Gentex Targets Light Commercial Vehicles for Its Digital Rearview Mirrors; Supplies Vision & Sensing Features for Rinspeed CitySnap

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ZEELAND, Mich., Sept. 06, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- The global Light Commercial Vehicle (LCV) market is experiencing significant growth, fueled in part by the rise in e-commerce, commercial and third-party logistics services, and the "last-mile" delivery market. Subsequently, automotive supplier Gentex Corporation anticipates increased demand for its digital vision solutions designed to address the unique rear visibility challenges inherent to LCVs and cargo vans.

LCVs provide drivers with little to no rearward vision. They often have windowless rear doors, partitions, or enclosed cabins that render traditional interior rearview mirrors ineffective. In addition, they're often loaded with equipment and packages that further hinder rearward visibility. This forces drivers to rely solely on their exterior mirrors, which provide a limited field-of-view, making it difficult to safely perform reversing maneuvers or monitor pedestrians, cyclist, and potential obstructions.

To address these concerns, LCV manufacturers have begun turning to Gentex's Full Display Mirror® (FDM®) an intelligent rear-vision system that uses a custom camera and mirror-integrated video display to optimize a vehicle's rearward view. The system captures video from the rearward-facing camera and streams it to a unique, mirror-integrated LCD that provides the driver with an unobstructed, panoramic view behind the vehicle. This makes it easier to spot pedestrians, cyclists, and rearward-approaching traffic while also improving the driver's ability to safely change lanes, reverse, park, turn, and dock the vehicle.

Fleet operators also appreciate the FDM because it helps reduce accident and repair costs, increases vehicle uptime, and potentially lowers insurance premiums.

"Our FDM, which is already available on numerous passenger vehicles around the world, is now gaining popularity with LCV manufacturers," said Gentex Chief Technology Officer Neil Boehm. "We're currently shipping for one LCV platform; however, we expect to launch several more programs over the next 12 months. The feature is unique in that it benefits the manufacturer, fleet operator and driver alike."

The Future of the LCV

To highlight the future of the LCV market, Gentex recently teamed with automotive think tank and car design powerhouse Rinspeed, which for nearly 40 years has turned out designs intended to inspire the transportation industry and promote future mobility systems.

Rinspeed's latest design is called CitySnap, a proof-of-concept delivery vehicle designed to highlight innovative, sustainable, and efficient urban delivery. Central to the concept are mobile locker units that are transported, delivered and "hot swapped" to parcel stations throughout a city.

Because autonomous driving has not yet been realized, CitySnap has been initially designed for a human driver. To assist the driver in the safe and efficient delivery and pickup of the locker units, Gentex not only equipped CitySnap with an FDM, but also a custom camera system that helps the driver align the vehicle at the docking station. The camera video is fed to an interior display with corresponding overlays, which the driver can monitor to perfectly align the vehicle.

As mentioned, CitySnap's mobile locker stations are transported, delivered and "hot swapped" to mobile parcel stations throughout a city, delivering everything from parcels and packages to food items and construction supplies. To help monitor the mobile lockers and prevent the potential transport of dangerous substances, Gentex equipped the lockers with its Vaporsens chemical detection units, which utilize machine olfaction – a digital sense of smell.

The core of the Gentex Vaporsens sensor technology is a net of nanofibers approximately one thousand times smaller in size than human hair. Their porous structure allows them to absorb targeted molecules from sampled gas and identify them via changes in their electrical resistance. The technology allows for the rapid detection of target chemicals with high sensitivity in the parts per billion range.

These locker-integrated units continuously sample the air within the ventilated locker stations to detect a wide range of airborne contaminants, including smoke, explosives or incendiary components, biohazards, spoiled food, pollutants, and other hazardous substances.

CitySnap will debut at the IAA Mobility show in Munich, which runs September 7-12, 2021.

Founded in 1974, Gentex Corporation (NASDAQ: GNTX) is a supplier of automatic-dimming rearview mirrors and electronics to the automotive industry, dimmable aircraft windows for aviation markets, and fire protection products to the fire protection market. Visit the company website at www.gentex.com.

Rinspeed Media Materials: https://www.rinspeed.com/en/CitySnap_54_concept-car.html

Photos accompanying this announcement are available at

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Rinspeed CitySnap

Rinspeed's CitySnap is a proof-of-concept delivery vehicle designed to highlight innovative, sustainable, and efficient urban delivery. Central to the concept are mobile locker units that are transported, delivered and "hot swapped" to parcel stations throughout a city.

Gentex Full Display Mirror

LCV's typically have poor rear vision. Consequently, LCV manufacturers are turning to Gentex's Full Display Mirror, an intelligent rear-vision system that uses a custom camera and mirror-integrated video display to optimize a vehicle's rearward view.

Gentex Vaporsens

To prevent the potential transport of dangerous substances, Gentex equipped CitySnap's mobile lockers with its Vaporsens chemical detection units, which utilize machine olfaction – a digital sense of smell -- to detect a wide range of airborne contaminants, including smoke, explosives or incendiary components, biohazards, spoiled food, pollutants, and other hazardous substances.

Source: Gentex Corporation