

## **MotorWeek Transcripts**

### **FYI 'Karma Electric'**

**JOHN DAVIS:** At the start of the automotive age, carmakers cropped up by the dozens. Each with its own take on the new fangled horseless carriage. And as in any new industry, only the ones with the best concepts survive. Well now with oil supplies shrinking and the fear of climate change widespread, today's auto industry is undergoing a rebirth that is also fostering new car companies with fresh ideas. And this week FYI reporter Yolanda Vazquez takes a closer look at one firm, and the man behind it, that's taking green motoring by storm.

**YOLANDA VAZQUEZ:** At its global headquarters in Irvine, California – Fisker Automotive is abuzz with activity. Designers, engineers, clay modelers dedicate their talents and tools to bring the world's first luxury plug-in hybrid – the Fisker Karma to life.

**FAIRUZ JANE-SCHLECHT:** We want to drive up next to somebody in a Fisker Karma.

**VAZQUEZ:** The original Sports Sedan and Karma S Convertible have wowed audiences at auto shows in the U.S. and abroad. Now the race is on to get the Karma into production in just a few short months.

**HENRIK FISKER, CEO, FISKER AUTOMOTIVE:** I think we have pushed it really to the edge now where we really have a complete new design.

**VAZQUEZ:** The man behind this spirited effort is Henrik Fisker – an affable Dane who, throughout much of his storied career, has defied the boundaries of automotive design.

**FISKER:** I kind of like to set myself dreams which other people think are impossible. Being a kid from Denmark, just being a designer at BMW was impossible – all the teachers told me.

**VAZQUEZ:** His creative talents gave us the sleek styling of the BMW Z8 roadster – yes, the one featured in the 1999 James Bond movie. Fisker hopes to stir up the same amount of awe and admiration with the Karma.

**FISKER:** It's beautiful – it's low sitting to the ground it's just kind of all the things that really gets us excited about cars.

**VAZQUEZ:** But there's more to this slick ride than meets the eye. At nearly 88k a pop, Fisker has developed a luxury eco-friendly car. It features cutting edge plug-in hybrid technology known as q-drive – which combines the best of both a gasoline engine and pure electric. Fisker claims the Karma's lithium ion batteries are good for a 50-mile emission-free range.

**FISKER:** We're really carving out a niche in this price segment that we're in where nobody really has a car today that has this type of performance and can get over 100 miles-per-gallon.

**VAZQUEZ:** A full-length solar roof panel helps charge the car's batteries and provide cooling for the passenger cabin. The circuit board design blends in well with the 22-inch alloy wheels and innovative LED headlamps.

**MARK CLARKE, EXTERIOR DESIGN MANAGER, FISKER AUTOMOTIVE:** People are really drawn to the headlamps – it's the jewelry of the vehicle. It's the eyes of the car.

**VAZQUEZ:** Mark Clarke is in charge of exterior design. He says distinctive details help establish the brand's styling.

**MARK CLARKE, EXTERIOR DESIGN MANAGER, FISKER AUTOMOTIVE:** And because we are a new company we don't have any traditional manufacturer DNA, design DNA to move into the next generation – that means we can start fresh.

**VAZQUEZ:** The idea of a “fresh approach” is what brought Alex Klatt to Fisker. The designer spent 18 years with BMW before coming onboard.

**ALEX KLATT, INTERIOR DESIGN MANAGER, FISKER AUTOMOTIVE:** When I started my job here I looked over this beautiful exterior from Henrik and I said the interior is missing that a little bit.

**VAZQUEZ:** To ensure the design aesthetic is uniform throughout, Klatt has set up an open work space filled with so-called “vision boards.”

**KLATT:** A creative collage of ideas, of pictures, of images and every designer and engineer sees something else in those images.

**VAZQUEZ:** Cutouts help Fairuz Jane-Schlecht with materials selection. Her job is to find suppliers who provide recyclable items like this patch of scrap denim for use as acoustic layering.

**FAIRUZ JANE-SCHLECHT, COLOR & MATERIAL DESIGN MANAGER, FISKER AUTOMOTIVE:** And this is made of something that you probably wear over the weekend – which is 100% recycled blue jeans.

**VAZQUEZ:** All the wood trim in the Karma is sourced from non-living and/or sunken trees.

**JANE-SCHLECHT:** And this is wood that came literally from bottom of Lake Michigan from the late 1800's as a result of the logging industry. The bottom of the Lake actually patina this, so we don't actually put chemicals into the environment.

**VAZQUEZ:** As Fisker and his staff try to redefine consumer's impression of green cars ...

**FISKER:** So we take the risk – so we say all right this is what they're going to get.

**VAZQUEZ:** ... the determined CEO is painfully aware of his looming deadline – and the skeptics who wonder if he'll be able to deliver the Karma by the end of 2009.

**FISKER:** Only thing I can say – we're ready and we're going to do it.

**VAZQUEZ:** Valmet Automotive in Finland will manufacture the vehicle – they assemble the Porsche Boxster and Cayman Sports Cars. By outsourcing major aspects of his business, Fisker can do in less than 3 years what takes most car companies double the time.

**FISKER:** The car industry seems most ripe for change – and really change not only in terms of how you development and design a vehicle – but also the entire business model of a car company.

**VAZQUEZ:** The 46-year old wunderkind has convinced investors this is the right way to do it and hopes consumers will embrace his way of thinking – as Fisker Automotive readies itself for the new, eco-chic, luxury car market.

**FISKER:** We want to go out there and carve out a niche where we are about beautiful, emotional, exciting green cars.