

June 13, 2018

## Autonomous versus Automated?

The [Conference Board of Canada](#) hosted the *Autonomous Vehicles 2018: Planning for Urban and Rural Transitions June 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>*

This conference is one that should be on your radar for future technologies and sector innovation. The conference is set to continue on an annual basis with the rural perspective being a focus area. The speakers covered an array of fields and levels of implementation.

The conference provided valuable insight in to autonomous vehicle innovation, including platooning, which includes different approaches being taken as the regulatory framework supports different levels of technology. Presently, in nine states across America, there are pairs of semi trucks being operated by connected software systems. This intent of this method calls for the two trucks to be running at the most efficient speed and using radar to cut fuel consumption and lower maintenance costs. Another model that is being tested has a driver in the first truck with subsequent trucks being operated driver-less. The legislative structure of platooning is not yet in place in Canada but as progress is made across the globe, it will become more prevalent in Alberta.

In the agriculture and forestry industries, there is a different lens being studied. Key elements being considered including ground levels, environmental conditions, and connectivity issues. The sensors being developed to analyze and synthesize this information are evolving as we learn more about the current limitations. [DOT Farming Reimagined](#) presented their product which is a mobile diesel-powered platform designed to handle a large variety of implements commonly used in agriculture, mining, and construction. The commonality among different sections of autonomous technology is the progression from automated to autonomous, and our ability to maintain levels of safety.

Although we will not see autonomous vehicles on our streets immediately, this technology matters to everyone. The automation of previous machineries has led to this conversation, and similarly, this will transcend into other areas. Additionally, this field will fulfill a gap that is currently being experienced with labour shortages. If you are an early adopter or would like to learn more, click [here](#) to see the conference information and presentation material.

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