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Factories punish rogue exporters

U. S. dealerships reap big gray-market profits

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As the weak dollar continues to make U.S. goods a bargain, automakers are cracking down on U.S. dealers who are exporting a growing number of new cars and trucks to foreign customers on the gray market.

In some cases, though, dealers say they're unwitting and unwilling participants who have no idea the vehicles they sell are going overseas.

Last month Mercedes-Benz warned its 344 U.S. dealers that it is raising financial penalties and cutting allocations for dealers who sell more than 2 percent of their vehicles to exporters, states a letter obtained by *Automotive News*.

The punishments apply even if dealers did not know that buyers planned to export the vehicles.

Mercedes-Benz spokeswoman Tracy Darchini said last week: "We are confident that there is a 'home' here in the U.S. for every vehicle that we are allocated."

Booming business

Gray-market exports are a growth industry. According to the North American Automobile Trade Association, 60,000 new gray-market vehicles were exported from the United States last year, up 68 percent from 2006.

Werner Schumacher, a major Mercedes-Benz dealer in Phoenix, was penalized $18,000 after his dealership sold a dozen new vehicles that later were exported. Schumacher, who chaired Mercedes' dealer council last year, says he didn't know the vehicles had gone to foreign buy-

see **EXPORTS**, Page **37**

Clarke: Buyers don't know Saturn brand

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DETROIT — Saturn's problem with potential buyers? It's worse than a lack of consideration. Buyers are barely aware of Saturn.

That means that Saturn has to revamp its marketing to build awareness of the brand and its new vehicle lineup, says Troy Clarke, president of General Motors North America.

Over the past 15 months, Saturn has launched a complete line of vehicles including the Aura sedan, which won 2006 North American Car of the Year. Yet Saturn sales are down 15.4 percent through April.

"If you look at the purchase funnel, you ask, 'Do we have a consideration problem on Saturn or a conversion problem?'" Clarke told *Automotive News*. "The fact of the matter is we have a basic awareness problem."

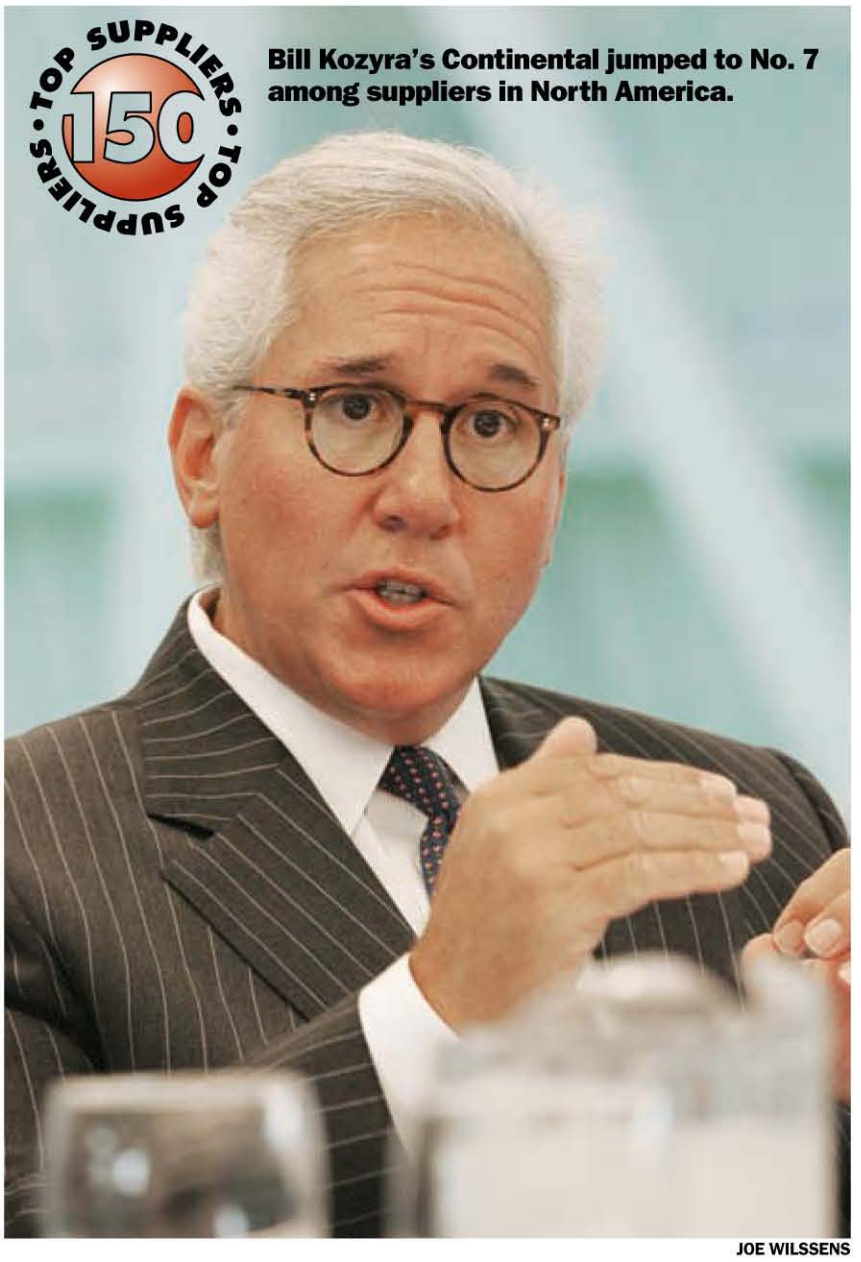
In GM research of coastal markets, consumers who saw pictures of Saturn vehicles could not identify them, Clarke said. So Saturn's advertising must start over with something "a little more basic" than the current "Rethink" theme, he said. Saturn will emphasize traditional mass media and social media.

"Just as if you're introducing a new brand," Clarke said. "We'll probably spend about the same amount of money, but we'll repurpose it so that it's more focused on awareness than consideration." AN



JOE WILSSENS

Troy Clarke: Saturn has "a basic awareness problem."



Bill Kozyra's Continental jumped to No. 7 among suppliers in North America.

JOE WILSSENS

U.S. firms sink on supplier list

Foreigners hold 5 of top 10 spots in N.A.

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After a stormy decade of spinoffs, megamergers, acquisitions, grand expansions and occasional red-faced retreats, the pecking order for North America's auto suppliers has a distinctly new look: Americans no longer are running the show.

For the first time, a company based outside the United States is the largest supplier of parts to automakers and other suppliers' North American factories. Canadian parts giant Magna International Inc. has elbowed its way past perennial No. 1 Delphi Corp. as the largest supplier to North America, based on 2007 sales.

And four other foreign-based suppliers have displaced U.S.-based rivals, giving foreign companies half of the top 10 spots.

In 2006, foreign-based suppliers took just three of the top 10 spots. In 1997, only two foreign-based companies made the top 10.

An analysis of *Automotive News'* annual list of the top 150 North American original-equipment suppliers shows that the leading foreign-based suppliers are growing quickly through acquisitions, the same way U.S. companies grew during the 1990s.

Continental AG's purchase last year of Siemens VDO catapulted the German supplier to No. 7, from No. 18 in 2006. Now, William Kozyra, Continental's North American CEO, must make the ac-

see **TOP 150**, Page **35**

Top 5 suppliers

North America OEM sales in millions

		N. America parts sales 2007	Percent change '07 vs. '06
1	Magna	$13,592	5.4
2	Delphi Corp.	11,810	–14.8
3	Johnson Controls	7,585 f	–11.6
4	Lear Corp.	7,198	–26.6
5	Robert Bosch	6,460 fe	45.1

f = fiscal fe = fiscal estimate
Source: Automotive News Data Center



Post-minivan plan at Ford and Chevy

Licking their wounds from minivan misadventures, Ford and Chevy offer new 2009 crossovers — key introductions in one of the few segments showing signs of life. | PAGE 4 |

Honda stands still – and picks up ground

By traditional measures, Honda is having a so-so sales year, marginally ahead of 2007. But in the context of the industry's sales slump, it's a star performer with rising market share. | PAGE 6 |

Auto retailing's new dynamic duo



Computer tycoon Michael Dell, left, and veteran auto retailer Jeffrey Rachor plan a whirlwind spending spree to acquire "premier" dealerships that sell luxury and high-volume import brands. | PAGE 8 |

Nissan will ease reliance on N.A.



After nine years of heavy reliance on North America, Nissan says it's entering an era in which profits from other portions of the globe will play an increasing role. | PAGE 16 |

New trustee faces a big job at Chamco

A New Jersey court has named a trustee to untangle the snarl of accusations and ill will that has paralyzed Chamco Auto, which wants to import Chinese vehicles for sale in the United States. | PAGE 40 |

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late news

Ford: Wait on Kerkorian

DETROIT — Ford Motor Co.'s board on Friday asked shareholders to take no action in response to a tender offer issued by billionaire investor Kirk Kerkorian's Tracinda Corp. to buy up to 20 million shares of common stock for $8.50 each. Ford stock closed the day at $8.10, down 10 cents.

Ford's board said it will advise stockholders of its position by May 22. In a statement earlier Friday, Tracinda said it may propose business strategies for Ford, depending on its evaluation of the automaker's business and other factors, and could acquire more shares after the tender offer.

— Philip Nussel

Sonic sues Mercedes-Benz

Sonic Automotive Inc. is suing Mercedes-Benz USA to compel the automaker to allow the public dealership group to complete its purchase of a Mercedes dealership in Sonic's hometown of Charlotte, N.C.

Sonic President Scott Smith says Mercedes-Benz is "holding hostage" his company's purchase of Beck Imports in an effort to force Sonic to spend tens of millions of dollars to upgrade four of its nine other Mercedes-Benz dealerships. Mercedes-Benz USA did not respond to a request for comment.

— Donna Harris

Fiat ponders Mexico plant

TURIN, Italy — Fiat is considering Mexico as the location for a plant that would supply North and South America, sources told *Automotive News Europe* last week.

Fiat will need production in North America after its Alfa Romeo brand returns to the United States in late 2009. And with demand in South America growing faster than Fiat's capacity, the company needs more production for the region.

In March, Fiat said it was scouting for a plant to build Alfa Romeos in the United States. Two possibilities being considered were a shuttered factory formerly owned by one of the Detroit 3 or expansion of a Case New Holland agricultural machinery or construction equipment plant. Fiat owns Case New Holland, which has 11 plants in North America.

— Luca Ciferri

Wanted: A few innovative dealers

If you are a franchised new-car dealer and have pioneered a winning strategy, we're gathering ideas for a special Insight section on **Innovative Dealers** to be published Oct. 13. Send a note to Insight Editor Karen Faust O'Rourke at **korourke@crain.com** or call her at **313-446-0386.**

Testing carbon fiber's mettle



At last October's Tokyo auto show, Toyota revealed its 1/X concept car, with a body frame made from plastic reinforced with carbon fiber.

Packed with potential

Japanese companies lead the world in the production of carbon fiber, left. Among its assets

- Light weight
- High tensile strength; resists stretching
- Extremely heat-resistant
- Doesn't rust or corrode

It's strong, light — and pricey — but 3 Japan firms want more of it in cars

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TOKYO — Carbon fiber may be best known for its use in golf clubs and jet planes. Yet the silvery black composite is extremely strong and light, and holds great potential as a steel substitute while automakers race to squeeze every extra mile from a gallon of gasoline.

Unfortunately, carbon fiber also is expensive — up to 30 times the price of steel.

Now three Japanese companies, which together control 70 percent of the global carbon fiber market, want to change all that. The players are Toray Industries Inc., Teijin Ltd. and Mitsubishi Rayon Co. And by boosting output and cutting costs, they aim to pioneer mass production of the futuristic material for widespread use in cars. They also are counting on some technical breakthroughs to bring down the cost.

The hurdles are still high. But the potential payoffs are too big to ignore.

Carbon fiber delivers the strength of steel at one-fifth the weight. By some estimates, a car's overall weight could be halved if carbon fiber composites are swapped for traditional steel in such parts as hoods, roofs, fenders, body panels, wheels, radiator panels or propeller shafts.

"But the first step is bringing down the cost," says Seiichiro Nohara, spokesman for the Japan Carbon Fiber Manufacturers Association. "It will help if gasoline prices keep climbing."

Imagine a cloth of tightly woven filaments, each a fraction of the width of a human hair and composed almost entirely of pure carbon atoms. That is raw carbon fiber, which is then in turn twisted into yarns, turned into fabric or molded with epoxy to form composite materials or carbon fiber-reinforced plastic parts.

Making the carbon filament is expensive and time consuming. Manufacturers take long strands of pitch, rayon or polyacrylonitrile, known as PAN, and bake them in ovens at temperatures of 3,600 degrees Fahrenheit. The heat treatment transforms this raw material into a fibrous product that is up to 95 percent pure carbon, making it very light and very strong.

Still new

Today, automotive uses account for less than 1 percent of world carbon fiber output, Nohara says. What little is used mostly finds its way into exotic performance cars.

Mazda's RX-8, Honda's Legend sedan and Mitsubishi's Pajero SUV already use carbon fiber driveshafts. In Europe, BMW's M3 has a carbon fiber roof.

Nissan's latest GT-R sports car has a carbon fiber engine underguard and radiator panel. But the car also has a $70,000 price tag to match the high-tech extravagance.

"This is very new technology and very expensive. I'm not sure if we can apply it to other cars," says Nissan r&d chief Mitsuhiko Yamashita.

Carbon fiber is one of the new materials Yamashita is looking at as Nissan tries to trim its average fleet weight. He believes widespread use is still five years away.

Ambitious Japan

Tokyo-based Toray, the world's top carbon fiber producer with 30 percent of the market, sees big growth coming soon. The company plans to open a $24.3 million automotive center in Nagoya next month. The goal is to develop low-cost carbon fiber composites for body panels and hybrid vehicles.

Teijin, which accounts for 20 percent of global output, plans to start supplying carbon-resin composites to

see **CARBON**, Page **36**

Going green: It's no longer an option

The government is mandating higher mileage. Your customers are demanding the same — plus better performance.

The Green Car Revolution is well under way. What does it mean to you?

To find out, come to the Automotive News Green Car Conference and technology exhibition on Nov. 20.

Key auto executives will discuss the challenges, opportunities and trade-offs of reducing the carbon footprints of their vehicles.

This one-day conference in suburban Detroit will include a debate over the viability of cellulosic ethanol as a fuel for the future, a look at powertrains of the future, and an examination of a variety of innovations that could improve fuel economy.

Speakers will cover issues such as vehicle weight reduction, the use of low-rolling-resistance tires and the development of new lightweight materials.

The conference also will include an exhibition that showcases suppliers' latest technology. AN

Automotive News GREEN CAR CONFERENCE / EXHIBITION

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Cost: $795 full-day registration; $295 reception and dinner only

For information: www.autonews.com/green

Questions: green@autonews.com or 313-446-0485

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Greer takes top sales post at Automotive News

DETROIT — Rick Greer has been named *Automotive News'* Director of Sales and Marketing.



Greer: New sales, marketing chief

Greer, 49, has been a top sales representative at *Automotive News* for 15 years, handling the Ford Motor Co. and supplier advertising accounts. In his new position, he will be responsible for the marketing and sales efforts of the publication.

Before joining *Automotive News,* Greer held sales positions at 3M and RL Greer and Associates.

"We are confident that through Rick's leadership, *Automotive News* will continue its history of growth," said Peter Brown, associate publisher and editorial director of *Automotive News.*

Greer is a graduate of Michigan State University.

Larry Schlagheck, Advertising Director since 2000, has left *Automotive News* to pursue other opportunities. AN

Toyota exec: Maybe it's time to raise a Prius hybrid family

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LOS ANGELES — A family of hybrid vehicles carrying the Prius badge could be the best way for Toyota to leverage its alternative-fuel technology, Toyota's top U.S. executive said.

Toyota has tried to promote its Hybrid Synergy Drive technology as a kind of brand — for example, making it the subject of advertising campaigns. All Toyota and Lexus hybrids carry the badge prominently.

But turning Hybrid Synergy Drive into a brand hasn't worked so well, says Jim Lentz, president of Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A. Inc. Now the company is weighing a different idea: lending the Prius name to all future vehicles that are offered only as hybrids.

"Try as we might to ingrain Hybrid Synergy Drive with consumers, what really stuck was Prius," Lentz said in an interview. "So rather than spend millions more driving Hybrid Synergy Drive on Highlander or Camry, I think the consumer is telling us they like the idea of Prius."

Marketing similar vehicles under the same brand name also brings efficiencies, Lentz said. He said Scion ads have been most effective when about the brand, rather than individual vehicles.



Toyota's Jim Lentz: "Try as we might to ingrain Hybrid Synergy Drive with consumers, what really stuck was Prius."

The same could work with a Prius-badged family of products that could be added to the current five-door hatchback, Lentz said. For example, the addition of a two-door coupe, a wagon or a commuter car.

A recent Nielsen Buzzmetrics study concluded that the Prius name generates the biggest share of online discussion of alternative-fuel vehicles, with almost 35 percent of total "buzz." No other alternative-fuel vehicle received more than 4 percent.

Not all Toyota hybrid-powered cars would carry a Prius badge. Hybrid versions of vehicles that are also sold as gasoline-powered vehicles would be called "Hybrid," not "Prius." Thus, the Camry Hybrid would not become the Camry Prius, Lentz said.

When will a family of Priuses arrive? Sources say a new Prius five-door is expected by 2010, but Lentz would not discuss timing of Prius derivatives.

"There is nothing in the pipeline," Lentz said. "It all depends on our resources and when we can make it happen. The longer gas is at four dollars, the greater likelihood (these vehicles) will bubble to the top."

Lentz said Toyota is not considering making Prius a stand-alone sales network, like Scion. AN



Chevrolet Traverse: Will safe approach to styling lead to higher sales?



Ford Flex: "Polarizing" on the outside, upscale look and feel on the inside.

RICK KRANZ PHOTOS

Chevy Traverse, Ford Flex face off this year

Can crossovers grab share from Honda, Toyota?

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news ANALYSIS

DETROIT — Their minivans bombed, so Ford and Chevrolet are pinning hopes on their newest people movers, two strikingly different crossovers.

The 2009 Ford Flex and 2009 Chevrolet Traverse will join one of the few remaining strong segments, mid-sized crossovers. Last year that segment generated 852,121 sales, up 30.7 percent from 2006.

The Flex and the Traverse will debut within about three months of one another and are aimed at the same buyers: people who relish value and price. Ford and Chevrolet cite the redesigned 2009 Honda Pilot and redesigned 2008 Toyota Highlander as primary competitors.

Based on interviews, walk-arounds and rides in the crossovers, here's how the Flex and Traverse stack up against each other:

Styling: Ford uses the term "polarizing" to describe the Flex's exterior styling. "Boxy" and "breadbox" are better words, say critics.

The Flex does have a perception problem. In photos, the vehicle seems too long. Blame it on the two-tone paint option; the long, white roof exaggerates the Flex's length. In reality, the Flex is 2.7 inches shorter than the Traverse.

Inside, though, even critics praise the Flex's upscale look and feel.

The Traverse styling, meanwhile, is familiar, a safe approach likely to translate into bigger sales. The Traverse shares sheet metal with two architecture-mates, the Buick Enclave and GMC Acadia.

Family tree: The Traverse is the fourth crossover based on General Motors' front-drive Lambda architecture. That may give Chevrolet an

see **RIVALS**, Page **38**

Head to head

The Chevrolet Traverse will reach dealerships in September. The Ford Flex goes on sale in June. Both are aimed at buyers who relish value and price.

