



Continental Connect infotainment on PSA models

By Simon Warburton | 29 November 2016

Peugeot, Citroën and DS brands are using a new infotainment system by Continental, which offers online services, as well as smartphone integration solutions, known as Connect.

The system uses the Linux open-source operating system and complies with GENIVI software standard. "We are a member of the GENIVI Alliance and pleased to implement this GENIVI-compliant system in production and to advance the level of standardisation for in-car infotainment," said Continental's Infotainment & Connectivity business unit head, Johann Hiebl.

The connected head unit provides the driver with a variety of current online services including live traffic information, weather forecasts, parking information, and fuel prices.

These services are embedded in the navigation system from TomTom, which factors in the current traffic situation at all times in route guidance and can use it to predict arrival time.

Drivers and passengers can also use it as a wifi hotspot and connect their mobile devices to the head unit to stay connected. The unit can also use a mobile device's internet connection (tethering) to guarantee cloud connection for the vehicle, in case it is not connected via an electronic data transmission system.

Secure smartphone connections also play an important role. The head unit already supports the most important integration mechanisms based on the mirroring principle, with Apple-based CarPlay and Mirrorlink. Further standards, such as Android Auto are due to follow in the next software releases.

The driver can connect a smartphone via USB then use the touch screen of the Connect system to operate the phone. The Bluetooth phone connection allows the driver to make calls safely throughout the journey.

Additional media sources such as personal media centres or Spotify can also be connected, while playing videos is possible while parked.

If the vehicle goes into an area without DAB reception, the connected head unit automatically switches to the corresponding FM channel. This also works the other way around, but without any time lags, as the channels are played time-released to avoid a leap in the programme of up to five seconds after the channel switch.

The driver can control the infotainment system using touch-screen, icon buttons, as well as steering wheel and voice controls. In the Chinese DPCA (Dongfeng Peugeot-Citroën Automobile) joint venture variation, the device can be operated using PinYin handwriting recognition.

The head unit can also control multiple displays, rendering a detailed navigation view for the secondary display to support the driver for example.

The functional range of the PSA Connect system will grow during the coming months, with more features available with the next generation of software and vehicles.

"For example, we are developing location-specific functions, known as location-based services, for different markets," added Hiebl.

"In addition, in future the system will be more deeply integrated into the vehicle structure and will become the central information hub through links with interior cameras and dash cams."