

Continental Vehicle Has Five Radar Sensors, Stereo Camera

The driverless car perhaps came a step closer to reality when Continental, a global automotive supplier, recently received approval from the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to test autonomous vehicles on the state's public roads.

Continental's testing license is for the company's highly automated vehicle, and represents the first license granted by the Nevada DMV to an automotive supplier.

"At Continental, we continue to invest in research and development for next generation technologies, such as our highly automated vehicle, that will drive us toward a safer, more efficient and more comfortable future," said Dr. Elmar Degenhart, chairman of the executive board of Continental.

"As a company, Continental's strategy is clearly focused on making this type of future technology a reality. It's clear to us that automated driving will be a key element in the mobility of the future. As a system supplier, we are perfectly positioned to develop and launch series production of solutions for partially automated systems for our customers by 2016.

"We will be able to develop the first applications for highly and ultimately fully automated driving, even at higher speeds and in more complex driving situations, ready for production by 2020 or 2025."

After completing driving demonstrations on December 18

in Carson City, the DMV's Autonomous Review Committee approved Continental's safety plans, employee training, system functions and accident reporting mechanisms.

Following approvals, Continental will receive its testing license and red license plate featuring an infinity sign to represent the car of the future.

The plate is designed to be easily recognized by law enforcement and the public at large. It will only be used for licensed autonomous test vehicles.

"Earning this license represents an important intermediate step towards automated driving

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Continental's Automated Vehicle on the road in Nevada

Suburban Joins Gleaners To Provide Meals for 100,000

The holiday spirit continues moving in metro Detroit, with aid from Suburban Collection employees and customers, who put their efforts into raising money and or donating food to help Gleaners Community Food Bank for the second consecutive year.

Unfortunately, according to the Suburban Collection, one in five people in Southeast Michigan – or 770,500 individuals – are food insecure, meaning they don't always have enough food for three nutritious meals per day.

Among children, the situation is even direr with one in four children missing meals. About one-third of those who receive Gleaners' food are children.

Last month, Suburban Collection raised nearly \$32,000, which was matched by The Suburban Collection. In addition, employees and customers donated nearly 5,000 pounds of food. This effort translates into 100,406 meals for Michiganders in need.

For every dollar raised, Gleaners' 600 partner agencies, in five Southeastern Michigan counties, are able to provide three meals to those in need.

For every pound of food donated, partner agencies are able to provide one meal. Gleaners' partner agencies include schools, shelters, food pantries, soup kitchens and church-based programs.

"Gleaners does such an amazing

job in assisting so many in our community," said David T. Fischer, chairman and CEO of The Suburban Collection. "Everyone in our organization really got behind this project again this year to make it an overwhelming success."

W. DeWayne Wells, president, Gleaners Community Food Bank, said, "Despite signs of economic recovery, the need for emergency food assistance is still high.

"We're extremely grateful to the Suburban Collection for helping Gleaners reach people who need our help. Every dollar or pound of food we receive through this effort will have a direct and positive impact on the life of a hungry person this holiday season."

Library Classes: Digital Photos, And 'My Money'

The Auburn Hills public library is kicking off the new year with a series of classes aimed at adults.

Among the courses offered starting in January is "My Money and Me, Part 1". The four-part class will be held every other Tuesday starting on Jan. 15, ending on Feb. 26. The class is 90 minutes and starts at 6:30 p.m. and is part of the state's "Investor Education in Your Community" program. It is non-commercial in nature and there will be no sales pitches.

The library's "Organizing Digital Photos on Your Computer" class will be held on Saturday, Jan. 26, starting at 2 p.m.

Attendees will learn how to manage their photos and what to do with them once they are in a digital file.

This includes learning how to print pictures, email them, upload shots to a Web site and share them on Facebook.

Those wishing to attend are asked to bring their cameras, and if they have them, their laptops.

To learn more and to register for these classes, call 248-364-6706, or go to www.auburn-hills.lib.mi.us.

Human Interest?

If you have knowledge of an interesting human interest story for this paper, please contact us at News@OaklandTechNews.com.

Cloud Technology Behind Accel Investment in Plex

Global venture capital and growth equity firm Accel has made a \$30 million strategic investment in Plex, an Auburn Hills provider of cloud-based ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) solutions for manufacturers.

As part of the financing, Accel Partners will gain a seat on its board of directors, joining Francisco Partners, which acquired Plex Systems earlier this year.

Accel Partners will further support Plex's already advancing "shop floor to top floor" cloud technology for ERP, manufacturing execution, quality management, supply chain management, and business intelligence.

As part of a broader shift of core business processes to the cloud – including storage, backup, and development – manufacturers are demanding cloud-based ERP systems.

Working from the cloud provides many benefits including lower organizational burden, higher reliability, frequent updates, and lower total cost of ownership. Plex Systems continues to lead this trend, having grown rapidly and profitably.

"Plex Systems was early in bringing the cloud to manufacturing ERP, and it now has the most advanced offering in the industry," said Sameer Gandhi, a partner with Accel Partners and newly appointed Plex Systems board member.

"Accel's investment philosophy is to invest in companies that have the greatest potential for success due to their market position, disruptive technology and prospects for future growth," said Gandhi.

"Plex Systems represents an opportunity to help move a highly complex and diverse industry –

manufacturing – to the next computing platform, based in the cloud.

"We believe the manufacturing ERP market represents at least a \$5 billion opportunity, and that less than 10 percent of the market has transitioned so far."

Plex Systems will join existing Accel investments – including such successful online and software innovators as Facebook, Kayak, Qlik Technologies, Dropbox and Cloudera – that collectively define their industry categories and the future direction of online technology for businesses and consumers alike.

Earlier this year, Plex Systems was acquired by Francisco Partners, a leading technology-focused private equity firm, which had identified the company as an early mover and pioneer in the cloud ERP market, with strong growth opportunities.

"Plex Systems is already a 'category killer' in cloud ERP for manufacturing," said Petri Oksanen, a principal with Francisco Partners.

"Plex Systems and our customers will benefit greatly from the validation and investment that Francisco Partners and Accel Partners have made in the company," said Mark Symonds, President and CEO of Plex Systems.

"In addition to validating our strategy, direction and technology, Accel and Francisco Partners bring access to additional talent, connections and other relationships that will enable Plex Systems to continue to scale quickly to meet customer demand.

Plex serves hundreds of customers across a wide range of industries including aerospace, automotive, electronics, manufacturing, and food & beverage.

17TH ANNUAL URBAN WHEEL AWARDS

Honoring Women In the Automotive Industry

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DETROIT, MICHIGAN

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