	2009 CHEVROLET TRAVERSE	2009 FORD FLEX
Wheelbase	118.9 inches	117.9 inches
Length	205.0 inches	202.3 inches
Width	78.4 inches	79.9 inches
Height	72.8 inches	67.6 inches
Weight (fwd)	4,720 lbs.	N.A.
Weight (awd)	4,925 lbs.	4,640 lbs.
Base engine	3.6-liter V-6	3.5-liter V-6
Horsepower	281 @ 6,400 rpm	262 @ 6,250 rpm
Torque, in lbs.-ft.	253 @ 5,500 rpm	248 @ 4,500 rpm
Transmission	6-speed automatic	6-speed automatic
Base price*	Not announced	$28,995

*Includes shipping

LaSorda reaffirms axle plant plan

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DETROIT — Chrysler LLC's Marysville, Mich., axle plant, under construction and scheduled for completion in 2010, is not for sale, but the company is looking for potential partners.

Said Tom LaSorda, Chrysler co-president: "The bottom line is we have made a commitment to the UAW and our employees that we're going to build a Marysville plant, and we're going to do that.

"We have enough flexibility so that if we pick up a partner, they could go bid on other work and make it in that plant."

Chrysler plans to spend $700 million on the Marysville axle plant. It will replace the carmaker's aging Detroit axle plant, and will make axles for trucks and SUVs. It is expected to have a capacity of 1.2 million axles per year.

Chrysler views axles as a core technology. The plant will build a lower-friction axle developed by Daimler AG that will increase fuel economy. Chrysler is engineering the Mercedes axle technology into its vehicles.

The plant will employ about 700 people, many of whom are expected to transfer from the Detroit plant.

Under the recent UAW-Chrysler contract, workers hired at the Marysville plant will be paid half as much as veteran UAW workers at the Detroit axle plant. Workers at the Detroit plant earn $28 an hour, and benefits boost the hourly package to $73. AN

Chrysler: Jeep seats from India make sense

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DETROIT — Chrysler LLC will fly in the face of conventional wisdom and import rear seats for the Jeep Wrangler from a seat supplier in India, according to Tom LaSorda, co-president.

The India seat project is part of Chrysler's effort to source more parts from China, India and other low-cost countries. The automaker also is building up engineering capacity in those countries.

Because seats are bulky, complex and difficult to ship cheaply, they often are built close to vehicle assembly plants. But Chrysler will get rear seats from Indian supplier Krishna Maruti Ltd. and have them shipped to the Toledo Supplier Park in Ohio, where the Wrangler is built. Chrysler has not said how soon the India-built seats might be installed in Wranglers.



Chrysler's Tom LaSorda: Sourcing rear seats for the Jeep Wrangler from India is "much less costly than to do it locally."

Current Wrangler seat supplier Johnson Controls Inc. will continue to build front seats for the vehicle, LaSorda said.

LaSorda admitted he was surprised that seats could be shipped cost-effectively from so far away.

"It makes enough sense that it's much less costly than to do it locally," he said last week in an interview at Chrysler's suburban Detroit headquarters. "In this particular case, it's the rear seats, which dramatically reduces complexity."

The rear seats have no electrical parts or heat elements, LaSorda said.

Krishna Maruti is a joint venture of Suzuki Motor Corp. in Japan and two Indian companies: Maruti Udyog Ltd. and Ashok Kapur & Associates. Krishna Maruti claims to be South Asia's largest seating systems maker.

Chrysler has opened an engineering center in Shanghai that employs 100 people. Chrysler plans to grow that number to 250 by year end. In April, Chrysler also opened an engineering center in Chennai, India.

LaSorda said Chrysler is studying Russia closely as it sets up a network of global engineering centers. Chrysler spokesman David Elshoff said the company plans to add 1,000 jobs in these centers this year. AN

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Denotes Masters Award Winner

Ford

Ford Motor Credit Company

Nissan plans wide range of electric vehicles

Lindsay Chappell
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CASCAIS, Portugal — While many in the industry ponder whether electric cars are viable, Nissan Motor Co. CEO Carlos Ghosn is preparing to plunge into the market.

Ghosn sees potential for 10 million global electric-car sales per year in cities such as New York, Washington, London, Paris and Mumbai, India. And he wants Nissan and its partner, Renault, to be a major player.

"It's a territory we want to own," Ghosn told reporters at a press event here. "We are bullish on zero-emission vehicles because of the social trend. The young generation is demanding this. The social trend will make electric vehicles more favorable, along with incentives and tax cuts."



Ghosn: "Bullish" on electrics



Saikawa: Fleet users first in line

Ghosn also clarified that the electric segment will mean introducing multiple vehicles, not merely a single car.

"The electric vehicle is not just one car but a lineup," he said. "Small car, passenger sedan, LCV (light commercial vehicle).

"It's a zero-emission lineup, which will be adapted to the needs of each market.

"We can make an electric sports car. We are testing many variations."

Hiroto Saikawa, chairman of Nissan's American management board, said the company first will distribute electric cars to U.S. fleet users starting in 2010 and then begin commercial marketing in 2012.

Saikawa said Nissan's U.S. fleet customers likely will be utility companies and others who drive vehicles in urban areas.

Urban customers will be the focus of Ghosn's commercial push. Ghosn, who is CEO of both Nissan and Renault SA, calculated that 69 million passenger vehicles were sold globally in 2007, of which 10 million were purchased for "urban driving" — commuting over small distances, from home to office and within neighborhoods.

"That's the first target of electric vehicles," he said. "So potentially, the core target could be for 10 million units for urban use.

"It could go further with the development of technology."

Nissan and Renault have engineers working on a new generation of lithium ion battery technology. Ghosn said some markets will accept batteries that recharge over six hours, while others will require only a 30-minute recharge.

"The battery and the electric charge have to be cheaper than gasoline," Ghosn said of his new product strategy.

"If we do this, we've won. With (oil) at $120 a barrel, it gets easier." AN

Changing models yearly created object of desire

Henry Ford had his way of doing things: Turn out a million of the same model each year in any color the buyer wanted, as long as it was black.

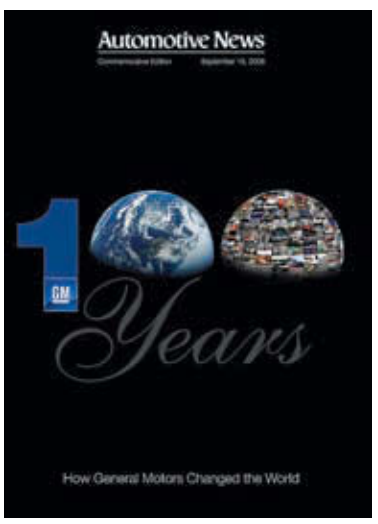
Alfred Sloan, General Motors' resident genius, had a different idea in the 1920s: Cater to the buyer's desire for something new. Make each year's car so innovative that the consumer couldn't get along without it, even though his current car had many good years left.

In other words, the annual model change. The 1923 Chevrolet is an early example of the new approach. It had a restyled body covering 9-year-old technology.

Another Sloan idea was the step-up plan. A motorist started with an entry-level Chevrolet. As his financial condition improved, he moved up to an Oakland (Pontiac), an Oldsmobile, a Buick — and maybe, when he made it big, a Cadillac. (Henry Ford was out of luck there. He had only one brand until he added Lincoln in 1922. And not many customers could step up from a Ford to a Lincoln.)

The annual model change was a basic industry strategy until the proliferation of nameplates in the 1960s made it impossible to change every line every year.

For the rest of the story, read Automotive News' *GM 100th anniversary edition,* How General Motors Changed the World, *on Sept. 15. For information about the special edition, go to* **www.autonews.com/gm100**.





DALE JEWETT

The Kia Soul concept car, shown, has a new grille. The production version comes to the U.S. in 2009.

Kia to bring small car to U.S.

Gary Anglebrandt
autonews@crain.com

SEOUL — Kia Motors Corp. plans to export its new Soul small car to the United States and China in March, says a Kia source.

The five-seater will be produced for the Chinese market at a Kia plant in China in December 2009. The source declined to be identified because he is not authorized to talk about the matter.

Suh Sung-moon, an analyst at Korea Investment & Securities, also said the Soul is coming to the United States in early 2009.

The car, code-named AM, is the next step, after the Borrego SUV, in Kia's strategy to reshape the brand's exterior design. The Soul concept was shown first in Detroit in January 2006. It was displayed in Geneva in March with a new "tiger nose" grille by Peter Schreyer, Kia's head of design.

Schreyer has said he wants to give Kias a more distinct look. In his corner is Tom Kearns, who came from Cadillac and did the main design work on the Soul.

The Soul was developed with buyers of the Toyota Scion and Honda Fit in mind. The car is expected to get a 2.0-liter, four-cylinder engine with front-wheel drive. AN

As U.S. waits, Chrysler sends cars made in China to Mexico

Namrita Chow
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BEIJING — By year end, Chrysler LLC will start shipping a China-made car to Mexico, says the car's manufacturer, Chery Automobile Co.

Still under discussion are Chery-built cars for U.S. dealers of the automaker.

The car for Mexico, sold in China as the Chery A1, will be badged with a Chrysler brand, says Zhang Lin , general manager of Chery International.



The Chery A1

In July, Chery and Chrysler agreed to work together to develop cars for global markets.

Chrysler "sent engineers to Chery in China to work on the A1," Zhang said last month at the Beijing auto show.

The A1 cars to be exported to Mexico are virtually the same as those sold in China, said Zhang. The car was styled by Bertone of Italy.

A supplier source in China said the current A1 will not be sold in the United States.

Chrysler co-President Tom LaSorda said his company and Chery are discussing cars that Chery could assemble for the United States and Europe.

"We need small cars," LaSorda said last week. "Chery's cars are still not ready for that exposure into these markets." He said China-built cars probably won't be ready to meet U.S. safety and emissions standards for "three years or more." AN

Bradford Wernle contributed to this report

Honda: Sales are flat, but market share soars

If you can keep your sales steady when all about you are losing theirs, then you'll be a man, my son, and rack up lots of market share. With apologies to Rudyard Kipling, that's the way it has played out for Honda so far this year.

Of the nine top-selling auto groups, only American Honda managed a sales increase in the first four months of 2008 — albeit a modest 1.5 percent. Honda has benefited from fuel-efficient cars such as the Fit (up a whopping 68.7 percent to 21,579 units this year) and an insightful lack of reliance on trucks and SUVs.

The result: American Honda is the newest carmaker to pass the 10 percent market share threshold.

The Honda and Acura brands clocked in at 10.1 percent share from January through April, up from 9.2 percent over the same stretch last year. They finished 2007 with 9.6 percent.



Running the numbers

No. 5 American Honda also is cutting *deeply* into Chrysler LLC's No. 4 ranking, what with Chrysler suffering the largest share decline of the top carmakers this year.

In the first four months of 2007, Chrysler held a lead of almost 250,000 units over American Honda. That advantage had been trimmed to about 114,000 units during the same period this year. If the trend continues, Honda will overtake Chrysler in 2009. AN

Honda hits double digits

Market share ups and downs, in percentage points, through April, compared with the same period last year

	MARKET SHARE GAIN/LOSS	2008 SHARE
American Honda	+0.9 pt.	10.1%
Toyota Motor Sales	+0.8 pt.	16.4%
Nissan North America	+0.5 pt.	7.2%
Hyundai-Kia	+0.2 pt.	4.8%
VW Group of America	+0.2 pt.	2.1%
Daimler AG	+0.2 pt.	1.7%
BMW Group	+0.1 pt.	2.1%
Ford Motor	–0.4 pt.	16.2%
General Motors	–1.2 pt.	21.9%
Chrysler	–1.5 pt.	12.5%

Source: Companies, Automotive News Data Center

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Fla. law: Automakers can't force dealer upgrades

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A bill awaiting the Florida governor's signature would limit how far manufacturers can go to force auto dealers to upgrade their stores.

The state's already dealer-friendly franchise laws also would be bolstered in areas such as warranty payouts, incentives, exports and fraud.

The legislation "turns the tables and prevents manufacturers from using their 800-pound gorilla status against dealers," said Alex Kurkin, a Miami lawyer who helped draft the bill.

The measure also would require automakers to pay retail customer rates for warranty labor and parts.

Manufacturers would be prohibited from auditing warranty claims from dealers that demand retail payment or taking other punitive measures against retailers — tactics some automakers are accused of.

Florida dealers have complained that some manufacturers bully dealers into building showrooms. Dealers also have complained about unfair warranty payout procedures.

The bill "prevents coercive actions," Kurkin said. "Dealers who had asked for retail warranty payouts got audited. Then they get pushed into the new facility *du jour* because the factory hired a new VP of marketing."

Both houses of Florida's Legislature unanimously passed the bill last week. Gov. Charlie Crist is expected to sign the legislation. If unsigned for 15 days, the bill becomes law automatically. Only a veto can prevent passage.

The bill says carmakers cannot:

- Terminate a dealer's franchise or change or cut vehicle allocations for failure to upgrade a facility, within certain limits.
- Withhold incentives for facility renovation from dealers who already comply with program standards.
- Deny Florida dealers incentives offered elsewhere in the country.
- Punish dealers who sell vehicles that are later exported — without proof the dealer knew the vehicle was to be exported.
- Revoke a dealer's franchise for fraudulent action unless the dealer principal had full knowledge of the fraud.

Manufacturer-backed lobbying organizations mounted a last-ditch effort to get Crist to veto the bill. The Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers — representing the Detroit 3, Toyota and five other automakers — has created FairAutoRepairs.com, a lobbying group to oppose the bill. The group has aired radio commercials promising more expensive repair bills, should the bill be signed. Consumers are urged to demand that Crist veto the legislation.

"This is an issue that should be handled internally between dealers and manufacturers, not through legislation," says alliance spokesman Charles Territo. "This legislation would be bad for manufacturers, consumers and, ultimately, could hurt dealers, if manufacturers are forced to increase the cost of vehicles as a result." AN

Partnership seeks 'premier' stores

Michael Dell-Jeffrey Rachor team could spend as much as $500 million over 5 years

Mary Connelly
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The new partnership of computer billionaire Michael Dell and veteran auto retailer Jeffrey Rachor will focus on buying "premier" U.S. dealerships that sell luxury and high-volume import brands, Rachor said.

"We have the capital available to pursue virtually unlimited growth," said Rachor, a former president of the public dealership group Sonic Automotive Inc. "We have no specific growth or revenue targets at this time. We want to grow at a measured pace."

Dealership broker Sheldon Sandler predicted that the new venture, MSD Automotive Partners LLC, could spend as much as $500 million over five years to acquire dealerships.

The auto retail partnership is an offshoot of MSD Capital LP, a private investment firm that manages more than $12 billion in assets for Dell and his family. Dell, 43, is CEO of Dell Inc., of Round Rock, Texas, the No. 2 maker of personal computers. Last year, *Forbes* magazine ranked Dell the eighth-richest American.

Rachor, 46, is CEO of the auto partnership announced last week. The venture is based in Chattanooga, Tenn., Rachor's hometown. Rachor said Dell will not be "actively involved in the day-to-day management or investment decisions" of the auto retailer.

In an interview, Rachor told *Automotive News* he is "investing a significant portion of my personal net worth in this venture." He declined to specify the value of his minority stake. But he said he and Dell "will be owner-operators with major skin in the game."


SEAN BUSHER
Jeffrey Rachor is "investing a significant portion of my personal net worth in this venture."

MSD Capital "is prepared to invest what is necessary" to achieve the goals outlined by Rachor, a spokesman said last week.

Rachor would not say how many dealerships the partnership seeks to buy. Although the company is especially interested in dealerships in Sun Belt states, he said, "we are prepared to go anywhere we can find great assets and management.

Big deal

Here are key elements of the dealership acquisition strategy underlying the auto retail venture formed by Michael Dell and Jeffrey Rachor.

- Focus on U.S. dealerships that sell luxury and high-volume import brands
- Emphasis on Sun Belt states
- Minority equity stakes for dealership general managers
- No plans to go public

Love of luxury

"We love the luxury brands — European, Asian and domestic," Rachor said. "And we particularly like the high-volume Asian import brands."

But he said he and Dell will be open-minded about domestic-brand dealerships "in the right situations and markets."

Rachor said the company does not plan to impose a corporate brand on the dealerships it buys: "The branding or name of the dealerships would be a local decision."

And the new venture has no plans to go public, Rachor said. Company executives "believe strongly that the auto dealership business model is best operated as a privately owned enterprise."

Sandler, CEO of Bel Air Partners LLC in Skillman, N.J., said he expects the Dell venture to focus on acquiring large private dealership groups that gen-

see **PARTNERS**, Page **36**

GM payback for Axle bailout: Lower prices, innovation

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GM's truck, SUV supplies rise ➤ 36

General Motors' $200 million proposed donation to American Axle & Manufacturing Holdings Inc. is a limited-time, no-strings-attached offer, according to a GM filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Yeah, sure.

GM will seek to get its money back in lower axle prices and first crack at product innovations, analysts say.

That's beyond the immediate goals: hasten the end of a 10-week-old UAW strike at American Axle that has hit light-truck production at 30 GM plants and head off local strikes at GM plants building popular cars such as the Chevrolet Malibu.

"There almost certainly was some hook that GM will get recompense either in pricing or innovation or both," said Aaron Bragman, a research analyst at Global Insight Inc.

"This isn't a gift," said Dave Cole, chairman of the Center for Automotive Research in Ann Arbor, Mich.

GM and American Axle spokespeople declined to comment on whether the GM offer had a quid pro quo.

The GM money would pay for $140,000 buyouts of American Axle workers. It also would fund $90,000 lump-sum payments to lessen the pain of permanently lower compensation for workers who remain.


© GM CORP.
GM wants to head off strikes at plants that build the Chevy Malibu.

Since GM spun off its axle operations in 1994 to create American Axle, the axle maker has enjoyed a premium on the prices it fetches from GM. The automaker also has contracts that allow American Axle to match competitors' bids on future work.

Those advantages have kept American Axle profitable — and heavily reliant on GM business, Cole said. GM represents about 80 percent of American Axle's business.

But axle competition has intensified in North America. Dana Holding Corp., a key rival, cut labor rates during Chapter 11 reorganization. Newcomers such as Magna International Inc. have pushed into the market.

American Axle CEO Richard E. Dauch cited that competition when he sought to halve wages and benefits of 3,650 workers at five plants. They responded with picket lines. AN

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Suddenly, small was big in April

John K. Teahen Jr.

salestales

April was a terrible month for the overall sales of new cars and light trucks, but one segment of the market feasted while the others fasted: Small cars.

Ever since the price of gasoline began heading for the stratosphere, those in the know have been talking of a small-car boom. Not exactly a divinely inspired idea. With gasoline leaping past $3 a gallon and pushing $4 and with much talk of $5, car buyers naturally want to wring as many miles as possible out of every gallon.

But the move to small, four-cylinder gas-sippers was slow.

In the first quarter, small-car sales rose only 1.8 percent. The tiny tots (the Kia Rio, Scion tC , Honda Fit and Toyota Yaris) were up sharply, but the small-car class as a whole had just as many losers as winners.

Then came April. A lot of incurable optimists who were expecting the price of gasoline to fall apparently woke up to reality. They bought the high-mpg model they had been looking at but hoped they would never have to drive.

Small-car sales rose 19.2 percent in April compared with April 2007. They had dropped 2.2 percent in March.

Trucks, SUVs collapse

Just as the small-car market came into its own in April, the pickup and SUV markets collapsed. In the first quarter, pickup sales were down 15.0 percent. In April, the drop was 19.9 percent. SUVs were smacked harder: down 24.5 percent for the quarter but off 32.8 percent in April.



John K. Teahen Jr. is the senior editor of Automotive News.

