

# TECHNOLOGY IN OUR LIVES

## Changing How Suppliers And Manufacturers Work Together

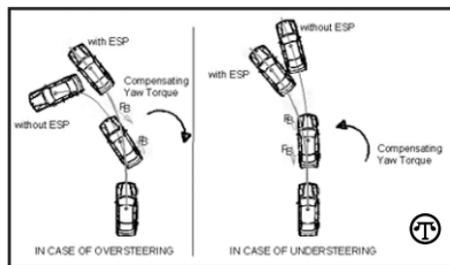
(NAPSA)—Cars that anticipate accidents and adjust accordingly, providing additional protection for drivers and passengers? Thanks to improving cooperation between original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and their suppliers, such vehicles may not be that far away.

“A further innovative development representing a leap forward in technology will only be possible when the informal networks between subsystems installed in today’s vehicles are replaced by systematic networking, consistently applied throughout the vehicle,” says Dr. Wolfgang Ziebart, deputy chairman of the Board of Management for Continental AG.

Dr. Ziebart and Continental envision a day when vehicle sensors detect hazardous driving situations at an early stage, and immediately transmit the data to passive and active safety systems. For example, signals might activate reversible seat-belt tensioners to prepare occupants for a crash, or be sent to airbags to provide more effective and reliable protection.

The result of this “holistic networking,” explains Dr. Ziebart, will be an increasing number of software solutions to generate added value for consumers. In other words, software would not be sold merely as an attachment to the hardware, but would be marketed and charged for as an independent product.

The key to achieving this is the type of standardization for interfaces and operating systems that has propelled the growth of the consumer PC and software industries. This will require the



**Continental Teves’ Electronic Stability Program (ESP) helps drivers maintain control of their vehicles during oversteer and understeer situations, which helps them avoid crashes.**

emergence of a new type of supplier—namely, a network supplier that offers a core competence for developing solutions to network existing systems. Advantages to standardization include:

- Easier integration of software products of different suppliers, and reduction of dependence on system suppliers. Automakers will continue to be free in the selection of their suppliers, while customer- and vehicle-specific software packages will be integrated into vehicles on the basis of plug-and-play.

- The approaches adopted by individual suppliers will always be compatible and can be interchanged.

- A unique opportunity for suppliers to offer their software solutions to the market globally and distinguish themselves from their competitors.

Continental AG is a world leader in the design, development and supply of critical brake and chassis systems that contribute to driving safety and comfort. For additional information, visit the Web sites at [www.conti-online.com](http://www.conti-online.com) and [www.contitevesna.com](http://www.contitevesna.com).