

Chinese green car maker opens LA office

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The Chinese BYD E6 electric car is displayed during a press preview at the 2010 North American International Auto Show in Detroit 2010. Environmentally-friendly Chinese car and battery maker BYD said Monday it had opened a new North American headquarters here.

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The new offices for BYD, backed by US investment titan Warren Buffett, will bring up to 150 engineering and management jobs to Los Angeles, as well as serving as the headquarters for BYD dealerships across the continent.

"Our city's environmental leadership and focus on the development of green tech jobs continues to attract innovative companies such as BYD," said LA mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

"BYD is thrilled to be making this investment in Los Angeles, a global city working towards a green, sustainable future," added BYD Chairman Chuanfu Wang in a statement.

China's auto sector overtook the United States in 2009 to become the world's largest and last year sales rose more than 32 percent to a record 18.06 million units.

But the sector has since lost steam after Beijing phased out sales incentives such as tax breaks for small-engine vehicles, originally introduced to ward off the impact of the global financial crisis.

BYD, which makes both cars and batteries, had been focusing on the development of clean-energy vehicles, but the industry-wide slowdown has hit it hard, analysts say.

Last month BYD denied reports of mass layoffs but said a "reshuffle" was under way in its [sales](#) and management teams.

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