Volvo Cars unveils Concept 26, delivering the luxury of time

Volvo Cars’ ongoing research into autonomous driving has confirmed what we all know - that the daily commute is taking the joy out of driving. It is during the commute and on long-haul motorway trips that people are most willing to delegate the act of driving to their car.

With this in mind Volvo has developed Concept 26, named to reflect the average daily commute to work of 26 minutes – time that could be spent doing something more meaningful than sitting in stop-go traffic. Volvo has set out to bring choice and freedom back to the driver; to enjoy the driving experience when they want to, or to delegate driving to the car when they want to do something else.

Drive, Create, Relax

"It's all about people. Our research clearly shows that some people will want to use their commuting time creatively when they have full autonomous drive available, while others will want to just sit back and relax, watch online media or listen to music. Autonomous drive will make all of this possible. This is what Concept 26 has captured by reimagining the entire car experience," said Robin Page, Vice President of Interior Design at Volvo Cars.

Concept 26 is based around an all-new patented seat design that actively cradles the driver during the transformation phase into one of the three modes: Drive, Create or Relax. With these three modes the concept creates a new autonomous drive innovation platform that can adapt to new needs and technologies over time.

When the driver wishes to delegate driving to the car the steering wheel retracts, the seat reclines and a large display emerges from the dashboard allowing the driver to enjoy the time spent in the car as they like. Concept 26 embraces the need for radical change of the basic design of car interiors and provides a space that can be used as the driver/passenger wishes.

Concept 26 opens up a new paradigm of possibilities in the car - from entertainment to service provision and beyond, using the technology that is now a natural part of our everyday lives. It also signals the huge potential for new business opportunities and high-tech collaborations that autonomous drive will bring.

"We have gone to great lengths to understand the challenges and opportunities that autonomous cars will bring to
people in coming years, and our flexible approach to engineering and design, enabled by our new Scalable Product Architecture, means that we can readily bring this from concept to reality,” said Dr Peter Mertens, Senior Vice President Research and Development at Volvo Car Group.

Confidence
Volvo Cars’ ongoing Drive Me research project, which will see an extended fleet of fully autonomous cars driving real customers on the roads of Gothenburg, Sweden, in 2017 is further proof that Volvo is a leader in autonomous drive technology, building firmly on its foundation of safety.

“Volvo Cars is among the first to address the subject of self-driving cars and liability. We firmly believes that car makers should take full responsibility for the actions of the car when it is driving in full autonomous mode. If a manufacturer does not accept liability it clearly implies that they are not confident about their autonomous drive technology,” said Dr Peter Mertens.

Volvo Car Group in 2014
For the 2014 financial year, Volvo Car Group recorded an operating profit of 2,252 MSEK (1,919 MSEK in 2013). Revenue over the period amounted to 129,959 MSEK (122,245 MSEK). For the full year 2014, global sales reached a record 465,866 cars, an increase of 8.9 per cent versus 2013. The record sales and operating profit cleared the way for Volvo Car Group to continue investing in its global transformation plan.

About Volvo Car Group
Volvo has been in operation since 1927. Today, Volvo Cars is one of the most well-known and respected car brands in the world with sales of 465,866 in 2014 in about 100 countries. Volvo Cars has been under the ownership of the Zhejiang Geely Holding (Geely Holding) of China since 2010. It formed part of the Swedish Volvo Group until 1999, when the company was bought by Ford Motor Company of the US. In 2010, Volvo Cars was acquired by Geely Holding.

As of December 2014, Volvo Cars had over 26,000 employees worldwide. Volvo Cars head office, product development, marketing and administration functions are mainly located in Gothenburg, Sweden. Volvo Cars head office for China is located in Shanghai. The company’s main car production plants are located in Gothenburg (Sweden), Ghent (Belgium) and Chengdu (China), while engines are manufactured in Skövde (Sweden) and Zhangiakou (China) and body components in Olofström (Sweden).

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