



Green-Car-Guide.com

The Original UK Green Car News site



Providing Environmental Information to Car Buyers

Paul Clarke, Founder, Green-Car-Guide.com

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**For people who like cars
... and the planet**



Background

- This is an expert audience so this is a personal view - the secrets of our success! - but the same principles can be applied more widely to green car communication
- Need to go back 2 years
- Main company:
- Promote: Environmental Communication Consultancy

Promote

Environmental & sustainability marketing & communication

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Background

- Specialise in the environmental area so see issues 2-3 yrs ahead
- Motorists being told to go green - but didn't know what to do
- Finding it impossible to locate any one source of information on the latest UK green car news
- Our core competences: Environment AND cars AND communication = we'll do it ourselves!
Green-Car-Guide idea was born

Promote

Environmental & sustainability
marketing & communication

Specialist strategic marketing and
communication consultancy for
environmental and sustainability issues



Working with organisations to help them
make the most of the low carbon economy

www.proenvironment.co.uk



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What we stand for

- People love their cars
(and dogs do too)

= Cars are good - and useful

But

- 2 years ago: petrol prices rising
- Climate change issue and CO2 emissions
- So a real need to communicate about cars that were high mpg/low CO2



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About us

- Website (no paper!)
 - Latest green car news (every day)
 - Features/Road Tests
 - Events
 - Green Car Information
 - Free Green Car eNewsletter
 - Green Car News & Features Content for Tiscali Motoring
- Etc...

The screenshot shows the website's layout. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Home, News, Features, Free Money-Saving Tips, Blog, Green Car Guide, Media, About Us, and Contact. The main content area is divided into several sections: a 'How to Save Money by Greener Driving' sidebar with a 'Free Tips' link; a central banner for 'New Cars Out Now' featuring a Mazda 6, with links to 'Electric/Electric Car' and 'Peugeot 207'; a 'Forthcoming Models' section listing 'Honda i30', 'SEAT Ibiza', and 'Audi A4'; and an 'Other News' section with a link to 'Volvo introduces 1.4 TSI engine for better MPG'. A 'Winning Range Rover Rally Car uses Engine Oil made from Plants' article is also visible. A registration form for 'Free News Updates' is located in the bottom left of the main content area.

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About us

Green-Car-Guide e-Book

- Lowest Emission Cars in 10 Categories
 - Updated every month
 - Petrol/Diesel
 - Sell on-line
- (Launched with site September last year)

City Cars		
Superminis		
Small Family Cars		
Family Cars		
Executive Cars		
MPVs		
Estate Cars		
4x4s		
Open Top Cars		
Sports Cars		
1 BMW		
7 Ford		
4 Citroen		
2 Peugeot		
4 Renault		
4 Toyota		
3 Volkswagen		
3 Honda		
3 Suzuki		
2 Audi		
2 Linn		
2 Mercedes		
2 Mini		
2 Saab		
2 Skoda		
2 Volkswagen		
1 Alfa Romeo		
1 Citroen		
1 Fiat		
1 Kia		
1 Jeep		
1 Lotus		
1 Mazda		
1 Mitsubishi		
1 Opel		
1 Volvo		

Green-Car-Guide

The Most Economical and Lowest Emission New Cars On Sale in the UK Today in 10 Different Categories

Includes our unique guide showing diesels with a particulate filter

The Top 68 Green Cars

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Media

- **Appeared live on BBC 1 prime time TV**
- **Contributed to other TV channels such as ITV and UKTV**
- **Regularly on BBC Radio**
- **Work with wide range of other media from national newspapers to specialist sustainability magazines to environmental books**



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OUR TOP 10 PRINCIPLES

1. Passionate about cars and inclusive

- Not anti-car
- Not anti-4x4 - want to see ALL cars green (can't ignore consumer demand for SUVs)
- Not anti-motorsport - people love motorsport - great demonstration & message opportunity for green production car technology



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Environment information for car buyers

2. Make it easy for people (to go green)

- ‘Sustainable development’
- Need to recognise that people want normal cars that are great to drive, with great design, but also green - two seat electric cars not suitable for everyone
- Need the cars and clear communication and information to make it easy for people



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3. Green-Centric

- Internet marketing - all about niche websites - lots of general car sites out there
- Focus on simple clear green information:
 - Miles per gallon (combined, urban and extra-urban)
 - CO2 emissions

4x4s Green-Car-Guide.com

Model/Engine size: 1.2 4x4
Fuel: Petrol
Fuel economy combined: 42.8 mpg

1. Fiat Panda



Summary

The Fiat Panda has earned a reputation as a very capable small car. However it shows the genius/medness of Fiat that the supermini returns to claim top spot as a 4x4.

Fiat is a company that is not afraid of raiding the history books if it can see an opportunity. In 1983 Fiat, spurred on by the shocking state of many Italian country roads, produced a small car with 4 wheel drive. It was called the Fiat Panda and it was a great success. Twenty years later the new Panda was launched and it didn't take them long to repeat the trick.

The new Panda is a great small car. It has character, and now the Panda feels as well built as any of its European competitors. Yet the Italians have managed to retain the sense of fun and design flair which is essential in any small Fiat.

Whilst the Panda is very much a soft-roader, it does have a raised ride height and the 4 wheel drive will allow it to scamper across the odd muddy field. The interior is surprisingly big with head and legroom aplenty for four adults. The compromise is that the boot isn't massive but it is capable of swallowing the weekly shop. If you need more room you can always fold down the rear seats.

