

# Tesla's rivals still cannot use its EV superchargers

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SCARCE AND FINICKY public chargers are among the biggest reasons people hesitate to buy electric cars. So when Elon Musk, the chief executive of Tesla, agreed last year to open the company's well-regarded Supercharger network to vehicles from other carmakers, many drivers and industry experts celebrated the decision.

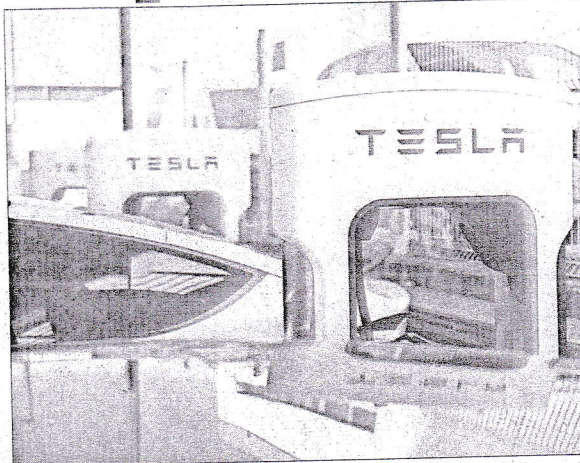
But more than 12 months later, Tesla's network, with nearly 30,000 fast-charging plugs in the United States and Canada, remains largely inaccessible to most people who don't drive Teslas because of software delays and hardware shortages.

The delays have fueled speculation that Musk was having second thoughts about opening up Tesla's network, possibly because he was worried that access would help other automakers sell battery-powered models and lure customers from Tesla, which has suffered from declining sales.

Tesla eased those fears a bit on Friday when the company's charging unit posted on X that it had stepped up production of a crucial piece of hardware: adapters that drivers of Ford, Rivian and other car brands need to connect to Tesla chargers.

A Tesla factory in Buffalo is producing 8,000 of the adapters per week, the company said, noting that outside suppliers are also producing the part. Still, it is unclear how fast those adapters would reach electric vehicle owners.

Tesla did not respond to a request for comment, and the other automakers have been



A Tesla EV Supercharger station in the Fuenlabrada district of Madrid, Spain, on February 28, 2024

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reluctant to speak in detail, apparently because they do not want to antagonise Tesla and Musk.

The slow rollout raises questions about the decision that almost all major carmakers operating in the United States made to abandon the Combined Charging System, the standard that most of them used previously, and adopt the North American Charging Standard developed by Tesla. The switch made them vulnerable to the whims of Musk, who frequently changes corporate strategy and tactics in ways that can surprise even his employees and supporters.

Tesla built the Supercharger network to encourage sales of its own vehicles. By opening up the network, Tesla can make money from drivers of other car brands, who pay per kilowatt-hour to charge. The electric car company also makes money from selling adapters to other automakers.

But Tesla risks alienating its own customers, who

will lose exclusive access to the chargers.

Tesla's opening up of its chargers to other automakers was meant to be a three-stage process.

First, Tesla and each automaker would update the software on Tesla's chargers and the other company's cars so they could work with each other. Second, Tesla would make and supply adapters to allow other cars to connect to its chargers, which use different plugs. The final step is supposed to happen next year, when most automakers plan to start installing Tesla plugs on the new cars they assemble, eliminating the need for an adapter.

So far only two car companies have advanced past the first stage with Tesla — Ford Motor and Rivian. General Motors had said it expected to complete the software coordination with Tesla this spring but now says it will happen later this year. Other automakers are expected to follow GM.

—NYT