

Electric Cars To Spark £7.2bn Motor Industry Revival

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300,000 electric cars to hit Britain's roads by 2014

Britain's ailing car industry will receive a £7.2bn boost from electric car sales over the next three years, a new study reveals today. (1)

The findings from the GfK Automotive report show that, by 2014, 300,000 electric cars will hit Britain's roads as consumers look for greener ways to travel (2). This means that, on current sales levels, electric cars would account for one-in-twenty of the total cars sold in the UK over the coming years. (3)

The study shows that an additional half-a-million electric cars could be sold if consumers' barriers to electric car purchase can be overcome. (4)

Seven in ten motorists have so called "range anxiety" concerns over the distances electric cars can travel. The same proportion are concerned over the limited availability of charging points, while half have reservations over the length of time taken to charge the vehicles. (5)

And although the government is committed to subsidising electric transport with its "Plug-in car grant" a £5,000 contribution towards an electric car the message has not yet reached the public. Two-thirds of people admit to being put off by the cost of the vehicles. (6)

Mark Durham, automotive expert at GfK Automotive, said:

"With so many people on the verge of going electric, the government, manufacturers and energy suppliers need to grasp the nettle and address peoples' concerns.

"The government needs to better-communicate the plug-in car grant and the industry should address legitimate concerns over range anxiety. Doing both will spark a revolution, and give the British car industry a shot in the arm at a time when it is in need of some good news."

Notes to editors

GfK Automotive interviewed 5,053 UK citizens online between 16th and 30th November 2010

(1) 1.8 per cent of people say they will definitely buy an electric car in the next few years which works out at 300,000 people across the car-buying population (19.8million households). The new Nissan electric car - the Nissan Leaf - is advertised on the web as selling at £24,000 so the total value of 300,000 electric cars could be £7.2 bn

(2) 2,030,846 cars were sold in the UK last year (source: SMMT) which if repeated over three years would lead to car sales of 6,092,538, meaning 300,000 units represents five per cent of this

(3) Almost 3 per cent of people say they would buy an electric car if barriers were overcome which works out at 500,000 people across the car-buying population (19.8 million households)

(4) Chief concerns:

* 68 per cent of those questioned were concerned over limited battery range

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* 68 per cent of those questioned were concerned over limited availability of charging points

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* 54 per cent of those questioned were concerned about the time taken to charge battery

(5) 64 per cent of those questioned were concerned about the price of electric cars

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