
MOBILITY OPTIONS

Dear reader,

There is little doubt about the direction the global auto industry is taking, as far as future mobility is concerned. Electromobility is the buzzword in markets world over, and manufacturers are ensuring they don't miss the bus – investing billions to develop sustainable electric solutions for the vehicles of tomorrow.

Nissan and General Motors took giant strides by launching the all-electric Leaf and petrol-electric hybrid Volt, respectively. Both these vehicles have occupied considerable mind space among manufacturers and consumers alike, but sales have not been inspiring, to say the least. A recent incident, where batteries in the Chevy Volt caught fire during crash tests, isn't doing much to its reputation either.

With greater curbs on CO₂ emissions being imposed across various markets, carmakers also have the challenge of making their conventional engines cleaner. And there lies the biggest deterrent for advocates of alternate drives – with cleaner and more fuel-efficient IC engines, consumers will remain reluctant to pay a premium on greener cars.

Experts argue that the IC engine is here to stay, and they'll stay for a good part of the 2020s. Over this time, researchers would ensure IC engines get further refined in terms of CO₂ emissions and improved fuel-efficiency. The use of turbochargers in vehicles will increase, and so will the use of better fuel-injection systems.

Such a situation will also lead to more collaboration among auto makers. A case in point could be the agreement between Toyota and BMW to jointly work on lithium-ion batteries and sourcing of diesel engines. Many such deals are likely in days to come.

The focus of our first regular issue is on some of the technologies and products that would be on display at the Auto Expo 2012. A feature, we particularly hope would interest you, is the one on Honda's Earth Dreams Technology. These next-gen technologies may not land up in India sooner, but would certainly play a key role in the company's future in this country.

Here's wishing each one of you a very happy and successful 2012!



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