

DRIVING JUST GOT A LOT EASIER

Autonomous Cars likely to reshape the future of transportation

By Michael Wang
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Automatic cars may even be more reliable drivers than your average human. Google reports a mere 12 minor accidents with over 1,000,000 miles travelled by their automatic vehicles. They expect that fully functional, automatic cars will likely be available for purchase within the next 5 years.

Google cars contain LIDAR steering technology to detect obstructions and navigate by using GPS. There are some design flaws such as a lack of manual driving alternatives and the speed is currently limited to 25mph, making the car only viable in certain zones. However, several well-known car manufacturers such as Audi, General Motors, Nissan, and Tesla are also racing to develop autonomous cars and have already made amazing breakthroughs. Audi's car is capable of driving up to 70mph and has successfully completed a cross-country trip. Each manufacturer estimates that this amazing technology will be available commercially by 2020.

What does this mean for the future? It is unlikely that autonomous cars will positively impact the economy. Automobiles are an integral part of economy. The average American travels thousands of miles per year by car. It is likely that large delivery companies such as Amazon, FedEx and UPS will many of their workers with these vehicles. Taxi drivers, truck drivers, bus drivers and other car transportation providers might need to search for new employment in the new future.

There are many potential positive social factors to consider. Autonomous cars will reduce accidents by eliminating irresponsible drivers and inexperienced drivers. Accidents related to teen drivers, drunk drivers, and sleep-deprived drivers will be a thing of the past. Whether the good outweighs the bad will differ from person to person, but the developers agree that it is worth investing in these vehicles that will improve the quality of life.

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