Potential For Affordable Hybrid Cars in China

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However Consumers Claim Insufficient Info

Expected to become the largest auto market in the world within the next decade, China will be at the forefront of the environmental challenges that are faced by the car industry. A recent survey conducted by one of the worldâ€™s leading market research companies, TNS, shows that hybrid cars could lead the way in the fight against pollution in the mainland.

The online study among car owners and purchase intenders in mainland China indicates that 8 out of 10 car buyers who are aware of hybrid technology (76 percent of interviewed consumers) would be ready to purchase a hybrid car at equal price to a regular gasoline powered vehicle. Every second person interviewed would even be willing to pay a 10 percent premium.

However, the majority of those aware of hybrid technology still seem insufficiently informed about hybrid cars. This contributes to a perception that hybrid cars may lack in reliability and that they will have elevated maintenance costs.

â€œThe results undeniably show huge opportunities for hybrid cars in the China marketâ€• says Klaus Paur, Shanghai based TNS Automotive Director for North Asia. â€œHowever, car manufacturers still have to do some homework before they can really exploit the potential in the market. There is a strong need to better inform the market about hybrid technology and also to bring prices down to competitive levels.â€•

To reduce pollution, the majority of car buyers bank on alternative energies and improved fuel efficiency, while to a lesser degree driving restrictions are thought to be effective.

â€œConsumers understand that driving cars has a negative impact on the environmentâ€•, Klaus adds. â€œHowever, they expe car manufacturers to present solutions to the problem rather than limiting their own mobility.â€•