

Electric cars for short hops in new scheme

LONDON, UK: Electric cars becoming an economically rational choice for short hop journeys and now 100% electric vehicles to be made available in pioneering pilot scheme for PwC.



PwC will pilot two 100% electric vehicles at the firm's central London offices as part of a pioneering new scheme to lower the firm's overall transport emissions, the first of its kind for a corporate fleet.

The deal with Hertz, will encourage employees to swap taxi journeys of over six miles with booking the cars from the firm's central London offices in Westminster or Southwark.

Bridget Jackson, head of sustainability, PwC said: "The journeys our people take at work in central London can be to locations with no direct transport link, or involve carrying materials either too bulky or confidential for public transport. We only need to convert around two of those journeys a day that currently use cabs, to our new electric vehicles to make this add up for us.

Committed to working with new technologies

"It's a pioneering initiative for PwC and fits our commitment to work with new technologies, test how they fit in our mix of needs, so we can reduce our overall environmental impact. We need to understand the day to day reality of working with electric cars, just as we test any other transport on offer, so we can lower our overall emissions, potentially rolling out the scheme nationwide."

The two five-door, small hatch cars have a 150km range, are 100% electric, and provide a live member car care support line via the Connect by Hertz in car communications system, including statistics on emissions and usage. The cars will be charged at the two PwC offices or via Hertz's wider network, or Source London's network. Employees could also charge them overnight via a three pin socket.

Research by PwC's automotive practice estimates that by 2020, pure electric vehicles (PEVs) could represent between 2 and 5% of the total output of light vehicles. The depth and speed at which electric vehicles will be able to penetrate the market will rely on several factors, but there remains little doubt that this technology will have a significant impact on the

automotive industry moving forward.

Electric cars could have a big role to play in the future

The auto industry is responsible for 15% of global carbon emissions, amounting to roughly 8 billion tons annually. Although environmental protection has been the primary driver for change, other factors such as the price volatility of fossil fuels and energy independence have also helped drive a change to alternative and renewable energy sources.

Richard Gane, head of automotive, PwC commented: "Electric vehicles (EV) could play a very big part in the future of the automotive market as firms and individuals becoming increasingly conscious of the need to switch to more environmental alternatives to lower our emissions.

"EVs may well represent a more promising transport option to reducing vehicle emissions and creating a more sustainable passenger vehicle fleet but the sector does face its own challenges.

"Comparative battery performance, availability of battery materials, storage technology, mileage range and the need for a 'smart grid' that can recharge millions of EVs using low-carbon electricity without overloading local distribution circuits are all issues manufacturers need to think about. However, the automotive market is ready to take on the challenge."

Notes

1. PwC estimates for the Global EV market can be accessed [here](#).
2. Two Mitsubishi i-MiEV cars will be based at Embankment Place and more London sites. They will use Connect by Hertz technology - providing 24/7 booking facilities via website or phone line, and will also offer an in-car call feature providing support to drivers direct from Hertz, and usage statistics. The cars will have access to the Hertz charging network in London.
3. Boris Johnson, Mayor of London announced a 100% discount from the congestion charge for electric drivers in the Capital, as well as other low emission vehicles, which offers electric vehicle owners using the zone a potential saving of more than £2000 (about R22 000) a year. Plans underway for the roll out of public charging points are part of a strategy to position London as 'the electric vehicle capital of Europe' according to the Mayor.

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