

February 2009 Hybrid Market Dashboard

read more online at <http://www.hybridcars.com/market-dashboard.html>

Overview

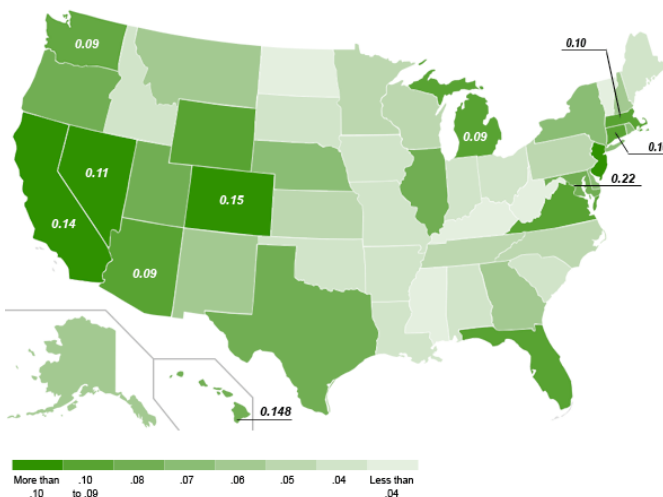
Don't be fooled by the slight uptick in car sales from January: the auto market is still in miserable shape. Overall sales are down 41 percent from February 2008, and have sunk to levels not seen since the late 1960s. Sales of hybrid models have fared somewhat better—falling 29 percent—but are still well below last year's levels. The only model showing sales growth last month was the Lexus RX 400h; most likely the effect of heavy discounting as the 2008 RX400h nears the end of its production cycle and Lexus begins to prepare for the launch of the 2010 RX450h later in the year.

The RX Hybrid wasn't the only model to have cash on the hood last month. Incentive spending on all vehicles ballooned in February as manufacturers desperately tried to "move metal." Carmakers offered discounts averaging almost \$3,000 per vehicle, and hybrids were not exempt. Dealer or consumer incentives were available on numerous 2009 hybrids, including the Chevrolet Tahoe Hybrid, the Honda Civic Hybrid, the Toyota Prius, Toyota Camry Hybrid, and the Nissan Altima Hybrid. Clearly many car shoppers have taken themselves out of the market, but manufacturers seem to believe that some buyers will jump back in if the deals are attractive enough.

If any new hybrid has a chance in this market, it's the 2009 Honda Insight that's due to launch next month. Last week, Honda announced pricing for the new Insight: base models will start at just \$19,800, plus \$670 in destination charges. That's \$2,200 below the cost of the cheapest Toyota Prius, a full 10 percent discount. And Honda will be making a major marketing effort to portray the Insight as the first hybrid affordable to mainstream buyers. Of course, the Insight's hybrid technology isn't as advanced or its fuel economy as high as the Prius, but in this market many buyers are likely to see the Insight as an accessible option that delivers good features and respectable fuel economy. Sales results in Japan so far have been promising, doubling Honda's initial estimates. However, Honda might have a hard time reaching its ambitious goal of selling 100,000 units per year of the "value hybrid" in North America—until the economy shows signs of recovery.

Luxury Hybrid Sales Intensity, All States and DC

"Luxury" hybrids are \$40K+ MSRP and include all Lexus models and all GM full-sized SUV hybrids. Based on Hybrids per 1,000 Households.

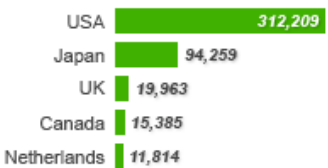


SOURCE: R. L. POLK & CO

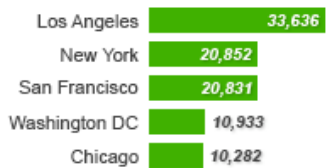
2008 global hybrid registrations



Top 5 global hybrid markets



Top 5 US hybrid markets



SOURCE: R. L. POLK & CO.

US Sales

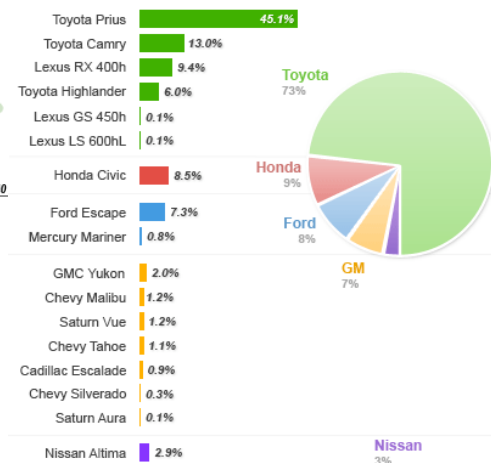
Our information is based on hybrid sales as reported by the manufacturers. For each model, this month's sales are shown compared to sales in the previous month and at the same time last year. We also examine hybrid market share by model and manufacturer. The historical sales graph for top-selling hybrid models shows estimated 2007 volumes based on sales-to-date.

Hybrids sold in the U.S. (February 2009): **16,020**

US Hybrid Sales for February 2009

Model	Units	vs. 01/09	vs. 02/08
Prius	7,232	-10.9%	-33.6%
Camry	2,080	82.3%	-49.5%
Highlander	956	-2.8%	-50.7%
RX400h	1,502	-3.5%	30.8%
LS600hL	22	-33.3%	-80.4%
GS450h	22	-46.3%	-71.4%
Civic	1,362	26.6%	-24.7%
Escape	1,172	55.6%	-22.3%
Mariner	122	-3.9%	-47.9%
Yukon	177	5.5%	n/a
Malibu	197	35.9%	n/a
Vue	188	22.9%	208.2%
Tahoe	315	5.5%	n/a
Aura	23	21.1%	n/a
Altima	463	-28.1%	-12.5%
Escalade	139	5.5%	n/a
Silverado	47	571.4%	n/a
All hybrids	16,020	3.7%	-28.7%
All vehicles	689,794	5.0%	-41.4%

U.S. Hybrid Sales for February 2009 by Manufacturer and Model



Regional Data

Curious where hybrid buyers live? We present the data in two ways. First, we list the 15 cities and states that boast the largest numbers of new hybrids on their roads within the past year. For example, residents in the New York City area put over 8,000 new hybrids on the road in 2007. Second, we adjust for population and look at hybrids per person (in states) or per household (in metro areas). This lets us include cities like Portland, OR: a city that has fewer overall vehicles (and thus fewer hybrids) but has more hybrids per capita than anywhere else.

States with the Most Hybrid Sales

Rank	State	New Hybrids*
1	California	74,932
2	New York	17,184
3	Texas	16,349
4	Florida	16,250
5	Illinois	12,817

Most Popular States for Hybrids

Rank	State	New Hybrids per 1000 residents*
1	California	2.070
2	District of Columbia	2.050
3	Oregon	1.640
4	Washington	1.600
5	Vermont	1.560
U.S. State Average		0.99

Cities with the Most Hybrid Sales

Rank	Metropolitan Area	New Hybrids*
1	Los Angeles	33,636
2	New York	20,852
3	San Francisco	20,831
4	Washington DC	10,933
5	Chicago	10,282

Most Popular Cities for Hybrid

Rank	Metropolitan Area	New Hybrids per 1000 residents*
1	Portland, OR	12.170
2	San Francisco	8.840
3	Monterrey, CA	7.160
4	Santa Barbara, CA	6.940
5	San Diego	6.570
U.S. Metro Area Average		2.180

*Registrations CYTD December 2008