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NEWS RELEASE

Visteon Looking At Confluence of Deep Automotive Experience and Disruptive Technology

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By Deepangshu Dev Sarmah, Mobility Outlook

This blog includes edited excerpts. Access the full story on the **Mobility Outlook**.

Visteon's solutions for the global automotive industry advance the digital, electric and autonomous evolution of its automaker customers. We speak to Visteon leaders to get a deeper understanding of their strategy for the future.

As the President of Visteon India,Aashish Bhatia is responsible for strategizing and leading profitable growth for Visteon in India. In this role, he is also responsible for driving productivity and capability of product development teams for the company's domestic and global programs. Balaji Gudavalli is Visteon's global vice president, engineering and product development. He leads the strategy, development and delivery of Visteon's cockpit software platform, encompassing **SmartCore™**, **infotainment**, driver monitoring, **driver information**, OS/BSP and **RenderCore™**. He is based in Van Buren Township, Michigan, U.S.

Balaji Gudavalli
Visteon Global Vice President, Engineering and Product Development

Aashish Bhatia
President of Visteon India

How did you approach innovation following the COVID pandemic? What is your overall approach?

BG: The safety of our employees, business continuity and executing the existing projects without much delay was a priority. We were able to successfully do that.

On the innovation front, we meet once in six months to take a comprehensive look at where we are in terms of the technology roadmap, and where we want to go. Based on that, we take steps in the right direction. The team also likes that because they get to work on the best technologies.

I worked in the cell phone industry for a couple of decades, and I see that the automotive industry is pretty much following the same curve. Big players like Qualcomm and Google gaining foothold in the automotive industry, bringing talent and innovation. Therefore, the benchmark is getting higher and there is a lot of skillset upgrade we need to do to catch up with that. At Visteon, there is a lot of focus on innovation, executing it right and nurturing talent for things that we aspire to do in the next two years.

In the Indian context, how do OEMs and end-consumers perceive innovation? What does it look like in years to come?

AB: From an OEM standpoint, they are keen to work with us on the next-gen cockpit electronics, which is based on three main pillars – connectivity, safety and security. In addition to large displays and rich graphics, we see an increased adoption of voice and, the apps invading the vehicle cockpit. These will define the cockpit of the future.

This revolves around the idea of digitization, which is now transforming cockpit electronics. We are focused on the mass-market aspect, and the premium end of that. Having said that, there are overarching consumer needs across different segments, which typically gain a high degree of importance; and those are safety and security of the data, and mirroring of the smartphones on their digital cockpit.

How do you view the mobility ecosystem, and what is the approach you take to engineering and product development?

BG: We are going from a technology platform to a solution platform to an app ecosystem. So, it's an end-to-end ecosystem that we're creating – one, inside the car ecosystem, and the other outside the car ecosystem. We're actually more focused on inside the car ecosystem, where we have more control. Traditionally, we have been collaborating only with the OEMs.

But today, we're also observing other industries, including 5G, V2X, and other intelligent technologies and infrastructure. In that context, there are many use cases driven by OEMs. We also know that we need to be ahead of the curve, and hence doing things with the right plan and talent in place.

It is also important to understand how Visteon as an organization is democratizing technology, both in the global context as well as the Indian context?

AB: Talking about democratization of technology, we have a strategy for hardware reuse; we also need a very fundamental approach of having a reuse strategy for software. That will enable us faster time to market and also give a better, stable value proposition.

As products are getting more and more complex, most of our customers are looking for first-time-right. They are also looking at reuse so that there is more stability and security in the solution. The third thing they are looking at is the customization in the local and regional context.

In that context, one of the technologies that is impacting us is **artificial intelligence**. The use of AI, voice or voice-based system has seemed the most natural and safe mode for the driver to interact with cockpit electronics. That is another excellent example, where we see the need to have a more regional focus.

Of course there is democratization in the sense of having these building blocks, but there have also been regional applications of these technologies.

BG: There's democratization and there is localization. We are looking at the trends in the industry. We don't want to reinvent the wheel. There is a proven Android ecosystem and there's a corresponding platformization that happens. I'm one of the lead for software platforms inside Visteon, and we push the reusability of software components so that we can focus on differentiating them.

> There's a lot of specific effort we put in to bring that mind-set change. And that's happening at a faster pace. We're also hiring the right teams to bring in that mind-set change. If you look at a high level, there's a lot of talent gap in the automotive industry compared to the number of technologies we have to bring-in and make it work. That's also the key to make sure we are ahead of the game and are ready for the upcoming challenges.
>
> Balaji Gudavalli
> Visteon global vice president, engineering and product development

Visteon has been investing a lot in talent and creating solutions out of the Indian market, be it in the context of AI or deep learning. How is Visteon taking advantage of the engineering talent that is available in the country?

BG: We have certain special projects, such as our own internal **DriveCore** system. There are a lot of deep learning, artificial intelligence, machine learning (ML) and training algorithms on that. So that's number one. We also have solutions for driver monitoring, **cockpit interior sensing**, electrification and battery management systems. We're building a strong roadmap as well as doing strong pre-work on the things that we want to make sure we have.

AB: In the context of artificial intelligence, we are seeing two applications – one is voice-based and the other is camera support. Our voice-based solutions offer natural language recognition and smart assistants; and our camera-based solutions offer driver monitoring, safety and ADAS features such as lane keep assist.

We're also focusing on vertical integration by investing on AI-based tools – for voice recognition and vision processing — that will assist OEs with their natural language processing needs, both on-board and off-board. That way, it will help meet the constant demand of cloud connectivity and with the help of AI, consumers will have a good, seamless conversation with the cockpit.

What is that one technology that excites you the most, when we think about the future?

BG: Our **wireless battery management system** is a new technology and has a lot of potential. We're very excited about that as a company. In general, the AI and ML are going across all the products. Also, we want to continue being the leader in cockpit domain controllers.

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