LAS VEGAS: Self-driving cars garner much of the attention, but in reality, we’re years away from tooling around in something like Knight Rider’s KITT. Coming sooner to a car near you: smartphone apps on dash displays, cruise control that adapts to cars around it, remote engine starting and more.

At International CES in Las Vegas this week, 10 automakers and numerous suppliers unveiled technological features that will find their way into cars in the distant and not-so-distant future.

Here’s a look at some of their wares. Your car will think. It will react. It will learn. “This car will take responsibility,” said Dieter Zetsche, leader of Mercedes-Benz, as he introduced the company’s luxury self-driving concept car.

If that sounds a bit scary, like the prologue to a film in which machines overtake their way into cars in the distant and not-so-distant future.

“Even as we showcase connected cars and share our plans for autonomous vehicles, we are here at CES with a higher purpose,” said Ford President and CEO Mark Fields. “We are driving innovation in every part of our business to be both a product and mobility company and, ultimately, to change the way the world moves just as our founder Henry Ford did 111 years ago.”

Also at CES, Ford is demonstrating SYNC 3, its most advanced vehicle connectivity system, while highlighting semiautonomous vehicles the company has on the road today and fully autonomous vehicles now in development.

The company announced its Ford Smart Mobility plan to use innovation to take it to the next level in connectivity, mobility, autonomous vehicles, the customer experience and big data. Ford also announced 25 mobility experiments around the world this year to test breakthrough transportation ideas to create better customer experiences, more flexible user-ship models and social collaboration that can reward customers.

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Ford invited innovators and developers around the world to create solutions for specific mobility challenges in North America and South America, Portugal, Africa, India, China, England and Australia. Challenges included finding technology solutions to identify open parking spaces in urban areas, better ways to navigate crowded cities and the use of navigation and other tools to help people gain access to medical care in remote areas.

Fourteen of the 25 experiments are Ford-led research projects, and 11 are part of the company’s Innovate Mobility Challenge Series. The experiments include:

- Big Data Drive: Dearborn, Michigan
- Fleet Insights: United States
- Data Driven Insurance: London
- Remote Repositioning: Atlanta
- City Driving On-Demand: London
- Dynamic Social Shuttle: New York, London
- Car Swap: Dearborn, Michigan
- Ford Carsharing: Germany
- Share-Car: Bangalore, India
- Rapid Recharge & Share: Dearborn, Michigan
- Data Driven Healthcare: The Gambia, West Africa
- Parking Spotter: Atlanta
- Info Cycle: Palo Alto, California
- Painless Parking: London

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SYNC 3
Also at CES, Ford highlighted SYNC 3, the company’s new communications and entertainment system that is faster, more intuitive and easier to use with enhanced response to driver commands.

SYNC 3’s more conversational speech recognition technology, a more smartphone-like touch screen and easy-to-read graphics will help millions of drivers connect with their lives and control their smartphone while on the road.

The next-generation system builds on the capability of SYNC technology already in more than 10 million vehicles on the road globally. SYNC 3 begins arriving on new vehicles this year. “Ford is delivering an easier way for customers to stay connected,” said Raj Nair, Ford chief technical officer and group vice president, Global Product Development. “SYNC 3 is another step forward in delivering connectivity features customers most want, and they tell us this kind of technology is an important part of their decision to buy our vehicles.”

LAS VEGAS: The OpenAir 11.3 infotainment system is on display in a car at the Visteon booth Thursday, at the International CES in Las Vegas. The technology allows you to access your smart phone and its apps from the touch screen in your car. — AP