

Hyundai unveils NFC smartphone feature to replace key fob

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(Phys.org)—Korean car maker Hyundai has unveiled what might be the next step for car accessory options: the disappearance of the key. Instead of a key, or fob, engineers at Hyundai have integrated the electronics generally found inside of a fob, into a smartphone. To gain access to their car, drivers would simply swipe their phone over a Near Field Communications (NFC) tag that has been affixed to the inside of a window.

[Hyundai](#) unveiled its new idea as part of its "Connectivity Concept" initiative during a demonstration at its European headquarters in Frankfurt Germany. There they showed a modified i30 compact hatch vehicle being locked and unlocked by a person holding nothing more than a [smartphone](#).

The smartphone abilities don't stop at the door either, once inside, the driver would place the phone into a console where it would activate a profile based system to automatically configure options for whichever driver's phone was in use. Thus, temperature settings, seat positions, radio presets, etc. could all be saved and deployed automatically when the smartphone is seated. The console is also able to recharge the phone – seating the smartphone would also engage the ignition, causing the car's engine to start.

[NFC](#) configured phones – which communicate via [radio waves](#) – are rapidly becoming standard as can be seen with the Samsung line of phones that allow users to transfer files to and from other phones simply by touching them together. Other uses for NFC under consideration are as cashier machines at retail establishments that allow customers to swipe their phone instead of a credit card to pay for merchandise. With this latest unveiling, Hyundai is signaling its intent to be at the forefront of the new technology as it makes its way into future automobiles.

Hyundai didn't announce that the NFC option would actually be available on any of its cars, instead they chose to show off what they are working towards, and that is apparently, the seamless integration of smartphone and automotive technology to make driving their cars a more pleasurable experience. They hinted that such technology will be likely be available in cars as early as 2015, though they offered no comments regarding how much the option would likely cost.

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