



Gridserve claim What Car? Innovation accolade

Jan 20, 2022 23:00 GMT

## CHARGING AHEAD: Gridserve wins 2022 What Car? Innovation Award, in association with Thatcham Research

- British company brings high-end forecourt concept to EV charging stations
- Charging infrastructure seen as crucial to drive adoption of EVs in the UK
- Gridserve beats BMW and Hyundai to claim innovation accolade

A new virtual navigation system from BMW promises to consign traditional

satnav to the history books, and a smart innovation by Hyundai could revolutionise the way we overcome blind spots when behind the wheel.

Yet these impressive technologies had to settle for second and third place respectively in the race for the 2022 What Car? Innovation Award because this year's winner has more to do with roadside charging infrastructure than in-car technology.

[Gridserve's](#) pioneering motorway service station concept brings the convenience and familiarity of petrol and diesel forecourts to EV charging. Its first Electric Forecourt opened in Essex in 2020, with a further 100 EV-only service stations planned across the UK.

Gridserve's Electric Forecourts will offer up to 36 dedicated EV chargers, including some 350kW fast chargers capable of charging vehicles in around 20 minutes.

Motorists can take advantage of shops, cafés and airport-style lounges while they wait for their charge to complete, and they can even get tech support by using the phones on every charging point to speak to dedicated EV experts at The AA.

“This will certainly make EV motorists feel less like an afterthought,” Matthew Avery, Thatcham Research's Chief Research Strategy Officer, said. “Rather than seeking out charging points in random locations that offer few if any facilities, they can now enjoy a coffee and a comfort break in surroundings that mirror the experience of a traditional forecourt or service station.

“The perception that EVs lack good facilities and infrastructure is something we believe is a barrier to adoption. Gridserve's forecourts will help shift this perception and underpin EV adoption as we head towards the UK's ban on ICE vehicles in 2030.”

Runner-up for the award was the BMW iX's virtual navigation system with Head-Up Display. The HUD projects journey information onto the windscreen, while the virtual navigation system combines augmented reality from live video footage with satnav data to give clear directions while driving.

“This is a great safety innovation because drivers can keep their eyes on the road while having all the information they need right there on the windscreen or the display,” Avery explained. “Using the HUD in combination with the augmented reality satnav makes navigation simpler and driving much safer. HUD isn’t a new development per se but this system from BMW is a real step change – a worthy runner-up.”

In third place is Hyundai’s Blindspot View Monitor. While not designed to replace traditional glass mirrors, the technology uses cameras mounted to wing mirrors to give motorists an expanded view around their car.

“It’s so simple, you wonder why nobody has come up with it until now,” Avery suggested. “Well, now Hyundai have done just that. It’s not to be confused with digital rear view mirrors but gives drivers greater awareness of what’s going on around them, and encourages greater use of mirrors while driving. It is precisely the kind of safety innovation that Thatcham Research applauds.”

[VIDEO: Matthew Avery and What Car?’s Darren Moss run the rule over this year’s award winners:](#)



[Watch video on YouTube here](#)

-- Ends --

---

Thatcham Research is the independent voice of automotive safety, security & repair, advising motorists, insurers and vehicle manufacturers to help reduce

accident frequency, severity and costs and to realise the vision of 'Safer cars, fewer crashes', while driving standards in vehicle security.

As well as its world leading crash and track research, Thatcham Research develops repair methods amongst a number of other products and services within the collision repair industry for insurers, motor manufacturers, equipment manufacturers and suppliers.

In addition, Thatcham Research has administered the Association of British Insurer's (ABI) Group Rating system for the past 50 years. Group Rating is an advisory system intended to provide insurers with the relative risk of private cars and light commercial vehicles.

A founder member of the international Research Council for Automobile Repairs (RCAR), Thatcham Research has also been a member of the European New Car Assessment Programme (Euro NCAP) since 2004.

## Contacts



**James Smith**

Press Contact  
Head Of Communications  
comms@thatcham.org  
01635 293101  
07990 706146



**Tom Flisher**

Press Contact  
PR Manager  
comms@thatcham.org  
01635868855  
07876 755615



**Kate Bailey**

Press Contact

Communications Executive

PR & Communication

[comms@thatcham.org](mailto:comms@thatcham.org)

+44 7384 830 461



**Francesca Turton**

Press Contact

PR Executive

PR & Communication

[comms@thatcham.org](mailto:comms@thatcham.org)

+44 7943 848 528