

Porsche invests in Israeli start-up Tactile Mobility

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29/10/2019 Porsche is intensifying its collaboration with Israeli technology company Tactile Mobility with a minority investment. The company is one of the leaders in the field of “tactile data” and is based in Haifa.

In addition to Porsche, Union Tech Ventures and existing investors are participating in the current investment round. Tactile Mobility plans to use the funds primarily to strengthen its development as well as sales activities and promote the collaboration with other automotive manufacturers, mobility service providers as well as municipalities and road authorities in the US, Europe and Asia.

So-called tactile data simulates a sense of touch. In this process, an algorithm processes data that is provided by different physical sensors which are already available. “Tactile Mobility’s method helps us collect additional information about the condition of vehicles and roads that goes beyond the

information that can be obtained with conventional sensor systems," explains Michael Steiner, Member of the Executive Board for Research and Development at Porsche. An integration into series production cars is planned for the beginning of the next decade. Amongst other use cases, tactile data can further improve the assessment of the friction coefficient between tyres and the road surface while a vehicle is moving. Additional potential for the use of the technology also lies in applications for the predictive servicing and optimisation of the battery management.

In a next development stage, Tactile Mobility's software can provide data on the vehicle's condition itself, for example engine and brake efficiency as well as fuel consumption. Consequently, it is possible to draw conclusions on different vehicle components' state of wear. In this process, the potential applications of tactile data and sensing go beyond individual vehicles as information is analysed in a backend system. Based on this information, the software is able to determine road conditions and quickly identify a change in road surface conditions in order to prepare additional vehicles in the fleet network for such changes, for instance in the event of a slippery road surface.

"We are very excited about the confidence that Porsche has in tactile data and virtual sensor systems," says Amit Nisenbaum, CEO of Tactile Mobility. "This investment will cement our leadership in this growing segment. By equipping intelligent vehicles with the sense of 'touch' and the ability to analyse tactile data, we can contribute to further improve the driving experience and make it even safer."

However, the generation and analysis of tactile data is not only interesting for automotive manufacturers like Porsche. Municipalities, as well as road authorities can also benefit from this technology by documenting the individual properties of the road. For instance, collected data could help in the planning of road maintenance work or the deployment of salting and snow removal services with maximum efficiency.

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