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Microsoft to Evolve Its Auto Software Platform

In collaboration with Hyundai-Kia Automotive Group

Microsoft and Hyundai-Kia Automotive Group have announced a partnership designed to evolve the Redmond company's Auto software platform. The next generation of in-car infotainment systems will be developed in collaboration by the two companies via the alliance inked by Martin Thall, general manager of Microsoft's Automotive Business Unit, and Hyun Soon Lee, president and chief technology officer of HKAG. The deal carries quite a lot of importance as Bill Gates, chairman of Microsoft, and Mongku Chung, chairman of HKAG attended the event in Seoul where the agreement was signed. "These new systems will redefine consumer experiences in the car. Since the spring of 2006, HKAG and Microsoft have been sharing their vision for the future of in-car technology. We're now aligned to develop the next generation of in-car infotainment systems," Thall commented. The Redmond company will offer the Microsoft Auto software platform as the basis for the development of in-car infotainment solutions which will be features in Hyundai-Kia automobiles worldwide. "We are pleased to partner with Microsoft to deliver high-performance infotainment solutions to our customers," Lee added. "The advanced capabilities, flexibility and low price point make the Microsoft Auto software platform an attractive solution for us." Microsoft already has similar partnerships with Ford Motor in the U.S. and Fiat Auto Group for Europe and South America. Now, the next-generation infotainment system will make its debut on the U.S. market via Hyundai-Kia autos no later than 2010. The first customers will be able to enjoy advanced voice-controlled connectivity technology, which will essentially bridge the mobile devices inside the car. The Asian and European markets will follow the U.S., but neither company delivered a timetable for availability. Microsoft and Hyundai-Kia Automotive Group will not stop here, expanding the platform with multimedia and navigation capabilities.