



Back to the future as electric concept cars dominate at Geneva Motor Show 2019



Geneva Motor Show saw a rash of new electric vehicles and concepts from Honda, Nissan, Fiat and Volkswagen, as auto industry enters the era of mass electrification. By Paul Fisher.

Honda e Prototype

Honda's so-called EV for Europe made its debut at Geneva. Positioned as an "urban commuter", the car features a range of over 200km and a 'fast charge' functionality providing 80% range in 30 minutes.

"The shift towards electrification has gathered pace considerably. Environmental challenges continue to drive demand for cleaner mobility. Technology marches on unrelenting and people are starting to shift their view of the car itself," said, Tom Gardner, senior vice president, Honda Motor Europe.



Back to the future as electric concept cars dominate at Geneva Motor Show 2019

The production version of the Honda e Prototype will be unveiled later this year. Customers will be able to place a reservation for the car in selected European markets in early summer. To date Honda has received 15,000 registrations of interest for the e Prototype. The company also pledged to make 100% of its European car sales electric by 2025.

Nissan IMQ concept crossover

Nissan showed its IMQ concept crossover, with the emphasis very much on concept. The company said it was a design showcase equipped with an all-wheel-drive version of e-POWER, the company's EV propulsion technology. "It reflects Nissan's position as a leader in crossovers, with a look that pushes the boundaries of what a European compact crossover can be," said the company in a press release.

"Already Nissan is the world's leader in mass-market EV technologies and a fully electrified Europe is now within our sights," said Roel de Vries, corporate vice president at Nissan, "with e-POWER arriving on European roads within the next two years, we will bring the benefits of Nissan Intelligent Mobility to more customers"

Fiat Concept Centoventi

Closer in spirit to the Honda e Prototype, the Fiat Concept Centoventi also evokes memories of the iconic Fiat Panda of the 1980s and the original Fiat 500 of the 1950s. Fiat are positioning the Centoventi as an electric utility vehicle with mass appeal. The car is designed to be ultra configurable; customers can choose the accessories and adapt the interior spaces according to their needs. A modular battery pack allows drivers to extend the range from 62 to 310 miles by buying or renting additional battery units.



Back to the future as electric concept cars dominate at Geneva Motor Show 2019

Six features (bumpers, polycarbonate roof, colour, instrument cluster, batteries and digital tailgate), would be installed at retailers, while another 114 accessories including the sound system, dashboard and door storage compartments and seat cushions, can be purchased on-line and fitted by the customer at home.

Fiat plans that cup-holders or a document-holder could be printed using a 3D printer. The company sees this as a new business model for automotive accessories, enabling them to be resold or traded on the internet.

Volkswagen ID. BUGGY

Volkswagen out-concepted everyone with the its ID. BUGGY. Based on the classic Californian Beetle-based dune buggies of the 1960s, this modern update is built on the company's modular electric drive matrix (MEB) platform.

“The ID. BUGGY demonstrates the broad spectrum of emission-free mobility that can be achieved with the MEB within the Volkswagen brand. But we want to open up the platform for third-party suppliers”, said Ralf Brandstätter, COO of the Volkswagen brand.

A lithium ion rechargeable battery supplies the electricity for the ID. BUGGY’s 150 kW/204 PS electric drive motor, placed in the rear just like the original dune buggies. An additional electric motor in the front axle is planned to create an AWD with an electric prop shaft.

