

AI AND AUTOMOBILES

From the car that warns you to the car that drives itself

Presenter: John Ulett | AISavvySeniors Future Tech Series

KEY DEFINITIONS

AI	Technology that learns from data to make predictions and decisions — not just following fixed rules.
Autonomy	The car's ability to perform driving tasks without human input.
Sensors	The car's eyes and ears — cameras, radar, and LiDAR that feed data to the AI.
Machine Learning	How AI improves over time by processing millions of miles of real driving experience.
SAE Levels 0–5	The industry scale for how autonomous a vehicle is — from fully human-controlled to fully self-driving.

THE 3 ACTS OF AI IN CARS

- **ACT 1 — AI Assists You**
 - Honda Sensing, Toyota Safety Sense, Subaru EyeSight, Ford Co-Pilot360
 - The car watches, warns, and occasionally intervenes. You are still driving.
 - Examples: auto emergency braking, adaptive cruise, lane keep assist
- **ACT 2 — AI Drives, You Supervise**
 - Tesla Autopilot, GM Super Cruise
 - Hands-free on highways. You must stay ready to take over at any moment.
- **ACT 3 — AI Drives, Full Stop**
 - Waymo
 - No steering wheel interaction needed. No driver required. AI is fully responsible.

ACT 1 BRAND COMPARISON

Feature	Honda Sensing	Toyota TSS 3.0	Subaru EyeSight	Ford Co-Pilot360
Auto Emergency Braking	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adaptive Cruise Control	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lane Keep Assist	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Blind Spot Detection	Optional	Yes	Yes	Varies

Pedestrian Detection	Yes	Yes — Enhanced	Yes	Yes
Road Sign Recognition	No	Yes	No	Limited
Emergency Stop if Unresponsive	No	YES	No	No
Sensor Technology	Camera only	Camera + Radar	Stereo Camera	Camera + Radar

Note: Toyota TSS 3.0's Emergency Stop feature can safely pull the car over if the driver becomes unresponsive.

WAYMO IS COMING TO NASHVILLE

- Waymo announced Nashville expansion in September 2025, in partnership with Lyft.
- As of February 2026, driverless testing is already underway on Nashville streets.
- Public service launches in 2026 — book through the Waymo app, later through Lyft.
- Tennessee's light-touch regulations made Nashville an attractive market.
- Nationally, Waymo completed 14 million trips in 2025 — tripling the prior year.
- Waymo is involved in 5x fewer injury-causing collisions than human drivers.

WHO PAYS FOR THE ROBOT?

- Uber owns nothing — drivers own the cars. Uber just runs the app.
- Waymo owns everything — each vehicle costs an estimated \$100,000–\$150,000 to outfit.
- A Waymo can run 24/7 with no wages or benefits. At scale, the math may flip.
- Today, Waymo rides are more expensive than Uber. Alphabet is subsidizing growth.
- In San Francisco, Waymo captured 27% of the rideshare market in just 20 months.
- The real competitor to Waymo for seniors may not be Uber — it may be calling family.

TODAY'S DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What AI features do you already have in your car — and did you know they were AI?
2. If a Waymo pulled up to your house tomorrow, would you get in? What would it take to trust it?
3. If Waymo and Uber cost the same, which would you choose — and why?
4. Is there a situation where you'd specifically prefer no driver in the car?
5. How might autonomous vehicles change life for seniors — independence, safety, access?
6. Is cheaper and safer worth it if it costs people their jobs?

5 KEY TAKEAWAYS

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- **AI in cars is not coming — it's already here. Adaptive cruise and auto braking are AI.**
 - **There are three acts: AI assists, AI supervises, AI drives. We are moving through all three now.**
 - **Waymo is already testing driverlessly on Nashville streets. Public launch in 2026.**
 - **For seniors, the key question isn't safety — it's independence. Waymo may give something back.**
 - **This technology has real tradeoffs: cost, jobs, trust, and access are all worth discussing.**
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MY NOTES
