Why you should support improvements in electric car chargers

People simply *don't* think of electric cars as long-distance vehicles. It's a car to run down the street and grab some groceries, make the 15 miles commute to work or—like one of my friends—if you live in Hawaii and can't *really* drive that far. It's not an option most people think about for a regular car.

In essence, half the battle is overcoming mental prejudice against electric vehicles.

Tesla Motors—a company started in 2003 with the sole purpose of creating awesome (expensive) electric cars—has decided to change that mindset. The company recently implemented a system of six solar-powered super charge stations [1] in California. The hope is that the super-chargers will entice consumers into thinking of the Tesla cars as all around vehicles—not just tooling around the neighborhood vehicles.

These aren't just your average industrial chargers. These are 90 kW super-charged solar powered chargers. Tesla calls it, "an adrenaline shot for your battery," but it's essentially a half-hour charge to jolt your battery up to half-full. A half-charged battery will get you about 150 miles in the Tesla Model S. It looks like it will be at least enough to get you to another station, if not to your final destination.

As an added bonus, the solar chargers—designed by SolarCity--will generate more power than is used by the cars, so it will actually create a positive transfer add power back *into* the grid.

Though the six chargers are located in California, the homeland of Tesla Motors, the company plans to install the units across the country are in the works. The California chargers will be open to the public in October. Plus, they're hoping to come up with a viable home option for the chargers.

Brace yourself, I'm about to make a bold statement.

This is a **great** idea.

Electric cars—like solar and wind energy—are the future. Regardless of the fact that they haven't advanced to a point of sustainability or widespread adoption, these green technologies need to be supported with an infrastructure that encourages their growth. True, they're not to that point *yet,* but they will be.

Change—particularly a massive overhaul of the automotive industry—is going to be hard. Consider this the "teen years" of the electric car; it's awkward, expensive, no one *really* understands it, and it hasn't quite come into its own yet. Innovations like the Tesla charger are helping the electric car along its way by supplying the required infrastructure to make the cars usable in everyday life.

At some point, electric cars will become the norm. Just like the days of incandescent light bulbs will fade into the past when LEDs and halogen reach a cheaper price point, so will the days of gas-guzzling Hummers. The cars will become cheaper and the chargers more powerful and slowly, electric cars will infiltrate American households. This is just the first step on the road to an electric car utopia.

You, as a consumer, have choices to make. You can choose to run around declaring the sky is falling and denying electric vehicles will ever be a "thing" *or* you can embrace the technology, wait out the inevitable technological hiccups that accompany such a change, and drive off—quietly—into the sunset.

Not to mention, they're free AND adding power back into the grid. What's to dislike?

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