

Electric Vehicle Display Coordinator's handbook

Coordinating an electric vehicle event

As EV (PHEV or BEV) owners, we can make a difference by simply sharing our experiences with the general public and key stake-holders at events. For this to happen, someone needs to coordinate owners' presence at these events. This can be time consuming, but in most cases it can be done quite easily. This handbook is designed to help you in the process. Thank you for taking on this important work.



Choosing the event

The first step is to choose the right event. Over the years we have tried a variety of different setups and it has become very clear that we get the best results when the EV display is done as part of a bigger event. That way, you don't have to do the heavy lifting of getting people there. You will just add another attraction to an existing event and everyone wins.

Working with the main event organizer

Figure out first how many people they expect at the event, what are the event hours and if there is a good location for an EV display. Ask how they are planning to promote the event and the EV display. Figure out the display location and make sure that bringing cars there and getting cars out works easily. Keep the EV display very simple: Cars, owners and flags. You can also setup a small table for handouts, but in most events we have not done that because we can use the cars as "handout trays."

Ideal EV display location

An ideal location for the EV display would be by the event entrance and right by the other expo areas and activities. If there is no good place for the EV display or it is too far from other activities (at the other end of the parking lot, behind the building, etc.) you can't expect much foot traffic and then you should consider whether it is worth setting up the display in the first place. You should also make sure that the display area is safe for volunteers and event attendees. There shouldn't be cars driving right by the display, so if the display is on a parking lot that area should be closed off to traffic.



Get a map

Make sure that you and event organizers are on the same page about where the vehicle display will be located. The easiest way to do this is to take a screen capture of the Google map satellite view and mark the display location there. Share the map with your volunteers before the event so they know exactly where to come.

Goldilocks' rules on vehicles and shifts

Keep the event very simple for the volunteers. One of the mistakes that volunteer organizations make is that they burn out their volunteer base by asking them to do too much. Remember that even though you might be organizing just one or two events, there are other events where these people will volunteer and we want to keep our “volunteer footprint” as small as possible to not tax the volunteers too much.

Number of cars: The first rule is that you should always match the number of vehicles with the size of the event. For example, for small events 3-5 vehicles will most likely be the right number. If the vehicle display is part of larger full day outdoor fair, 6-10 vehicles might be a better number.

Shifts: If the event lasts over four hours, I would recommend splitting it to more than one shift. So, if you have a six hour display and you want to have five vehicles there all the time, you need five volunteers with vehicles there for the first three-hour shift and another five for the second shift, so 10 volunteers with vehicles altogether.

Variety: You can work to try to make sure that you have a variety of different vehicle makes and models at the event, but in the end I would recommend being flexible with that. We want volunteers to choose events that they are interested in and that work with their schedule and if this means that we have two or three of the same models there, so be it.

Minimize time commitment: We also have to be respectful of people’s time so if there is an easy access to the display area, don’t ask the volunteers to arrive earlier than 15 minutes before the event starts.



Event promotion among members and volunteer signup

For smaller events, the Facebook event post might be good enough for finding and coordinating the volunteers. Just ask volunteers to post to a comment section what kind of vehicle they are planning to bring. If there is more than one shift, I would recommend using an online volunteer coordination tool like Signup.com. We have successfully used this system for years and it provides the right basic tools for requesting and scheduling volunteer shifts, even for multi day events like our State Fair display.



Communication with the volunteers

Make sure to send a confirmation email to volunteers a week before the event. In this email, you should provide event details (times, location etc.), a map of the specific display location and any other valuable information about the event. We often also remind our volunteers that they don’t have to know everything, but they are there mainly to share their stories and information about why and how they drive electric. Naturally you should provide your contact information in this email so volunteers can get a hold of you if they have any questions or if their schedule changes.

Flags

Make sure your EV display is noticed. One of the best ways to do that is to use signs and flags by your vehicles. Otherwise people might not recognize this as any sort of special display. Simple teardrop flags are relatively inexpensive. It doesn’t really matter that much what the text on them says as long as they are colorful and look nice. If your display is outside of the main expo area, see if there is an easy way to set up some wayfinding signs.



Handouts

Be choosy on what you hand out to people. Often less is more. In Minnesota, we don't normally hand out anything to people unless we have had good discussions with them and we know that they are interested in the topic. Two of the most powerful handouts that we use are the MN EV Owners business cards and EV Info List

MNEVO business card is our multi tool

The front of the card has our logo and links to our Facebook group page and our webpage.

