Tesla's 'unlimited' connectivity plan, including navigation, now expires after eight years

Tesla made a change to its free data connectivity tier that could potentially have a big impact on the way its customers use their vehicles. The included Standard Connectivity package, which adds basic navigation features without live traffic views or satellite maps and the ability to stream music over Bluetooth, will now expire after eight years (*via Electrek*).

Eight years is still a significant duration of time to have the included navigation and Bluetooth features, but it's just one lessened note for potential buyers. In a time when car companies are looking for more revenue streams by imposing subscription fees to use already included features (looking at you, BMW), Tesla's move to impose a time limit on data usage certainly weakens the overall customer experience.

Other companies are a bit more nuanced in the services they offer. For instance, BMWs have maps that can be upgraded after three years for a fee, and BMW's more premium navigation features (and auto high beams) are locked behind a ConnectedDrive subscription that costs $50 a year. And if you want satellite maps in an Audi, you'll be paying $84.99 a month for its premium MMI Navigation Plus service.

Tesla vehicles used to include lifetime premium data features; now, these features are $10 per month
Tesla vehicles used to include lifetime premium data features

like streaming music and movies, live security camera feeds, and internet browsing, but starting June 30th, 2018, it all got locked behind a $10 per month Premium Connectivity subscription (or $99 if paid annually).

So, if you plan on buying and keeping a new Tesla for at least eight years, you'll need to think about subscribing at some point, even for just the FM radio. Alternative connectivity options are scarce since the automaker not only puts standard Bluetooth audio streaming behind the Standard Connectivity subscription but also refuses to integrate smartphone-connected platforms like CarPlay and Android Auto. (Though you could get creative and make the former work.)

Realistically, you're probably going to want the Premium Connectivity package sooner than later on a car that your uncle loves repeatedly calling a "computer on wheels." And it's a small price to pay as Teslas get even more expensive seemingly every few months. I would probably hold off on the Full Self Driving subscription, though — perhaps better to take a wait-and-see approach despite price increases.

https://www.theverge.com/2022/7/27/23281022/tesla-standard-data-connectivity-navigation-limited-eight-years