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ENVI: Environmentally Responsible Electric-drive Vehicle Technology

January 13, 2008, Detroit - Chrysler's three concept vehicles for the 2008 North American International Auto Show provide a glimpse into how Chrysler envisions surprising and delighting its future customers through seamless integration of advance production technology into its future product portfolio.

ENVI, an in-house Chrysler organization, was formed late last year with a focus on establishing Chrysler leadership in electric-drive vehicles and related advanced-propulsion technologies. Team members were selected for their exceptional skills in portfolio management, modular architecture, product engineering, manufacturing, design, and procurement and supply.

"ENVI has an entrepreneurial small company spirit that can apply the vast resources available at Chrysler to create environmentally responsible vehicles customers aspire to own," said Lou Rhodes, President – ENVI, Chrysler LLC. "With ENVI, Chrysler will be able to quickly address the unique dynamic that is taking place between changing consumer attitudes, the worldwide regulatory landscape, and the acceleration of propulsion technologies."

Providing exceptional fuel economy and reducing emissions is part of Chrysler's environmental commitment, thus allowing customers to make environmentally responsible choices without compromising their mobility needs.

"Electrically driven vehicles are zero emission vehicles," said Rhodes. "Generating electricity from renewable sources to power tomorrow's vehicles breaks the dependency on fossil fuels and promotes the development of renewal and clean energy production."

Engaging the Customer

ENVI will develop electric-drive vehicles and technologies that draw from our customer insights for each of the Chrysler brands—Chrysler, Jeep® and Dodge.

"We are committed to deeply understanding the needs of our future customers by being market focused and customer-centric," Rhodes said. "ENVI is applying new and unique ways of engaging our target customers into the product development process. Each member of the ENVI team will have a deep understanding of our customers' needs, priorities and lifestyle, in addition to the predominant trends that will likely affect their future purchase decisions."

These initial customer insights and expectations are conveyed in the Chrysler ecoVoyager, Jeep Renegade and Dodge ZEO concept vehicles.

Specifically, Chrysler buyers seek both understated luxury and purposeful technology – without compromising "elegance and simplicity."

In harmony with nature, Jeep enthusiasts seek "stylish green" vehicles that offer capability, comfort and style packaged together as only Jeep can.

Dodge "driving enthusiasts" crave performance without compromising the need for comfort and space. Practical but innovative features complement the experience that is expected from a Dodge performance sedan.

The Technology

ENVI will focus on executing Chrysler's next-generation vehicles with technologies that complement the company's current hybrid vehicle plans, and extend hybrid electric vehicle (HEV) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV) benefits to the next level.

"Taking full advantage of these emerging technologies requires a holistic approach involving the development of the entire vehicle," said Rhodes. "Vehicle architecture, package, design and propulsion cannot be decoupled."

Chrysler's concept vehicles represent the marriage of all these elements, while staying focused on our target customers' wants and needs."

Chrysler's electric-drive systems are envisioned to be modular, with a high-level of technology sharing and component reuse. Common elements include a 200-kilowatt electric motor, electrical architecture, power electronics, and next-generation, safe lithium-ion battery technology, to name a few.

The Chrysler ecoVoyager concept is an electric vehicle with a 40-mile, 16 kilowatt-hour lithium-ion battery module. Total driving range is 300 miles when coupled with the advanced hydrogen fuel cell range extender. The common 200-kilowatt electric motor drives the front wheels.

The Jeep Renegade concept is also an electric vehicle with the common 40-mile, 16 kilowatt-hour lithium-ion battery module, but uniquely incorporates electric motors on each axle for true four-wheel-drive capability. Driving range is extended by an electric generator coupled to a small-displacement BLUETEC diesel engine. Renegade has a 400-mile range, and is capable of achieving an equivalent petroleum fuel economy of 110 miles per gallon.

The Dodge ZEO concept is a Battery Electric Vehicle powered by the common electric motor driving the rear wheels. Driving range is 250 miles with the integrating of multiple lithium-ion battery modules for a total energy rating of 64 kilowatt-hours.

Addressing future challenges such as global warming, energy security and customer wants and needs will require the production implementation of one or more of these technologies in the not-too-distant future.

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