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Autonomous cars: What does the future look like?

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Self-driving cars of the future will look and act differently, changing lives



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Autonomous cars – cars that drive themselves – will be driving on roads in the future. Visionaries and analysts in the field agree that transportation options will change greatly, while being safe.

Gradual self-driving features

Self-driving cars require a great deal of technology that is currently in different phases of testing, deployment and development by technology companies, automakers and mobility sharing services.

"It's a rare case in which technology will have a major impact on society," says Egil Julissen, director of research and principal analyst automotive technology at IHS Markit. "Self-driving, autonomous cars will have a major impact on transportation."

Privately-owned cars will experience a gradual progression to autonomous driving, starting with luxury cars at high costs such as Tesla's Autopilot. In the meantime, cars will continually get safer with advanced driver features, says Julissen.

To implement self-driving features, there will be systems in place that make the driver feel safe and confident about automated driving and ways to re-engage the driver to take over the driving, says Kathy Winter, general manager of the Automated Driving Solutions Division at Intel Corporation – best known for engineering the first autonomous drive across the United States.

"The most important thing for people to realize is that consumers are worried that autonomous driving is not safe. It will be safe," confirms Winter.

Cars as predictive personal assistants

The way autonomous cars integrate with people's lifestyle will be more predictive and personalized.

"The car will become your personal assistant. The car will know what kind of music would you like to listen to and know your relaxing music as opposed to your invigorating music. The system will be reactive and predictive to the needs of the humans," says Jono Anderson, principal at KPMG's Strategy and Innovation.

Fully autonomous cars change designs

Autonomous cars that fully drive themselves will allow changes to the interior and the exterior of the car. There may be no need for a steering wheel. There will be large viewing screens and changes in the seat configuration depending on who's in the vehicle. There may also be adaptations for people with disabilities, says Winter.

"When drivers become riders they will need to have something to do," says Winter. "That's where Intel is working to provide 5G data connections to supply a steady stream of entertainment and data for activities on the road."

Another influence on a car's design will be what it's designed to be used for.

"Cars will be created for the mission of the car such as delivery, recreational or business. Some will be designed for long trips where the rider can sleep or work," says Anderson.

New mobility services

Mobility service providers have started to change transportation as they become more affordable than driving. For example, Anderson says in San Francisco, where it costs \$50 to park a car, some commuters are opting to use ride-sharing services such as Uber or Lyft – which can cost less than driving and parking. When mobility service providers don't have to pay for human drivers, the fares for services will decrease, making them more affordable.

Autonomous mobility services will provide vehicles according to what is needed. It could be a two-passenger vehicle or up to a fourteen-passenger vehicle depending on the use case, says Winter.

Riders will use apps that will give them choices of the kind of driverless vehicle to call. The driverless cars will be electric vehicles because they require less service and are less expensive to maintain, which will help reduce pollution, says Julissen.

He further suggests that driverless cars could fill the gaps in mass transit. Mass transit municipalities may choose to subsidize alternative, self-driving transport so that they don't have to pay for the expensive buses.

Driverless cars will be able to accept payments and enable opportunities for advertising and sales related to riders' profiles, destinations or preferences. It is not

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clear yet how or what services will be offered. By 2030, products and services related to autonomy, mobility and connectivity will be worth \$1 trillion dollars, says Anderson.

Cars = freedom

Autonomous mobility services will emerge first in urban areas, notes Julissen, but there will still be a need for personal car ownership.

"Owning your own car provides the greatest freedom. When multiple mobility choices are available. It's going to be hard to give up," says Julissen. "In the case of an emergency, you can still get out and drive your car."

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