

The following is a response to a reader of a March 18, 2008 Green Lantern column by Brendan I. Koerner appearing on line at Slate.com.
http://www.slate.com/id/2186786/pagenum/all/#page_start

Thanks for forwarding the Slate link and your offer to allow me to respond. I apologize in advance for the length of the following.

Slate never called or wrote to ask for a comment, explanation or more details about Dust to Dust before publishing this lackadaisical article. Therefore, the inability for its writer, the editor or the reader to understand Dust to Dust is understandable.

Circling the wagons around Prius is a mystery to me. The vehicle is expensive, not significantly more fuel efficient than a Toyota Corolla and a waste of precious resources.

The issue isn't if the Hummer is more energy efficient over its lifetime than a Prius. The issue is if more complexity in a vehicle can equate with protecting the environment. The simple answer is no. More complexity equals more energy to produce and dispose of. Even Toyota is now suggesting it needs to expand the lineup of Prius models to include other vehicles (e.g. sportscar, mini-SUV, etc.) in order to justify the expense in both manufacturing and component utilization to justify the brand from a purely business standpoint.

Consider what D2D actually says in conclusion, and which I have stated numerous times in interviews: We intended and accomplished being able to provide a comparison between like products. For example, if someone is interested in or desires or needs a large Sport Utility, they can now compare the energy cost to society among the list of SUVs and select the most energy efficient model.

The same is true among small four passenger sedans. From that standpoint, the Prius is a miserable alternative to Corolla or Civic or a host of other like-sized vehicles.

What is clear from those who like to bash Dust to Dust is that they have undeniable roots in agenda-driven politics. If the issue were really Prius vs. Hummer, this would have already expanded among the D2D naysayers to include comparisons with other small four-door sedans. It has not. There is a long history of such groups being vehemently opposed to large sport utilities. And perhaps they should be. But their honesty and agenda transparency come into question when the only method they use to discard the Dust to Dust findings is to single out the Hummer vs Prius rather than the Ford F150 vs the Toyota Tundra or the Honda Accord vs the Toyota Camry.

We tweaked their sensibilities not because of our Hummer comparison, but because we dared to show the weakness of their golden automotive goddess, the Prius.

Finally, neither Slate nor the Rocky Mountain Institute or other so-called independent, unbiased naysayers have ever attempted to duplicate the Dust to Dust study. None have asked for the 3,000-plus

data points used for each vehicle. None has requested additional information. Instead they rely on reports from those who have long used old techniques for determining product life cycles, techniques and methods proven to be inaccurate and woefully incomplete.

If there is anything more I can add, please feel free to contact me directly.

Best,

Art Spinella
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