

What will carmakers think of next? Three cool Chevrolet features worth a look

5 May 2017, by Jim Rossman, The Dallas Morning News

I recently spent time driving a lot of new Chevrolet cars, trucks and SUVs.

Chevrolet hosted dealers, salespeople and the media at an event called the Find New Roads Experience at Texas Motor Speedway.

I mainly focused on the technology, and I saw a few cool features in the new Chevrolets that I'd like to highlight.

-Hybrid energy gauge

I love [hybrid vehicles](#). They combine an electric [motor](#) with a traditional [gasoline engine](#) to increase fuel mileage. The cars switch between the motors as needed and even use both at the same time, but I always wondered exactly when each motor was being used.

The Chevy Malibu Hybrid's center screen can show an outline of the car with both engines, and as you drive, the screen shows when the car is on battery power, using the gasoline engine, using both engines or when it's sending power back to the battery (regenerating) through coasting or braking.

I've not driven a hybrid before, so this might not be a new or unique feature, but it was exactly the kind of information I wanted to see while driving the Malibu. It's a simple graphic, but it really helped me understand how to adjust my driving habits to save gas.

-Trailer cameras

I saw a cool demo of an optional camera system for the Silverado pickup designed for keeping an eye on payload or a trailer and making it a bit easier when it's time to back that trailer into a tight spot.

Fixed video cameras are mounted in the left and

right side-view mirrors, and a third camera is mounted on the top of the cab, pointed into the bed, which is great for connecting a fifth-wheel trailer.

Finally, an optional fourth [camera](#) can be mounted in several places, including on the tailgate, on the back of a trailer or even inside the trailer for keeping an eye on cargo or livestock that you are hauling.

-Rear seat reminder

Perhaps the best feature I saw was on several vehicles, including the Malibu and the Suburban: It's an automatic reminder to check the back seat when you get out of the vehicle.

The car realizes when you've opened the rear doors, and the next time you turn off the motor, a dialogue box pops up on the dashboard's info screen telling you to check the rear seat. It doesn't come out and say, "Hey, make sure you're not leaving a small child in the car" but it's clear that's the gist.

You only see the dialogue when the rear doors have been opened.

I'm not sure how many vehicles from any manufacturer have this feature, but of all things I saw during the event, it made the biggest impression on me.

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