“Snap Motion“ - a disruptive startup from Silicon Valley and Central Europe

The success of the Rinspeed “Snap” concept vehicle at the CES 2018, the Geneva Auto Show and many other exhibitions around the world has encouraged the innovative team led by Frank M. Rinderknecht, founder and CEO of Rinspeed AG, to strike out in new directions. “Urban mobility needs further impulses and models as incremental steps to tackle the pending mobility problems in an ideally sustainable way. Whereby sustainable is to be understood on two levels: eco-friendly and efficient,” says Rinderknecht out of conviction.

To achieve this goal, the startup company “Snap Motion” will be established in the near future. The displayed concept vehicle “Snap” is not to remain a one-off, but is to be developed to production readiness in future. Initially the term “production” is defined as a small fleet, which is to serve as a proof of concept and is slated be used worldwide. In parallel to the mechanical-electronic development of the vehicle, the “ecosystem” is to be developed and programmed, which will later control the entire systematic of need, availability, upkeep and settlement.

“Snap Motion” will rest on two main pillars. The location in Silicon Valley south of San Francisco will handle the software aspects, the location in Central Europe will deal with the entire hardware. As a result, the company will combine the best from America and Europe.

The omnipresent robo-taxi as ultimate wisdom?

If a chip merely replaces the driver in future, robo-taxis will have little to no effect on the traffic efficiency and thus on emissions. As long as such vehicles only take people to their destinations, the underlying systematics have not been questioned at all or insufficiently, let alone thought through to the end. Of course, sharing models can increase the number of occupants, but the limiting of the use of vehicles intended for just one purpose is obvious. When daily passenger transport wanes or rests, it is difficult for a robo-taxi to provide other services. It is simply not designed for it. As a result, valuable resources sit around idly. Thus, we have also come full circle: While the daily repeated and necessary conversion or upgrade of the robo-taxi to a different use makes sense, no one will be willing or able to do so. History has also already taught us that.

The Rinspeed “Snap”

The Rinspeed “Snap” rigorously pursues the solution of separating the intelligent and thus quickly ageing and proportionately expensive components from the long-lasting vehicle components. The former are combined in an intelligent chassis called a “skateboard,” the others in a “pod,” that is to say a superstructure. The innovation lies in the fact that skateboard and pod do not have to spend their service life together, but definitely could. Instead, they come together as temporary partners for different periods of the day. It is important in this context that the skateboard is always in use and that the aforementioned service lives overlap as a result. The pods are loaded and used as needed. In addition to mobility tasks, they can also serve other purposes and be used stationary as an integral component of smart cities, for example.

This opens up the possibility for all industries to participate, even those still inactive at present in the field of mobility. In future, we will see a multitude of different pods used for specific purposes, from doctor's pods, which will come to the patient for routine checkups and not the other way around, to sauna pods and party pods for recreational pleasures in the backyard. At that point, no longer will 100 percent of the production costs sit around idly, but maybe only 40 percent, which even though currently immobile will nonetheless likely be actively used otherwise. In the meantime, the skateboard tirelessly transports other types of pods to their destinations. The comprehensive and forward-looking Snap ecosystem will bring the users and the desired hardware combinations together in an intelligent and efficient way. It will also handle the instant settlement of the particular services with all market participants in real time.