Here's how some of the big pickups fared in April: The Toyota Tundra was off only 6.0 percent from last year, but the Nissan Titan was down 51.1 percent. Sales of the Detroit 3 pickups — the Ford F series, Dodge Ram, Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra — declined 21.0 to 24.7 percent.

George Pipas, Ford Motor Co.'s sales analyst, estimates that 25 to 30 percent of pickup buyers don't really need a pickup. Well, they're not buying them anymore.

SUVs suffered even more, especially the midrange nameplates (the Chevrolet TrailBlazer, Dodge Durango, Hummer H3, Nissan Pathfinder and Ford Explorer). TrailBlazer sales in April were down 73.0 percent from last year. Other declines included the Mercury Mountaineer, 55.7 percent; Durango, 45.1 percent; H3, 47.0 percent; and Pathfinder, 40.9 percent.

But the premium-priced large SUVs dipped only 4.5 percent in April — lines such as the Cadillac Escalade, Lincoln Navigator and Lexus LX 470. Buyers in that price stratum obviously are not concerned about a little thing like $4-a-gallon gasoline

The fad is fading

General Motors announced last month that it has eliminated several shifts at pickup and SUV plants, cutting production by 138,000 units for the rest of this year. It was Page 1 news in Detroit, but it came as no surprise to regular readers of SalesTales.

I have been warning for a long time that the pickup boom was about to run its course and that buyers would again want cars — a product that the Detroit 3 are woefully short of. I must admit I didn't foresee $4-a-gallon gasoline this soon. But pickups are falling from favor, and the fall will continue.

As for SUVs, I've called them a fad, and I've been royally excoriated by devotees of those vehicles. I'll stick to my guns; fads run their course, and that's what is happening to SUVs. Think Hula Hoop, yo-yo, Rubik's Cube. To my mind, the end of the fad has just as much to do with the decline of SUV sales as the rising price of gasoline.

You may e-mail John K. Teahen Jr. at jteahen @crain.com

UAW vote may be nearing at Honda's Alabama plant

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Employees at Honda Motor Co.'s Lincoln, Ala., factory could be voting within several months on whether to join the UAW.

UAW representatives have been helping a core group of Honda workers at the factory generate support for a union.

The plant assembles the Honda Odyssey minivan and Pilot SUV. Honda Manufacturing of Alabama LLC employs 4,500 workers there.

"We know all the issues that the associates have. We're beyond that point," Mychal Boyd told *Automotive News*. "I think we're moving forward. We're close to a vote. It may be just months away."

Boyd, a quality assurance employee at the plant, is part of the core group.

The group of employees pressing for union representation has grown from 40 last summer to about 180 today. The group invited the UAW to try to organize a union at the plant.

In two meetings in mid-August, about 500 Honda employees met with UAW representatives at a nearby motel. Since then, the core group has identified employee concerns, distributed literature and talked with colleagues about the benefits of a union, Boyd said.

The Lincoln plant, about 35 miles east of Birmingham, Ala., opened in November 2001.

Wages are not an issue with employees, Boyd said. He identified the three top employee concerns as favoritism in promotions, high medical insurance premiums and lack of retirement health benefits. The core group meets once or twice a week and now has its own meeting hall in Lincoln.

Boyd said Honda employees are willing to listen to the group's pitch.

"We're well into the process of educating everyone about a union, its benefits, the pros and cons," he said.

In response to the organizing effort, Honda sent employees a pointed, anti-union letter in September reminding them that Honda's North American auto operations have managed to avoid even a single layoff for nearly 30 years.

Mark Morrison, the plant's communications manager, said he has not heard about an approaching vote.

Union supporters are allowed to distribute literature to employees at the plant entrance on their own time during noncore hours, he said. The union supporters have not been disruptive, Morrison said.

The plant began mass-producing the redesigned 2009 Pilot on April 15.

"Our focus has been on getting everything right with the '09 Pilot," Morrison said. "We've had a smooth startup." AN

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opinion

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In tough times dealers must coddle customers

Now that parts of the North American auto market are in free fall, many dealerships are emphasizing other sources of revenue to offset sagging new-vehicle sales. That's good. But each dealer must be careful not to damage his or her dealership and its long-term relationship with customers.

One of the biggest sources of dealership revenue can be the finance and insurance operation, with its menu of profitable products. But dealers can get in a lot more trouble over F&I than they do over selling a car.

For example, when the service contract vendor Automotive Professionals Inc. filed for Chapter 11 reorganization last year, it stopped paying claims on the 250,000 service contracts it had sold. Texas dealer Ramsay Gillman's dealership group had sold 15,000 of them.

To take care of his customers, and to protect his reputation, Gillman has paid more than $500,000 of his customers' claims, hoping to be reimbursed.

Long-term vehicle loans are an even more corrosive problem. Finance companies, including some of the biggest captives, are offering loans as long as 84 months. That may seem a boon to cash-strapped consumers with negative equity in their current vehicles who want to buy new ones — and to dealers trying to sell cars and trucks. But awareness is growing among consumer groups and some dealers that long-term loans perpetuate the negative-equity problem and saddle car buyers with excessive interest payments.

It's a short-term fix that can come back to bite the dealership when customers realize that their vehicles are worth less than they owe — but that they must continue paying for years to come.

Especially in tough times, dealers ought to nurture their customers and their customers' satisfaction with the dealership.

Museum funding is bold

Give credit to Chrysler LLC's management for finding creative ways to shed unnecessary or unwanted operations.

Spinning off the automaker's Walter P. Chrysler Museum into a charitable 501(c)3 corporation is a bold stroke that can help the museum grow. CEO Bob Nardelli is asking Chrysler's U.S. dealers to donate $5,000 apiece to the museum, which is on the grounds of Chrysler's headquarters in suburban Detroit.

Not all Chrysler dealers may be able to donate. But those who do will help preserve the heritage of the brands they sell.

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Watch your car-truck inventory



KEITH crain

It seems so simple. Just make sure that your dealership doesn't stock too many vehicles that are rapidly losing their appeal.

And that applies to your used-car inventory as well.

The factories are having a hard time adjusting to new customer tastes. But the U.S. dealer has a lot of options, not the least of which is to simply say no. There will be plenty of inducements to encourage dealers to buy vehicles in which the U.S. consumer has lost interest.

The manufacturers can't shut off their production lines overnight. They are committed for years, and it's expensive for them to realize that the automobile market is sensitive to the increased fuel prices. Fuel prices started rising in the early 1970s and — except for an occasional temporary reprieve — have been rising ever since.

Yet far too many automakers ignored all the signs and have invested heavily in vehicles that are not fuel-efficient.

Everyone has predicted that at some price point — higher than the current price — U.S. consumers are going to start buying smaller vehicles.

But too many plants are building those huge fuel-inefficient vehicles that Americans seem to be rejecting. Sure, U.S. consumers may become comfortable with the higher prices, just as the Europeans have, but it would appear that such comfort would not come quickly.

That consumer adjustment won't happen overnight. The shock is real, and it's anybody's guess whether it will wear off.

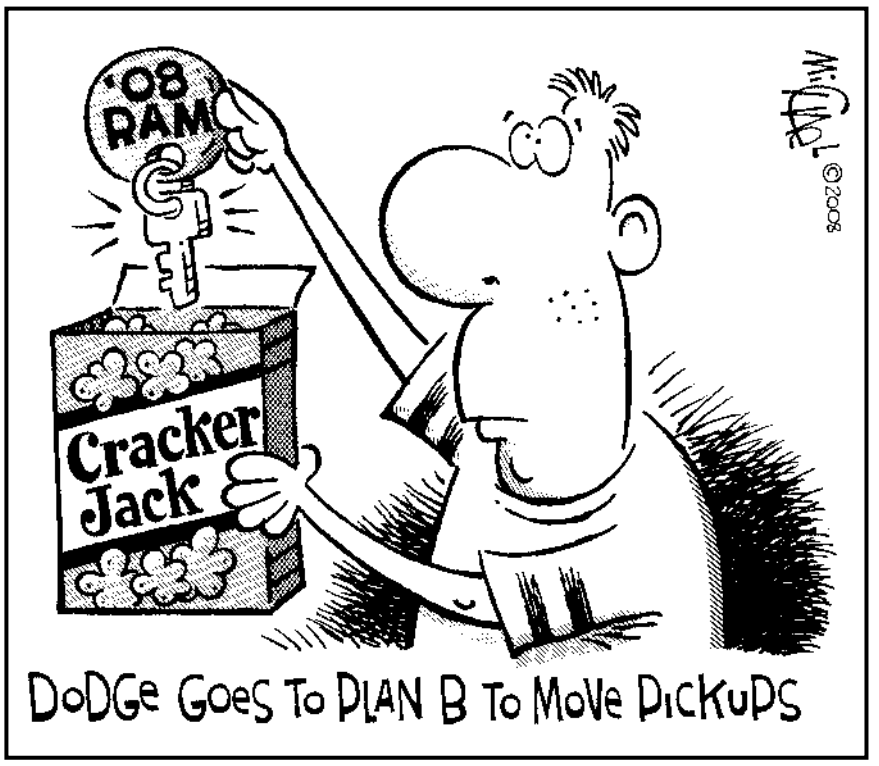
Meanwhile we're going to see massive wholesale and retail rebates to try to counter the natural consumer reaction to much higher gasoline and diesel prices.

The manufacturers can't shut off their production lines overnight.

When you have billions of dollars invested in plants and products that you can't change overnight, you must do everything in your power to get your dealers to stock plenty of those unattractive vehicles. Then you'll have to have plenty of incentives for the consumer.

This fall is going to be interesting, with two 1-year-old big pickups competing with two brand-new ones. They will be competing for customers who aren't much interested in any of them. It looks like Nissan is the prudent one by folding its tent and sliding away in the dark of night.

The pickup market this fall is going to be bloody.



letters

TO THE EDITOR

Dealers should sell alternative fuels

To the Editor:

Sometimes when we are looking for something, the answer is in front of us.

If car dealerships are going to embrace alternative fuels, they must make them available at the dealerships. Instead of spending millions on advertising to get people in the door, they could offer gasoline or hydrogen at a savings to the consumer.

The lines would be around the block, and dealerships would make money doing it. There could be a minimart/gasoline/hydrogen station at every dealership.

When minimarts were placed in gas stations, people said it would never work. People will always need cars.

KARL DISKIN
Delray Beach, Fla.
The writer is a business manager for an auto dealership.

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Dealers are tuned in to absorption figures

To the Editor:

Keith Crain must be living on another planet if he thinks that today's car dealers are not conscious of absorption and absorption percentage ("Time to go back to the basics," April 7).

It appears on Page 4 of General Motors dealers' financial statements, for example.

I know lots of dealers, including U.S. dealers, who are very concerned about unabsorbed overhead. A step to help with that issue would be to get an industrywide standard definition for the term "absorption."

LINDER ARMITAGE
President
Southgate Chevrolet Ltd.
Calgary, Alberta

Irvin was smart, friendly, helpful

To the Editor:

Everything John K. Teahen Jr. said about Bob Irvin in his March 24 column is true and worthy of one heck of a guy in our business.

I started in this business in 1954, and I found Bob to be not only intelligent automotively but a great guy you could talk to and with.

He was helpful. I miss him and still thank him for being a model guy in our business. Thanks for your insight for others.

ED BOBIT
Publisher — *F&I* magazine, *Special Finance & Automotive Fleet*
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Torrance, Calif.

GM's big problem: Too many brands

To the Editor:

Regarding General Motors' reorganizing its eight brands into four channels: Long term, it's about killing brands for profitability. General Motors has too many brands chasing its diminished share of about a quarter of

see **LETTERS**, Page **14**

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Ford's challenge: Long-term reliability

Initial quality is good, but then come the repairs

Richard Truett



DALE JEWETT

Staff Reporter Richard Truett loves the looks of his 2005 Ford Mustang, but he doesn't like the way it was built.

It seems like a lifetime ago. But for the first 12 of my 20 years as an automotive journalist, I handed out consumer advice daily as the auto writer for *The Orlando Sentinel* in Florida.

Thousands of times between 9 a.m. Aug. 16, 1989, and 5 p.m. Jan. 2, 2001, I was blasted by angry consumers who had bought something from General Motors, Ford Motor Co. or Chrysler. It usually happened after I had written a positive review of a Detroit 3 vehicle.

I would always tell a surly caller or e-mailer something like: "You should give the Big 3 another chance. They aren't making Oldsmobile diesels, Ford Tempos and Chrysler K cars anymore. The technology is all new. It's much better."

Now I am in the position of having to take my own advice, and I don't think I am going to do it.

Here's why: I bought a new Ford Mustang in December 2004, one of the first of the current Mustangs built at the Ford-Mazda plant in Flat Rock, Mich. I'm a sucker for a good-looking car, and I get nostalgic over cars I used to own. The 2005 Mustang was a perfect blend of a 1966 Mustang fastback and a 1967 Mustang GTA that I owned and restored in the 1980s. So, when I saw the new Mustang, I had to have one.

Sadly, though, it hasn't been a very good car — not for me and certainly not for Ford. Because of frequent and expensive warranty claims, Ford probably hasn't made a nickel on the car.

Shoddy fix

After just 30,100 miles, my Mustang is on its third power-steering rack. The first two succumbed to leaks. My car has been in the shop three times for an exhaust system rattle in the catalytic converter area that the dealer can't or won't fix properly and permanently. (In one shoddy attempt, the dealer installed radiator hose clamps in an effort to put tension on the converter to keep it from rattling.) The transmission sometimes doesn't downshift properly. The rear seat belt broke.

I could live with all that stuff.

But two weeks ago, the paint started peeling off the hood. And now I am soured on Ford products, despite the fact that here in Detroit I can clearly see how well Alan Mulally, Mark Fields, Joe Hinrichs, Derrick Kuzak, Jim Farley and others are turning Ford around.

Sorry, guys, but you likely won't get any more of my money — not for a long time. I like the new Ford Fiesta, Flex and Escape Hybrid. They look great. Your initial quality scores on the Edge and Fusion are impressive. But most cars look like they'll last when they're new.

The real test of quality — and one Ford is failing by my experience — is long-term reliability. So, like most other consumers, before I buy another new Ford, I am going to have to see proof that your vehicles hold together long after they are paid off, just like Hondas and Toyotas.

This Mustang has taught me that it's much easier to tell people how to spend their money than it is to step up and spend your own. It also has clarified for me why consumers tolerate sense-dulling Toyotas and Hondas. Those cars, though not perfect, usually don't break. And the resale value is almost always higher than on

comment

a domestic when it is time to trade.

Luckily for me, all the Mustang's mechanical failures occurred while the car was still under warranty. And Ford did step up and pay two-thirds of the cost to repaint the hood, even though the warranty didn't cover it. But the next time the car breaks, it's my dime.

Liked the retro PT

When I landed in Detroit in January 2001, I came from sunny Florida in a black 1995 Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme convertible. The rough roads in Detroit were beating that car to smithereens, so I traded it in for a new Chrysler PT Cruiser because I liked the retro looks and the excellent interior.

Then a funny thing happened: Too many senior citizens started buying the PT, and that was not an image I was interested in, even though it was a great vehicle that never went back to the dealership except for oil changes.

The Cruiser gave way to a 2003 Mini Cooper, which let me buy a new British car for the first time after having owned dozens of used British sports cars. The Cooper also never needed anything except regular maintenance.

Everything was fine until the new Mustang came along. My 1966 Mustang fastback was the first car I ever loved, and so there was no question that I would own the new model.

So, I traded the Mini and got the new Mustang. I even paid it off two years early. I was counting on it to keep me off the car-payment bandwagon for at least six years. Now I find I can no longer trust the Mustang enough to think it won't need some major, wallet-draining repair sometime in the next three years.

Lately, I've been looking at new cars and testing a few. Several of the new GM vehicles, such as the Saturn Aura and Astra and Chevrolet Malibu, are nothing short of excellent. I realized the other day I am over my angst at GM for killing Oldsmobile, a brand that was near and dear to my family. So maybe it's time to give GM another try — if I can make that leap of faith.

You may e-mail Richard Truett at rtruett@crain.com

letters

continued from Page **12**

the U.S. market.

It makes more sense to spend money on fewer, more class-leading products and not spread resources thin by designing and marketing so many with smaller volume.

The Toyota brand has models that cover all GM makes except Cadillac, and Lexus does that.

You can talk about brand equity and perceived value, but that holds up only if a brand is sought and popular, and many of GM's just aren't that hot anymore.

With its new four-channel retail structure (Chevrolet, Saturn, Buick-Pontiac-GMC and Cadillac-Hummer-Saab), GM can sell Saab and kill Pontiac or GMC and not run into all the problems it had when it dumped Oldsmobile.

Cadillac and Hummer are a good match — vehicles for people to show they have more money than we do.

On the other hand, Saabs are for those who hear little voices telling them to eat more tofu. Saab has never come up to the sales volume GM projected for it and never will.

Maybe the General can convince Tata that Saab and Jaguar would be the greatest automotive combo since Studebaker-Packard. Come to think



© GM CORP.

A writer says Saab won't meet GM's sales goals. A 2008 9-3 is shown.

of it, they would be.

GMC is probably safe; it provides its channel with trucks. They're simply high-zoot Chevys, but so are all the other GM cars. Pontiac is the weakest brand in the channel.

The Japanese have taken the mid-priced segment away from the Detroit 3 during the past 20 years. Olds is gone, and Pontiac, Mercury and the Chrysler brand are on the ropes.

The only thing that saves Buick is the fact that more than a million of them were sold in China last year.

Consolidating brands is the fastest way for GM to make money in today's market. I'm betting GM will utilize the brand chemotherapy it needs to do just that. Traditions be damned.

RICK C. SAND
Boynton Beach, Fla.
The writer has worked in automotive marketing and briefly as advertising and promotions director for Zimmer Motor Car Co.

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Nissan: N.A. off the hot seat

Lindsay Chappell
lchappell@crain.com

Nissan North America can exhale now.

After nine years of high-pressure emphasis on North America, Carlos Ghosn, CEO of Nissan Motor Co., says the automaker will not be so critically reliant on that market going forward.

Just days before unveiling his next multiyear plan for the company, Ghosn said Nissan is entering an era in which profits will flow from new corners of the world, including China, India and Russia.

"The U.S. will continue to grow and be a main pillar for us," Ghosn said in an interview with *Automotive News*. "But it will no longer be the main pillar of Nissan profitability and growth."

The automaker has transformed under Ghosn, from near-bankruptcy in the late 1990s to one of the industry's most profitable players. That turnaround has come in large part from rising market share, swelling profits and cost-cutting in the United States, Mexico and Canada.

Ghosn said Nissan North America, with 1,070 Nissan-brand retailers and 180 Infiniti dealers, has been delivering two-thirds of Nissan's profits for the past two fiscal years.

"I think the relative importance of (Nissan North America) is going to diminish because of the booming of China, the booming of Russia, the booming of India and the investment we're making in the Mideast," he said.

Without revealing details of the so-called midterm plan he will announce Tuesday, May 13, Ghosn alluded to Nissan's expectations to grow and invest more in emerging markets such as China, India, Russia and the Middle East.

He said Japan has slipped to the company's No. 2 market after North America. He predicted that Nissan's business in China will eclipse Japan "within the next midterm plan." AN

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AUTO PEOPLE

Maserati North America taps luxury-segment veteran Eulberg as CEO

Marti Eulberg has been named president and CEO of Maserati North America. She will report to Raffaele Fusilli, commercial director of Maserati S.p.A. in Italy.

Eulberg replaces James Selwa, who left in February after less than three years. Maserati CEO Roberto Ronchi oversaw U.S. operations while the brand searched for a replacement.

Eulberg joins Maserati after about 20 years with luxury automakers.

She was vice president of marketing and sales for Jaguar Cars North America, a position she held since August 2006. Previously she was vice president of Volvo's European sales.

