

Detroit Auto Scene

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Delphi's HMI Tech Aids How Driver Interacts with Car

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"We want to minimize distraction to the driver and maximize safety by using all the available information our technology generates."

An example of this, Ferris said, is the use of rear, side and forward radar. These systems can now determine if a driver is in a congested traffic region or an uncongested one.

"Say you're driving along on a quiet country road," Ferris said. "The system can be set up in such a way that the scanners can determine that and the system tells you that you have a text. Because the system has determined that you're in a low-traffic area, you can respond to that text using voice command."

If that same system determines the driver is in a relatively heavy traffic area that requires more driver attention to the road, the driver will not be able to access and respond to that text until the driver is in a safer traffic environment. That's the convergence of communications technology and active safety technology, Ferris said.

Delphi is also excited about the company's Human Machine Interface (HMI) technology. HMI is basically how a driver or passenger interacts with the car. Is the radio display set up in such a way that it's easy to see and use? Is the traffic display easy to read? Are there too many display features on too small a screen, which makes it hard to read or use?

These are all HMI design issues that can really help make a vehicle easier and more pleasant to drive, Ferris said.

"Delphi is involved in both hardware and software design," she added. "The future lies with the development of both technologies."

"The difficulty is trying to design systems that can be refreshed during the 10-year lifespan of a vehicle. Look at the development of the cell phone. Compare state-of-the-art five years ago to one today. Huge advances."

"Today's consumer expects rapid improvement in technology and they want their cars to keep up with their phones."

Ultimately, Ferris said, Delphi is planning for the future by looking at three megatrends. The first trend is safety. Technology such as rear cameras, as well as rear, side and front radar scanners are examples of safety tech.

The second megatrend, she noted, is green technology. The OEMs have done a lot using hi-tech to make internal combustion engines cleaner and they are all working on electric vehicles and hybrids.

The third megatrend, she said, is connectivity – cars talking to drivers, cars talking to other cars and cars talking to infrastructure outside vehicles –



Chrysler executive Abdullah Bazzi is seen here kicking off the PHEV durability testing program in October, 2011, at Auburn Hills city hall.

Chrysler Changing Battery Chemistry In Its Advanced Plug-in Test Fleet

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many vehicles return to service.

The PHEVs were being evaluated for durability and other attributes by 16 partner organizations – municipalities and utility companies across 20 states. The fleet accumulated more than 1.3 million miles of service in various conditions, from high-altitude Colorado to Arizona's searing desert.

A primary goal of the final phase of the program is to determine how reverse power-flow might reduce the operating costs of commercial fleets.

Some of the fleet's plug-in pickups are capable of transferring power from their batteries to the grid, which could generate revenue for fleet operators. The trucks also are able to link with each other to form independent mini-grids.

They are the first factory-built vehicles ever to feature this technology.

In addition, the pickups are the first factory-assembled Advanced Technology Partial Zero-Emissions Vehicles (ATPZEVs) to pair PHEV technology with V8 engines.



Chrysler is recalling all of its Ram PHEV pickup trucks loaned to municipalities nationwide, including Auburn Hills, due to battery issues.

During testing, the pickups recorded peak average fuel-economy of 37.4 mpg, while the mini-vans delivered 55.0 mpg.

The batteries themselves are unique, marked by a high energy density that enabled weight- and size-reduction for convenient packaging.

The batteries also were produced without environmentally harmful NMP solvent used in most battery-manufacturing processes.

Chrysler Group is working with its partners to mitigate disruption of their operations.

Begun last year, the program is scheduled to end in 2014.

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There's 'Great Uncertainty In the Economy' – Engler

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March that details how to help improve the economy. The paper, which Engler called as relevant today as it was in March, calls for corporate tax reform, the streamlining of regulations and a serious energy development program.

Engler also emphasized the importance of education. "Schools need to be held accountable," he said. "Right now, the economy is at a crossroads. The BRT is aligned, not with political parties, but with people who are working toward job growth."

"Congress is out of session but can come back for a lame duck

session after the upcoming election. This makes it possible to get a lot of things done, but even if that happens, 2013 will be a crucial year for tax reform.

"It could be a year that secures the economic future of the United States for the next half century."

Engler emphasized that Washington needs to take debt seriously. He said Europe tried to do things using a "credit card" and that hasn't worked out well for them in the long run.

"California is the biggest state in the union, but their debt problems have forced four municipalities to declare bankruptcy."

He said Michigan and other states should follow the example

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