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Swedish Giant Volvo heads down the hybrid route

By [Eddie Cunningham](#)
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'MOSTLY' electric cars with emissions as low as 50g/km will be sold by Volvo as soon as 2012

The Swedish car giant is planning to sell plug-in hybrids rather than going down the fully electric route, clearly preferring this semi-green technology over full electric vehicles at this point.

Volvo's thinking is simple. As long as there is a small petrol or diesel engine in place the car will not be limited by the number of kilometres it can take from a single electric charge.

The company has already teamed up with a Swedish energy company that has been working on hybrid engines since 2007.

As with Chevrolet's Volt, the Volvo plug-ins will be aimed at the average commuter. The hybrid element in Volvo's planned products may have a cost penalty, but that is likely to be far outweighed by the greater range and the 'comfort' of having a fall back power supply, which it is hoped will appeal to buyers.

According to reports, Volvo is intent on making the plug-in hybrid even cleaner by developing a system that relies on a diesel generator which can run the next-generation renewable synthetic diesel.

This diesel can be made without refining crude oil. However, Volvo is hedging its bets a bit. It says it will, for short urban driving, go on to make a full electric car.

The big challenge in this market is to cut down on the cost of batteries at the same times as extending the distances covered by the vehicles.

Volvo plans to unveil three V70 plug-in hybrid prototypes that will demonstrate the capabilities of its new technology

- *Eddie Cunningham*

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