Eulberg, a Texas native, joined Volvo in June 2001 as vice president of Volvo Cars of North America Inc. She began her career with a nine-year managerial stint with BMW of North America Inc., of Woodcliff Lake, N.J. While there, Eulberg was responsible for business-to-business, commercial and daily rentals; used-vehicle programs; retail training; and coordination of field activities.



Marti Eulberg joins Maserati after about 20 years with luxury automakers.

— Diana T. Kurylko and Philip Nussel

Nissan N.A. unit gets new head of communications

Nissan North America Inc. has named Alan Buddendeck vice president of corporate communications. Buddendeck replaces Frederique Le Greves, 40, who held the position for four years.

Buddendeck, 42, joins Nissan after 11 years with Motorola Inc. mobile devices, most recently as senior director of global public relations and corporate communications.

Le Greves will assist with the transition until mid-June and transfer to Renault headquarters. Her new position will be announced later, Nissan said in a press release. Le Greves had served a year as vice president of communications for Nissan Europe after joining the company in 2003.



Frederique Le Greves, Nissan North America's communications chief for four years, will move to Renault headquarters.

— Craig Trudell

Former GM PR chief joins BMW

Tom Kowaleski, former head of General Motors communications, became vice president of corporate communications for BMW of North America LLC effective May 1. He replaces Robert Mitchell, who retired April 30.

Kowaleski will manage the corporate communications department. He resigned the top PR post at GM in early 2006 and has more than 30 years of experience at GM, Chrysler Corp. and AMC-Renault.

Tom Salkowsky has been appointed manager of BMW corporate communications, with responsibility for the BMW automotive brand. He previously was manager of experiential marketing.

— Dave Guilford

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“If you want to end up first in safety, you have to put safety first.”

Dr. Steven Rouhana,
Ford Safety Research and Development

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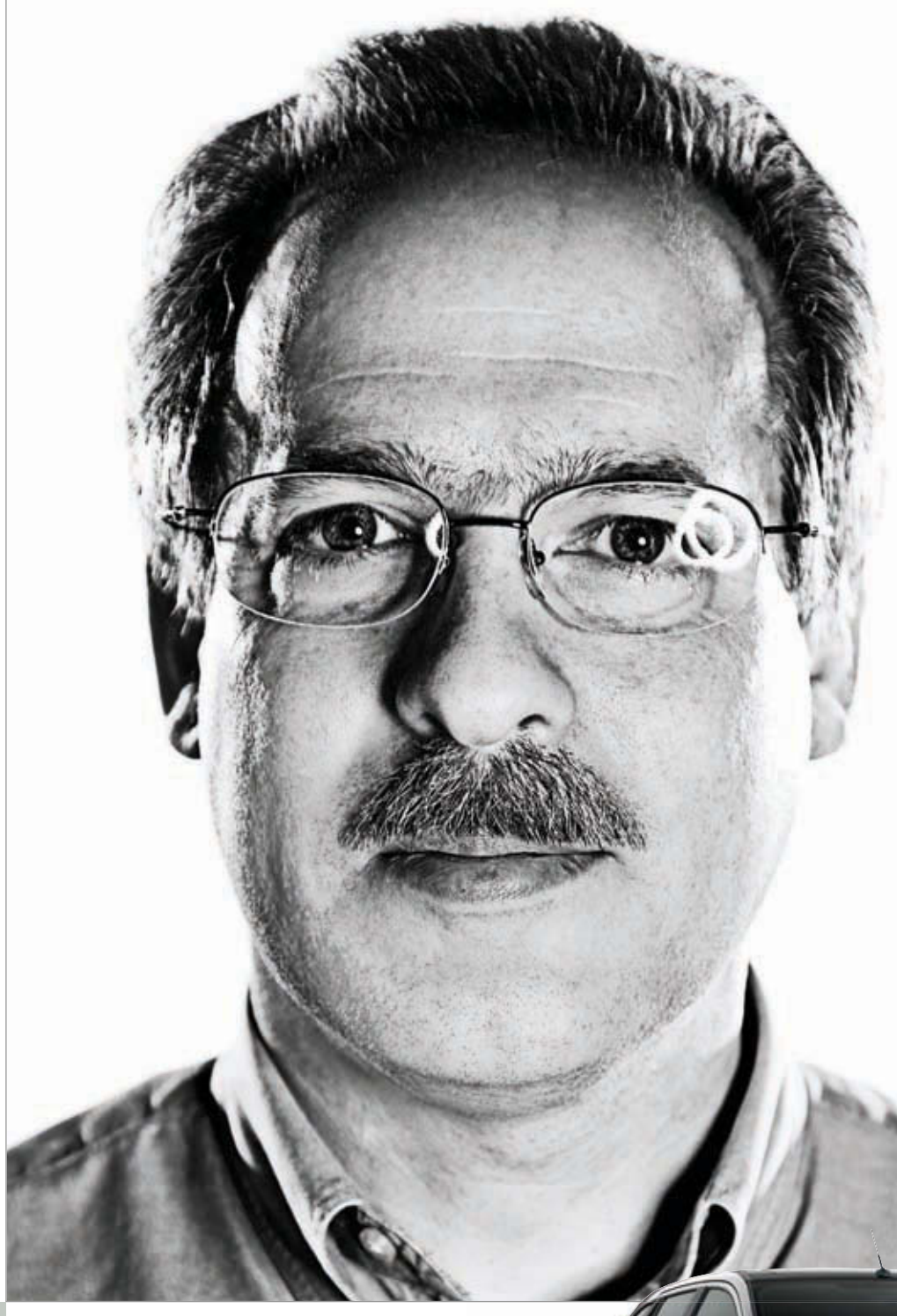


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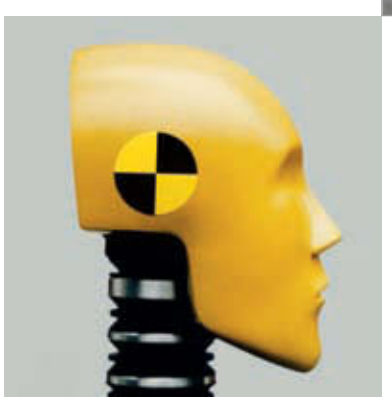
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service & parts

VW uses free service to improve sales, image

Maintenance plan will start with 2009 models

Diana T. Kurylko
dkurylko@crain.com

Volkswagen Group of America's offer of free new-vehicle maintenance starting in the 2009 model year is an effort to boost sales and shed the brand's reputation for costly repairs.

VW calls its plan the "Carefree Maintenance Program." It will give owners of new VW cars and trucks free scheduled maintenance for three years or 36,000 miles. The plan also includes a checkup after 90 days or 6,000 miles.

Mark Barnes, COO of Volkswagen Group of America Inc., says the program will make VW "the only automaker among our key competitors to offer a no-charge maintenance program." The company declined to estimate the cost of the program.

In the late 1990s, BMW of North America LLC used a similar strategy to combat a perception that its vehicles were too expensive to maintain. BMW launched a free-maintenance plan in 1996 that it continues to tout heavily.

Volkswagen Group of America's Audi luxury brand stopped offering free maintenance in the United States in the 2007 model year. Audi dropped the plan so it could boost profits and cut costs, moves that helped pay for a new dealer-margin program that took effect last year.

Jim Hall, owner of the automotive consulting firm 2953 Analytics in suburban Detroit, called VW's offer a good move. Free maintenance, he said, "takes one variable completely out of the picture."

"It has helped BMW tremendously — 'Break My Wallet' was their nickname," Hall told *Automotive News*. "That was their image in the late 1990s. It was VW's image as of late."

VW has struggled to improve its vehicle quality. For example, its Touareg SUV was riddled with quality problems when VW introduced it four years ago.

But the brand has made major improvements in new products. Last week *Consumer Reports* magazine designated the VW Rabbit the highest-quality "affordable hatchback," replacing the Mazda3.

Of six hatchbacks the magazine tested for its June issue, only the Rabbit earned an excellent rating. AN

Aftermarket center opens at Mich. college

AUTO NEWS digest

MIDLAND, Mich. — A new education center on Northwood University's Michigan campus focuses on aftermarket management. The Sloan Family Building for Aftermarket Studies honors O. Temple Sloan Jr., who founded General Parts International Inc. and Carquest; and his brother, C. Hamilton Sloan, an early General Parts partner.

The Sloan family and employees of the two companies contributed more than half of the new center's $6 million construction cost. The 25,500-square-foot center has interactive classrooms that link Northwood campuses in Florida and Texas.

Northwood's aftermarket program enables students to take courses in aftermarket manufacturing, marketing and retail/wholesale management. Northwood is the only university that offers an undergraduate degree in aftermarket management.

Report cites trends in repair costs

SAN DIEGO — A shift to lightweight materials, advances in vehicle safety equipment and a transition to waterborne paints are key trends that are changing the collision industry, a new study says.

The report, by Mitchell International, concludes that the industry "is undergoing some of the most significant changes since the introduction of unibody vehicle production." The factors identified in the report are affecting the cost to repair shops of tools and training, says Greg Horn, Mitchell's vice president of industry relations.

Mitchell International, of San Diego, provides information, work flow and performance management services to the collision industry.

Survey: Consumers like indie shops

BETHESDA, Md. — Advocates of federal "right to repair" legislation seek to bolster their case with a new survey that says consumers are more satisfied with independent repair shops than service departments at new-vehicle dealerships.

A survey in the May issue of *Consumer Reports,* cited by the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association, says 71 percent of consumers who were polled said they were "very satisfied" with the service at independent shops. The comparable figure for franchised dealerships was 53 percent.

Proposed right-to-repair legislation would require automakers to give independent shops the same access to service information and safety alerts that franchised dealerships get. The bill is before the U.S. House, where it has 45 sponsors.

Shops cited for labor violations

SAN DIEGO — State regulators have fined 28 auto body businesses here more than $226,000 for a variety of labor violations. Among the infractions:

- Employing a minor without proper permits at one shop.
- Failing to pay overtime at four shops.
- Failing to pay minimum wage at two shops.
- Failing to carry workers' compensation insurance at 18 shops.
- Failure to keep required records and post labor notices at 16 shops.

A statement by the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency did not identify the cited businesses.

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Spence Levy, vice president of Air Aroma America, displays scents that dealerships can release in their service areas.

Dealers aim to turn scents into dollars

Bernadine Williams
bwilliams@crain.com

Dealerships install the Aroscent misting devices in service bays to mask less-pleasant odors and help stressed-out customers relax.

Does that new-car dealership smell attract service customers? Air Aroma America Inc. and its dealer customers are betting it can.

Air Aroma, of Miami, markets Aroscent, a portable diffuser the size of a briefcase that dispenses scents such as orange, pine, peppermint and leather. Dealerships install the misting devices in service bays to mask less-pleasant odors and, company executives say, to help stressed-out customers relax.

"We enhance the whole environment and try to create a sensory effect," says Spence Levy, Air Aroma America vice president.

Dealerships also use the device in showrooms. Levy says company data suggest that customers stay longer on sales floors that smell better.

Air Aroma says about 20 dealerships in the United States use its products. The company charges dealers $185 a month, on average, for the Aroscent system.

The service has the endorsement of General Motors' Service and Parts Operation, which recommends Aroscent to GM dealerships as part of its Goodwrench marketing initiative. The contract with Air Aroma allows GM dealers to rent the system for $130 a month.

"Some of our older dealerships may have oil, grease and things in the service lane," says Gordon Barnes, Goodwrench brand manager. "We want people to come back to our service lanes. By retaining those additional customers, it is likely we will be able to sell them vehicles down the road."

Levy says his company worked with GM to identify scents that would especially appeal to the Goodwrench target demographic: middle-aged men. The Goodwrench scent is a customized blend of citrus and leather, he says.

Last month, Al Serra Chevrolet, near Flint, Mich., installed Aroscent in its service area and customer lounge. Jason Freeman, the dealership's service manager, said employees and customers have given the Goodwrench scent rave reviews.

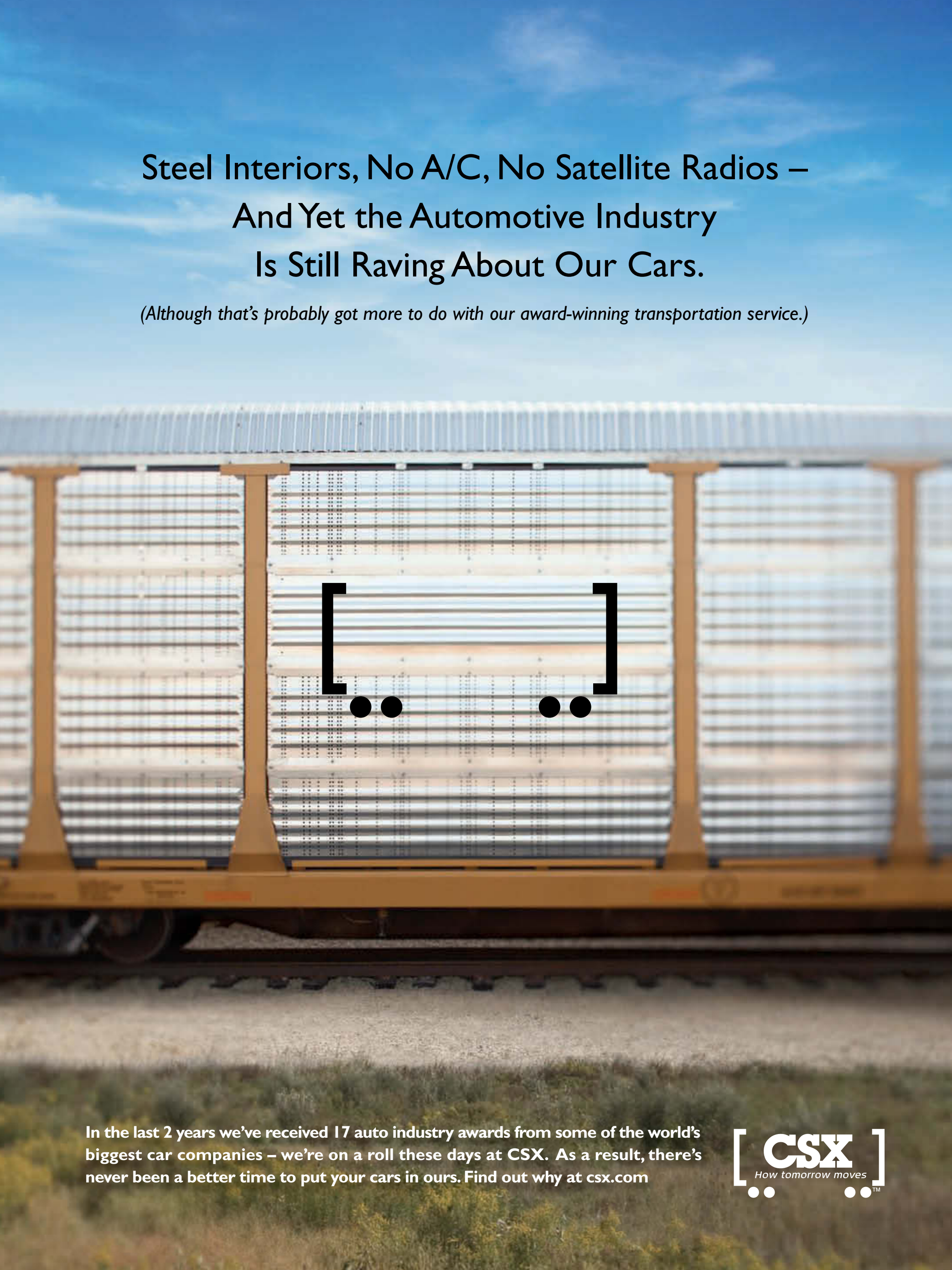
The dealership also plans to include the scent in mailings to service customers. Air Aroma turns the oils in the scenting devices into an inklike substance that can be applied to mailings.

"The concept is to create a sense of awareness for customers so they feel comfortable when they make their purchases," Freeman told *Automotive News*.

It's too early to tell whether the aroma system is boosting service department revenues, Freeman said. But he added: "We are excited for the coming months." AN

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personnel

CLEAN ENERGY FUELS CORP. — Vincent Taormina, 52, to the board of directors. He is former CEO of Taormina Industries Inc., a solid-waste and recycling company that merged with Republic Services in 1997. Taormina fills the vacancy on Clean Energy's board created by the resignation of **David Demers.**



Taormina

Clean Energy Fuels, of Seal Beach, Calif., supplies natural gas for refuse, taxi, trucking, municipal and other fleets in North America.

COHERIX CORP. — Homer Harrison, 73, to manager of diesel engine and machine tool markets and special adviser to CEO Dwight Carlson. He had been president and CEO of Ex-Cell-O Machine Tools Inc., a manufacturer of metal-removing equipment for auto plants and other factories.

Pete Frieling, 53, to North American automotive sales manager for Asian OEM sales. He had been a regional account manager for Metris USA, a supplier of metrology products and software for the auto and aerospace industries.



Harrison



Frieling

Coherix, of Ann Arbor, Mich., is a privately held supplier of optical-based measurement and inspection products for the automotive and semiconductor industries.

DASSAULT SYSTEMES SA — Peter Schmitt, 41, to vice president of automotive sales for Dassault Systemes Americas Corp. in suburban Detroit. He had been vice president of marketing and business development for Dassault's Delmia brand.

Dassault Systemes, of Suresnes, France, supplies software and services. Its brands include Delmia, Catia, Enovia and Simulia.

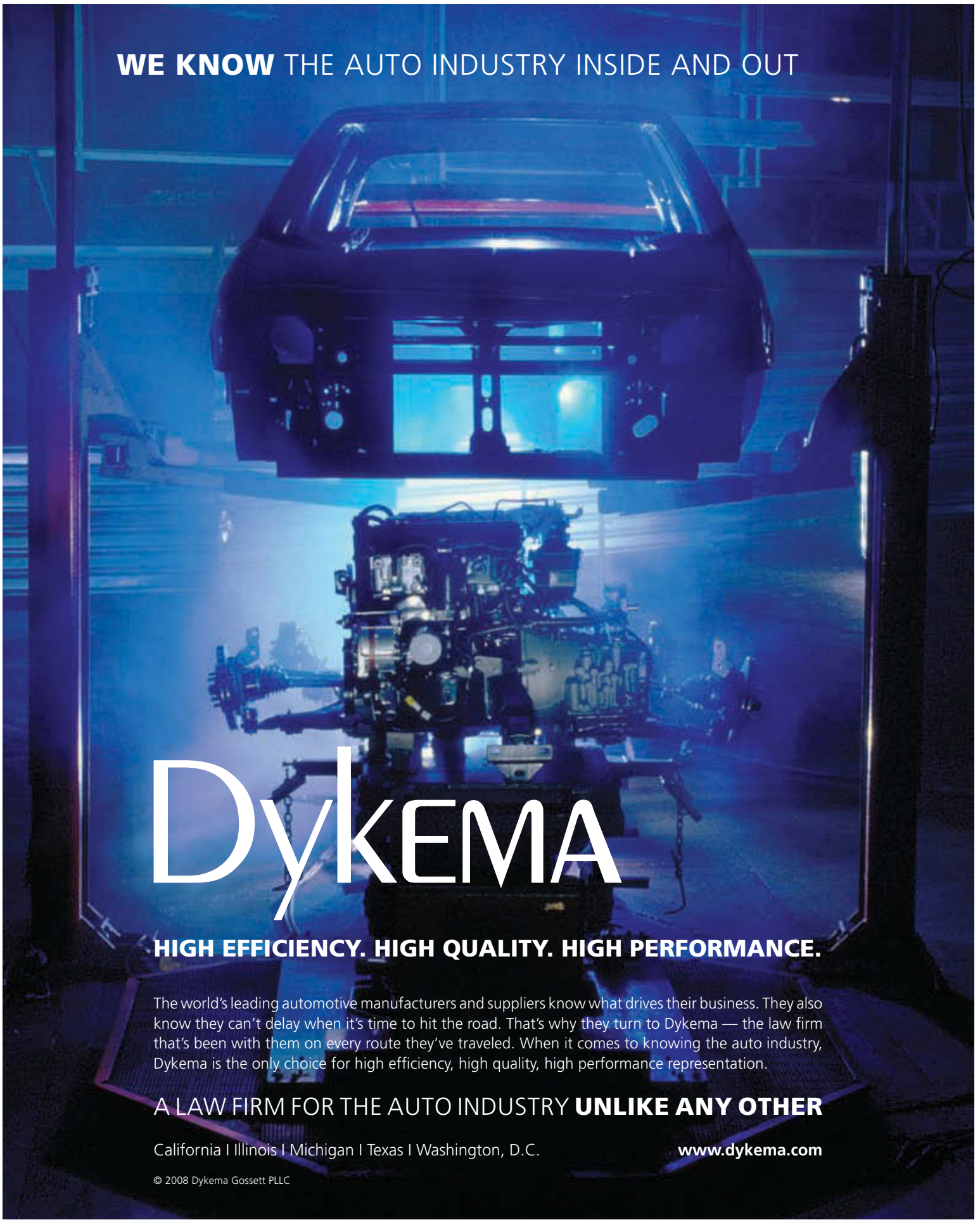
FEDERAL-MOGUL CORP. — Jeff Kaminski, 46, to senior vice president and CFO. He succeeds **Michael Lynch,** who retired. Kaminski had been senior vice president of global purchasing. He continues as a corporate officer and member of the Federal-Mogul strategy board.

