

## Tech Center News

31201 Chicago Road South  
Warren, Michigan 48093

586-939-6800

Contact us:

Info@TechCenterNews.com

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William Springer II, publisher  
Lisa A. Torretta, operations  
Jim Stickford, news

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## Used Car Prices Drop as New Car Sales Rebound

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longer drawn to used cars the way they have been in recent years," says Edmunds.com's Director of Used Car Analysis Joe Spina.

"Used car prices will likely continue to decline in the coming months simply because there will be more of these vehicles sitting on dealer lots."

While softer prices are a good sign for used car buyers, the Edmunds.com report points out that prices still are relatively higher than they were before the recession.

Average used car prices crossed the \$15,000 threshold for the first time at the end of 2009, and have remained above that level ever since. At their peak, used car prices averaged \$16,473 in the second quarter of 2011.

Shoppers looking to score the best deal on a used car, says the Edmunds.com report, may want to consider brands such as Volvo, GMC and Chevrolet. Vehicles produced by those three automakers sat on used dealer lots longer than any other brand in the third quarter.

# Cadillac ELR App Offers Buyers Ways to Save Energy, Money

by Jim Stickford

In order for a car's smart technology to work most efficiently, the people who use it need information they can use to make decisions that can save them money and time.

That's why the Cadillac ELR will be "smart-grid" ready as soon as it comes off the production line, said OnStar spokesman Stefan Cross.

Using the ELR's extended-range electric vehicle technology combined with OnStar's cloud-based connection, the car will be able to communicate with the electric grid and provide ELR users with the information they need to save energy and money.

ELR owners will have access to the OnStar RemoteLink Mobile App, which, in addition to allowing drivers to check their vehicle's operating systems and send remote commands, gives them access to electric vehicle specific functions, Cross said.

The EV-tailored app shows owners their vehicle's current state of charge, electric range, electric miles driven and eMPG, or equivalency of electric miles per gallon.

The RemoteLink Mobile App also will allow ELR owners to control and schedule vehicle charging, including an option to charge during off-peak hours when electricity rates are lowest.

"While RemoteLink is really our first Smart Grid service to be available for consumers, the same connection we use to enable the app's EV functions can be used to open the door for more energy cost and load control benefits," said Russ Eling, manager, Smart Grid and EV Services, General Motors.

RemoteLink via OnStar's four unique Smart Grid APIs, or Application Programming Interfaces, allows ELR operators to connect utilities and third-party companies to get information that can save the user money, Cross said.

One app feature is "demand re-

sponse," which is being developed and should be available in the near future, Cross said.

"This future service connects utilities to companies that have intelligent energy management products, allowing OnStar to manage energy use for ELR customers who opt in for the service," Cross said.

"Basically, it takes into account the demand for energy and the supply of energy on the power grid. It tells users when it's cheapest to charge their cars. When demand is high, the cost of the energy is higher as well.

"Benefits include saving money on energy costs and enabling more efficient use of the electric grid."

There is also the "time-of-use rates" app, Cross said. OnStar can receive dynamic time-of-use pricing from utilities and notify ELR owners of the rate plan offers via email. Owners would be able to use OnStar to load the rate plans directly into their vehicle and access them to schedule charging during lower-rate periods.

The charging data app allows OnStar to send and receive EV data including location-based EV information that identifies charging locations and determines potential load scenarios, Cross said.

"So someone can come home, plug his or her car into his or her home charging station," Cross said. "The app actually sets a charging time when rates are lower. So someone doesn't have to get up at 2 a.m. and plug in his or her car. The car is already plugged in. Charging doesn't start until 2 a.m."

And finally, Cross said, there is the aggregated services app. This solution allows electric service providers to manage the charging of participating vehicles



2014 Cadillac ELR

in a given geographic area, with customer consent.

This includes the ability to control charging on a large amount of EVs simultaneously. These services could potentially result in a more efficient use of clean energy.

An example of an aggregated service solution, Cross said, would be charging with renewable energy. A regional transmission organization would send OnStar a signal letting it know that renewable energy such as wind or solar is available on the electric grid. OnStar then uses this signal to manage the charging of one or multiple EVs in order to utilize the available renewable energy.

Part of being green, Cross said,

is being smart. By charging an ELR when renewable energy such as solar or wind is available, ELR users help reduce their carbon footprint.

"We give ELR buyers the ability to manage information," Cross said. "We also give them the choice of whether or not to opt in."

"Some people don't like giving out information on how they use their cars, so by giving them the choice to opt out, a person can make his car just a car."

But by opting in and getting RemoteLink, users can get access to information that can save them money and help the environment, which is why people buy vehicles like the ELR to begin with, Cross said.

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