

# Valeo and Vinnie Johnson Team Up To Purchase Ford Supplier ACH

The international auto parts supplier Valeo has teamed up with V. Johnson Enterprises to deliver critical components to Ford Motor Co. through a new venture.

Valeo and V. Johnson Enterprises have formed Detroit Thermal Systems and, through their joint venture, purchased Automotive Components Holdings (ACH), which is currently located in Plymouth Township.

ACH provides climate control parts to Ford and was a subsidiary of the automaker. The new joint venture firm will assume ACH's commitments to Ford.

V. Johnson Enterprises of Detroit will own 51 percent of Detroit Thermal Systems and Valeo will own the remaining 49 percent. V. Johnson Enterprises is a minority supplier to Ford and is owned by former Detroit Pistons player Vinnie Johnson.

The acquisition will strengthen Valeo's thermal systems operations and its position with Ford Motor Co. in North America and the rest of the world.

This transaction is in line with Valeo's strategic commitment to helping its customers reduce CO2 emissions by offering innovative solutions in each of its four areas of expertise: powertrain systems, thermal systems, comfort and driving assistance systems, and visibility systems.

The Sheldon Road plant produces heating and air conditioning components and systems for a large number of Ford vehicles.

"This acquisition is a strategic breakthrough for Valeo that will not only enhance our presence across North America, but also strengthen our ties with the Ford Motor Company in North America and the rest of the world. Va-

leo will be a member of Ford's Aligned Business Framework (ABF) supplier program," said Jacques Aschenbroich, chief executive officer of Valeo.

"This new joint venture will enable Valeo to broaden its offering of innovative thermal system products and support its customers in meeting their CO2 emissions reduction challenges."

This joint venture plays to Valeo's strengths, said Brad Warner, Regional Communications manager, North America, at Valeo.

"Valeo has a very strong legacy of producing quality thermal systems," Warner said. "The products we will help produce through this joint venture are really a part of our core competency."

And, Warner said, it gives the company the opportunity to help develop a minority business while producing and selling parts that are part of Valeo's core competency.

"Our portfolio is filled with climate control components," Warner said. "Valeo has four business groups, and one of them is thermal systems. We want to maintain a balanced portfolio across the globe. This helps an international company weather the current economic storm."

Warner said the new plant should be up and running sometime in the first quarter of 2013. The new location is in Romulus and the Plymouth plant will continue operation as processes are transferred.

"We will use a stepped timeline to transfer functions," Warner said. "This will happen over a 24-month period."

"To move a production line from one facility to another involves a lot of processes and issues of quality control. We must make sure that we continue to produce parts that meet our quality standards during this transition time."

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## Auto.Tech.Connect, Set for Nov. 15, Is a First Industry-Exclusive Event

The Auburn Hills Chamber of Commerce will debut an industry-exclusive networking event on Thursday, Nov. 15.

Auto.tech.connect is open to those in the automotive manufacturing, technology and supplier industries located anywhere in the metro Detroit area. It is designed to connect members in Auburn Hills' core industries with others, promoting collaboration and support of common business goals.

"We are hoping to facilitate business relationships between core industry members," said Denise Asker, executive director.

"Since the automotive industry has put Auburn Hills on the map, the Chamber wanted to create a networking event for members with common goals and

business interests."

The event will take place at the Rochester Mills Production Brewery from 4:30 to 6 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and include networking, beer tasting and snacks.

Registration is open until Nov. 12. Call the Chamber at 248-853-7862 to register. Attendees must work for an approved automotive manufacturer or supplier.

## Charging at RR Station

WESTPORT, Conn. (AP) - Westport is set to install solar panels that will charge commuters' cars at a railroad station.

The *Connecticut Post* reports that the project will not require town funding, but the town will be billed for electricity produced at 30 percent below utility rate.

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