Markus Wermers, 43, to senior vice president of global purchasing. He had been vice president of sales and marketing for Europe, the Middle East and Africa. He also becomes a corporate officer and a member of the strategy board.

Steven Gaut, 47, to vice president of corporate communications and government relations. He had been director of communications and marketing services for Europe, the Middle East and Africa and the global powertrain division at Delphi Corp. He also becomes a corporate officer and member of the strategy board.

David Pouliot, 45, to director of investor relations. He had been director of corporate development and strategic planning.

Federal-Mogul, of suburban Detroit, supplies pistons, rings and liners, valvetrain products, systems protection, bearings, lighting and seals. In December, the company emerged from Chapter 11 reorganization.



BorgWarner adds turbo capacity

DETROIT — **BorgWarner Inc.** is building plants in Mexico and Thailand and expanding plants in Hungary and Poland over the next few years to increase turbocharger capacity by more than 3 million units.

The turbochargers will be built for diesel and gasoline engines.

The company is spending $125 million with the expectation that the demand for turbochargers in North America, Europe and Asia will increase by 40 percent to 27 million units over the next five years.

BorgWarner, of suburban Detroit, makes engine air management systems, transmission assemblies and components for the automotive industry.

supply LINE

Kia supplier builds Ga. plant

LaGRANGE, Ga. — **Sewon America Inc.,** a unit of the South Korea-based Sewon Group, broke ground here this month on a plant that will make components for Kia Motors America.

The plant, which is expected to provide 700 jobs, will produce stamped chassis and body components and decorative trim pieces for Kia Motors Manufacturing Georgia in West Point, Ga.

The contract with the automaker requires a $170 million investment over three years. Sewon expects production at the 420,000-square-foot plant to begin in the fall of 2009.

Sewon Group, of Daegu, South Korea, supplies automotive parts and ornaments.

GKN Driveline to grow in China

BEIJING — **GKN Driveline** plans to open a production plant during the first half of 2009 in the central China city of Wuhan in Hubei province.

The 474,000-square-foot plant will supply driveshafts for Dongfeng Motor Co. and its joint venture programs with Honda and Citroen.

The plant will have an annual production capacity of more than 1 million driveshafts.

GKN Driveline, of Worcestershire, England, makes sideshafts, propshafts and other driveline components for the automotive industry.

Mich. stores merge under Project Genesis

Project Genesis has made its mark in Grand Rapids, Mich., with the consolidation of a Dodge dealership and a Chrysler-Jeep store.

Betten Auto Group, owner of Courtesy Dodge, has acquired Highland Chrysler-Jeep a block away and merged the stores at the Courtesy site.

The deal was done under the auspices of Project Genesis, Chrysler LLC's plan to reduce its dealership count and put Dodge, Chrysler and Jeep under the same roof.

Highland Chrysler-Jeep was acquired from Jay and Bruce VanHouten, whose family had owned the dealership since 1959.

This Automotive News *feature lists recent dealership acquisitions as reported by brokers, official announcements and news media.*

Betten/VanHouten

Buyer: Betten Auto Group, owner of Courtesy Dodge in Grand Rapids
Sellers: Jay and Bruce VanHouten
Location: Grand Rapids, Mich.
Franchises: Chrysler, Jeep
Old name: Highland Chrysler-Jeep
More: The Chrysler and Jeep franchises were moved to Courtesy Dodge, now called Courtesy Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge.

Cantanucci/Crabtree

Buyer: Michael Cantanucci
Seller: Crabtree family
Location: Westport, Conn.
Names: Lexus of Westport; Toyota of Westport (now New Country Toyota of Westport)
More: Robert Crabtree Sr. opened the Toyota dealership in 1982 and the Lexus dealership in 1991. Cantanucci's company, New Country Motor Car Group, of Saratoga Springs, N.Y., operates dealerships in Connecticut, New York and Florida. Franchises include Lexus, Mercedes-Benz, Maserati, Ferrari, BMW, Porsche and Audi.

Dyer/Douglas

Buyer: William Dyer
Seller: William Douglas
Location: Vero Beach, Fla.
Old name: Douglas Mazda
New name: Dyer Mazda

Dyer/Vero Beach

Buyer: Tatiana Dyer
Seller: Vero Beach Chevrolet Inc.
Location: Vero Beach, Fla.
Former name: Service Chevrolet
New name: Dyer Chevrolet

Peterson/Stupey

Buyer: Rock Peterson
Seller: Becci Stupey
Location: Everett, Wash.
Old name: Harbour Pointe Mitsubishi
New name: Brien Mitsubishi
More: Peterson will move the Mitsubishi franchise to his Brien Ford store in Everett.

Group 1/Tate

Buyer: Group 1 Automotive
Sellers: Creston and Atwood Tate
Location: Annapolis, Md.
Old name: Tate BMW-Mini
New names: BMW of Annapolis, Mini of Annapolis
More: Group 1 says the stores are expected to generate about $73 million in annual revenues.

Dealership Buy/Sell: We invite news items about dealership sales and acquisitions. Here's what we need:
- Name of seller
- Name, city and state of buyer
- Name, city and state of dealership being sold, including name change
- Franchises involved
- Name of broker if applicable
- Size of dealership (annual unit sales or sales revenue)
- Transaction price if possible
- Any other relevant information
- Phone number or e-mail address

E-mail items to: **rjohnson@crain.com**
Or send them to:
Dealership Buy/Sell
Managing Editor
Automotive News
1155 Gratiot Ave.
Detroit, MI 48207-2997

dealers



50 with GMC

Robert Parks of Parks Motor Sales (Buick-Pontiac-GMC) in Columbia, Tenn., receives a 50-year award for GMC. Pictured, from left, are Robert Rogers, the dealership's vice president; Dick Connelly, Buick-Pontiac-GMC Kentucky-Tennessee zone district manager; Robert Parks; Gary Harms, the general manager; Dot Spears, the office manager; and David Lush, Buick-Pontiac-GMC Kentucky-Tennessee zone manager.



25 with Chevrolet

Joseph Gambino, left, of Gateway Chevrolet in Avondale, Ariz., receives a 25-year award for Chevrolet from William Devine, Chevrolet's Southwestern region zone manager.

Milestones

■ **Jay Darling** of Darling's Nissan in Bangor, Maine, received a 25-year award for Nissan from Nissan North America.

We invite items and top-quality photos for the dealers section. For guidelines, e-mail **pfoley@crain.com** or call **313-446-0378.**
Or send items to:
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Bob Baker Toyota
Lemon Grove, CA

Elmore Toyota
Westminster, CA

John Elway's Crown Toyota
Ontario, CA

Keyes Toyota
Van Nuys, CA

Longo Toyota
El Monte, CA

Marina Del Rey Toyota
Marina Del Rey, CA

Power Toyota Cerritos
Cerritos, CA

Puente Hills Toyota
City of Industry, CA

Quality Toyota
Corona, CA

South Bay Toyota
Gardena, CA

South Coast Toyota
Costa Mesa, CA

Thousand Oaks Toyota
Thousand Oaks, CA

Toyota Carlsbad
Carlsbad, CA

Toyota of El Cajon
El Cajon, CA

Toyota of Escondido
Escondido, CA

Toyota of Glendora
Glendora, CA

Toyota of Huntington Beach
Huntington Beach, CA

Toyota of North Hollywood
North Hollywood, CA

Toyota of Orange
Orange, CA

Toyota of Riverside
Riverside, CA

Toyota of San Bernardino
San Bernardino, CA

Toyota of Santa Maria
Santa Maria, CA

Tustin Toyota
Tustin, CA

SAN FRANCISCO REGION

Chuck Patterson Toyota
Chico, CA

City Toyota
Daly City, CA

Concord Toyota
Concord, CA

Fairfield Toyota
Fairfield, CA

Hansel Toyota
Petaluma, CA

Hobbie Auto Center
Oroville, CA

Magnussen's Auburn Toyota
Auburn, CA

Novato Toyota
Novato, CA

Putnam Toyota
Burlingame, CA

Thurston Toyota
Ukiah, CA

Toyota of Vallejo
Vallejo, CA

Valley Toyota
Hanford, CA

PORTLAND REGION

Appleway Toyota
Spokane, WA

Bob Bridge Toyota
Renton, WA

Foothills Toyota
Burlington, WA

Gresham Toyota
Gresham, OR

Griffith Toyota
The Dalles, OR

Helena Toyota
Helena, MT

Hometown Toyota
Ontario, OR

Kendall Toyota
Eugene, OR

Larry Lassen Toyota
Albany, OR

Lithia Toyota
Medford, OR

Lithia Toyota of Springfield
Springfield, OR

Lum's Auto Center
Astoria, OR

Magic Toyota
Edmonds, WA

Parker Toyota
Coeur d'Alene, ID

Rogers Toyota
Lewiston, ID

Ron Tonkin Toyota
Portland, OR

Teton Toyota
Idaho Falls, ID

Tom Scott Toyota
Nampa, ID

Town Toyota
East Wenatchee, WA

Toyota of Bend
Bend, OR

Toyota of Gladstone
Gladstone, OR

Toyota of Lake City
Seattle, WA

Toyota of Puyallup
Puyallup, WA

Toyota of Tri-Cities
Pasco, WA

Wheeler Toyota
Grants Pass, OR

DENVER REGION

Beaver Toyota of Santa Fe
Santa Fe, NM

Boulder Toyota
Boulder, CO

Camelback Toyota
Phoenix, AZ

Carson City Toyota
Carson City, NV

Desert Toyota of Las Vegas
Las Vegas, NV

Ehrlich Toyota
Greeley, CO

Fallon Toyota
Fallon, NV

Fletcher Jones Toyota
Las Vegas, NV

Fremont Toyota
Lander, WY

Garvin Toyota
Powell, WY

Go Toyota Arapahoe
Englewood, CO

Hatch Toyota
Show Low, AZ

Hellman Toyota
Delta, CO

Karl Malone Toyota
Sandy, UT

Karl Malone Toyota
Albuquerque, NM






Larry H. Miller Toyota
Murray, UT

Mark Miller Toyota
Salt Lake City, UT

Menlove Toyota
Bountiful, UT

Pedersen Toyota
Ft. Collins, CO

Power Toyota Tempe
Tempe, AZ

Precision Toyota of Tucson
Tucson, AZ

Reno Toyota
Reno, NV

Right Toyota
Scottsdale, AZ

Stevinson Toyota West
Lakewood, CO

Tony Divino Toyota
Riverdale, UT

NEW YORK REGION

A-1 Toyota
New Haven, CT

Bay Ridge Toyota
Brooklyn, NY

Burdick Toyota
Cicero, NY

Colonial Toyota
Milford, CT

Condit's Toyota World-Newton
Newton, NJ

East Coast Toyota
Wood Ridge, NJ

Empire Toyota
Oneonta, NY

Gault Toyota
Endicott, NY

Hudson Toyota
Jersey City, NJ

Jack Sherman Toyota
Binghamton, NY

James Toyota
Flemington, NJ

Johnstons Toyota
New Hampton, NY

Lawrence Toyota
Lawrenceville, NJ

Lynch Toyota
Manchester, CT

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Middletown Toyota
Middletown, CT

New Country Toyota
Saratoga Springs, NY

Northway Toyota
Latham, NY

Nye Toyota
Oneida, NY

Parkway Toyota
Englewood Cliffs, NJ

Prestige Toyota
Kingston, NY

Prestige Toyota
Ramsey, NJ

Rockland Toyota
Blauvelt, NY

Steet Toyota
Yorkville, NY

Sunrise Toyota
Oakdale, NY

Toyota of Clifton Park
Mechanicville, NY

Toyota of Hackensack
Hackensack, NJ

Toyota of Turnersville
Turnersville, NJ

Toyota of Wallingford
Wallingford, CT

West Herr Toyota
Orchard Park, NY

Westbury Toyota
Westbury, NY

BOSTON REGION

Acton Toyota
Acton, MA

Alderman's Toyota
Rutland, VT

Bernardi Toyota
Framingham, MA

Bristol Toyota
Bristol, RI

Central Maine Toyota
Waterville, ME

Charlie's Toyota
Augusta, ME

Copeland Toyota
Brockton, MA

Durand Toyota
Bellows Falls, VT

Falmouth Toyota
Bourne, MA

Handy Toyota
St. Albans, VT

Hyannis Toyota
Hyannis, MA

Ira Toyota III
Milford, MA

Irwin Toyota
Laconia, NH

Orleans Toyota
Orleans, MA

Prime Toyota
Saco, ME

Sullivan Brothers Toyota
Kingston, MA

Toyota of Keene
East Swanzey, NH

Toyota of Newport
Middletown, RI

Toyota of Portsmouth
Portsmouth, NH

Toyota of Watertown
Watertown, MA

Toyota of Wellesley
Wellesley, MA

York Toyota
Houlton, ME

CHICAGO REGION

Andrew Toyota
Glendale, WI

Beck Toyota
Indianapolis, IN

Bredemann Toyota
Park Ridge, IL

Burnsville Toyota
Burnsville, MN

Carlson Toyota
Coon Rapids, MN

Classic Toyota
Waukegan, IL

Crown Toyota
Decatur, IL

Dan Hecht Toyota
Effingham, IL

Dave Mungenast Alton Toyota
Alton, IL

Ed Martin Toyota
Anderson, IN

Elgin Toyota
Elgin, IL

Elmhurst Toyota
Elmhurst, IL

Evans Toyota
Ft. Wayne, IN

Heintz Toyota
Mankato, MN

Hiland Toyota
Moline, IL

Jack Safro Toyota
Brookfield, WI

Jordan Toyota
Mishawaka, IN

K.C. Summers Toyota
Mattoon, IL

Kenny Kent Toyota
Evansville, IN

Kolar Toyota
Duluth, MN

Lakeland Toyota
Sheboygan, WI

Le Mieux & Son Toyota
Green Bay, WI

Maplewood Toyota
Maplewood, MN

Mark Toyota of Plover
Plover, WI

O'Brien Toyota
Indianapolis, IN

O'Brien Toyota of Urbana
Urbana, IL

Rhinelander Toyota
Rhinelander, WI

Schaumburg Toyota
Schaumburg, IL

Smart Toyota
Madison, WI

St. Charles Toyota
St. Charles, IL

Steve Low's Midwest Toyota
La Crosse, WI

Team Toyota
Highland, IN

Toyota City
Brooklyn Park, MN

Toyota of Merrillville
Merrillville, IN

Uebelhor Toyota
Jasper, IN

Walser Bloomington Toyota
Bloomington, MN

CINCINNATI REGION

Byers Delaware Toyota
Delaware, OH








C & C Toyota
Marietta, OH

Crown Toyota
Holland, MI

Cumberland Toyota
Cookeville, TN

Don Joseph Toyota
Kent, OH

Don Moore Toyota
Owensboro, KY

Fannin Toyota
Ashland, KY

Fox Toyota
Rochester Hills, MI

Fox Toyota
Clinton, TN

Gary Force Toyota
Bowling Green, KY

Germain Toyota of Columbus
Columbus, OH

Glenn Toyota
Frankfort, KY

Green Tree Toyota
Clarksville, IN

Green's Toyota of Lexington
Lexington, KY

Hudson Toyota
Madisonville, KY

Jeff Wyler Toyota
Springfield, OH

John Roberts Toyota
Manchester, TN

Kasper Toyota
Sandusky, OH

Kings Toyota
Cincinnati, OH

Kool Toyota
Grand Rapids, MI

LaRiche Toyota
Findlay, OH

Mike Smith Toyota
Paducah, KY

Performance Toyota
Fairfield, OH

Phil Bachman Toyota
Johnson City, TN

Rivergate Toyota
Madison, TN

Robinson Toyota
Jackson, TN

Ron Hibbard Toyota
Gallatin, TN

Rusty Wallace Toyota
Morristown, TN

Signature Toyota
Benton Harbor, MI

Sunshine Toyota
Battle Creek, MI

Swope Toyota
Elizabethtown, KY

Team Toyota
Steubenville, OH

Toyota of Cleveland
McDonald, TN

Toyota of Hopkinsville
Hopkinsville, KY

Toyota of Kingsport
Kingsport, TN

Toyota of Louisville
Louisville, KY

Toyota of Somerset
Somerset, KY

Toyota South
Richmond, KY

KANSAS CITY REGION

Billion Toyota
Sioux Falls, SD

Cedar Rapids Toyota
Hiawatha, IA

Crown Toyota
Lawrence, KS

Dan Porter Toyota
Dickinson, ND

Fort Dodge Toyota
Fort Dodge, IA

Harr Toyota
Aberdeen, SD

Lewis Toyota of Hays
Hays, KS

Lyons Toyota
Mason City, IA

McEleney Toyota
Clinton, IA

Midwest Toyota
Hutchinson, KS

Okoboji Toyota
Spirit Lake, IA

Olathe Toyota
Olathe, KS

Performance Toyota of La Vista
La Vista, NE

Performance Toyota of Lincoln
Lincoln, NE

Quality Toyota
Independence, KS

Reliable Toyota
Springfield, MO

Riley Toyota
Jefferson City, MO

Rolling Hills Toyota
St. Joseph, MO

Toyota of Des Moines
Des Moines, IA

Toyota of Iowa City
Iowa City, IA

Toyota of Muscatine
Muscatine, IA

Toyota of the Black Hills
Rapid City, SD

Twin City Toyota
Herculaneum, MO

Wilson Toyota
Ames, IA

SOUTHEAST TOYOTA

Atlanta Toyota
Duluth, GA

Ballentine Toyota
Greenwood, SC

Bob Tyler Toyota
Pensacola, FL

Bobby Murray Toyota
Rocky Mount, NC

Bryan Easler Toyota
Hendersonville, NC

Cherokee County Toyota
Canton, GA

Courtesy Toyota
Tampa, FL

Cramer Toyota of Venice
Venice, FL

Dave Edwards Toyota
Spartanburg, SC

David Maus Toyota
Sanford, FL

Daytona Toyota
Daytona Beach, FL

Earl Stewart Toyota of North Palm Beach
Lake Park, FL

Ernie Palmer Toyota
Jacksonville, FL

Franklin Toyota
Statesboro, GA

Fred Anderson Toyota
Raleigh, NC

Ft. Myers Toyota
Ft. Myers, FL

Gatorland Toyota
Gainesville, FL

Gettel Toyota
Bradenton, FL

Greenville Toyota
Greenville, NC

Headquarter Toyota
Hialeah, FL

Hubert Vester Toyota of Wilson
Wilson, NC

I-95 Toyota of Brunswick
Brunswick, GA

Jim Barkley Toyota of Asheville
Asheville, NC

Jim Hudson Toyota
Irmo, SC

Keith Pierson Toyota
Jacksonville, FL

Kendall Toyota
Miami, FL

LaGrange Toyota
LaGrange, GA

Lipton Toyota
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Mark Jacobson Toyota
Durham, NC

