TECHNICAL CONSULTANCY

Dear Reader,

"The car toll proposed by German transport minister Alexander Dobrindt is a half-hearted measure," says Professor Dieter Kempf, president of Bitkom, the Federal Association for Information Technology, Telecommunications and New Media. "If the plans are implemented as they currently stand, we will have missed out on a major opportunity to modernise our transport infrastructure," he adds, while explaining that: "Dobrindt's plan is technically obsolete. Alongside satellite tracking and microwave technology, it uses the GSM/GPRS second generation mobile communications standard to make the toll charges, instead of opting for the current LTE fourth generation."

What does this have to do with ATZelektronik? The technical developments that you describe in our magazine need fertile economic and political ground in order to succeed. The criticism from Kempf calls this into question and this in its turn set us thinking. For several years, we have been documenting on your behalf and largely with your help the technical opportunities and the necessary conditions and market developments in the field of car-to-x. These represent the ultimate in high-tech solutions with viable prospects for the future, which involve networking cars with the surrounding infrastructure using intelligent transport concepts. The LTE fourth generation is one of the basic requirements for all development projects based on information and communication technology or ICT.

ICT expert Detlef Schumann raises awareness of the importance of the technical integration of information technology into the automotive value chain, which represents a significant change. In his political function as innovation manager for ICT in the leading-edge electric transport cluster in south-western Germany, he plays an influential

role. However, he is critical of the current situation. "On the one hand it is essential for the politicians to take action. On the other hand, I believe that the automotive industry is not adequately equipped for the forthcoming change. "We need to show more commitment, because words alone will not help us to make progress," says Schumann.

Are Germany's political advisors failing to do their jobs? We all remember the hype about electric cars, which was fuelled by the politicians, who at the same time were unable to provide the infrastructure needed to stimulate the market for electric drive systems. One of the key responses that politicians must take responsibility for setting the direction also in ICT. This includes transport systems that are networked with cars.

Here we need the most advanced systems available, so that our researchers and developers can bring their projects to a successful conclusion.

With best regards

MARKUS SCHÖTTLE,
Vice-Editor in Chief
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