In defense of the Tesla Model S

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When Motor Trend announced an electric car was their pick for Car of the Year, something tells me you could have heard a pin drop in the car world. An *electric* car? They must have rigged the vote.

Well, my friends, I hate to break it to you, but Consumer Reports [1] just agreed with Motor Trend, effectively doubling down on the support. The all-electric Tesla S is officially a legitimate vehicle purchase.

Alright, before we get started, let's just acknowledge that at a base price of about $60,000 with the 40 kWh , a lot of consumers could be priced out of this particular purchase, but it still provides a glimpse into what could be in the future. You'll get a $7500 federal tax credit, but still, that's a serious investment.

I've talked a little bit about the Tesla chargers [2], but I haven't focused on the car itself. This vehicle, despite being fully electric, can travel a reported 265 miles—Motor Trend puts it at a tested 238—and pretty much blows the wheels off any competing electric car. When you run out of power, you can charge the battery halfway in about 30 minutes.

The EPA rated the Tesla Model S at 89 MPGe overall with an 85-kWh battery pack. It's also available in 40 kWh and 60 kWh. The 89 MPGe means that the overall cost will be about 4 cents per mile in energy costs, according to consumer reports.

Still wondering why the consumer judges are drooling all over its pristine paint?

“The 2013 Motor Trend Car of the Year is one of the quickest American four-doors ever built. It drives like a sports car, eager and agile and instantly responsive. But it's also as smoothly effortless as a Rolls-Royce, can carry almost as much stuff as a Chevy Equinox, and is more efficient than a Toyota Prius. Oh, and it'll sashay up to the valet at a luxury hotel like a supermodel working a Paris catwalk. By any measure, the Tesla Model S is a truly remarkable automobile, perhaps the most accomplished all-new luxury car since the original Lexus LS 400. That's why it's our 2013 Car of the Year,” according to Motor Trend [3].

One thing that really sets the Tesla apart is it’s considered a luxury sedan; theoretically, this could be a decent family car. Plus, based on the picture, the designers nailed that luxury feeling for the cockpit, I mean dashboard, dominated by a large touchscreen that controls basically everything in the car.

The AC-induction type motor, props to Nikola Tesla, is what gives the mostly aluminum car its weight. It also makes it a pretty safe car because the weight is carried so low. Motor Trends claims the car is quick and responsive, and according to Tesla, it passed the federal crash standards (impact tested at 35 mph) and then some (it tested to 50mph).

Right now, we’re stuck in the vicious circle of no one wants an electric car because there aren’t any charging stations, and no one wants to build the infrastructure for a car that no one actually owns. It’s a game of chicken that someone is going to have to make the first move on. If electric cars are something we’re seriously

considering as a nation, we need to invest in the infrastructure, while the car companies find a way to make the decent electric cars cheaper or the cheaper electric car decent.

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