Massey Toyota
Kinston, NC

McKinnon Toyota
Clanton, AL

Mike Erdman Toyota
Merritt Island, FL

Mike Johnson's Hickory Toyota
Hickory, NC

Milton Martin Toyota
Gainesville, GA

Modern Toyota
Winston-Salem, NC

Palmer's Airport Toyota
Mobile, AL

Panama City Toyota
Panama City, FL

Patterson Toyota
Mt. Airy, NC

Pecheles Toyota
Washington, NC

Reinhardt Motors
Montgomery, AL

Rice Toyota
Greensboro, NC






Riverside Toyota
Rome, GA

Serra Toyota
Birmingham, AL

Stadium Toyota
Tampa, FL

Stevenson Toyota
Jacksonville, NC

Sun Toyota
New Port Richey, FL

Sunny King Toyota
Anniston, AL

Thomasville Toyota
Thomasville, GA

Toyota Mall of Georgia
Buford, GA

Toyota of Boone
Boone, NC

Toyota of Concord
Concord, NC

Toyota of Decatur
Decatur, AL

Toyota of Dothan
Dothan, AL

Toyota of Easley
Easley, SC

Toyota of Henderson
Henderson, NC

Toyota of Milledgeville
Milledgeville, GA

Toyota of Newnan
Newnan, GA

Toyota of Orangeburg
Orangeburg, SC

Toyota of Roswell
Roswell, GA

Toyota of Tampa Bay
Tampa, FL

Toyota of Vero Beach
Vero Beach, FL

Toyota of Wilmington
Wilmington, NC

Tuscaloosa Toyota
Tuscaloosa, AL

Walker-Jones Toyota
Waycross, GA

GULF STATES TOYOTA

Atkinson Toyota
Bryan, TX

Bohn Brothers Toyota
Harvey, LA

Caldwell Toyota
Conway, AR

Ceranti-Oakes Toyota
Greenville, MS

Champion Toyota
Austin, TX

Champion Toyota Gulf Freeway
Houston, TX

Classic Toyota
Tyler, TX

Don McGill Toyota of Katy
Katy, TX

Durant Toyota
Weatherford, TX

Fowler Toyota
Norman, OK

Fred Haas Toyota Country
Houston, TX

Fred Haas Toyota World
Spring, TX

Gray-Daniels Toyota
Brandon, MS

Janzen Toyota
Stillwater, OK

Jim Norton Toyota
Tulsa, OK

Joe Myers Toyota
Houston, TX

John O'Neil Johnson Toyota
Meridian, MS

Landers Toyota
Little Rock, AR

Lithia Toyota of Abilene
Abilene, TX

Musson-Patout Toyota
New Iberia, LA

North Park Toyota of Boerne
Boerne, TX

North Point Toyota
North Little Rock, AR

Northcutt Toyota
Enid, OK

Pat Lobb Toyota of McKinney
McKinney, TX

Philpott Toyota
Nederland, TX

Price LeBlanc Toyota
Baton Rouge, LA

Putnam Toyota
Altus, OK

Red McCombs Toyota
San Antonio, TX

Round Rock Toyota
Round Rock, TX

Silsbee Toyota
Silsbee, TX

Star Toyota
League City, TX

Sterling McCall Toyota
Houston, TX

Street Toyota
Amarillo, TX

Team Toyota
Baton Rouge, LA

Tegeler Toyota
Brenham, TX

Toyota of Dallas
Dallas, TX

Toyota of Fayetteville
Fayetteville, AR

Toyota of Fort Worth
Fort Worth, TX

Toyota of Irving
Irving, TX

Toyota of Muskogee
Muskogee, OK

Toyota of Northwest Arkansas
Rogers, AR

Toyota of Paris
Paris, TX

Toyota of Richardson
Richardson, TX

Vandergriff Toyota
Arlington, TX

Yokem Toyota
Shreveport, LA

CENTRAL ATLANTIC TOYOTA

Advantage Toyota
Barboursville, WV

Alexandria Toyota
Alexandria, VA

Allegheny Toyota
Franklin, PA

Aubrey Alexander Toyota
Selinsgrove, PA

Buckhannon Toyota
Buckhannon, WV

Casey Toyota
Williamsburg, VA

Charles Barker Toyota
Virginia Beach, VA

Checkered Flag Toyota
Virginia Beach, VA

Dan Cava's Toyota World
Fairmont, WV

DARCARS Toyota
Silver Spring, MD

DARCARS Toyota of Frederick
Frederick, MD

David R. McGeorge Toyota
Richmond, VA

Fitzgerald's Lakeforest Toyota
Gaithersburg, MD

Freedom Toyota
Hamburg, PA

Gloucester Toyota
Gloucester, VA

Hanover Toyota
Hanover, PA

Hertrich Toyota
Milford, DE

Koons Toyota
Annapolis, MD

Koons Westminster Toyota
Westminster, MD

Miller Toyota
Manassas, VA

Ourisman Chantilly Toyota
Chantilly, VA

Palmiero Toyota
Meadville, PA

Preston Toyota
New Castle, PA

Shelor Toyota
Christiansburg, VA

Team Toyota
Langhorne, PA

Thompson Toyota
Doylestown, PA

Timonium Toyota
Cockeysville, MD

Williams Toyota of Sayre
Sayre, PA

Younger Toyota
Hagerstown, MD

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moving forward

VW is Europe's top seller

Volkswagen was Europe's top-selling brand in the first quarter, with sales virtually flat compared with 2007 in a market that declined by 1.7 percent overall.

The VW brand sold 403,617 units in the first quarter, beating the runner-up Ford brand, which sold 354,970. General Motors' Opel/Vauxhall brand ranked third, with 338,756 units, followed by the Renault brand, Peugeot and the Fiat brand.

Among companies, Volkswagen AG was by far the top seller, with 783,152 units in the quarter. But that total was down from 804,436 in the first quarter of 2007.

The PSA group, with 535,743 sales, was second, followed by Ford Motor Co., General Motors and Renault. Renault was the only top-five automaker to post an increase in the quarter, boosting sales by 1.6 percent.



Strong sales of the Golf helped Volkswagen take the lead in Europe.

Other gainers included BMW Group, 11.2 percent; Daimler AG, 5.0 percent, and Nissan, 47.1 percent.

Toyota Motor Corp. posted the biggest percentage loss among major carmakers, with quarterly sales down 15.5 percent.

In Germany, Europe's largest market, sales rose 2.6 percent. Sales were down 0.7 percent in the United Kingdom, the No. 2 market, and down 10.0 percent in France, the third-largest.

Several eastern European nations posted double-digit sales increases, including Poland (19.5 percent) and Romania (23.6 percent).

— Dave Guilford

Estimated Europe registrations by country

	3 mos. 2008	Percent change
Germany	735,914	2.6
United Kingdom	683,349	–0.7
Italy	663,532	–10.0
France	526,121	1.3
Spain	347,734	–15.3
Belgium	169,864	3.7
Netherlands	164,037	1.7
Ireland	93,045	–7.2
Poland	86,926	19.5
Greece	79,271	–0.1
Romania	74,028	23.6
Austria	73,778	–2.0
Switzerland	68,134	7.9
Sweden	61,823	–9.6
Portugal	55,162	11.6
Finland	46,112	14.7
Hungary	42,559	3.5
Denmark	37,148	0.5
Czech Republic	33,026	9.7
Norway	29,974	–11.2
Slovenia	18,799	13.3
Slovakia	15,586	18.2
Luxembourg	13,490	–6.5
Bulgaria	11,790	18.0
Estonia	7,202	–5.9
Lithuania	6,162	51.0
Latvia	5,934	–25.3
Iceland	3,322	7.1
TOTAL	**4,153,822**	**–1.7**

Note: Excludes most commercial vehicles
Source: ACEA

Estimated Europe light-vehicle registrations by manufacturer, March & 3 months

	March 2008	March 2007	Percent change	3 mos. 2008	3 mos. 2007	Percent change
Volkswagen division	154,102	177,242	–13.1	403,617	403,687	0.0
Audi	65,187	74,774	–12.8	160,573	170,528	–5.8
Seat	37,917	43,722	–13.3	98,902	104,183	–5.1
Skoda	45,184	50,056	–9.7	118,886	124,600	–4.6
Other	597	670	–10.9	1,174	1,438	–18.4
VOLKSWAGEN AG	**302,987**	**346,464**	**–12.5**	**783,152**	**804,436**	**–2.6**
Peugeot	110,788	127,919	–13.4	294,720	303,081	–2.8
Citroen	87,142	101,871	–14.5	241,023	258,926	–6.9
PSA GROUP	**197,930**	**229,790**	**–13.9**	**535,743**	**562,007**	**–4.7**
Ford division	154,215	171,065	–9.9	354,970	368,622	–3.7
Volvo	26,223	30,960	–15.3	66,912	74,098	–9.7
Land Rover	11,768	15,030	–21.7	24,442	28,054	–12.9
Jaguar	5,860	6,026	–2.8	8,569	10,189	–15.9
FORD MOTOR CO.	**198,066**	**223,081**	**–11.2**	**454,893**	**480,963**	**–5.4**
Opel/Vauxhall	147,029	167,621	–12.3	338,756	368,725	–8.1
Chevrolet/GM Daewoo	20,488	22,667	–9.6	52,007	52,862	–1.6
Saab	8,770	10,115	–13.3	19,346	21,976	–12.0
GM U.S.	567	632	–10.3	1,775	1,594	11.4
GENERAL MOTORS	**176,854**	**201,035**	**–12.0**	**411,884**	**445,157**	**–7.5**
Renault division	123,768	131,969	–6.2	311,041	317,525	–2.0
Dacia	15,252	15,207	0.3	46,512	34,278	35.7
RENAULT	**139,020**	**147,176**	**–5.5**	**357,553**	**351,803**	**1.6**
Fiat division	100,825	105,683	–4.6	280,556	269,656	4.0
Lancia	10,609	13,838	–23.3	32,481	37,669	–13.8
Alfa Romeo	7,820	16,390	–52.3	22,028	42,838	–48.6
Other	800	632	26.6	2,026	1,541	31.5
FIAT GROUP	**120,054**	**136,543**	**–12.1**	**337,091**	**351,704**	**–4.2**
Toyota Division	88,051	105,136	–16.3	213,664	251,711	–15.1
Lexus	4,329	5,523	–21.6	8,871	11,535	–23.1
TOYOTA MOTOR	**92,380**	**110,659**	**–16.5**	**222,535**	**263,246**	**–15.5**
BMW division	74,729	75,896	–1.5	175,245	163,170	7.4
Mini	18,530	15,283	21.2	40,950	31,179	31.3
BMW GROUP	**93,259**	**91,179**	**2.3**	**216,195**	**194,349**	**11.2**
Mercedes-Benz	77,950	84,063	–7.3	189,450	188,646	0.4
Smart	9,672	4,776	102.5	22,022	12,751	72.7
DAIMLER AG†	**87,622**	**88,839**	**–1.4**	**211,472**	**201,397**	**5.0**
NISSAN	**45,931**	**33,537**	**37.0**	**107,857**	**73,311**	**47.1**
HONDA	**41,608**	**42,927**	**–3.1**	**86,964**	**86,683**	**0.3**
MAZDA	**32,646**	**32,837**	**–0.6**	**73,986**	**68,915**	**7.4**
HYUNDAI	**28,803**	**33,421**	**–13.8**	**73,723**	**80,689**	**–8.6**
KIA	**29,708**	**28,676**	**3.6**	**71,681**	**64,595**	**11.0**
SUZUKI	**26,709**	**31,501**	**–15.2**	**69,966**	**74,282**	**–5.8**
MITSUBISHI	**17,198**	**18,769**	**–8.4**	**39,717**	**40,510**	**–2.0**
CHRYSLER LLC†	**13,115**	**13,493**	**–2.8**	**30,200**	**30,606**	**–1.3**
OTHER	**10,323**	**17,201**	**–40.0**	**69,210**	**51,461**	**34.5**
TOTAL	**1,654,214**	**1,827,128**	**–9.5**	**4,153,822**	**4,226,114**	**–1.7**

†DaimlerChrysler sold the Chrysler group on Aug. 3, 2007; Chrysler LLC and Daimler AG totals through July 2007 are extracted from DaimlerChrysler.
Note: Reflects estimated registration data from 28 European countries; excludes most commercial vehicles
Source: ACEA

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Supplier IAC consolidates operations and know-how

Rhoda Miel
rmiel@crain.com

HURON, Ohio — International Automotive Components Group North America's plant here helped IAC zoom from concept to full-bore production in just two years. How? Experience.

The Huron factory's leadership, work force and the plant itself represent decades of manufacturing know-how. For example:

- Chuck Raymont, the plant manager, has worked for several companies, including Lear Corp. and Chrysler.
- Steve Sauder, the technical services manager, has spent 22 years at auto suppliers from small headliner compression molders to major suppliers such as Lear and the former Collins & Aikman Corp.
- Preston Lopetrone, the operations manager, has put in more than 20 years with international companies.

And the plant had been part of Lear and before that Automotive Industries Inc.

No startup

"The biggest misnomer about IAC out there is that we're a startup company," says James Keppler, vice president of North American operations for the suburban Detroit company. "We're not. We're a well-established operation with more than 100 years of auto heritage between our parts."

In 2006, New York financier Wilbur Ross began bringing together parts of distressed suppliers of automotive interior parts under one roof. He wanted to create a company that could combine operational strengths with a financial group's fiscal discipline.

In August 2007, the biggest parts came together. Lear, of suburban Detroit, rolled its plastics-intensive interior group into IAC in exchange for a share in the new company, and IAC picked up parts of bankrupt Collins & Aikman.

"IAC is coming in and applying a new dynamic to the industry," says Laurie Harbour-Felax, a managing director of consulting group Stout Risius Ross Inc. "They're private equity-run but with a solid manufacturing base."

Private-equity payoff

Private equity has gotten involved in the auto supply business before, with mixed results.

Ross comes with a pedigree that includes reinvigoration of the U.S. steel industry in the 1990s. That background has given IAC a different sheen than many of its competitors. Keppler says the company has a long-term outlook that gives it an edge in a tough economy. "I know that financially we don't have to make short-term decisions that other companies have to," he says.

The company also is banking on former Lear executives' history in past acquisitions within Lear, which executives say shows that the company and its leaders know how to bring multiple firms together under one corporate banner.

Taken together, the history and long-term outlook give IAC the opportunity to invest in "best practices" strategies at its plants that will pay off in the long run, while its lower debt gives it more time to allow those strategies to succeed.

At Huron, the company is dealing with the short-term effects of the strike at American Axle & Manufacturing Holdings Inc., which has halted production at some auto assembly plants. Some Huron workers are laid off because the assembly plants aren't building vehicles.

At the same time, IAC is preparing for major vehicle launches this year. "Launch clocks" show the days and hours remaining until full production, and the company is making sure the plant and its employees are ready.

Says Sauder, the technical services manager: "We've moved presses around. We've worked to make sure the material flow is in line so everyone can see what we need at a glance."

A robotic assembly module the company added next to two 24,000-ton presses inserts 47 clips on each

see **IAC**, Page **24B**



Workers assemble interior parts at IAC North America's plant in Huron, Ohio.

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IAC
Upgraded presses monitor problems

continued from Page 24A

instrument panel carrier as it comes out of the press, automatically checking each in line, eliminating the possibility of human error.

The plant has added in-mold monitoring capabilities in 26 of its 36 presses during the past two years. That makes it possible to adjust pressure and molding continually in the press on each part. At an on-floor command center, Raymont, the plant manager, points to the data coming from each upgraded press. The data show whether the presses are operating according to specifications and point to any problems.

Says Keppler: "This has been one of the big evolutions in our plant — real-time feedback."

Regional structure

IAC's manufacturing improvements are taking place under a new corporate structure.

IAC North America has its own operating structure, which also oversees IAC operations in China and India. A separate IAC entity in Europe is responsible for that area. The two units, along with IAC facilities in Japan and South America, cooperate on international projects but also can focus on their own regions.

"We say that we have global strategy with local execution," Keppler says.

IAC still is bringing together some elements that it picked up in the past few months.

Through the acquisition of Collins & Aikman's carpet and acoustics division, IAC gained an acoustics-testing laboratory in suburban Detroit that is equal to anything the automakers have. The lab had been shuttered because of cost cutting within Collins & Aikman. IAC is reviving those capabilities at that site.

IAC also taps Collins & Aikman's compression molding tool-making capabilities in Old Fort, N.C., carried over from C&A's carpet facilities. IAC uses those to improve manufacturing of headliners in Port Huron, Mich. At the same time, IAC plans to move some headliner production to North Carolina, adding to its product mix for automakers in the Southeast.

The company also just launched production of an injection-molded energy absorber that costs less than a traditional foam absorber. The product is for the 2008 Nissan Altima coupe.

New technologies

IAC continues to invest in Lear-developed technology for so-called two-shot molding capabilities that it can use at other sites. In two-shot molding, one plastic component is made from two materials in one process. Keppler says the company is looking into the potential of three- and four-shot production.

"That's what manufacturing is at IAC," he says. "We've been able to take the best of the best from a lot of places and bring it under one roof." AN

Mann + Hummel sees growth

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DETROIT — Mann + Hummel Automotive Inc. had a record $120 million in North American sales in 2003. But COO Claude Mathieu set his sights higher. He predicted the company would hit $200 million in sales in 2008.

He was right. The U.S. unit of German auto supplier Mann + Hummel GmbH passed that mark a year early — in 2007 — and with $20 million to spare.

Despite a slowdown in North American auto production, the Portage, Mich., company continues to grow.

A 50,000-square-foot expansion is under way at its plant in Queretaro, Mexico, which opened in 2004, and employees are being trained for a new plant near Bangalore, India. Production there will start this year on injection-molded plastic air-intake manifolds and filtration systems.

Mann + Hummel also recently purchased land near Delhi, India, for another plant that will supply automakers in northern India within the next two years.

Growth is coming from production in new regions, such as Asia and eastern Europe; the development of new products; and shifting production from established plants to new sites, Wilfried Lehr, managing director of Mann + Hummel's automotive original-equipment division, said during a press event here last month.

Mann + Hummel GmbH reported sales of about $2.5 billion in 2007, a 9.9 percent increase from 2006. The company makes cylinder-head covers, intake manifolds and air and oil filters for automakers and the aftermarket.

The current expansion will return blow molding to Mann + Hummel's portfolio in North America — this time suction blow molding. At one time, the company had standard blow molding at its U.S. operations but phased it out in favor of buying blow-molded parts from other suppliers.

The North American offices also will pick up production of some parts now made in Germany for North American customers. Because of the rising value of the euro compared with the U.S. dollar, it makes more sense to transfer work to regions where production is less expensive, Lehr said.