The back of the card has our short resources list. We use this list when talking with people and point them toward specific resources that will provide good information for their questions/challenges:

www.MNEVBuyer.com Provides good general information for EV Buyers in Minnesota.

www.MNCharging.org portal provides direct links for people to their electric utility's electric vehicle information pages.

www.PlugShare.com provides the most comprehensive and up to date mapping tool for people to find all public charging stations.

www.WorkplaceCharging.com provides good information for people who are wondering how to get charging at their workplaces.

www.MultiHousingCharging.com provides good information about charging for those living in an apartment building or a condominium.



www.EVSalesSavvy.com
www.MNCharging.org
www.PlugShare.com
www.WorkplaceCharging.com
www.MultiHousingCharging.com
No Plug, No Deal!

EV Info List

This table lists all EVs available in the Midwest and provides pricing and technical specs for easy comparisons. This is an excellent tool for our volunteers because they don't have to remember any of the specs and they can use this to talk with the event attendees to see which vehicles would most likely fit best for their use cases.

Everyone uses their car a bit differently and people have their personal preferences, so with this tool it is easier for the volunteers to talk about all other EVs in addition to just the one that they own and drive. This has been very well received both by our volunteers and event attendees when we have used these at a variety of different event settings. Again, we don't just hand these out to all people who walk by our display, but only to those that are really interested in EVs. It provides structure and value to our discussions with people. EV display coordinators can download the latest list in pdf format from www.EVInfoList.com and print the right amount for that specific event. In addition to the Midwest EV Info List you can also find there the US EV Info List and some other useful links.



Model	Year	Price	Range	Charging	Power	Weight	Seating	Storage	Options	Notes
BMW i3	2013	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2014	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2015	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2016	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2017	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2018	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2019	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2020	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2021	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2022	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2023	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2024	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2025	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2026	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2027	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2028	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2029	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2030	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2031	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2032	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2033	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2034	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2035	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2036	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2037	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2038	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2039	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2040	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2041	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2042	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2043	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2044	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2045	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2046	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2047	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2048	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2049	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard
BMW i3	2050	\$37,400	109	AC/DC	150	3,500	4	10	None	Standard

The day of the event

As a coordinator, be at the location about 30 minutes before the event starts. Set up the flags, check that your earlier display plan works and make sure that it is easy for your volunteers to drive there and park their cars. One small thing that people often forget is sunscreen, so make sure you have one bottle available. You will be standing outside for several hours so sun protection is needed. Then it is show time. Engage with people lightly and be available to answer any questions they have. One of the best ways to engage with people is to just ask “Have you driven an electric car yet?” and then let them know that you are an electric car owner yourself. Usually discussion starts pretty easily from there if people are interested in learning more. If you come across negative people who seem to be there mostly to argue, just end the discussion quickly and wish them a good day. Enjoy the day and make sure your volunteers have everything they need. If the weather does not cooperate, consult with the main event organizer on the proper course of action. There is no shame in cancelling or taking the display down early if the poor weather keeps people indoors. Sometimes you might be in a location that doesn’t naturally get a lot of foot traffic, and we have sometimes had some volunteers move to areas of higher foot traffic to let people know about the electric vehicle display. Consult with main event coordinator if needed.



Share it

Only a small number of people from your group can take part in the event, so make sure to take photos and post them on social media to share with others. This promotes your efforts to the general public and encourages your members to participate in future events.



Add-ons

Here are some options that you could add to the event. Remember that adding these makes the event coordination much more labor intensive so consider first if you have time and resources available for these:

Presentation

Depending on the event setup you might be able to do a presentation about EVs and charging options. The presentation can be done by one knowledgeable presenter or as an EV owners panel presentation. In both cases, the presentation should cover the advantages of driving electric, what EVs are available in your area, how to charge a EV and case examples of people driving electric. Provide also enough time for Q&A and encourage attendees to check out your EV display to talk with owners after the presentation.



Ride&Drive

Our recommendation is to have the EV owners just do the static display, meaning bringing their car to the event, parking it on the predetermined area and standing by the car to talk with people. If you would like to organize a Ride&Drive as part of the event, please contact local dealers and vehicle stores and invite them to join the event. They can have their salespeople bring EVs to the event to provide rides and drives for event attendees, because they have the right insurance to do this. Remember that because of the structure of dealer agreements, you need to work with the dealer whose sales territory includes the event location. This can sometimes be a bit tricky to know because manufacturers don't share their dealer sales territory maps, so the best approach is to reach out to the closest dealers and ask if the event location is in their sales territory.

