

ELECTRICITY GARNERS THE LION'S SHARE AT THE FRANKFURT AUTO SHOW

Illustrating carmaker's efforts towards increased respect for the environment, **electric and hybrid vehicles have taken the place of honor at the 63rd Frankfurt International Auto Show**, which has opened its doors until September 27.

The big news was Renault's presentation of four electric concept cars, in anticipation of their line-up arriving in dealer showrooms in 2009: the sub-compact Twizy Z.E., the Zoe Z.E. and Fluence Z.E. sedans, and the mixed-utility Kangoo Z.E. paneled passenger van. Concerning the general electric vehicle arena; Renault is banking on a new business model whereby consumers buying vehicles would sign up for electric energy supply contracts that include battery rental. Vehicle recharging would take place in 6 to 8 hours at normal speed on a standard domestic 220V (10A or 16A) outlet, say automakers, and eventually in 20 to 30 minutes on a rapid three-phase 400V (32A to 63A) current; or alternatively through an exclusive "quickdrop" rapid battery exchange system.



The Twizy ZE from Renault

The French auto builder has teamed with German power supplier RWE, and announced **an agreement to accelerate the development of electric mobility in Germany**. Beginning in 2010, a pilot program will get underway in Berlin, to be deployed at a later date in other German cities. 100 pilot production vehicles will be in operation using recharging infrastructure installed by RWE. RWE is also in participation with Daimler, testing 100 Smart electric cars and 500 charging terminals in Berlin.

Another contender in the electric race is PSA, introducing its Peugeot iOn – developed with *Mitsubishi* (to hit showrooms at the close of 2010), its concept car the Peugeot BB1, and its Citroën Berlingo first, a light utility vehicle developed with the *Venturi* company for response to tenders for bid by *La Poste*. *BMW* and *Daimler* for their part are offering the electric sub-compacts Mini E from *BMW* and the Smart Electric Drive from *Daimler*, with *Volkswagen* unveiling its own prototype E-Up all-electric. At India's *Reva* stand were the NXG (200 km autonomy) and the NXR (160 km autonomy), and at *Ford*, the Focus BEV, destined for a testing program in England in 2010, and the Tourneo BEV with its sights on the American market. Korea's *Hyundai* announced upcoming tests on an electric version of its i10.



The Peugeot iOn electric: in showrooms at year-end 2010 (photo : DR)

Electric mobility is finally turning out sports models, with *Audi* unveiling its e-tron, a sports car with 250 km of autonomy, and *Mercedes* presenting the SLS AMG all-electric.



The new Prius plug-in hybrid rechargeable from Toyota (photo : DR)

The major automakers are also counting on hybrid vehicles. Pioneer hybrid maker *Toyota* is introducing the worldwide launch of its Auris HSD Full Hybrid sedan, along with a plug-in hybrid version of its new Prius, the subject of 2009 European trial tests in Strasbourg in partnership with *EDF*. The plug-in rechargeable hybrid is also present at *Opel* with its Ampera, at *BMW* with its Vision concept car, and at *PSA* in the *Citroën* concept car, the Revolte. At the *Mercedes* booth, the Vision S500 plug-in was on display, and at *PSA*, the 3008 HYbrid4 – the first hybrid diesel from the group (available from Spring 2011). The diesel hybrid is also the choice for the Sorento concept car from Korea's *Kia*, who are also behind the LPG hybrid concept car, the Forte.

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