

<http://smartdrivingcar.com/NewYear-010316>

**Sunday, January 3, 2016**



### **Google Pairs With Ford To Build Self-Driving Cars**

J. Hyde & S. Carty, Dec. 21 "Google and Ford will create a joint venture to build self-driving vehicles with Google's technology, a huge step by both companies toward a new business of automated ride sharing, ...According to three sources familiar with the plans, the partnership is set to be announced by Ford at the Consumer Electronics Show in January. By pairing with Google, Ford gets a massive boost in self-driving software development; while the automaker has been experimenting with its own systems for years, it only revealed plans this month to begin testing on public streets in California....

Google already has several links to Ford; the head of the self-driving car project, John Krafcik, worked for 14 years at Ford, including a stint as head of truck engineering, and several other ex-Ford employees work in the unit as well. Former Ford chief executive Alan Mulally joined Google's board last year.

And Ford executives have been clear for years that the company was ready to embrace a future where cars were sold as on-demand services. Ford CEO Mark Fields has repeatedly said Ford was thinking of itself "as a mobility company," and what that would mean for its business" [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Not surprising and not exclusive. :-)* *Alain*



### **If You Care About Cars and Riding in Them, Then CES 2016 Actually Matters**

N. Kulwin, Jan. 4 "You can gain a lot of insight into the state of tech by looking at the content and makeup of CES. Begun as a showcase for hardware gadgets, the annual confab transformed, in recent years, into a compulsory destination for the media world, which tech was transforming, largely via destruction.

This year's agenda shows clearly that transportation is the next industry tech is trying to transform and perhaps decimate....the CEOs of General Motors and Volkswagen are delivering keynotes in Las Vegas this week. The second marquee session is focused on urban mobility, with execs from key suppliers in autonomous vehicles — Qualcomm, Bosch, Mobileye — along with the U.S. Secretary of Transportation. Other big auto manufacturers, like Ford, are on hand en masse at parties, dinners and other events...[Read more](#) *Hmmm...Really a transformation of the mobility space. See also the [Faraday Video](#) and [Fortune](#).* *Alain*



## [GM and Lyft to Shape the Future of Mobility](#)

Press Release, Jan 4 "General Motors and Lyft today announced a long-term strategic alliance to create an integrated network of on-demand autonomous vehicles in the U.S. GM will invest \$500 million in Lyft to help the company continue the rapid growth of its successful ridesharing service. In addition, GM will hold a seat on the company's board of directors. "We see the future of personal mobility as connected, seamless and autonomous," said GM President Dan Ammann. "With GM and Lyft working together, we believe we can successfully implement this vision more rapidly."

John Zimmer, president and co-founder of Lyft, said: "Working with GM, Lyft will continue to unlock new transportation experiences that bring positive change to our daily lives. Together we will build a better future by redefining traditional car ownership."

Key elements of the GM and Lyft alliance include..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Very interesting! :-)* Alain

## **Bloomberg**[Business](#)

### [an Alphabet Company in 2016](#)

### [Google to Make Driverless Cars](#)

J. Lippert, Dec. 16 "Google Inc. plans to make its self-driving cars unit, which will offer rides for hire, a stand-alone business under the Alphabet Inc. corporate umbrella next year, a person briefed on the company's strategy said..."[Read more](#) *Hmmm...Not surprising. Hopefully they'll be shared rides, when appropriate. :-)* Alain



### [January 9 within the DC Beltway](#)

L Fabian, Dec 19, "...Something extraordinary is happening, and you have an opportunity to tap into it at the University of Maryland on Saturday, January 9, 2016. ATRA will have its annual technical information exchange (dubbed Technix) structured to engage you to Envision Advanced Transit (EAT). A modest registration covers breakfast, lunch and materials. The fellowship, learning and networking are free..."  
[Read more](#) *Hmmm...Should be interesting. Alain*



## [With Via, Sharing More Than Just a Ride](#)

C. Tell, Dec 30, "...Compared with taxis, where rides are on the decline, the price of a shared ride is worth the middle seat and constant pickups. A Via ride costs just over \$5 for any two points throughout Manhattan south of 110th Street.

But convenience aside, these shared cars are also prime breeding grounds for scandalous, titillating exchanges, where New Yorkers sandwiched together are networking, flirting and sparring in a seemingly consequence-free environment where nearly anything goes..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Some evidence that shared-ride autonomousTaxis might make it. :-)* *Alain*



## [Draft Comments on CA-DMV AV Proposed Regulations](#)

R. Peterson Dec 20, "Allow me to comment on the DMV's proposed autonomous car regulations. My comments will include my opinions, but I like to think that they are well founded opinions. I have been commenting on and lecturing on autonomous vehicles for several years. My comments may also, at times, be blunt – perhaps too blunt. Please forgive. I would also like to express my condolences that the legislature dropped this task on you. As you have noted on several occasions, your core competence lies in vetting drivers, not cars...." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Well worth reading.* *Alain*



## [The Most Overhyped Story Of 2015 - And 2016: Driverless Cars](#)

A. Wahlman Dec 23, "There is a world of difference between a true driverless car, and one in which the driver must be alert and skillful to take over on a split second's notice. ..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Not bad.* *Alain*

## Some other thoughts that deserve your

The  
New York  
Times

### [Atlanta Begins Charging for a Streetcar Named Undesirable by Some](#)

A. Blinder, Jan 1. "The streetcar was stopped in downtown traffic, and before long Keisha Schwarzel figured that was enough of a first experience with the year-old addition to Atlanta's transit system. "I'd rather walk," Ms. Schwarzel, 35, said on a rain-drenched Wednesday morning. And that was when the ride was free...[Atlanta's 2.7-mile](#), \$98 million streetcar system... Ridership, estimated at about 900,000 trips,...

