



Ford Smart Mobility LLC Names Laura Merling as Vice President Autonomous Vehicle Solutions

- Laura Merling named vice president, Autonomous Vehicle Solutions, to lead the commercialization of high volume fully autonomous vehicles as part of Ford Smart Mobility LLC
- The 20-year Silicon Valley veteran brings significant experience leading strategy development, innovation, and platform development within both start up and traditional corporate organizational settings
- Ford Smart Mobility LLC designs, builds, grows, and invests in new mobility services as Ford expands its business model to be both an auto *and* a mobility company

DEARBORN, Mich., Oct. 27, 2016 – Ford Motor Company is announcing today the appointment of Laura Merling as vice president, Autonomous Vehicles Solutions, of Ford Smart Mobility LLC, Ford’s subsidiary working to design, build, grow and invest in emerging mobility services. Merling will report to Jim Hackett, Ford Smart Mobility LLC chairman, and be based in Palo Alto, California.

As vice president for AV Solutions, Merling will lead the commercialization of autonomous vehicles. Ford has announced its intent to have a high volume SAE level 4 fully autonomous vehicle in commercial operation by 2021.

“While Ford’s technical teams invent and further develop the technology of autonomous vehicles, we need to invent and develop the commercialization strategy to connect this technology with the uses and users that will truly change the way the world moves,” said Hackett. “Laura has deep experience innovating strategy and platform development for both start up and corporate organizations. She also brings a significant external network through her Internet of Things consultancy and start up board advisory roles.”

In addition to her role with Ford Smart Mobility, Merling will continue to serve in an advisory role for several startups working on Internet of Things connectivity, machine learning and digital manufacturing. These include [Wivity](#), [Thin Systems](#), [Alluvium.io](#), and [Authentise](#).

Merling: Experienced Innovator and Leader

Merling comes to Ford after running her own consultancy focused on the intersection of hardware, firmware, and software in the Internet of Things. Prior to that, she was global general manager and executive vice president of Internet of Things for SAP. In this role, Merling led the go-to-market strategy for the Internet of Things business.

Prior to SAP, Merling served as vice president, enterprise digital transformation for AT&T. In this role, she led the enterprise customer innovation program, launching big data and Internet of things solutions. In addition, Merling launched groundbreaking web services including the Mobile Identity Toolkit, and the company’s cloud based voice platform, while also developing business automation solutions and leading complex partnerships

“I am excited by the opportunity to be part of the biggest change in transportation in more than a century,” said Merling. “The challenge of building the business models to commercialize autonomous vehicles perfectly aligns with the more than two decades I’ve spent working on the edge of innovation and business.”

Merling has served with a wide variety of Silicon Valley organizations over her career including with Alcatel-Lucent as their senior vice president of Applications Platforms and Application Enablement, with [Mashery](#) as their vice president of sales and marketing, with [Krugle, Inc](#) as their vice president of marketing and business development and as executive director and chief executive officer for [Silicon Valley Forum](#).

Merling began her career in 1989 as a technology analyst with TechTeam Global, working on key projects for Ford Motor Company, including the launch of the company's first online configurator for the F-Series trucks and the first use of electronic medical records in the company's US assembly plants.

Ford Smart Mobility LLC: Building and Investing in New Mobility Services

Ford Smart Mobility LLC is part of Ford's expanded business model to be both an auto and a mobility company. Ford Smart Mobility LLC is working with Ford's product development, research and advanced engineering, marketing and data analytics teams to develop commercially-ready mobility services and invest in promising mobility-related ventures.

Designed to compete like a startup company, Ford Smart Mobility LLC is designing and building mobility services on its own through its Greenfield Labs business incubation team. It also is collaborating with start-ups and tech companies, such as the company's recent acquisition of Chariot, an app-based, crowd-sourced shuttle company, and its collaboration with Motivate to launch Ford GoBike in San Francisco. In addition, Ford Smart Mobility LLC has established the City Solutions team to lead expanding mobility efforts with key cities worldwide.

Related Materials:

For biographical information and photos of Laura Merling, click [here](#).

About Ford Motor Company

Ford Motor Company is a global company based in Dearborn, Michigan. The company designs, manufactures, markets and services a full line of Ford cars, trucks, SUVs, electrified vehicles and Lincoln luxury vehicles, provides financial services through Ford Motor Credit Company and is pursuing leadership positions in electrification; mobility solutions, including self-driving services; and connected services. Ford employs approximately 188,000 people worldwide. For more information regarding Ford, its products and Ford Motor Credit Company, please visit www.corporate.ford.com.