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New energy vehicle and car sharing keys to intelligent mobility

— by Dana Wang

SHANGHAI – New energy vehicles and car sharing are the keys to intelligent mobility and create a cleaner and smarter transportation ecosystem, which is an opportunity for the auto industry to transform, according to Erik Jonnaert, secretary general of European Automobile Manufacturers Association (ACEA).

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Does Polestar equal pole position?



Polestar 1



— by Mark Andrews

SHANGHAI – Polestar up to now has not been a name with much resonance in China, or for that matter anywhere save perhaps for Sweden. This however is all set to change thanks to the October 17 unveiling of the Polestar 1 and announcement of a ¥5 billion capitalized joint venture to build electric cars in China.

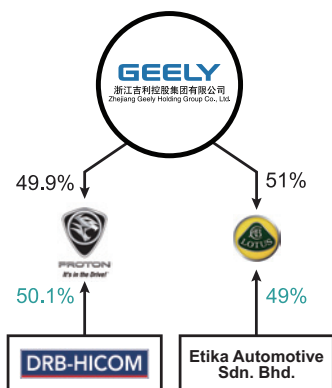
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Geely finalizes Proton board structure and completes Lotus transaction

— by Lei Xing

KUALA LUMPUR – In separate announcements, Geely said on September 29 that it has finalized the board structures and part of the executive team for Proton Holdings Berhad and its related companies (Proton Group) as well as completed the transaction to purchase a majority stake in the British luxury sports brand Lotus.

The announcements come exactly 100 days after the signing of the Definitive Agreement between Malaysia's DRB-HICOM Berhad and Geely on June 23 over the acquisition of Proton and Lotus brands.



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See you in 2018 and 2019: AIWAYS' first cars and next investment on their way

— by Lei Xing

SHANGRAO, Jiangxi – Fu Qiang believes as long as AIWAYS remains conscientious and serious about building products and a company, production approval will come naturally.

The co-founder and president of China's latest smart EV startup made the comments at a media briefing here on September 29 on the sidelines of an industry forum sponsored by AIWAYS.

It will debut its first product, a super car, at the Beijing Auto Show in April 2018 and launch it to market by the end of 2018, according to Fu, before

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| Fu Qiang |

Does Polestar equal pole position?

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The brand has its roots in Flash Engineering founded in 1996 which raced the Volvo 850 in the Swedish Touring Car Championship. 2005 saw the rebranding to Polestar and despite a Volvo C30 Polestar Concept road car in 2010 it wasn't until 2013 that the first road going production cars were produced with the S60 and V60 Polestar versions.

Volvo Cars' Polestar plan has likely been fermenting for some time. In 2015 Volvo Cars purchased Polestar Performance and the Polestar brand. Today's Polestar 1 is a direct development of the Volvo Concept Coupe first seen in 2013 at the Frankfurt Motor Show – a car which paved the way for the S90.

“Something happened there. When I arrived the car was undisguised standing there in this beautiful winter landscape and the sun shining. The sheer presence of it, the extraordinary dimensions, how low and how wide this car was, the pure beauty and the presence it radiated. It was clear this was not an S90 two-door coupe anymore, this was a GT, a true sports car – a car not fitting to Volvo anymore,” said Thomas Ingenlath, Polestar CEO and former vice president of design at Volvo Cars about his first experience with a test drive of an early prototype of the production Concept

Coupe. Volvo Cars President & CEO Håkan Samuelsson two weeks earlier had first broached the idea of making the car as a standalone Polestar.

Volvo Cars earlier this year unveiled its electrification plan and it is therefore not surprising that Polestar is electrified. “A car emitting exhaust fumes will become just as unacceptable as smoking in a restaurant,” said Ingenlath regaling the audience with a story about having to wear a face mask when cycling in London as an automotive design student 25 years ago.

The big surprise is that the Polestar factory is to be in China – or perhaps not given China's embrace of electric cars. Currently being built on a green field site in Chengdu it is set for completion next year. Polestar has so far released little information about capacity other than saying the factory is geared for lower volumes and that it will be the first car plant in China to meet gold LEED environmental standards. Also on site will be a customer experience center and test track.

Polestar 1 is a halo car and they say it will be the most powerful car ever produced in China. Powering it will be two 80 kW motors on each of the rear wheels which use torque vectoring which means that instead of slowing down the inner wheel when cornering, the outer



Håkan Samuelsson



| Polestar Chengdu factory |

wheel speeds up. Up front will be a turbo and super charged engine, presumably based on the Volvo 2.0 liter unit, giving an overall claimed figure for the car of 600 hp along with 1,000 Nm torque. Battery capacity is 34 kW including cells placed in the rear axle space giving an electric range of 150 km.

While the car may lack a Volvo badge there is an obvious crossover from the S90. The Thor hammer lights remain at the front and the dashboard and interior are near identical in design. It sits on a modified version of the Scalable Platform Architecture (SPA) but Polestar claims that about half of it is bespoke and new. To get from the S90 to the 4.5-m long Polestar 1 they cut 320 mm from the wheelbase and 200 mm from the rear. The body is largely carbon fiber allowing for weight reduction, increased body stiffness and meaning with the steel frame a lower center of gravity. Weighing 230 kg less than a steel body it compensates exactly for the added weight

from the batteries along with allowing a far more daring roofline.

Also announced were future model plans for the Polestars 2 and 3 which are set to be fully electric. Set to be unveiled in 2019, the same year the 1 is due on sale, the Polestar 2 is claimed to be aimed at the Tesla Model 3. What seems to have escaped Polestar is that the Tesla 3 is meant to be Tesla's mainstream car not something produced as a low volume producer. Production of the Polestar 1 is said to be targeted in the region of only 500 units a year. The Polestar 3 will arrive around 2021 and is set to be a low roof aerodynamic interpretation of an SUV riding on a platform based on the next generation SPA.

The customer experience is set to be different. “We want the Polestar's customers to be able to focus on the pleasure of driving their car. To do this we will get rid of the hassle traditionally associated with running a car,” said Polestar COO Jonathan Goodman. At its heart is a no deposit subscription leasing model based on a two or three year period. Orders will be placed and configured by app and the company will deliver the car to wherever the customer wants and will pick it up for maintenance. Servicing will be done through the Volvo Cars network and there will be no dealer network. There will however be Polestar Spaces in key markets where people can interact with the brand. The key will be on the subscriber's phone. If this all sounds familiar, it is, bar the leasing part very similar to what was announced earlier this year for Geely Holding's other new brand, LYNK & CO, which will launch its 01 SUV in about a month's time.

Undeniably the Polestar 1 is a good looking car, the question is whether there really is enough differentiation from Volvo Cars to make it as a standalone brand. Then there is the marketing mix, are customers ready for this new form of usage and ordering? Producing such an expensive car – likely to be well ¥1 million – in China will perhaps limit appeal amongst many foreign customers. Interestingly for the launch of a high performance electric car in China not one word was mentioned about autonomous driving. And ultimately how the car drives may be the deciding factor in its success or failure. [CBUCAR](#)



Thomas Ingenlath