

Less torque talk, more tech talk



By [Ilse van den Berg](#)

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Okay, obviously there will always be torque talk when it comes to cars, but if you follow global industry trends, it's easy to pick up that it's technology-driven trends that will drive the automotive industry forward. 2018 will no doubt be a year of further tech innovation and growth for the industry.



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According to McKinsey, technology-driven trends will revolutionise how industry players respond to changing consumer behaviour, develop partnerships, and drive transformational change.

Can you believe that ten years ago the cool, cutting-edge car innovations included iPod integration and Bluetooth? Let's see what 2018 might hold:

1. Electric cars take the lead

Every year, electric cars seem to be climbing the popularity ladder just another notch. Maybe it hasn't grown on all consumers just yet, but statistics show that global electric car sales surpassed the [two million mark](#) in 2016, a 60% increase from 2015.

Automakers are rushing the idea of electric vehicles (EVs), with almost every major automaker announcing an EV initiative in 2017. With manufacturers such as Daimler AG, Volkswagen, and General Motors entering this profitable market with their own models, and [Volvo announcing that it will only produce electric cars from 2019](#), many industry professionals and analysts are predicting that electric cars will soon be more popular (and cost-effective) than petrol and diesel cars.

2. Big strides for autonomous cars

Sure, people have been talking about self-driving cars forever and a day, and although it seems pretty sci-fi and we won't be having driverless cars taking over our cities anytime soon, [huge progress is being made on the autonomous car front](#).

We can already see semi-autonomous capabilities in many brands' latest models. I mean, 2017 was the first time I'd driven vehicles with such impressive driver-assist technologies that it left my mouth hanging open.



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With auto braking sensors, lane sensors, blind spot check, front and rear-facing cameras, adaptive cruise control, and autonomous self-parking, many car models now require you to simply press a couple of buttons and then pilot the car - that's it.

I'm not sure if you saw the latest *Fast and the Furious* movie, but it was scary. Not scary in the way one would expect a movie to be scary, but scary in the sense of how far technology has come and what it could look like in future.

This year, these technologies will no doubt improve at the speed of lightning, moving us closer and closer to fully autonomous cars. Which brings me to the next trend we'll hear a lot about in 2018...

3. Serious security

As everything gets connected and IoT takes the world by storm, security will be on everyone's lips in 2018.

Not only do people's [smart vacuum cleaners get hacked](#), but just look at the [massive Uber boo-boo](#) last year, when hackers stole the personal information of approximately 57 million customers and drivers.

And, to refer back to the abovementioned movie, imagine this scary scene in real life...

Automakers and mobility providers will be focussing a lot on security this year to prevent mishaps and advocate the case of autonomous vehicles being the way forward.

4. Maximising the mobility trend

[McKinsey](#) forecasts that by 2030, one out of every ten cars sold globally will be a shared vehicle. It seems the more advancements are being made on the auto tech front, the less people are emotionally attached to their cars.

Big brands [such as Volkswagen](#) are hopping on the bandwagon with it's recently announced subsidiary company in Rwanda. It will be building cars and provide the country with transport services such as car-sharing and Uber-style ride-hailing.

Edward Steele, MD of Steele-Dixon Recruitment, [is of the opinion](#) that customisability of car-sharing services is also expected to increase in 2018. Some Uber drivers currently allow passengers to use an auxiliary cable for music, whilst others are even offering snacks and drinks to enhance the passenger's Uber experience.



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5. IoT and big data

The internet of things (IoT) brings with it great possibilities as well as risks. As more and more things get connected to the internet in 2018 - including cars, infrastructure, and so forth - more and more things will be able to communicate to each other. Connected cars will eventually be able to share information about driving conditions like weather, speed, sudden braking, and accidents, for example. Security, once again, will need to be prioritised.

A game-changer for most industries, the big data trend is one that is here to stay for a while. Data mining, statistics, machine learning, and AI to analyse current data to make predictions about the future, will be critical for the automotive industry and the development of connected cars.

Digitisation and new business models have revolutionised other industries, and automotive will be no exception.

View more automotive trends in the [BizTrends2018 special section](#).

References and further reading:

- [Five Trends the Automotive Industry is Looking Towards in 2018](#)
- [Five Automotive Trends to Watch in 2018](#)
- [Five Automotive Technology Trends in 2018](#)
- [Automotive key trends](#)
- [Five auto trends to watch in 2018](#)

ABOUT ILSE VAN DEN BERG

Ilse is a freelance journalist and editor with a passion for people & their stories (check out [Passing Stories](#)). She is also the editor of [Go & Travel](#), a platform connecting all the stakeholders in the travel & tourism industry. You can check out her work [here](#) and [here](#). Contact Ilse through her website [here](#).

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