Last Week In Innovative Mobility

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ITSBerkeley
Institute of Transportation Studies

SCOOTER SHARING

Bird pauses operations of Circ scooter sharing in the Middle East, six months after acquiring the Berlin-based company. About 100 employees have been laid off, and between 8,000 to 10,000 scooters have been sent to a third-party company for recycling. Bird says it plans to return to the Middle East in Fall 2020.

AUTOMATED VEHICLES

Volkswagen (VW) invests $2.6 billion in Argo AI. The Pittsburgh-based company will absorb VW's automated vehicle (AV) subsidiary, Autonomous Intelligent Driving. This will expand Argo AI's workforce to more than 1,000 people. Argo AI already claims Ford as a customer. Despite the shared investment, Ford and VW will not collaborate on developing AV services.

URBAN AIR MOBILITY

Kitty Hawk ends its Flyer program. The company failed to find a profitable business model for the electric aircraft, which flies at a low altitude and slowly over water. Kitty Hawk is laying off most of Flyer's 70-person team. The company will instead focus on scaling up Heaviside, an electric, automated aircraft that has a longer range and can fly over cities.

SCOOTER SHARING

Superpedestrian will launch Link, a scooter sharing service, in four cities across the U.S. and Europe. The service will use the company's "smart" scooters, which use onboard computing power to determine when components will need servicing. Superpedestrian recently acquired Zagster, an acquisition that was accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Germany requires gas stations to provide electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. This requirement comes as part of the country's €130 billion COVID-19 stimulus package. The German government is also increasing its subsidy for EVs to €6,000 for cars costing less than €40,000.

innovative mobility