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## Ahead of the curve: Installing electric vehicle charging stations

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Most projections estimate that every major automobile manufacturer will be introducing a plug-in hybrid or battery electric vehicle in the next five years. While the projected numbers of these automobiles may vary, these vehicles will certainly need a new infrastructure of charging stations—not just at home, but also at the businesses they visit throughout the day. While some businesses and residences think that waiting until a large share of their customers demand EV charging stations is the best course of action, they might just have it backwards—by then, they'll need to install a larger number of chargers to meet the demand, and today installing even one or two is a low-cost, high-visibility way to differentiate yourself and stay ahead of the curve.

The cost of purchasing and installing a charging station can range from a few thousand dollars to five figures, depending on the model of charger chosen and how far from the panel it is installed. Installation can be done in as little as one day. Because the stations are fully customizable with your logo/colors, they become an effective way to show that your business is on the cutting-edge. Installing EV chargers is also a low-cost commitment over the long-term. Some electric vehicles cost as little as \$1 per day to fully charge.

With the right contractor, installation is straightforward. That said, you need to work with someone who can help you figure out the most cost-effective way to approach siting and other issues to ensure that it goes smoothly. For building-side installation, this can take as little as one day; digging in parking lots or garages can take a few days more. Adding EV chargers to plans for new buildings is an even easier way for developers to start off right with this trend that is here to stay.

When choosing your installer, there are a few keys to keep in mind to help it move smoothly. First, you want to choose someone with expertise in this technology. Second, you want someone who will take the visible aspects as seriously as the panel work—to effectively boost your image, you want to make sure that the station itself doesn't just have your logo, but that it's installed seamlessly. Last but not least, as with any electrical project, you want the contractor to be a part of your team, so choose carefully.

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