

Wireless charging for electric vehicles demonstrated

SUPPLIED

A Renault Kangoo EV runs a wireless charging test in France.

A demonstration in France has shown how electric vehicles could be charged wirelessly while driving, a technology some believe will help accelerate the adoption of self-driving cars.

Smartphone chipmaker Qualcomm said a so-called "dynamic charging" test took place on a test track in Versailles, France following work with Renault and Vedecom. Two Renault Kangoo vehicles drove over embedded pads in the road that transferred a charge to the cars' batteries at up to 20 kilowatts at highway speeds around 100kmh.

Experts believe that self-driving cars of tomorrow will be electric and require a way to charge themselves without human intervention.

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Wireless charging is an important area of research for carmakers, their suppliers and start-ups like xChargepoint, WiTricity and FLO Power.

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The dynamic charging demonstrations took place at the 100-metre test track, built by Vedecom at Satory, Versailles, near Paris with Qualcomm and Vedecom installing the system in the track and Vedecom and Renault installing the secondary part into the Kangoos.

Qualcomm, which supplies chips to Android phone makers and Apple Inc, is on track to become the leading supplier to the fast-growing automotive chips market given its pending \$38 billion takeover of NXP Semiconductors.

European Union regulators are to rule by June 9 on the deal, which would be the semiconductor industry's biggest to date.

Electric vehicle charging is one area where Qualcomm could grow as it strives to reduce its dependence on a cooling smartphone market.

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Qualcomm Chief Executive Steven Mollenkopf has called automotive technology and Internet of Things - in which household objects like cars and refrigerators communicate - a "tremendous opportunity" for the company.

-Reuters and Stuff

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