

INTRODUCTION

THE WHEEL REINVENTED

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IN SEPTEMBER 2021, A PAPER PUBLISHED IN SCIENCE ROBOTICS DETAILED A DESIGN FOR AN ORIGAMI-INSPIRED SHAPE-SHIFTING TYRE THAT CAN CHANGE ITS OWN STRUCTURE, SWITCHING BETWEEN THE MORE TRADITIONAL TALL-AND-SKINNY SHAPE TO A SHORT-AND-FAT FORM.

In so doing, it was able to bear loads heavier than what traditional wheels could. These shape-shifting wheels were significant because they had the potential to be applied across a wide variety of uses. For example, they would be very useful in situations where vehicles had to wander on fast-changing surfaces – including extra-terrestrial terrain where vehicles had to move from very rocky surfaces to soft dissolving sand.

With this, the term “**Reinventing the Wheel**” has taken on new meaning. Where the assumption had always been that the basic concept of the wheel, which was invented thousands of years ago, cannot be improved upon, science has now shown that it can.

And so it has been for the land transport industry too. The business is no longer just about moving people or goods from point A to point B. It has extended beyond the actual transit. Certainly, the competition for the commuters’ attention starts pre-journey and extends post-journey as well. This has been made possible – and essential – through the advent of technology and the telecosm.

ComfortDelGro, which began 20 years ago as an amalgamation of two very traditional land transport companies, has embarked on this very path of transformation. This book chronicles its evolution, from a mishmash of transport companies, to a multinational, multidisciplinary transport conglomerate focussed on long term sustainability and growth.

It is a story of grit and tenacity, of challenges faced and battles lost and won. It is a story of perseverance and hard work. It is a story of our people.

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