

GM Debuts New Framework Allowing Drivers to Add Apps

Not all of GM's big product news is coming out of the North American International Auto Show in Detroit this week.

The automaker announced last week in Las Vegas the introduction of a new flexible application framework at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) that will allow drivers to add apps and features to their vehicles after the initial purchase, allowing vehicle infotainment systems to improve over time.

The framework enables a new set of vehicle application programming interfaces, or APIs, for developers, allowing them to interact with and build upon the infotainment systems in GM vehicles.

GM will offer developers a software development kit, or SDK, through an online portal at <http://developer.gm.com/>. This will allow developers to work with GM in a secure and controlled manner to design, test and deliver the most relevant, customizable and seamlessly integrated automotive apps.

The implementation of these apps is incorporated into new infotainment systems – debuting in select 2014 model year vehicles – that will change how in-vehicle apps are offered. The system's framework includes a catalog that will allow vehicle owners to choose from a menu of available applications specifically designed for the in-vehicle experience.

GM demonstrated applications

from four potential partners for the new app catalog – iHeartRadio, TuneIn, Slacker and The Weather Channel. The catalog, which is not yet available on GM vehicles, is expected to grow as GM readies the launch of the new framework.

In addition, the framework will allow developers to create a new category of vehicle apps.

"There will be a category of apps that will be unique to our cars and very different from what people use today on their smartphones or tablets," said GM Chief Infotainment Officer Phil Abram.

"It's not just taking phone apps and making them function in a car, which most car companies do in some form now. Instead, GM may approve applications that stem from vehicle ownership.

"For example, customers can choose to download applications that assist them in driving more safely or in a more fuel-efficient manner, possibly decreasing the costs of vehicle ownership."

Once these apps are created and have been approved by GM, future owners of certain GM models will be able to download them directly to the vehicle through the app catalog.

"GM customers will soon be able to personalize and update the apps in their vehicles," said Abram, "compared to today, when you purchase a vehicle and the infotainment features are fixed and re-

main the same throughout the ownership experience."

Until now, GM has offered only select developers access to remote APIs that interact with the vehicle via the OnStar system. The new SDK will expand the environment so developers can work with the actual vehicle through the infotainment system.

"We are providing developers a pathway to develop for a new audience in a new setting, resulting in new customers," said Abram.

"GM intends to cultivate a relationship with these developers to explore new apps that will benefit the overall driving experience."

"This is part of GM's commitment to bring customer-centric technology to our vehicles and establish a community where developers can join in exploring what's possible with in-vehicle apps."

GM sells more than 9 million vehicles globally on an annual basis, which creates a large base of potential app-capable vehicles on which developers can work. Following the select 2014 U.S. model year rollout, the intent is for the new app framework to be available over time on global brands, increasing the opportunity for local customization.

GM is also using the HTML5 Java Script framework in its SDK.

"We have designed our SDK so that developers only have to write the software code once to address the entire population of

vehicles and end users," said Abram.

"Developers can repurpose existing tools and code from existing projects as long as they're consistent with applicable licenses. Our app policies will also provide flexibility in how developers can design commercial aspects of their apps as well."

GM will define a full certification process and business model for applications. After developing apps, developers will have an online opportunity to submit them on the dedicated online portal. If approved, GM will provide the developer with next steps to test and publish the app for customer access.

The online developer portal includes a forum where developers can ask questions of a technical specialist.

The portal also will host a blog for developers to keep them informed on the latest news and information. GM will use the input and feedback from the developer community to continuously improve the app framework.

GM's Toledo Plant Produces Its 2 Millionth RWD 6-Speed Tranny

Just 21 months after building the 1 millionth rear-wheel-drive six-speed transmission, Toledo Transmission Operations produced the 2 millionth unit.

The RWD6 transmission is built into the Chevrolet Corvette, Camaro, Silverado HD, Tahoe, Suburban and Express, GMC Sierra HD, Yukon, Yukon XL, and Savana and Cadillac Escalade.

"The entire workforce exhibits a sense of ownership and pride in the transmissions they build," said Donald Morand, area manager, RWD Transmissions. "This continued dedication will lead us into our next big launch – the eight-speed – and the shared vision of continued improvement will make us successful."

Future production includes the next generation of GF6 Gen3 and RWD eight-speed transmissions.

WID to Bowl for Fallen, Wounded Soldiers

Those looking to help Michigan veterans might want to check out the Women In Defense (WID) charity bowling fundraiser.

The event, to raise money to benefit the Fallen and Wounded Soldiers Fund, is being held on Tuesday, Jan. 22, from 5:50 to 8:30 p.m. in Star Lanes at Emagine, 200 Main Street in Royal Oak.

Registration is \$40 for WID or National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) members and \$50 for non-members. On-site registration is \$45 for WID or NDIA members and \$55 for non-members.

Advance registration is encouraged; space is limited at this annual sell-out event. Registration fee includes open bowling, shoes, dinner, dessert, and non-alcoholic beverages.

Those who donate \$500 will receive two positions on a four-person team with representatives from prime defense contractors.

Women In Defense Michigan chapter (WID-Michigan) is a non-profit professional networking and development organization for women and men across Michigan who contribute to national defense and security.

Now in its fourth year, the WID-Michigan charity fundraiser benefits an organization that supports Michigan veterans. This

year, the recipient is the Fallen and Wounded Soldiers Fund, an organization that helps veterans in Michigan from the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns.

For more information, visit www.wid-mi.org or contact Heidi Warren at events@wid-mi.org.

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