

VW boss attacks Tesla for “barely selling 80,000 cars a year”

The remarks were made during a discussion of the future of the auto industry.

[Jonathan M. Gitlin](#) -



[Enlarge](#) / Matthias Müller, CEO of Volkswagen, at the Volkswagen Preview Night prior to the 2017 Frankfurt Auto Show.

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Well, this one will certainly set the cat among the pigeons. Via the [Daily Kanban](#), we came across this video of Volkswagen CEO Matthias Müller ripping Tesla during a panel discussion on [the future of the automotive industry](#). Prompted by a comment from the moderator, Müller laid into the electric car company for its small production volumes, [regular quarterly losses](#), and for [firing hundreds of workers](#).

Per Daily Kanban's translation:

Now I really need to say a few words about Tesla: With all respect, there are some world champions of big announcements in this world—I don't want to name names. There are companies that barely sell 80,000 cars a year. Then there are companies like Volkswagen that sell 11 million cars this year, and produce a profit of 13 or 14 billion euro. If I am correctly informed, Tesla each quarter destroys millions of dollars in the three digits, and it willy-nilly fires its workers. Social responsibility? Please. We should not not get carried away and compare apples with oranges.

The attack comes at a tough time for Tesla. The Model 3, the company's new mass-market EV, is mired in "[production hell](#)," with Tesla having little chance of meeting its goal of [building 20,000 in the month of December](#). And there has been a spate of allegations of harassment at the company's factory, with workers reporting [racial](#) and [now anti-LGBT abuse](#).

Still, it's a brave move by Müller, as VW Group has not been without its own troubles. The diesel emissions scandal is now in its second year, [with arrests made in both the US and Germany](#). And while the fallout resulted in [Müller getting his job](#), it has also [cost VW Group tens of billions of dollars](#) in fines, write-offs, and losses. As a result, VW Group—which is one of the world's three largest automakers—is aggressively pivoting toward electric cars; at this year's Frankfurt auto show, Müller announced [50 battery EVs and 30 new plug-in hybrid EVs](#) will be coming during the next 13 years.