

Automakers Go Green, But Are They Making Green?

Earth Day Highlights Growing Discrepancy Between Number of New Hybrid and Electric Vehicle Models and Declining Sales

CHICAGO, April 19, 2017 [/PRNewswire/](#) -- As Earth Day approaches, Cars.com digs into its mountains of data to determine how the hybrid and electric vehicle (EV) market is faring. The company found that while automakers continue to pump out hybrid and electric models – 55 in 2016 and 59 in 2017 – sales have tumbled over the past five years. Is it the pressure from unrealistic legislation requirements driving this trend or are automakers betting on a comeback?

"The hybrid and EV market is more splintered than ever," said David Greene, a data analyst at Cars.com. "It's an interesting phenomenon to see automakers continue rolling out new models while sales continue to fall. With that said, we're still seeing an interest to go green from shoppers with significant searches for hybrids and EVs on Cars.com."

The company found that luxury brands comprise nearly 50 percent of all hybrid and electric vehicle searches on Cars.com. The top five most-searched luxury brands in 2016 were Lexus, BMW, Tesla, Porsche and Infiniti. When looking at all brands, Toyota and Lexus dominated shoppers' attention. The Toyota Motor Company hybrids and EVs were searched more in 2016 than the next five brands combined, with the Prius family making up 12.4 percent of total hybrid and electric vehicle searches.

Most Searched Hybrid and Electric Vehicle Brands (2016)

Most Searched Hybrid/EV Brands	Total Share of Searches	Most Searched Luxury Hybrid/EV Brands	Total Share Searches	Most Searched Non-Luxury Hybrid/EV Brands	Total Share Searches
Toyota	23.4%	Lexus	33.7%	Toyota	45.9%
Lexus	16.5%	BMW	29.5%	Chevrolet	12.7%
BMW	14.5%	Tesla	13.2%	Honda	11.7%
Chevrolet	6.5%	Porsche	5.5%	Ford	10.6%
Tesla	6.5%	Infiniti	4.3%	Nissan	4.9%
Honda	6.0%	-	-	-	-
Ford	5.4%	-	-	-	-

Most Searched Hybrid and Electric Vehicles (2016)

Most Searched Hybrid/EV Vehicles	Total Share of Searches	Most Searched Luxury Hybrid/EV Vehicles	Total Share of Searches	Most Searched Non-Luxury Hybrid/EV Vehicles	Total Share of Searches
Toyota Prius	7.8%	Lexus RX 450h	10.0%	Toyota Prius	15.2%
Lexus RX 450h	4.9%	Tesla Model S	9.2%	Chevrolet Volt	8.5%
Tesla Model S	4.5%	BMW i8	8.0%	Toyota RAV4 Hybrid	7.0%
Chevrolet Volt	4.3%	BMW 330e	7.7%	Honda Accord Hybrid	5.3%
BMW i8	3.9%	Lexus ES 300h	5.8%	Toyota Camry Hybrid	4.9%

"While we continue to see significant interest in eco-friendly vehicles on Cars.com, consumers aren't buying – primarily due to shrinking gas prices and shoppers' desire for crossovers and trucks," said Greene. "The reality is that automakers are building these cars because they have to to meet Federal CAFE legislation requirements. And I'm anticipating even more hybrid and EV models in the coming years."

Gas prices fell \$1.22 in the first quarter of 2017 compared to five years ago, based on Cars.com's analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Energy. Price of gas was estimated at \$3.66 per gallon in Q1 2012 and fell to \$2.44 per gallon in Q1 2016. Meanwhile, strict government regulations are encouraging further production of hybrids and EVs. In August 2012, new CAFE regulations were announced for model year 2017-2025 vehicles to increase fuel economy to 54.5 miles per gallon for cars and light-duty trucks – a goal that many feel is still

unrealistic.

***Internal Cars.com Data, April 2017

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