Alpha, beta, gamma, delta ...

Dear Reader,

No, I am not referring to Corona but Tesla. The Californians rolled out the update 10.3 of their Full Self Driving (FSD) software on the 24th of October for Tesla drivers with an internal safety score of 99 to 100. The result was (for a change) a minor shitstorm because the SW was recalled just a few hours later and the users were asked to change back to FSD 10.2. The background to this recall included phantom collision warnings and problems with ACC and steering.

Elon Musk's terse yet succinct twitter post: "Please note, this is to be expected with beta software. It is impossible to test all hardware configs in all conditions with internal QA, hence public beta." A striking attitude that other OEMs and tier-1 suppliers, thank goodness, do not share but rely on comprehensive testing and simulation including experts who carry out "beta" testing. This does not mean that others do this better in every case, as the example of a VW Golf 8 driver shows: The German newspaper Wirtschaftswoche reported on the 24th of October of a lawyer who fought and won a court case enabling the return of his vehicle because of SW bugs; among other things, the car would "accelerate autonomously, suddenly brake or switch the media system on by itself."

Even one individual case would show that insufficiently tested software can be a gigantic problem down the line. Many developers see a problem in the attitude of the company "that can do software" to user safety anyway. In the other company "that can do cars," there also seems now to come up a somewhat brash approach to the

learning curve due to the forced catch-up maneuver and an implementation strategy of "99,8 % of it works, let's put it on the road." The opportunity to differentiate against Tesla through diligence could be missed in this way for the time being. At the end of the day, no vehicle may be operated on the road without proof of proper function, even if authorities need to be provided with more staff or certification has to be done externally. Quoting freely from Nvidia's Danny Shapiro regarding automated driving functions: You have to be not only sure that you have done everything right, but also that you will never do anything wrong.

99,8 % is not enough for long-term success, every case, even if it is exotic, must be thought through. I don't know how you feel, but I am not that much of a technology fan to be a guinea pig.

Enjoy reading this edition.

Robert Unseld
Responsible Editor

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