff, Aug 30, "...The [Drive.ai](#) cars won't speak with pedestrians and bicyclists. But they will try to communicate with visual displays that go beyond today's turn signals, perhaps with bannerlike text and easily identifiable sounds, company officials said...." [Read more](#) *Hmmm... That's what Daimler showed @ 2015CES in their F 015! Alain*

post-gazette.com

[Uber's test track almost ready still no official word on when self-driving cars will roll out](#)

M. Belko, Sept 3, "The asphalt is down, the buildings are up, and, for all intents and purposes, it looks like the test roadways for self-driving cars planned by Uber Technologies at the former LTV Coke Works in Hazelwood are about ready to go. But just when the first vehicles will zip across the sprawling fenced-in site is anybody's guess. [Read more](#) *Hmmm... The track is a good first step, but self-driving is ultimately more about avoiding the other guys in the weird configurations. Alain*



[Self-Driving Car Crash Raises Questions About Safety](#)

G. Allen, Sept 2, "A Dallas man says his car drove him straight into a guardrail at 80-miles-an-hour. The wreck is raising questions about the safety of self-driving cars..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm... See the embedded video report. Alain*



[Tesla enters car insurance business as self-driving cars prepare to disrupt the industry](#)

Aug 30, "Electrek has learned that Tesla is entering the car insurance business starting with new programs in Australia and Hong Kong. The new program is called InsureMyTesla and it features custom insurance plans for the company's vehicles underwritten by bigger insurers partnering with Tesla. In Hong Kong, Tesla is partnering with AXA General Insurance and in Australia, the automaker released its new plan with QBE Insurance. [Read more](#) *Hmmm... Of course. It would be interesting to know the details of the partnership. Beginning the disruption anticipated in KPMG's report of 2015. Alain*



[Driverless cars will kill the most jobs in select US states](#)

M. Farley, Sept 2, "If Silicon Valley gets its way, it won't be long until every vehicle in the country has nobody behind the wheel. *Hmmm... Even if it gets its way, it will be long until even a majority of... Anyway, go on...*

Driverless car technology is expected to reduce labor costs, fuel costs and accidents, but it will also be a complete disaster for the millions of Americans who work as long-haul truckers, bus drivers or cab drivers. Truck driving alone is the most common job across vast swathes of the United States, and they could all be unemployed within years.

Almost 3 percent of all working American are drivers of some sort — more than 2 percent are truck drivers, 0.4 percent are bus drivers and 0.3 percent are cabbies and other types of drivers, according to Census Bureau occupational data. ..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm... Way before these folks lose their jobs they will each be much safer and less stressed while doing their jobs. That's the biggest benefit of having "silicon Valley get its way". Alain*

Some other thoughts that deserve your attention



[Passenger Jet Service From U.S. to Cuba Starts Wednesday](#)

F. Robles, Aug 31, "The first scheduled passenger jet service in history from the United States to Cuba will take off Wednesday morning from Fort Lauderdale, another important step toward normalized relations between two former Cold War foes.

It has been so long since an airline in the United States flew a regularly scheduled flight to the island that the last time it happened, the passengers flew on a propeller plane, said Marty St. George, the executive vice president of JetBlue..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Congratulations Marty!*
Alain



[Dramatic Video Shows Huge Scale of SpaceX Rocket Explosion](#)

M. Wall Sept 1, "...The two-stage Falcon 9 and its payload, a communications satellite called Amos-6, were destroyed during an engine test Thursday, which was part of the standard protocol to prepare for a planned Saturday (Sept. 3) launch from Florida's Cape Canaveral Air Force Station..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...After almost 60 years since [Sputnik](#), [Vanguard TV3](#), [others](#) and [now this](#) have shown that it isn't easy.* *Alain*



[Intelligent Technology](#)

H. Varian, Sept 2016, "...One example of technology making a big difference to productivity is photography. Back in 2000, about 80 billion photos were taken worldwide—a good estimate since only three companies produced film then. In 2015, it appears that more than 1.5 trillion photos were taken worldwide, roughly 20 times as many. At the same time the volume exploded, the cost of photos fell from about 50 cents each for film and developing to essentially zero.

So over 15 years the price fell to zero and output went up 20 times. Surely that is a huge increase in productivity. Unfortunately, most of this productivity increase doesn't show up in GDP, since the measured figures depend on the sales of film, cameras, and developing services, which are only a small part of photography these days..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Interesting.* *Alain*

On the More Technical Side

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



Learning to Recognize Distance to Stop Signs Using the Virtual World of Grand Theft Auto 5

A. Filiowicz, J. Liu, A Kornhauser, Aug 1 [Read more](#)



The Interplay between Fleet-size, Level-of-Service, and Empty Repositioning Strategies in Large-scale, Shared-ride autonomous Taxis Mobility-on-Demand Scenarios

S. Zhu, A. Kornhauser, Aug 1 [Read more](#)



Synthetic Generation of Individual Vehicle-borne Person Trips That Characterize Individual Mobility Across the United States on a Typical Day

K. Marocchini, A. Kornhauser, Aug 1 [Read more](#)

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

FORTUNE

Here Comes Russia's Driverless Minibus

D. Meyer, Aug 25, "...Yandex announced a partnership on Wednesday with Russian truck manufacturer Kamaz, whose shareholders include the Russian government, Daimler and the government-backed NAMI automotive research facility.

The deal revolves around the development of a driverless minibus shuttle. Yandex will bring to the party its expertise in computer vision, artificial intelligence, and speech recognition..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...I'm very skeptical for obvious historical reasons and the provenance. Alain*

Calendar of Upcoming Events:



[Sept 15 & 16, 2016](#)
[Arlington, VA](#)



[Sept 19-21, 2016](#)
[Antwerp, Belgium](#)



[Sept 19-23, 2016](#)
[Washington, DC](#)



[F1/10 Autonomous Racing Competition](#)
[Oct 1-2](#)
[Wean Hall, Carnegie Mellon U.](#)