When Mann + Hummel began North American production with its acquisition of Geiger Technic Inc. in Portage, vibration-welded thermoplastic air-intake manifolds were still a niche product in the United States. Now they are used throughout the auto industry.

Starting in 2009, the company will make a glass-filled nylon oil pan for a passenger car in North America. The only vehicle currently being produced with a thermoplastic oil pan is a commercial tractor-trailer truck.

Within two years, Mann + Hummel also will launch production of another new product, a blow-molded "sound pipe" that allows carmakers to alter the sound of their car engines to produce a sporty or more powerful sound. AN



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personnel

ASBURY AUTOMOTIVE GROUP INC. — Craig Monaghan, 51, to senior vice president and CFO. He had been CFO of Sears Holdings Corp. He replaces **J. Gordon Smith,** who has left the company.



Monaghan

Asbury Automotive Group, of New York, is a publicly traded dealership group that operates 90 stores.

JM FAMILY ENTERPRISES INC. — Amy Kropp to vice president of human resources operations, responsible for all JM Family companies. She had been a human resources director.



Kropp

Sandra Porceng to vice president of human resources total rewards, responsible for compensation, retirement services, benefits strategy and workers' compensation. She had been a human resources director.



Porceng

JM Family Enterprises is in Deerfield Beach, Fla. Its principal businesses are vehicle distribution and processing, financial services, finance and insurance products, retail sales and dealer technology products and services.

MOBILE PRODUCTIVITY INC. — David Boyle, 44, to president and COO. He had been senior vice president of sales and marketing.



Boyle

Mobile Productivity, of Las Vegas, provides vehicle inspection tools, processes and software for dealership service departments.

SAE INTERNATIONAL — Renee Bovair, 38, to executive director of the SAE Detroit section. She had been a program developer with the Detroit section.



Bovair

SAE International, of Warrendale, Pa., is a professional society for engineers in the automobile, commercial-vehicle, motorsports and aerospace industries. It has 86 sections, of which Detroit is the largest.

SUBARU OF AMERICA INC. — Heather Ward, 37, to manager of corporate communications. She had been regional marketing manager for Commerce Bank.



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Honda exec red-flags Detroit 3 aid

Harry Stoffer
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WASHINGTON — A proposal that would give tax credits to the Detroit 3 for researching fuel-saving technology — even if they don't have taxable income — is "covert protectionism," a top Honda executive says.

"It creates a very unlevel playing field" for import-brand automakers, said John Mendel, executive vice president of American Honda Motor Co.

Contrary to common assumptions, Mendel said, the Japanese government does not subsidize Honda research. U.S. incentives for energy-saving technology should be available to all automakers, "not just a few," he told *Automotive News.*

Industry help?

The tax credit proposal is part of legislation introduced last month by U.S. Rep. Joe Knollenberg, R-Mich. The eight-term congressman, who faces a serious re-election test this year in his suburban Detroit district, says his bill would stimulate Michigan's economy and help the auto industry meet tougher federal fuel economy standards.

The bill estimates that the Detroit 3 will increase r&d spending by $7 billion a year to meet the new standards. The federal r&d tax credit is 20 percent of new spending, Knollenberg spokesman Nate Bailey says. Normally, money-losing companies can't collect the credit.

The bill's chances appear slim. Democrats who control Congress likely would not be eager to advance the proposal, even if Knollenberg had proposed a way to pay for it.

But the issue could move to the front burner next year. Both of the leading Democratic presidential contenders, Sens. Barack Obama of Illinois and Hillary Clinton of New York, have offered campaign proposals that would provide special financial aid for what they call "domestic" carmakers.

Clinton's energy plan includes $20 billion in "green vehicle bonds." They would help companies retool to build more fuel-efficient cars and trucks and provide a tax credit for employee health and pension costs.

Obama advocates "retooling tax credits and loan guarantees for domestic auto plants and parts manufacturers."

Tough challenge

Both candidates favor fuel economy standards that are even higher than those enacted by Congress last year. The new law requires cars and trucks to average 35 mpg by 2020, about 40 percent higher than today.

Honda's Mendel said all automakers will be challenged to meet the higher standards.

He warned against the increased risk of "covert protectionism" during a May 1 session of the International Auto Industry Summit, organized in Washington by the American International Automobile Dealers Association. Said Mendel: "We've got to keep our eyes open." AN

Court: Auction not liable for truck defect

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An auction company cannot be held liable for selling a defective vehicle, the Texas Supreme Court has ruled unanimously.

The decision prevents the estate of a driver who was killed in a rollover accident from seeking product liability damages from Big H Auto Auction. The Houston auction had sold the 1993 Ford Explorer that the victim was driving on consignment from a finance company.

"Auctioneers are usually neither buyers nor sellers but agents for both," the court said. "While they are obviously engaged in sales, the only thing they sell for their own account is their services. The items they auction are generally sold for others."

legal FILE

The ruling supports the position taken by the National Auto Auction Association, which filed a brief in the case. The association argued that the Big H auction, like most of the group's other members, are wholesale operations that handle transactions between "a sophisticated buyer and seller."

"Consumers are rarely aware of the auctions' role in moving used cars from one dealer to another, and so they have no expectations that auctions will protect them from such goods," the association said.

No bid

At issue: Can a motorist's estate collect product liability damages from the auction that sold an allegedly defective 1993 Ford Explorer?

Outcome: Top Texas court rules auto auction companies are not liable for selling defective vehicles.

Sold 'as is'

According to court documents, a finance company repossessed the Explorer and consigned it to Big H Auto Auction. Big H sold the Explorer "as is" to another auction in 2000 for $3,100. The second auction sold it to a dealership, which in turn sold it at retail.

In 2001, the Explorer's owner died in a single-vehicle rollover accident caused by an allegedly defective Bridgestone tire. His family sued both auctions, Ford Motor Co., the dealership and the tire manufacturer.

The family asserted that Big H was negligent for failing to replace the Explorer's tires, citing a recall that had been issued a few weeks before the auction sold the vehicle. A trial court judge threw out the case against Big H, but the Texas Court of Appeals reinstated it.

The Texas Supreme Court dismissed the suit against Big H, saying the company owed no legal duty to the buyer. "Federal law generally places the duty on manufacturers to report potential defects, notify the public and make necessary repairs," said the opinion written by Justice Scott Brister. "Imposing a duty on auto auctioneers to discover and repair defects would require them to go into a side business other than their own."

Big volumes

The court noted that Big H auctions about 1,000 vehicles a week, "with many of them moving on and off the premises in a matter of hours." The auction doesn't inspect and repair vehicles except at a customer's request and expense, the opinion said.

Big H sells only to licensed commercial dealers who have access to at least the same recall information as the company, the opinion added. Vehicle and tire manufacturers have superior knowledge about their own products, the court concluded.

It added: "Big H made no warranties of its own at the auction, serving merely as a conduit for warranties made by sellers." AN

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Chrysler asks dealers to donate to museum

Bradford Wernle
bwernle@crain.com

DETROIT — CEO Bob Nardelli has asked Chrysler LLC's dealers nationwide to donate $5,000 apiece to the Walter P. Chrysler Museum.

Chrysler, which has operated the museum as part of its communications department, is setting up a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, Nardelli said in a letter to dealers. The new entity will be called the Walter P. Chrysler Museum Foundation.

Dealers who contribute will be featured on a Founding Dealers Society Donor Wall in the museum, on the grounds of Chrysler headquarters in suburban Detroit.

Nardelli has said he will look to unload "nonperforming assets" from Chrysler's operations. But Frank Fountain, president of the Chrysler Foundation, said the company wasn't making the museum move to save money.

"In terms of financial impact on the company one way or another, it's relatively insignificant," Fountain said. "The motivation isn't to improve the company's bottom line because, frankly, you wouldn't notice if we had a museum or not."

The museum employs about six full-time staffers and has roughly 200 volunteers, many of them retired employees. It displays about 70 vehicles in 55,000 square feet of exhibit space.

Fountain said the company submitted its application for nonprofit status to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service in April.

The first dealer to contribute $5,000 was John Schenden, owner of Denver Pro Chrysler-Jeep in Denver. He said the museum is an important resource.

"It's our history. It's my history," Schenden said. "Who doesn't like to go to an automobile museum?" AN

Canada sales post 3.8% gain in April

April sales of cars and light trucks in Canada rose 3.8 percent from April 2007 to 175,382 units.

For the first four months of 2008, volume is up 6.2 percent from the same period last year, to 539,663 units.

Top-selling General Motors plummeted 13.6 percent from April 2007 to 38,739 vehicles. GM's year-to-date total of 121,667 is off 3.6 percent from last year.

Chrysler LLC gained 7.8 percent to 24,266 vehicles in April. Ford Motor Co. sales dipped 5.7 percent during the month to 22,073 units.

Asian automakers, except Mitsubishi and Mazda, posted April sales gains in double-digit percentages. Toyota Motor Corp. rose 19.8 percent to 25,441 vehicles.

Through the first four months, Toyota pulled to within 870 units of third-place Ford Motor Co. Toyota's year-to-date sales are up 16.2 percent to 70,247.

— Bernadine Williams

Canada light-vehicle sales, April & 4 months

Canada sales by model available online at: www.autonews.com/datacenter

	April 2008	April 2007	4 mos. 2008	4 mos. 2007
BMW division (D/I)	2,310	2,258	6,145	6,775
Mini (I)	456	373	1,153	1,071
Total car (D/I)	**2,225**	**2,027**	**5,440**	**5,559**
Total truck (D/I)	**541**	**604**	**1,858**	**2,287**
BMW (D/I)	**2,766**	**2,631**	**7,298**	**7,846**
Chrysler Division (D/I)	2,755	3,332	11,999	10,922
Dodge	15,749	15,904	49,511	51,674
Jeep	5,762	3,278	17,904	13,007
Total car (D/I)	**6,462**	**7,341**	**21,953**	**21,879**
Total truck (D/I)	**17,804**	**15,173**	**57,461**	**53,724**
CHRYSLER LLC†	**24,266**	**22,514**	**79,414**	**75,603**
Maybach (I)	–	1	2	2
Mercedes-Benz (D/I)	1,869	1,529	5,862	5,124
Smart (I)	359	252	1,113	635
Total car (D/I)	**1,813**	**1,383**	**5,596**	**4,554**
Total truck (D/I)	**415**	**399**	**1,381**	**1,207**
DAIMLER AG†	**2,228**	**1,782**	**6,977**	**5,761**
FERRARI (I)*	**10**	**9**	**40**	**36**
Ford division	20,548	21,118	66,215	65,034
Lincoln	441	817	1,532	2,181
Mercury	2	38	21	90
Jaguar (I)	113	82	325	289
Land Rover (I)	202	353	834	897
Volvo (I)	767	995	2,190	3,097
Total car (D/I)	**5,257**	**5,897**	**16,996**	**18,751**
Total truck (D/I)	**16,816**	**17,506**	**54,121**	**52,837**
FORD MOTOR CO. (D/I)	**22,073**	**23,403**	**71,117**	**71,588**
Buick	1,990	1,839	5,601	4,634
Cadillac	984	833	2,717	2,958
Chevrolet (D/I)	18,103	20,074	57,296	57,932
GMC	5,084	6,614	17,888	20,751
Hummer	78	122	349	446
Pontiac	10,743	13,115	32,296	32,011
Saab (D/I)	140	197	383	622
Saturn	1,617	2,054	5,137	6,876
Total car (D/I)	**21,247**	**23,530**	**61,726**	**58,313**
Total truck (D/I)	**17,492**	**21,318**	**59,941**	**67,917**
GENERAL MOTORS (D/I)	**38,739**	**44,848**	**121,667**	**126,230**
Acura (D/I)	2,222	1,670	7,235	5,875
Honda Division (D/I)	16,412	13,447	51,775	39,599
Total car (D/I)	**13,446**	**10,468**	**41,596**	**30,610**
Total truck (D/I)	**5,188**	**4,649**	**17,414**	**14,864**
HONDA (D/I)	**18,634**	**15,117**	**59,010**	**45,474**
Hyundai division (D/I)	9,412	7,235	25,641	22,537
Kia (I)	3,719	3,318	10,878	9,543
Total car (D/I)	**8,154**	**6,173**	**20,911**	**17,667**
Total truck (D/I)	**4,977**	**4,380**	**15,608**	**14,413**
HYUNDAI-KIA (D/I)	**13,131**	**10,553**	**36,519**	**32,080**
MASERATI (I)	**15**	**12**	**50**	**32**
Total car (D/I)	**5,610**	**6,929**	**17,496**	**18,814**
Total truck (D/I)	**3,505**	**3,412**	**11,216**	**9,276**
MAZDA (D/I)	**9,115**	**10,341**	**28,712**	**28,090**
Total car (D/I)	**1,186**	**1,131**	**3,726**	**2,737**
Total truck (D/I)	**750**	**822**	**2,511**	**2,486**
MITSUBISHI (D/I)	**1,936**	**1,953**	**6,237**	**5,223**
Infiniti (D/I)	903	714	2,785	2,338
Nissan Division (D/I)	7,946	6,741	24,876	23,739
Total car (D/I)	**6,103**	**5,357**	**17,865**	**17,672**
Total truck (D/I)	**2,746**	**2,098**	**9,796**	**8,405**
NISSAN (D/I)	**8,849**	**7,455**	**27,661**	**26,077**
Total car (I)	**145**	**151**	**361**	**436**
Total truck (I)	**81**	**82**	**271**	**203**
PORSCHE (I)	**226**	**233**	**632**	**639**
Total car (D/I)	**1,916**	**1,403**	**5,582**	**4,936**
Total truck (D)	**54**	**53**	**397**	**228**
SUBARU (D/I)	**1,970**	**1,456**	**5,979**	**5,164**
Total car (I)	**1,070**	**744**	**2,821**	**2,270**
Total truck (D/I)	**381**	**411**	**1,018**	**1,317**
SUZUKI (D/I)	**1,451**	**1,155**	**3,839**	**3,587**
Lexus (D/I)	1,558	1,309	4,412	4,126
Toyota Division (D/I)	23,883	19,934	65,835	56,318
Total car (D/I)	**18,407**	**15,471**	**49,120**	**42,192**
Total truck (D/I)	**7,034**	**5,772**	**21,127**	**18,252**
TOYOTA MOTOR (D/I)	**25,441**	**21,243**	**70,247**	**60,444**
Audi (I)	1,128	799	3,062	2,415
Bentley (I)	22	21	55	72
Volkswagen division (D/I)	3,382	3,501	11,147	11,723
Total car (D/I)	**4,297**	**4,146**	**13,563**	**13,619**
Total truck (D/I)	**235**	**175**	**701**	**591**
VOLKSWAGEN AG (D/I)	**4,532**	**4,321**	**14,264**	**14,210**
Domestic car	**61,052**	**61,637**	**184,310**	**172,695**
Import car	**36,311**	**30,535**	**100,532**	**87,382**
Total car	**97,363**	**92,172**	**284,842**	**260,077**
Domestic truck	**64,267**	**65,576**	**211,837**	**211,630**
Import truck	**13,752**	**11,278**	**42,984**	**36,377**
Total truck	**78,019**	**76,854**	**254,821**	**248,007**
TOTAL CANADA	**175,382**	**169,026**	**539,663**	**508,084**

†DaimlerChrysler sold the Chrysler group on Aug. 3, 2007; Chrysler LLC and Daimler AG totals through July 2007 are extracted from DaimlerChrysler. *Estimate

Note: (D) = produced in North America; (I) = imported to Canada; vehicles are domestic unless noted
Source: Automotive News Data Center and Association of International Automobile Manufacturers of Canada





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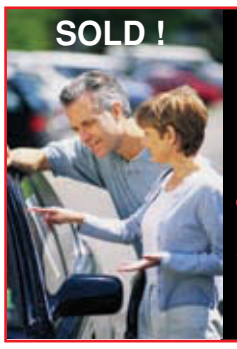
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Box #5143

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KENTUCKY near metro, Chrysler Dodge Jeep, 650 retail, good location and facility, nice starter store, owner wants offer. Only at McNulty & Associates. Call David McNulty at **1-800-826-3828.**

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TEXAS. 2 new listings. One is in a major metro market. The other is a medium size group incl tier-one import lines. Exclusively by National Business Brokers at **949-770-7451,** facilitated by Brady Schmidt and Jason Stopnitzky.

MEMPHIS area - profitable Chrysler Dodge Jeep - short commute - Blue & FFE only $450,000 - Outstate Missouri Chev $20M + sales - retailed over 800 n & u last yr - 2nd tier import St. Louis market - Don Brown - **636-477-4900.**

ORLANDO, FL - 8 ACRES +/- . . Current auto facility. Two miles south of major shopping center. Minutes from major attractions. 1.2m per acre. Reply in confidence to **Box 5149.**

NORTHEAST PENNSYLVANIA - Fully Suzuki squared franchise for sale. Turn key operation. 30 year existing dealer. Purchase franchise separately or lease property with franchise. Contact **215-292-3006** or 215-357-8226.

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Don't miss this SW MI CJD dealership! Established customer base with recently remodeled & updated facility in resort area only 2 hours from Chicago. Very strong used market! Email for more details at **cjd4sale@verizon.net**.

NORTH TX CHEVY, 478 new & used retail last 4 year average, 25 miles to 100K population metro. $350K total bluesky & fixed assets. Lease or buy facilities. Qualified buyers only. Gary Sigman - **817-860-1805**.

FLORIDA IMPORT with excellent potential. Priced right to sell quick. Located on the coast in one of the best area's of the State. Buy or lease facility. VBIII Automotive Dealer Consulting, **407-672-2811.**

HYUNDAI - MITSUBISHI DUAL - Southeast area. Priced to sell. $750,000 buys parts, furniture, fixtures, blue sky, all equipment and special tools. Very attractive lease on facility for $13,000 per month. **Box #5142**.

PENNSYLVANIA - State-of-the-art new facility for a Ford and L-M dealership. For sale by owner. Single point located in South Central Pennsylvania on main thoroughfare. Sales over $20 million per year. Call **410-292-7526.**

SUZUKI DEALERSHIP FOR SALE IN THE MIDWEST - Top in central region sales. New facility. Huge net profit in metro market. Excellent location. Priced to sell. Reply in confidence: **Box #5137**.

RHODE ISLAND - Mitsubishi dealership. Great location on 2 acres. Route 44. Excel. used car bus. $100,000 plus parts. Owner motivated. Great opportunity. 20 yrs. @ loc. Very affordable. **carman20@verizon.net**

TEXAS - Houston, San Antonio, Austin; Chevrolet (5), Ford (2), Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Buick (2), Nissan, Pontiac (3), GMC Truck (2) , Others. Tennessee; Chevy. Buyer Services avail. Roger Ackels **713-249-1246**

NISSAN-PACIFIC NORTHWEST - Small store in good shape. Owner must relocate ASAP. Priced to sell. Prv. Pty. Contact **autonetwork@hotmail.com**

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WANTED: HONDA or FORD/LINCOLN/MERCURY South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia Metro or Fringe Metro store(s). Turn around opportunities ok. Current dealer Principal -- **803-513-7330**.

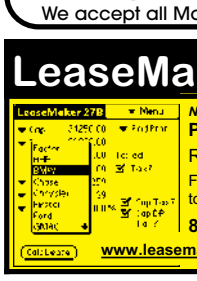
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obituaries

Felix Callari

PALM BEACH, Fla. — Felix Callari, CEO of the Callari Auto Group, died here March 18 at age 79. In 1967 he opened his first new-car dealership in Stamford, Conn., selling BMWs, Sunbeams and Saabs. Callari went on to sell Datsun, Sterling, Chrysler, Plymouth, Jeep, Eagle and Dodge vehicles, with several stores in Stamford. The group now includes BMW of Darien, Mini of Fairfield County in Stamford and Volvo of Westport, all in Connecticut.

