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# Kiwi inventor revolutionises gearbox

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*ONE News* Zeroshift inventor Bill Martin

Kiwi inventor Bill Martin has developed a gearbox that looks set to consign current manual and automatic transmissions to the dustbin of history.

The last big breakthrough in automatic gearboxes was in 1928 with synchromesh.

Now, 90 years later Martin's Zeroshift has the potential to shake up the entire motor industry.

Martin's system replaces synchromesh, making it smoother than changing gears on a manual gearbox. Place a cup of water on the dashboard and a car fitted with Zeroshift will see the water tilt back as the car accelerates seamlessly, rather than sloshing back and forth.

It is also greener, with 10% fewer emissions than cars running a traditional automatic gearbox.

"You've got the efficiency of a manual, the emissions of a manual, but you've got better acceleration than a manual because you're not going through neutral," says Martin.

He says the reason for people buying a manual versus an automatic will change with the introduction of the new technology.

"There won't be any major penalty for price - won't be any major penalty for fuel consumption...I'm expecting the take up of automatics to increase," says Martin

It is also cheaper to make than an automatic gearbox and Martin believes Zeroshift will end up replacing all transmissions.

Zeroshift is working with major global automotive players and expects to go into production in 2011, starting with motorbikes and followed by trucks and cars.

"In spite of what the industry is going through they're still forced to come out the other end of it with a greener product and they're very, very mindful of their costs," says Martin.

And, with around 80 million cars manufactured a year, that will leave Martin in the driving seat.



[Steve Marshall](#) - Steve Marshall is TVNZ's Australia Correspondent

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