

AUTOMOTIVE

Tesla rethinks "excessive automation" for Model 3 production

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Tesla's Model 3 has had its production deadline pushed back. Image credit: Tesla

By STAFF REPORTS

Production of Tesla's entry-level Model 3 was partially slowed by robots, leading the company to replace some of its automation with humans.

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In an interview that aired on CBS, Tesla CEO Elon Musk admitted that robots were partly to blame for the brand missing its production targets. While Tesla has faced struggles to meet its own goals for the Model 3, Mr. Musk sees a "path out of hell."

Rethinking robots

Tesla's plant in California's Silicon Valley features one of the most automated car assembly lines in the world.

In the televised interview, Mr. Musk said, "We had this crazy complex network of conveyor belts and it was not working, so we got rid of the whole thing." He later added that "humans are underrated."

In the first quarter of 2018, Model 3 output increased fourfold, rising above 2,000 vehicles produced per week. However, this still misses Tesla's original goal of 5,000 Model 3 cars per week.

As of April, Mr. Musk is personally overseeing Model 3 production, pulling overtime to help get the process back on track. The executive is optimistic that the second quarter will see another boost in output, helping meet demand for consumer deliveries.



Tesla's plant in Fremont, CA. Image courtesy of Tesla

On April 17, Tesla paused its production for four to five days, a move aimed at improving automation and production rates.

A series of delays and record losses for electric vehicle company Tesla has left its customers unhappy and in danger of abandoning the company, according to a report from Autolist.

After Tesla announced record losses last quarter and further delays to its Model 3 line, Autolist found that many of its customers said they would cancel their orders if the cars were not delivered in a timely manner. For luxury auto brands, meeting production deadlines can be a challenging task, but for customers it is one of the most important criteria for owning a luxury car ([see story](#)).