

Little shopping cart speedster in Aisle 7 inspires Ford braking solution

April 26 2019, by Nancy Cohen



Credit: Ford

For a child's mom, supermarkets are where you fulfill your list of candles, berries, bologna and soap. For the child, supermarkets, like parks, are where you can run and, best of all, drive a grown-up trolley and command the wheels.

Carscoops quoted Tanith Carey, parenting expert. "Children love to copy adults and experiment with feeling more in control. When they push a trolley, to their minds, it's like they are behind the wheels of a car – with long, [wide](#) supermarket aisles as their racetrack."

Mom intervenes, of course, and warns her child that they are in a store, not a park, not a racetrack, and must try not to slam into shoppers.

In the Ford 'Self-Braking Trolley' video, Paul Edmonds, a supermarket manager, said when children start messing about in supermarkets, things can get tricky—a feeling of dread is not surprising when you see two little ones working as an attuned pair, race-pushing their trolleys neck and neck.

Thing is, a trolley represents to young ones an interesting toy—hurl the car forward and then run up to it. Look, said another supermarket voice in the video, they just drive it like maniacs.

Trolley collision risks attracted the likes of Ford. Trolleys are after all one mode of transport; so why not reflect on their own Pre-Collision technology, namely, Pre-Collision Assist.

So, what is the tech all about? Ford defines Pre-Collision Assist technology that automatically applies the brakes if the driver does not respond to warnings. When used in cars, there is a forward-facing camera and radar to detect vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. Ford said the supermarket prototype uses a sensor to achieve a similar outcome. It can scan ahead for people and objects and automatically apply the brakes when a potential collision is detected.

This would not be the first time Ford showed creative research goals outside the car model box. "The company has in the past explored some pretty far out ideas," said Tyler Lee in *Ubergizmo*, "like a [kennel](#) for

dogs with noise-cancelling technology, so it doesn't really come as a surprise to learn that their next invention comes in the form of a reimagining of the humble shopping cart that you can find at your supermarket."

Also, this is a prototype, Lee said, but a fun idea nonetheless.

While the focus on the Ford showing was a supermarket with kids at the helm, Zac Palmer in *Autoblog* said the carts pose risks elsewhere too. "Shopping carts are my greatest fear in [supermarket](#) parking lots. People leave them [sitting](#) around everywhere in precarious positions between cars or just in the middle of nowhere. My fear is that one of these shopping carts is going to end up smashing into my car, something I've seen happen to others but not myself yet."

Actually, Ford has something called the Interventions series, which includes the "Smart Bed" and "Noise Cancelling Kennel," Automotive expertise is applied to solve day-to-day problems.

Ford of Europe marketing exec Anthony Ireson was quoted in *Carscoops*. "We thought that showing how similar thinking could be applied to a shopping trolley would be a great way to highlight what can be a really useful technology for drivers."

More information: fordeurope.blogspot.com/2019/04/r-trolley-maybe.html

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