

Our Friend, The Mercedes-Benz Diesel, Makes a Comeback

by Peter Vanderveer

The world we live in has one constant rule: the evolution of technology. A more fascinating element of this rule is how advances in technology accelerate faster and faster over time. Once upon a time someone invented the wheel, and the rest is history!

Why did the wheel become a popular tool? It was useful and above all necessary. Back to the present, eliminating CO2 exhaust gas emissions from cars and trucks is a high priority necessity—not to mention a ten team race, sponsored by Google, to have the first robot on the moon! GO spacewheel!

So let's see... around 3500B.C. the wheel is invented. Two thousand five hundred years later, the Iron Age, then steel is the new technology say around 1200 B.C. These are the basic ingredients that make up an automobile which only required another three thousand or so years to put together. GO MERCEDES-BENZ! With the first car patent on January 29, 1886!

That's more than five thousand years to get from the wheel to the horseless carriage say one hundred and twenty years ago. Forty

So let's see... around 3500B.C. the wheel is invented. Two thousand five hundred years later, the Iron Age, then steel is the new technology say around 1200 B.C.

short years ago mandatory (U.S. 1968) seat belts and exhaust gas recirculation devices (U.S.) became the first signs of the technology needed to save us from—you guessed it—the evolution of technology!

We have come to an amazing time in our history. Technology is now desperate to reverse the effects of the last five thousand years and car manufacturers are leading the way. Advances in diesel motor management is a good illustration of the staggering acceleration curve. We went from one hundred years of basically the same diesel engines to now common rail, direct injection; Peizo activated injectors in the last few years. This has DOUBLED the range of the mid sized Mercedes-Benz diesel over the last twenty years and technology is in the works to improve even these advances. We may not recognize the

next generation which must include the advances in battery/ hybrid power.

Well over 600 million cars and trucks on the road in this world (that up from zero vehicles only a century ago) shows the responsibility Mercedes-Benz and the other major manufacturers of the automobile have toward the environment. Some very efficient cars already on the road in other parts of the world can't be bought in the U.S. The E220 diesel six speed manual transmission, gets 60 miles per gallon highway, has 300 foot pounds of torque, goes well over one hundred miles an hour and can't be had here. What's up with that?

Lastly, how many of you have visited Mercedes-Benz' own TV web site? If you like, go to mercedes-benz.tv and enjoy the show. Particularly interesting go to the innovation tab to see how the next very few years will reveal some out of this world technological acceleration.

- Peter Vanderveer is our technical editor and owner of Vanderveer Motors in Norwood.