

Award-winning autonomous driving tech

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Kautex Textron, a leading designer and manufacturer for Tier One automakers, has received the AutomotiveINNOVATIONS Award from the Center of Automotive Management (CAM) and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) for its Allegro Premium sensor cleaning system. The system is a software-controlled cleaning system designed for autonomous drive and Advanced Driver-Assisted Systems (ADAS)-equipped vehicles. The prestigious recognition, which selected Kautex Textron from a pool of 400 global applicants, will lead to increased visibility to customers and potential customers of the technology, said Javier Bayod, VP at Kautex CVS.

Founded in 1935, the name Kautex has a storied track record in innovation and industry. From its inception, Kautex began working on the design and development of groundbreaking industrial technology, and created the first blow-mold machines for industrial use in Europe. Two decades later, the company had grown to nearly 400 employees and began exporting its advanced product line outside of its native Germany. By the 1960s, the company was the largest European producer of these technologies and soon after had expanded into the automotive industry.

In 1996, Kautex was sold to what is now its parent company, Textron, beginning an era of expansion and sustained

growth for the company. Its first plant in China opened that same year, and three years later, followed by additional new plants in China, Mexico and Romania. Today, Kautex is well known in its space as a Tier One automotive supplier with more than 30 plants operating in 13 countries. The company's workforce is now beyond 5,000 in four continents, and continues to bring innovations and breakthroughs to the verticals in which it operates.

Kautex is known for the design, development and manufacturing of traditional and hybrid fuel systems, advanced cleaning solutions for assisted and autonomous driving, engine camshafts and plastic industrial packaging solutions. The company is a pioneering player in the development of automotive plastic fuel systems, expanding the portfolio of solutions to offer smart products and data-driven services for top global customers. Among the critical components the company develops are thermoplastic composite and composite-metal hybrid battery systems, hybrid fuel systems and autonomous drive vehicle cleaning systems.

The future of the company gleams brighter as global mobility trends lean further toward advanced autonomous driving solutions. Dr. Javier Bayod, VP,

Kautex CVS, who joined the company in 2019, said the company is at an exciting point in its history. He has held a number of leadership roles in the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) industry and holds a Masters in Mechanical Engineering as well as a PhD in Mechanical Engineering/Structural Vibrations.

“The company is reinventing itself as a relevant player in e-mobility while also expanding its capabilities in cleaning systems to include technologies to support assisted and autonomous drive,” said Dr. Bayod. “Kautex is doing so by drawing upon its rich history of innovation, engineering design and development, and operational execution. I'm excited to be part of this change and to take on the challenge to help Kautex develop solutions for new mobility.”

Recently, the company received a prestigious global recognition for the advanced state of its cleaning solution for sensors in the autonomous auto space. Kautex announced it received an AutomotiveINNOVATIONS Award from the Center of Automotive Management (CAM) and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) for the success and innovation of its Allegro Premium cleaning system. The company's system is a software-controlled cleaning system for autonomous drive and Advanced Driver-Assisted Systems (ADAS) equipped vehicles.

Kautex was selected for the award after an extensive study conducted by CAM and PwC, evaluating 400 suppliers. The award ceremony was held in July during PwC's Digital Automotive Talk held in Frankfurt, Germany.





“We believe the award will lead to increased visibility to our customers and prospective customers of our capabilities and the solutions we offer,” said Dr. Bayod. “We also think this is a great proof point to potential recruits and future talents who are considering joining Kautex — as an example of our innovative spirit. As for our employees, it instills a sense of pride seeing their hard work resulting in such a prestigious award.”

The award took into consideration Kautex’s development and testing programs, according to a press release. The team conducts extensive development and testing under numerous parameters and environmental conditions to understand the best cleaning approach. This data is then transferred into an algorithm that controls the cleaning system. In autonomous cars, cleanliness of sensors is absolutely essential for smooth operations. “In this age of disruption, innovation will ensure a company’s future

success,” said Carsten Elsasser, Kautex’s director, Innovation and Strategy, in the announcement of the award. “By working closely with our customer-facing sales and engineering teams, we learn details about our customers’ unmet needs that we incorporate into our testing and design. The result is an outstanding product that meets – or exceeds – what many customers are looking for with regards to advanced cleaning solutions.”

“Our years of expertise in our Clear Vision Systems (CVS) business was foundational to expanding our capabilities to include software-controlled cleaning solutions for autonomous drive or assisted drive vehicles,” said Dr. Bayod. “In 2018, we booked our first Allegro business and in 2020 began marketing our Pentatonic battery systems.”

As for the future of the company, the upside is considerable amid the global shift toward an autonomous driving

framework. ResearchAndMarkets.com projects that the global autonomous vehicles market demand is expected to reach 3,195.5 thousand units by 2030. The market overall is expected to expand at a compound annual growth rate of 53.6% by the end of the decade according to the firm.

Likewise, the transition from internal combustion engines to battery electric vehicles (EVs) opens up numerous opportunities for Kautex, according to Dr. Bayod. With decades of expertise in fuel tank production, its familiarity with fire tests, leak tightness and crash tests, the company is able to provide critical elements to the development of lightweight composite battery systems for the growing global EV vertical.

“Kautex, like many other Tier Ones, is in the process of reinventing itself as it transitions to new technologies so it’s a very exciting time for the company,” he said. “There is tremendous opportunity for growth in these technologies – and opportunities for us



to develop sustainable solutions that meet our customer's needs."

As for challenges ahead, these are similar for other organizations in the industry. A key area of development is the ability to procure sufficient specialised talent to continue the path of innovation previously set, Dr. Bayod said. Areas of special demand include electronics, software engineering, battery management and thermal management. Other challenges include remaining agile during a very volatile time in the industry, managing the transition to electric vehicles and the

addition of advanced autonomous driving technologies in the vehicle, as well as driving sustainable solutions.



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