



The car maker: BMW



It's that little bonus that gets the buyer over the line and makes the purchase process a better experience.

Think electric vehicles are a relatively new invention? You might be surprised to learn that BMW was experimenting with them 50 years ago. The 1972 BMW 1602 had a range of 60km and was used by the organising committee of the Olympic Games in Munich.



BMW launched its first electric car in Australia in 2014 – the i3, which came with a three-year subscription to Chargefox. Head of Product and Market Planning for BMW, Brendan Michel, says partnership discussions with the Australian charging company started several years earlier.

“Chargefox was probably the first charging infrastructure supplier here in Australia to actually get off the ground and start doing something locally, reaching out to all the vehicle manufacturers,” says Michel. “We signed the contract with them for the only fully electric car we had in the market at the time.

“Since then, our electric portfolio has grown significantly. We’ll have 12 fully electric variants on the road by the end of 2023. And all of those come with some type of Chargefox subscription.”

Michel says the now five-year subscription makes a big difference to prospective BMW purchasers. “It’s like you’re getting five years of free petrol. In this case it’s five years of free electric charging on Chargefox’s fast-charging network. So it’s definitely a big benefit to us. It makes the sales process easier, especially when people are transitioning

from an internal combustion car to fully electric. It’s that little bonus that gets the buyer over the line and makes the purchase process a better experience.”

Once the owner collects their new car, the VIN and other details are sent to Chargefox and an account automatically created. All the customer has to do is register for the Chargefox app on their phone, and they’re off and running.

While range anxiety was an issue in the early days of electric cars, Michel says BMW now has cars that can travel up to 600km between charges. Chargefox’s extensive network of chargers – Australia’s largest – also helps bring peace of mind.

“You can drive from Adelaide to Melbourne to Sydney to Brisbane on the Chargefox network,” he says. “They have their fast chargers strategically positioned along the highways on those routes. If you buy a BMW and you’ve got your five years’ free subscription, you can do that journey totally free of charge.”



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Why electric?

BMW is aiming for

50%

of its production to be fully electric by the end of this decade.

The cost benefit is one of the main attractions of electric cars. “Every home is a charger, essentially,” says Michel. “Even if you don’t have three-phase power at home and you can’t charge quickly, if you’re patient enough, you can just plug it in at home and it’s probably about a third of the cost of petrol. Our dealer network gets very strong feedback that in a lot of cases, it was the free charging that really helped seal the deal.”

Incentives such as these are important for encouraging more Australians to switch to EVs; Australia’s percentage of EV sales against total light vehicle sales is still only about half that of Europe and the UK¹. But demand is on the rise. In the first six months of 2023 Australians bought 56 per cent more electric light vehicle variants compared to 2022². Fully electric cars account for 10 per cent of

BMW’s total global sales, and the manufacturer is aiming for 50 per cent of its production to be fully electric by the end of this decade.

“It means one out of every two cars we sell here in Australia by 2030 will be fully electric, so a lot more people will be using the Chargefox network,” says Michel. “Even by the middle of next year, we’ll have 15 fully electric variants available here.

“Chargefox’s network will benefit the whole country,” he adds. “The fact that it is owned by Australian Motoring Services is a benefit because they are so much bigger and stronger now – it’s good they have that backing from all the car clubs around the country. It helps secure the future as well.”

Sources:

1. National Electric Vehicle Strategy, Australian Government 2023

2. Electric Vehicle Council, July 2023



ELECTRIC AVENUE

A New Era



BMW says the next battery generation will enhance both charging speed and range by up to

30%

By the time the BMW i3 ceased production in 2022, it had become the world's most successful EV in the compact car segment, selling more than 250,000 units. The company is now preparing for a new era of electric driving with the Neue Klasse range, which focuses on improved range, charging time, durability and carbon footprint of the high-voltage batteries. BMW says the next battery generation will enhance both charging speed and range by up to 30 per cent.

While the Neue Klasse vehicles won't be available for several years, Chargefox will continue to work with BMW to make charging an electric vehicle fast, easy and convenient, bringing benefits to both BMW drivers and the planet.



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