

Assignment for Student One-Pager “The Future of the Automobile”

Topic: Automobile as a Status Symbol vs. Personal Statement

Due Date: March 8, 2010 / 10am

Description: It is being said that the automobile is one of the most important status symbols in our society. It is also the second biggest personal investment many people make in their lives. On the other hand some vehicles are being viewed as classless, which means its owners cannot be categorized in certain groups. In addition, some vehicles are a personal statement in itself like “I care about...”, “My hobby is...”, or “I like...”. Is there a general shift from status symbol to personal statement? For example, think about the following:

- What are examples for cars as status symbols or personal statements?
- What observations has everyone made recently? Is there a trend?
- What could a shift away from status thinking mean to the industry?
- Which thinking do car sharing, rental, leasing, or owning follow?
- What else do you think of when it comes to status and statements?

Format: The papers serve as a preparation for the seminar discussions to capture students’ thoughts, expectations, and concerns regarding the selected topic. While the papers should reflect the students’ own understanding of the matter, references that were used should be listed (e.g. research, statistics, news...). All students draft their paper individually; it is not a group work.

The papers are due at the date and time stated above to allow for review and to include them into the preparation for the seminar discussions. Students should indicate on their paper if they do not authorize the use of their paper in class, further research, or discussion with industry partners.

Credit: Students earn one point per paper towards the required three points for successful completion of the course CS532 / ME302. The papers need to be sent to beiker@stanford.edu by the due date.

Instructors: Prof. C. Gerdes (ME), Prof. S. Thrun (CS), Prof. C. Nass (COMM)
Sven Beiker, Terman 548, beiker@stanford.edu, 736-1504
Office hours: Mon, 2-4PM, Terman 548

Website: <http://me302.stanford.edu>