

Re: Electric Vehicles saved from the shredder

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- *From:* "Rob Dekker" <rob@xxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Thu, 5 Jun 2008 17:32:26 -0700
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"daestrom" <daestrom@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
[news:48472ff4\\$0\\$30145\\$4c368faf@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:48472ff4$0$30145$4c368faf@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

"Rob Dekker" <rob@xxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
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"daestrom" <daestrom@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
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<snip>

People didn't like the need to drive all around LA looking for a charging station and then finding them out of order. Nor did they like having to call a tow truck when they went dead. (who would?)

You are right : American consumers are used to pumping at a gas station at regular intervals, they are not used to charging their car at regular intervals. For people to change, an incentive is needed. And that incentive was not that strong at the end of the 90's with lead-acid batteries and \$20/gallon oil. Now that all that changed (batteries did, and oil price did), but we don't have any production EVs (or even plug-in hybrids) around.

Yet the memory of investors is still there. A few enthusiasts such as yourself obviously would clamor to get an electric. But do you think it's worth designing a whole new production line for 4000 orders? or even 10,000?? Americans are just getting 'used to

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the idea' of gas-powered hybrids. Certainly as they grow in number and PHEV's become available there will be more.

Frankly, GM only did the EV-1 because of legislation, not because there was any real market for it. Until there is a solid market, there is no real reason for any manufacturer to invest millions (billions??). If you owned stock in some company making 'widgets', would you want them spending all your dividends inventing a 'wocket' that nobody wants to buy?

Go watch the movie. It's really interesting.

I have. I think many of its points are unsubstantiated conspiracy-theory nonsense. They offer arguments like, "well it *must* be GM deliberately stopped it". But they don't offer any evidence other than the filmmaker's own *interpretation* of events.

I have a hard time understanding your point, and how you interpreted the facts.

Do you argue that GM did NOT deliberately stop the program ?
They did, and they gave their arguments (cost too high to produce them, batteries not ready and too costly, don't think anyone will buy them etc etc).

The point of the movie (as far as I interpret it) is that there were many other factors are work (GM's reluctance to move away from the ICE, oil company interest, government pet-projects, lack of willpower at CARB, focusing on status-quo 'bigger-is-better' thinking (of all groups, including consumers) etc etc, which eventually let to a decision that killed off a revolutionary (and in many ways successful) vehicle that had the potential to change the world forever.

Here is my point :

Now that oil supplies will start to reduce 3% annually for the foreseeable future, that is really what we need : a revolution in automotive fuel-economy of the US car fleet (going to 60 or 80 mpg immediately, and going to full electric in 20 years. We are past-due to 'kick' our oil-addiction in my opinion. Please see my previous post "Can anyone wake up GM".

And in that context, shredding electrical vehicles and introducing the Hummer H2 at the same time are two steps in the wrong direction.

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GM finally gave up and didn't want to keep supporting this 'white elephant'. End of story.

daestrom

P.S. Now with hybrids that can be filled up at any gas station, and the price of gas over \$4 a gallon, people are more interested in hybrids than they ever were in EV.

True. But these only get 40 mpg (Asian models) or 20 mpg (GM models). We need 60 mpg vehicles now, and 80 mpg vehicles next years, if we want to continue to drive same miles in the face of 3% annual oil supply decline. Plug-in hybrids should be here already. Electric drive should be here already. EVs should be back already. But it's all postponed till 2010 or later.

In *your* opinion. Obviously the market doesn't agree or they would already be here.

GM just announced that there has been a 'breath-taking' shift in the auto market. The number 1 seller is no longer Fords F-150 pickup truck but has been superceded by high MPG imports. They are closing four of their SUV plants.
http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080603/ap_on_bi_ge/gm_shareholders

My point exactly.

High time too IMHO. America's honeymoon with big gas-guzzlers is long overdue for a reality check. It will be a painful adjustment for many workers and supporting companies, but better to make these adjustments gradually than any sort of overnight, radical change to all EV.

I totally agree. But rather than let automakers decide what we should drive, why not let the market decide ? People often buy cars to 'make a statement'. You are what you drive, and not ALL Americans drive huge gas-guzzlers.

Here in the (environmentally contious) SF bay area there are some 8 million vehicles on the road. Close to half a million new cars sold each year. Most are rather modest sized (but pretty luxurious) vehicles. The prius was a hit right from the start. Even for

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the top-of-the-line
Tesla roadster there is a market here.

So why not introduce some revolutionary high-mpg or EV models ? GM already showed that technically they can do it and be bold and advanced. So at least bring out some high-performance model(s) with electric drive, small battery and an small ICE/generator (like that mini with PML wheel motors at 80 mpg). I'll bet you a good amount that they sell better than Hummers here. And if gas increases in price again over next year, maybe they even sell better than any other model.

Rob

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