



Carmunication: Data that means Business

Remote access to vehicle data is radically changing business models in the automotive aftermarket – for parts distributors and manufacturers as well as for workshops. The non-profit association Carmunication is developing data solutions for anyone who requires vehicle data to remain competitive or to reposition themselves on the market. Media and insurance companies are already on board with Carmunication too because the added value of data exceeds traditional industry boundaries. ADI has also recognized this and joined Carmunication in April – here we present the association.



Walter Birner, Co-founder of Carmunication

How does one even come up with the idea of establishing a non-profit association for vehicle data? For Walter Birner, founding member of Carmunication, it was clear from the start that the sector's path must be a shared path: "About three years ago, we realised that we had to act: not only because vehicle data is becoming increasingly important but because this data is primarily being saved on the storage media of the automotive industry." Discussions at Automechanika 2015 led to initial plans and eventually to the founding of the association: "Our aim has always been to support the free market with access to vehicle data. If only a few have full access, competition dies – and with it, the companies without this access."

Data platform, knowledge community and business enabler: Anyone who becomes a member of the association is supported every step of the way in gaining customised access to vehicle data. It is not just a matter of the provision of

a technically and legally perfect solution. Besides industry veteran Erik Lundtoft, Managing Director of Carmunication since April 2018, specially appointed division managers take care of the concerns of the five divisions currently supported: Trade, Workshops, Industry, Data Providers and Insurance & Banking.

This means that Carmunication is also a knowledge community: members' meetings and workshops always provide opportunities for keeping up-to-date with development. The digital business models of the future are now at an early stage – Carmunication would like to offer not only the data but also the information network to enable these to flourish.

Independence comes first: Carmunication's most important decision was and is to develop their own open data platform – only in this way can independence be ensured. The Carmunication platform gathers vehicle data from various sources: telematics systems and manufacturer solutions as well as OBD dongles (see diagram). This is prepared and thus made usable in the true sense. What distinguishes Carmunication is the 'Privacy Zone' installed in the system: this ensures that personal data remains protected and is thus ahead of manufacturer solutions (see "The eCall and the consequences" infobox). Carmunication members benefit from the secure data tailored to their requirements which is made available to them via the platform.

Why do workshops need telematics data? Repair procedures will change still further with the introduction of telematics systems: then car owners will not only come into the workshop when they have problems but when the forecasting system recommends they should, based on telematics data. Who will get the service order then: the familiar and trusted workshop – or the manufacturer's workshop which makes this recommendation? This is why it is so important that telematics data is not just kept by the vehicle manufacturers – otherwise independent workshops will not stand a chance soon (see "The eCall and the consequences" infobox).

What competitive advantage do parts distributors and manufacturers have? New competitive advantages can also be developed for the Production and Trade sector using telematics data. "Big Data" is the key here: telematics units not only offer more data per vehicle, by analysing anonymised live vehicle data, conclusions can also be drawn regarding product quality and wear and tear across the width of the installed



parts. This is where product development can be applied with pinpoint accuracy and distributors can improve their product range in a targeted fashion.

Contact: info@carmunication.eu for enquiries from all branches of industry.

The objectives: In the long term, Carmunication is working on an industry solution that is already anchored in vehicles: the development of an intelligent unit which permits vehicle owners to send and release data straight from the dashboard. Carmunication thus supports the political work of FIGIEFA/AF-CAR: 'Direct Access – Driving Progress'.

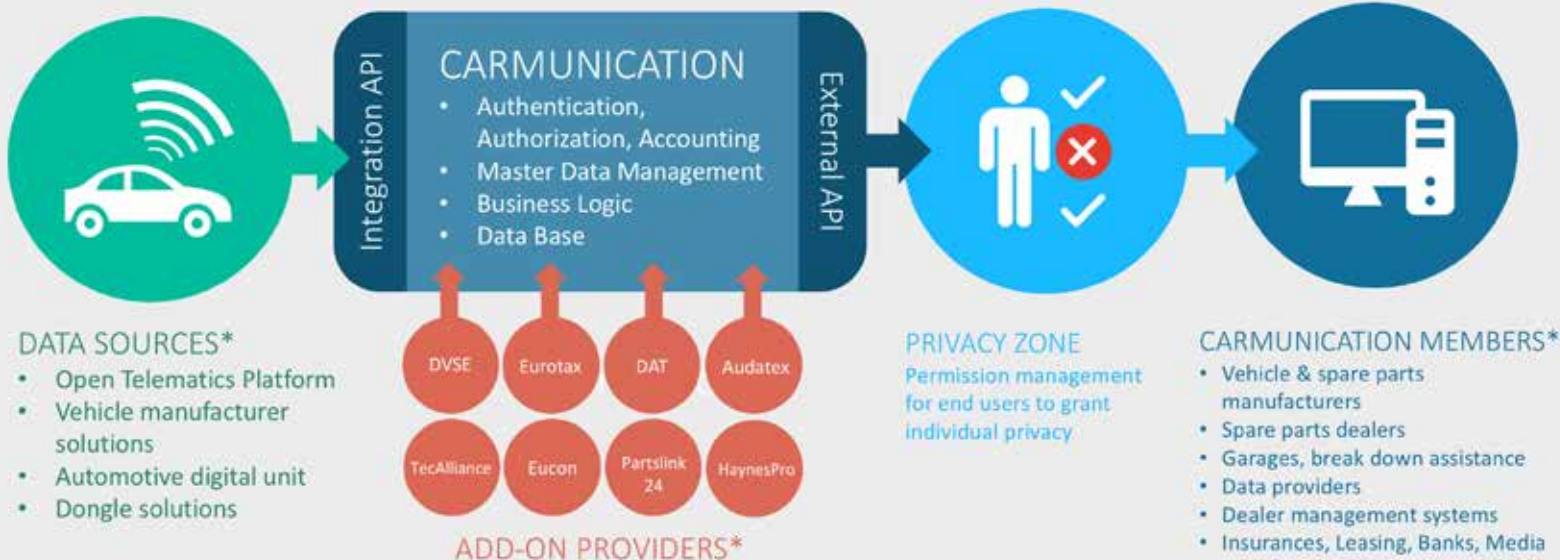
The eCall and the consequences

By introducing the eCall emergency call system, the risk of uneven distribution has once again come to a head: with telematics systems, the installation of which has been compulsory since April 2018, vehicle manufacturers potentially have a direct link to vehicle data. Conversely, solutions developed by some car manufacturers to enable data access for others have proved disappointing to date: the so-called "Extended Vehicle" concept provides about eighty (!) data points maximum instead of several thousand (we reported: ADI news 12/2017). Vehicle

manufacturers have also recently come under fire from consumer protection groups, such as the vzbv (Federation of German Consumer Organisations) in Germany, who say the vehicle manufacturers would „gather all vehicle data possible“. Consumer protection groups are therefore insisting on a neutral solution where "trusted agents" take care of the storage and redistribution of data. Carmunication regards itself as such a "trusted agent", for which the protection of personal data is paramount.



Open Platform – Current Status



*All sources and providers are possible; Carmunication does not necessarily have a contractual basis with them.