

North American International Auto Show Rejuvenated

Electric/Hybrid/Concept show stoppers; Breathtaking displays; Big Crowds and expectations

by: Justin Rydzewski

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Since 1965, COBO Center has been host to one of the world's greatest auto shows. Though the show has had its share of ups-and-downs through out the years, the 2012 North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) may just prove to be the precursor to the long awaited turn-around in the automotive industry.

Vehicle displays provide a healthy dose of sensory overload, exciting new concept cars tickle the imagination, all housed in a newly revamped COBO Center. The BMW display has High-Definition video feed that features incredible visual stimuli moving from wall to ceiling. The Ford display takes anxious visitors on a ride up to the ceiling where interactive videos and sound effects await them. There are loads of driving

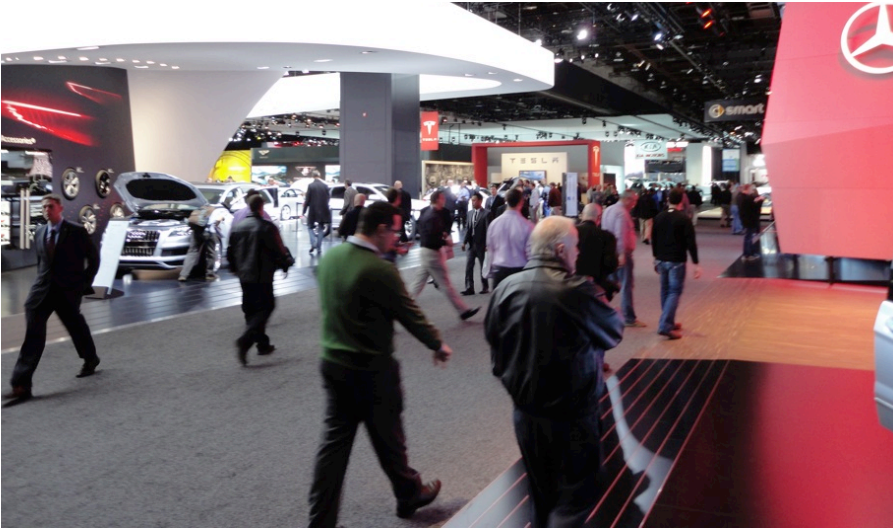


simulations and racing games setup for your entertainment, a wonderful mix of technology and fun to say the least.

This year's show includes many great looking concept cars. One of the standouts, for me at least, in the concept car department was the Chevrolet Miray (pronounced ME-Ray). Think Chevrolet Volt idea but with sporty styling and supreme performance. This concept car is a mid-electric, hybrid-powered sports car with a



*Clockwise from top left: BMW i8 Concept, Dodge Challenger SRT8, Lexus LF-LC, Chevy TRU-140S, VW E-Bugster Concept
Full-slide show on controlsservice.com*



Directly inside the NAIAS, industry suppliers take in the elaborate displays and prestige offerings from around the industry

turbocharger. The styling is out of this world. Gorgeous lines throughout the car. If this is what the future of electric cars holds, I am on-board.

Another eye-catching and jaw-dropping electric car was the BMW i8. It too is an electric/hybrid/gas powered car. Except that the i8 puts out 349hp, boasts a 0-60mph time of 4.6 seconds, and can post a top speed of 155mph (restricted). Oh, did I mention it gets 47 mpg? The futuristic styling and impressive specs will have even the Automotive purist saying, "Wow".

However, the most satisfying observation made by this author was the excitement seen in the faces of the NAIAS attendees, you could sense it in the air.

If the NAIAS is an indicator of the auto industry's health, then there is a strong heartbeat that can be felt the moment you step foot inside the entrance of the show and that is a very welcome feeling in this "been-down-too-long" town.

"Day one attendance was the strongest it has been in five years and record attendance was reported on day 3," according to North American International Auto Show chairman, Bill Perkins, in a press release.

The NAIAS should continue to report great numbers from their show for one main reason. The show does not disappoint. It is full of great cars, displays, and excitement. I believe it is almost safe to say, the NAIAS is as healthy as horsepower. 🚗

Holly, Michigan-based, Falcon Motorsports F7 Supercar.



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