Post
Transport

Connected car solutions at MWC 2013
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"The car will be the next connected device". This sentence, pronounced by Corinne Lauer, Renault's Team Leader, Multimedia & Telematics, summarizes very well the current implantation of M2M technology in vehicles industry. It was also our 'leitmotiv' during the second day of Mobile World Congress 2013.

We are currently living how machine-to-machine technology is taking over cars step by step. More and more manufacturers are incorporating connected services into their vehicles in order to offer a more complete service, which include messaging and email, real-time update of fuel prices, social networking, music services, information about city events, weather, news... The seminar mAutomotive – Navigating the changing landscape of connected cars – what does the final destination look like? featured very good examples and use cases of this technology.

Although it is possible that right now only a few new cars include these kind of connected services, the growth of the sector is expected to be really fast. For 2015, almost half of the new purchased cars will include connectivity, according to Francesca Forestiera, director mAntomotive of GSMA. Brands like Audi will incorporate M2M technology to all their new vehicles before the end of this decade, said Marcus Keith, head of the project Audi Connect.Sooner or later, the trend will arrive.

There is one thing in which all of them agree (at least, those who participated in the seminar: Toyota, Audi, Renault, Volvo, BMW, Ford): it is necessary a global and flexible SIM card. "When our customers seat in our cars, they don't want to worry about anything else than driving, the connectivity must not be a problem for them", assured Keith.

That is just the idea of the global M2M Alliance, whose solution was at MWC. The eight companies that conforms the agreement, including Telefónica, have planned a global service for many industries; cars manufacturers are one of their main targets.

Anyway, before the connected car with a factory-set SIM card goes mainstream, there are some interesting ways to implement connectivity in current vehicles. We have a great example at Telefónica's stand, where attendees were able to see the demo of the solution Pago como Conduzco, an Insurance Telematics product commercialized jointly with Generali, aimed to optimize operating costs and reduce fraud. Thanks to a mobile app, the customers can check all their driving parameters in real time and have the vehicle always located in case of hijacking.

On the other hand, a few meters away from our stand, Ford showcases another solution to provide connectivity to their own cars. It can be an interesting stepping stone until the SIM cards are widely incorporated. Its name is SYNC and allows to plug almost every smartphone (290 different models) to their cars, integrating it with the car in order to use it with just the voice. SYNC can be tried for free at Hall 3 of MWC.

On a final note, there is a thing that we must always have into account when we talk about connected cars. As Robert Jagler, director MSS Connectivity, Commercial Product Management of Volvo, said: "Being connected within the car is not the same than in your sofa; the interaction through touch, voice, and gesture are key in this technology".

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