In a December vote that reflected at least a measure of urban unease, the City Council removed Buckhead, a popular retail and dining district, from a future streetcar service plan. "The day may come when the public will support sharing precious Peachtree Road capacity with streetcars, but today isn't it," Howard Shook, a councilman who represents Buckhead,...

"We need to accept that this was a dismal failure and that once people actually have to start paying to ride it, we'll see ridership plunge," ...the debut of fares — \$1 per ride or \$3 for a one-day pass.... [Read more](#) *Hmmmm...\$100M Capital cost must translate into at least a \$10M/yr. operating&maintenance cost which is \$10/ride. 1. Why bother collecting a fare???? (Oh, someone bough a fare collection system. :- ( ) 2. Why not just abandon the whole thing now and give the \$9/ride to "Uber" to provide on-demand shared-ride service down this 2.7 mile corridor? 3. Why not prepare the corridor to Buckhead for autonomousTaxis which will be a reality BEFORE any ribbon cutting on any extension of the existing streetcar. The tea leaves are showing [deja vu all over again](#). This technology is about to suffer it's 2nd extinction. Alain*

The  
New York  
Times

### [Rail Industry Again Given More Time to Install Safety System](#)

R. Nixon, Dec 30, "When Congress in October [gave railroads extra time](#) to install a badly needed speed-control system, officials at the Federal Railroad Administration vowed to move aggressively to make sure the safety technology would be in place by the end of 2018, the new deadline. This month, Congress struck again. Tucked into a 1,000-page transportation law signed Dec. 4 is new language that could effectively extend the deadline until the end of 2020. And [positive train control](#), a technology that safety advocates say could have prevented the deadly [Amtrak crash in Philadelphia](#) in May, could stay on the shelf even longer..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Maybe the problem is [positive train control](#) and all of its antiquated regulatory oversight which needs to be rethought? Maybe this is whee US DoT should focus its "V2V connected" legacy? (Or, does this lethargy highlight the fundamental fallacy of "V2V"?) Alain*



## [Uber Hits One Billionth Ride, Gifts Free Year](#)

K. Roof, Dec. 30 "...Rapidly expanding car service startup Uber says it has driven its 1 billionth ride. Launched in June 2010, it took the company 5.5 years to reach this milestone. Uber trip number 1 billion took place in London on Christmas Eve. ...."[Read more](#) *Hmmm....Big number; however, there are about 1 Billion person trips every day just in the US, so Uber still has an infinitesimally small share of the mobility market!* *Alain*



## [The secret to Uber's success: Be everywhere all the time](#)

M. Weinberger, Dec 25 "Wherever you are, whatever you do, whatever device you own, Uber wants to give you a ride. You can call an Uber car from your Apple Watch, Pebble smartwatch, or Microsoft Band 2 fitness tracker. ...But Uber rushed in where others stayed out, building a super-deluxe app for Windows 10 computers, tablets, and smartphones. In fact, it's the first Uber app for the desktop computer....."[Read more](#) *Hmmm.... Yup! The Apps are impressive!* *Alain*



## [BMW and Mercedes accused of cheating on emissions tests](#)

J. Kay, Dec 18 "...The same researchers who discovered that the auto manufacturer had been cheating on emissions tests are now accusing Mercedes and BMW of the same thing....."[Read more](#) *Hmmm.... Please tell me it ain't true!* *Alain*

## Recompiled Old News & Smiles:



### [Uber v. Taxi: One must die for the other to live](#)

K. Herzog, Sept 2015 "...UBER MAY BE a tech-darling upstart, but the taxi industry is three decades older than Canada itself. In 1837, Thornton Blackburn, a runaway slave from Kentucky, built Toronto's first taxi, a wooden red and yellow box drawn by a single horse. The city was a tiny place then, but Blackburn found plenty of business along the docks of Lake Ontario. Business grew, and in 1843 city councillors drafted a comprehensive law "to license and regulate the duties and charges on coaches, carriages, cabs, carts, and other vehicles." Many early provisions seem quaint now: Cabs required "two well-lighted lamps" after dark, "unless it be moonlight." They were prohibited from carrying cargo on Sundays. A driver could not "wantonly snap or flourish his whip."...."[Read more](#) *Hmmm.... Interesting! Alain*

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



### [Google has gotten incredibly good at predicting traffic — Here is How](#)

T. Stenovec, Dec 18 "...It's not just what [traffic] is right now, but how do we expect it to change over the next hour or two hours," Amanda Leicht Moore, the lead product manager for Google Maps, said in an interview with Tech Insider...."[Read more](#) *Hmmm.... I don't believe it. In the next hour or two, you'll be 50 or 100 miles down the road. The "13 minute delay" shown in the graphic is NOT the delay that is expected at the time that you get to the bridge. Total hype! [CoPilot with Inrix](#) is still better, but, of course, I'm very biased. :-)* Alain

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



### [Here's why lawyers are 'salivating' over self-driving cars](#)

N. McAlone Dec 22 "...But what's not hard to establish is who will likely benefit: lawyers..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm.... Soooo wrong! The reduction in the number of collisions will decimate the ambulance chasers. Plus, the availability of information will eliminate uncertainty about what really happened so that lawyers will have nothing to argue about. A couple may do well, the rest will be in the bread line. [C'mon Man!](#) Alain*