

# Authenticity

Dear Reader,

does the established German car industry really need to have its innovations dictated by newcomers or even companies outside the automotive sector? Does it always have to follow suit when it comes to superlatives like the electric driving range of a Tesla Model S or an autonomous Google car? I don't think so.

Professor Andre Seeck, Head of Automotive Engineering at the Federal Highway Research Institute (BAST), confirms that Germany's car industry has a more structured, gradual and therefore more serious strategy for making automated driving a reality in fifteen years' time. He does not question what is technically feasible today. But he is worried about how opinions are being formed in the public domain, and speaks of a discrepancy between wishes and reality.

A similar picture is apparent in the establishment of electric mobility markets, above all in Germany. Yesterday, OEMs still considered an electric driving range of 200 km to be sufficient to convince customers to buy electric cars. Today, they are raising that limit to 500 km. Such superlatives that symbolise future innovations, just like the wait for a super battery, actually block the innovations necessary right now, in other words the successful migration and spread of electric vehicles into the markets.

Perhaps there is a little movement in Germany's electric mobility market after all. Dr. Norbert Reithofer, the outgoing CEO of BMW, is now calling on the German government to offer incentives for the next two to three years for consumers to buy an electric car. Like many high-ranking OEM representatives, the future member of BMW's supervisory board has finally stuck his head above the parapet.

But will incentives alone be enough? In my opinion, the polemic debate that has been going on for years, casting doubt on the viability of electric cars, must finally give way to authenticity among German decision-makers. Electric mobility needs a face – also, by the way, in the form of electric vehicles with an unmistakable appearance. Dr. Ulrich Hackenberg and others are still struggling with the situation. Even though Audi's head of development has announced an independent e-tron design and Porsche has reserved its seventh series for electric cars. Hopefully not driven by Tesla alone.

Best regards,



**Markus Schöttle**  
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