The Panda is a classic Fiat that brings 4 wheel drive to a whole new audience. Thanks to its efficient petrol engine (and being half the size!), the Panda virtually matches our best diesel 4x4's mpg and has significantly lower CO2 emissions, whilst offering more than enough "off road" ability for the average owner. The only down side is that the Panda is very, very slow (note the 0-60mph time of 20 seconds!). It's a cheap and cheerful 4x4, it's just a shame that the diesel version isn't available in the UK.

Fuel economy extra urban: 48.7mpg	Price: £9,660 (From £6,995 to £10,160)
Fuel economy urban: 35.6mpg	Insurance group: 2
CO2 emissions: 156g/km	Safety: NCAP 3 Star
Green rating: VED band D - £125 a year	Max speed: 90mph
Weight: 980 Kg	0-60mph: 20 seconds
Company car tax liability (2007): 18%	

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4. Educate

- People go on-line for information
- People - and the media - need to be educated about green issues, green cars and technology - about biofuels, hybrids, electric cars etc



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5. Make it fun

- People want fun and entertainment
- Aim of our site: inform people about latest green car developments - but in a fun and entertaining way rather than a technical way (there are other sources of technical information)



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6. Make it cool

- We need green cars and communication that is cool and sexy - not quirky
- Like it or not, huge media space devoted to celebrities and other well-known figures - they could help with making green cars cool in the eyes of the consumer



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7. Design & imagery

- All effective green car communication - and all green communication - and branding - needs to be visually attractive and professional
- This means great design - and photography



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8. What's in it for me?

- Need to understand what motivates people - why should people be interested in green cars?
- So... focus on benefits:
- Eg. save money - London Congestion Charge etc - works for some people - businesses especially - along with drivers such business Corporate Responsibility agenda



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9. Emotions

- All effective communication appeals to the emotions - ideally should work on a level that is visual, auditory and kinesthetic
- Save the environment - CO2 emissions, climate change, flooding - is an emotive issue - works for some people - in our experience younger rather than older people are more motivated to save the planet



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10. Mainstream it

- Just as some manufacturers are making 'mainstream' cars green, we need to mainstream green car communication
- Most people go through life focusing on their football team, what's on TV etc - green cars are still not on the 'radar' of most people - we need to get the message to the masses!



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Examples of other ideas for awareness

Fuel economy and real CO2 information

- Other ways of raising environmental awareness with motorists
- Replace prominence of speedometer/rev-counter with every car having a mpg readout in front of driver
- Similar to Toyota/Lexus information - encourages you to beat previous results
- Must be 100% accurate



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Examples of other ideas for awareness

- This would also show CO2 emissions
- CO2 - invisible - big issue in climate change communication
- This would make CO2 more tangible
- System would record mpg & CO2 over the year
- End of year offset CO2 in *effective* offset schemes
- Rewards for improving on official mpg figures (incentivising rewards!)



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Summary

We need green leadership

- We hope we've played a part in showing leadership - based on the number of people who've copied what we've done, and the motoring press waking up to green cars
- It shows that effective communication can work - in just 1 year we've gone from nothing to high profile with media, got green cars on TV, & >1m page views by yr end



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Summary

- The feedback is that we've made a difference in the area of providing environmental information to car buyers

But!

- Green-Car-Guide is only a VERY small percent of what we do
- Virtually all our time is taken up with our main environmental communication consultancy business



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Summary

- We believe that our site has had a positive influence on many people - perhaps to a greater extent than some of the ideas in the LowCVP low carbon vehicle marketing competition earlier this year
- And Green-Car-Guide has been done with virtually no resources or funding support - especially compared with budgets for things such as the government's 'Act on CO2' site

The screenshot shows the website's layout. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Home, News, Features, Free Money-Saving Tips, Blog, Green Car Guide, Media, About Us, and Contact. Below the navigation bar, there are several content blocks:

- Header:** A banner for Toyota Prius with the slogan "Prius. Mean but green." and the Toyota logo.
- Left Sidebar:** Contains three sections: "How to Save Money by Greener Driving" with a "Free Tips" link, "Green Car Guide" with a link to "The most environmentally-friendly cars - by category", and a "Register for Free News Updates" form with a "First Name" field.
- Main Content Area:**
 - Top Section:** A large image of a car with a Union Jack on the roof, with the text "For people who like cars ... and the planet" and "The Original UK Green Car News site". Below it is a link to "Save money running your next car" for November's e-Book, which includes a unique filter for diesels.
 - Middle Section:** A photo of a speaker at a podium during the "Biodiesel-Expo 2007" with the headline "The Most Sustainable Solutions Will Win".
 - Bottom Section:** A photo of a rally car (a Land Rover) driving on a dirt track.
- Right Sidebar:** Contains two sections: "New Cars Out Now" with links for "New Mazda 6", "Electrica Electric Car", and "Peugeot 207", and "Forthcoming Models" with links for "Hyundai i30", "SEAT Ibiza", and "Audi A4".
- Far Right:** A vertical advertisement for "Saab BioPower" featuring a car image.

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The Future

- We've got lots of ideas for the future, so imagine what we could do with more resources, and working with others!
- Today I've only been able to communicate some basic ideas. The key area where we can add value is with a high level strategic approach to these sort of issues



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The Future

- So to take all this to the next level, and make a bigger difference to a wider audience - to mainstream it - come and speak to me!



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