Daniel Donnelly

OTTAWA — Daniel Donnelly, the founder of Donnelly Automotive Group in Canada, died here Dec. 22 at age 77. After working at International Harvester and Ford Motor Co., Donnelly became sales manager at Ottawa Motor Sales in 1963. He bought the company in 1970. Donnelly Automotive Group now has four dealerships selling Ford, Lincoln, Pontiac, Buick, GMC, Mitsubishi and Kia vehicles, all in the Ottawa area.

William Eberle

CONCORD, Mass. — William Eberle, chief trade negotiator for Presidents Nixon and Ford and a former president of the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association, died here April 3 at age 84. Eberle began working for the Nixon administration in November 1971. He left in 1974, four months after Nixon resigned. Eberle became president of the manufacturers association, which primarily represented the Detroit 3, in 1975. The group re-formed in 1992 to become the American Automobile Manufacturers Association. It dissolved in 1998. Eberle left the group in 1977 and became a consultant.

John Mollica

HENDERSON, Nev. — Former General Motors wage administrator John Mollica died here March 28 at age 84. He became a GM wage administration executive in Detroit at age 31, involved with union negotiations. In 1971, Mollica was promoted to director of wage administration and labor economics and eventually became assistant director of labor relations. He retired in 1980.

Donald Towbin

MEDFORD, N.J. — Former New Jersey auto dealer and banker Donald Towbin died here March 11 at age 86. His first dealership was Kaiser-Frazer Auto in Lakewood, N.J. Towbin owned four Lincoln-Mercury stores in New Jersey in the 1950s and 1960s. He also owned the Larson Ford Agency in Lakewood and Eldridge Pontiac-Buick in Princeton. Towbin went on to own Towbin Chevrolet in Trenton, Towbin Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge in Pemberton and Towbin Spirit Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep in Swedesboro. He later sold all the dealerships. Towbin's sons, Joel and Daniel, own dealerships; his daughter, Linda Baker, and grandson, Josh, are co-owners of dealerships.

Complaint will delay UAW revote at JCI plant

April Wortham
awortham@crain.com

Johnson Controls Inc. has agreed to toss out the results of a March election in which workers at its Alabama factory voted down the UAW.

But a separate charge of unfair labor practices against the supplier could delay a new election for several months — and buy the union some much-needed campaign time.

On March 14, workers at Johnson Controls' Cottondale, Ala., factory voted against UAW representation by a 2-1 ratio.

A day earlier, workers at a Johnson Controls factory in Madison, Miss., also rejected the union. That vote was 213-145.

Bones of contention

The UAW immediately filed objections with the National Labor Relations Board, accusing the supplier of interfering with both elections. Among the union's claims: Johnson Controls threatened to close the Cottondale factory, which supplies seats and headliners to nearby Mercedes-Benz U.S. International Inc., if the UAW won.

Johnson Controls has denied the allegations but on April 9 agreed to set aside the results of the Alabama election and hold another vote without going through the NLRB hearing process. The supplier has made no such offer regarding the Mississippi election, according to the NLRB.

In a statement sent to *Automotive News*, Johnson Controls spokeswoman Debra Lacey said the supplier agreed to rerun the Alabama election "in an effort to resolve the issue of representation and avoid a significant delay in being able to more effectively collaborate with our work force."

Put on hold

The agreement could have allowed another election to take place almost immediately. But five days earlier, the UAW had filed a charge of unfair labor practices against management at the Cottondale plant. That charge accuses Johnson Controls of intimidating and harassing employees because of their pro-union stance.

Since the UAW has not filed a request to proceed, another election cannot take place until the NLRB completes its investigation of the unfair-labor-practices charge, says Doug Marshall, the NLRB's resident officer in Birmingham, Ala.

"The unfair-labor charges basically block the election until after the investigation is completed," Marshall said.

The UAW has filed a similar charge of unfair labor practices against management at the Madison factory. The NLRB is investigating the charge, along with the UAW's original objections regarding the election.

Johnson Controls' Madison factory supplies interior components to Nissan Motor Co.'s assembly plant in nearby Canton, Miss. AN

Inventory – U.S. car and light-truck, on May 1

Vehicles are domestic unless noted.

	Inventory units	Days supply May 1 2008	Days supply Apr. 1 2008
BMW div. car (D/I)	**28,700**	**36**	**36**
BMW div. trk. (D/I)	**7,200**	**32**	**39**
Total BMW division (D/I)	**35,900**	**35**	**36**
Mini Cooper car (I)	**3,300**	**18**	**22**
BMW†	**39,100**	**32**	**34**
300	18,300	82	61
Crossfire (I)	1,600	221	209
PT Cruiser	8,500	38	50
Sebring	14,300	69	42
Chrysler Div. car (D)	**41,100**	**63**	**50**
Chrysler Div. car (I)	**1,600**	**221**	**209**
Total Chrysler Div. car	**42,700**	**65**	**52**
Aspen	6,900	84	68
Pacifica	5,900	232	198
Town & Country	31,600	77	49
Total Chrysler Div. trk.	**44,400**	**85**	**59**
Total Chrysler Division	**87,100**	**74**	**55**
Avenger	11,000	51	35
Caliber	13,400	39	48
Charger	20,300	41	58
Magnum	1,200	70	35
Viper	200	55	60
Total Dodge car	**46,100**	**43**	**47**
Caravan	25,100	45	45
Dakota	10,800	110	73
Durango	6,400	65	61
Journey	14,600	57	139
Nitro	14,000	110	68
Ram	101,900	109	99
Sprinter	7,000	139	129
Total Dodge trk.	**179,900**	**85**	**82**
Total Dodge	**226,100**	**71**	**70**
Commander	11,900	117	96
Compass	5,500	51	34
Grand Cherokee	25,900	102	81
Liberty	22,600	88	72
Patriot	11,400	47	39
Wrangler	31,800	95	98
Total Jeep trk.	**109,200**	**84**	**70**
Chrysler LLC car (D)	**87,200**	**50**	**48**
Chrysler LLC car (I)	**1,600**	**221**	**209**
Chrysler LLC car	**88,800**	**51**	**49**
Chrysler LLC trk.	**333,500**	**85**	**74**
CHRYSLER LLC	**422,400**	**74**	**66**
Mercedes-Benz car (I)	**31,000**	**54**	**54**
Mercedes-Benz trk. (D/I)	**14,700**	**72**	**60**
DAIMLER AG†	**45,800**	**59**	**56**
Crown Victoria	8,200	40	47
Focus	39,800	43	54
Fusion	27,700	48	52
Mustang	34,400	89	91
Taurus (new)	14,700	73	60
Total Ford div. car	**124,800**	**54**	**60**
E series/Club Wagon	4,100	34	22
E series van	24,900	67	68
Edge	42,700	107	69
Escape	32,200	54	44
Expedition	19,600	98	67
Explorer	28,100	99	65
F series	222,900	129	97
Ranger	11,400	39	34
Taurus X	7,400	85	61
Total Ford div. trk.	**393,300**	**97**	**73**
Total Ford division	**518,100**	**82**	**69**
Jaguar car (I)	**5,900**	**86**	**80**
Land Rover trk. (I)	**9,400**	**95**	**79**
Town Car	2,500	33	45
MKZ/Zephyr	8,200	65	59
Total Lincoln car	**10,700**	**53**	**54**
Mark LT	2,400	162	148
MKX	11,300	97	82
Navigator	5,700	89	82
Total Lincoln trk.	**19,400**	**99**	**87**
Total Lincoln	**30,100**	**76**	**70**
Grand Marquis	7,100	58	51
Milan	6,900	47	48
Sable (new)	4,800	67	85
Total Mercury car	**18,800**	**55**	**57**
Mariner	8,700	73	58
Mountaineer	4,000	110	70
Total Mercury trk.	**12,700**	**82**	**62**
Total Mercury	**31,500**	**63**	**58**
Total L-M car	**29,500**	**54**	**55**
Total L-M trk.	**32,100**	**91**	**74**
Total L-M	**61,600**	**69**	**64**
30 series (I)	1,200	94	120
40 series (I)	1,400	28	43
50 series (I)	400	76	94
60 series (I)	1,800	60	56
70 series (I)	5,800	88	77
80 series (I)	2,600	69	47
Total Volvo car (I)	**13,200**	**65**	**61**
Volvo trk. XC90 **(I)**	**6,100**	**84**	**67**
Total Volvo (I)	**19,300**	**70**	**63**
Ford Motor Co. car (D)	**154,300**	**54**	**59**
Ford Motor Co. car (I)	**19,100**	**71**	**65**
Ford Motor Co. car	**173,400**	**56**	**60**
Ford Motor Co. trk. (D)	**425,400**	**96**	**73**
Ford Motor Co. trk. (I)	**15,400**	**90**	**74**
Ford Motor Co. trk.	**440,800**	**96**	**73**
FORD MOTOR CO.†	**614,300**	**80**	**68**
LaCrosse	9,500	67	87
Lucerne	15,700	86	111
Total Buick car	**25,300**	**78**	**101**
Enclave	6,000	38	40
Rainier	–	33	54
Terraza	300	112	131
Total Buick trk.	**6,300**	**39**	**41**
Total Buick	**31,600**	**65**	**79**
CTS	7,300	35	24
DTS	5,700	63	57
STS	4,500	63	78
XLR	600	114	111
Total Cadillac car	**18,000**	**48**	**43**
Escalade	10,200	137	97
Escalade ESV	5,100	151	111
Escalade EXT	3,000	207	126
SRX	5,600	101	73
Total Cadillac trk.	**23,800**	**134**	**96**
Total Cadillac	**41,800**	**76**	**62**
Aveo (I)	12,500	56	113
Cobalt	37,100	52	75
Corvette	10,000	82	100
HHR	19,600	82	75
Impala	22,700	22	21
Malibu	23,500	36	37
Monte Carlo	100	29	46
Chevrolet car (D)	**112,900**	**41**	**45**
Chevrolet car (I)	**12,500**	**56**	**113**
Total Chevrolet car	**125,500**	**42**	**48**
Avalanche	18,600	151	136
Colorado	23,200	116	114
Equinox	27,200	121	94
Express/G van	16,700	91	68
Silverado	174,400	122	118
Suburban	21,700	119	110
Tahoe	39,100	125	110
TrailBlazer	15,900	145	92
Uplander	2,700	11	11
Total Chevrolet trk.	**339,400**	**113**	**103**
Total Chevrolet (D)	**452,400**	**78**	**78**
Total Chevrolet (I)	**12,500**	**56**	**113**
Total Chevrolet	**464,900**	**77**	**79**
Acadia	14,300	54	57
Canyon	7,600	160	148
Envoy	4,600	101	64
Savana/G van	4,600	50	46
Sierra	64,500	127	118
Yukon	21,300	188	146
Yukon XL	13,500	186	139
Total GMC trk.	**130,300**	**114**	**100**
H1	–	910	228
H2	2,100	95	76
H3	6,900	100	88
Total Hummer trk.	**9,100**	**99**	**85**
G5	6,600	84	127
G6	27,500	64	43
G8 (I)	4,500	55	89
Grand Prix	3,500	61	119
GTO (I)	–	120	243
Solstice	7,000	158	167
Vibe	10,600	62	68
Pontiac car (D)	**55,100**	**71**	**63**
Pontiac car (I)	**4,500**	**55**	**90**
Total Pontiac car	**59,700**	**69**	**64**
Montana SV6	–	146	429
Torrent	10,000	163	135
Total Pontiac trk.	**10,100**	**163**	**136**
Total Pontiac (D)	**65,200**	**77**	**68**
Total Pontiac (I)	**4,500**	**55**	**90**
Total Pontiac	**69,700**	**75**	**69**
Saab car (I)	**7,900**	**151**	**77**
Saab truck	**700**	**80**	**45**
Total Saab	**8,500**	**141**	**71**
Astra (I)	8,300	236	326
Aura	15,300	71	60
Ion	–	26	20
Sky	3,800	118	82
Saturn car (D)	**19,200**	**77**	**64**
Saturn car (I)	**8,300**	**236**	**326**
Total Saturn car	**27,400**	**97**	**87**
Outlook	8,800	96	101
Relay	–	56	75
Vue	21,200	77	73
Total Saturn trk.	**30,000**	**82**	**80**
Total Saturn (D)	**49,200**	**80**	**73**
Total Saturn (I)	**8,300**	**236**	**326**
Total Saturn	**57,500**	**88**	**83**
GM car (D)	**230,600**	**51**	**53**
GM car (I)	**33,200**	**93**	**131**
GM car	**263,700**	**54**	**57**
GM trk.	**549,700**	**109**	**98**
GENERAL MOTORS†	**813,500**	**82**	**80**
RL (I)*	1,000	46	57
TL	13,000	79	73
TSX (I)*	8,000	80	78
Acura car (D)	**13,000**	**79**	**73**
Acura car (I)	**9,000**	**74**	**74**
Total Acura car	**22,000**	**77**	**73**
MDX	12,000	80	65
RDX	5,000	78	74
Total Acura trk.	**17,000**	**79**	**67**
Total Acura	**39,000**	**78**	**70**
Accord (D)	*74,000*	*70*	*64*
Accord (I)	*22,000*	*79*	*78*
Total Accord	96,000	72	67
Civic (D)	*60,000*	*53*	*56*
Civic (I)	*3,000*	*17*	*31*
Total Civic	63,000	48	52
Fit (I)	5,000	22	27
S2000 (I)	1,000	77	79
Honda Div. car (D)	**134,000**	**61**	**60**
Honda Div. car (I)	**31,000**	**45**	**50**
Total Honda Div. car	**165,000**	**57**	**57**
CR-V (D)	*11,000*	*45*	*35*
CR-V (I)	*22,000*	*48*	*40*
Total CR-V	33,000	47	38
Element	7,000	63	65
Odyssey	41,000	80	78
Pilot	20,000	62	61
Ridgeline	17,000	106	133
Honda Div. trk. (D)	**96,000**	**71**	**71**
Honda Div. trk. (I)	**22,000**	**48**	**40**
Total Honda Div. trk.	**118,000**	**65**	**63**
Total Honda Div.	**283,000**	**60**	**59**
American Honda car (D)	**147,000**	**62**	**61**
American Honda car (I)	**40,000**	**49**	**53**
American Honda car	**187,000**	**59**	**58**
American Honda trk. (D)	**113,000**	**72**	**70**
American Honda trk. (I)	**22,000**	**48**	**40**
American Honda trk.	**135,000**	**67**	**63**
AMERICAN HONDA	**322,000**	**62**	**60**
Hyundai div. car (D/I)	**46,600**	**42**	**40**
Hyundai div. trk. (D/I)	**32,300**	**80**	**68**
Total Hyundai div. (D/I)†	**78,900**	**52**	**48**
Kia car (I)	**24,500**	**37**	**47**
Kia trk. (I)	**15,800**	**32**	**33**
Total Kia (I)*	**40,300**	**35**	**41**
Hyundai-Kia car (D/I)	**71,100**	**40**	**42**
Hyundai-Kia trk. (D/I)	**48,000**	**54**	**52**
HYUNDAI-KIA	**119,200**	**45**	**45**
Ascender	700	115	86
Pickup i-280/i-350	1,600	101	113
ISUZU†	**2,300**	**105**	**103**
Mazda3 (I)	25,000	70	43
Mazda6	9,800	52	31
MX-5 Miata (I)	4,500	82	73
RX-8 (I)	1,400	110	131
Mazda car (D)	**9,800**	**52**	**31**
Mazda car (I)	**30,900**	**73**	**48**
Total Mazda car	**40,700**	**67**	**42**
B series	800	139	137
CX-7 (I)	10,300	115	67
CX-9 (I)	9,000	106	81
Mazda5 (I)	1,600	21	17
Tribute	4,200	91	74
Mazda trk. (D)	**4,900**	**96**	**80**
Mazda trk. (I)	**21,000**	**83**	**55**
Total Mazda trk.	**25,900**	**85**	**59**
MAZDA†	**66,600**	**73**	**48**
Eclipse	4,800	82	76
Eclipse Spyder	1,700	55	137
Galant	5,500	102	54
Lancer (I)	10,500	92	80
Mitsubishi car (D)	**12,000**	**84**	**69**
Mitsubishi car (I)	**10,500**	**92**	**80**
Total Mitsubishi car	**22,400**	**87**	**73**
Endeavor	3,600	123	76
Montero (I)	–	130	156
Outlander (I)	5,800	129	110
Raider	1,400	133	263
Mitsubishi trk. (D)	**5,000**	**126**	**91**
Mitsubishi trk. (I)	**5,800**	**129**	**110**
Total Mitsubishi trk.	**10,800**	**127**	**101**
MITSUBISHI	**33,200**	**97**	**80**
Infiniti car (I)	**16,800**	**62**	**50**
Infiniti trk. (D)	**5,000**	**175**	**102**
Infiniti trk. (I)	**7,400**	**110**	**88**
Total Infiniti trk. (D/I)††	**12,400**	**129**	**92**
Total Infiniti (D/I)†	**29,200**	**80**	**61**
350Z (I)	7,300	157	154
Altima	62,100	71	48
Maxima	9,400	102	49
Sentra	20,100	59	60
Versa	13,500	51	53
Nissan Div. car (D)	**105,200**	**67**	**51**
Nissan Div. car (I)	**7,300**	**157**	**154**
Total Nissan Div. car	**112,500**	**70**	**54**
Armada	8,400	203	90
Frontier	18,600	137	98
Murano (I)	16,700	76	48
Pathfinder	13,800	148	82
Quest	6,800	120	77
Rogue (I)	18,300	82	71
Titan	21,500	232	134
Xterra	14,600	198	111
Nissan Div. trk. (D)	**83,700**	**170**	**101**
Nissan Div. trk. (I)	**35,000**	**79**	**58**
Total Nissan Div. trk.	**118,700**	**127**	**81**
Total Nissan Div.	**231,200**	**91**	**64**
Nissan N.A. car (D)	**105,200**	**67**	**51**
Nissan N.A. car (I)	**24,100**	**76**	**62**
Nissan N.A. car	**129,300**	**69**	**53**
Nissan N.A. trk. (D)	**88,700**	**170**	**101**
Nissan N.A. trk. (I)	**42,400**	**83**	**62**
Nissan N.A. trk.	**131,100**	**127**	**82**
NISSAN NORTH AMERICA	**260,400**	**89**	**64**
Porsche car (I)	**3,700**	**59**	**79**
Porsche trk. (I)	**1,400**	**29**	**26**
PORSCHE†	**5,100**	**46**	**54**
Subaru car (D)**	**13,000**	**56**	**60**
Subaru car (I)	**19,700**	**55**	**57**
Subaru car (D/I)	**32,700**	**55**	**58**
Subaru truck (D)**	**5,400**	**100**	**97**
SUBARU†	**38,100**	**59**	**61**
Suzuki car (I)	**14,900**	**69**	**72**
Suzuki trk. (D/I)	**9,400**	**60**	**50**
SUZUKI†	**24,300**	**65**	**60**
Lexus car (I)	**27,000**	**51**	**48**
Lexus trk. (D/I)	**15,500**	**42**	**37**
Total Lexus (D/I)	**42,500**	**47**	**43**
Toyota/Scion car (D/I)	**191,000**	**41**	**43**
Toyota trk. (D/I)	**205,700**	**73**	**62**
Total Toyota/Scion (D/I)	**396,600**	**53**	**51**
TOYOTA MOTOR SALES†	**439,100**	**52**	**50**
Audi car (I)	**28,100**	**112**	**109**
Audi trk. (I)	**2,700**	**58**	**45**
Total Audi (I)*	**30,800**	**104**	**98**
VW div. car (D/I)	**66,900**	**93**	**93**
VW div. trk. (I)	**3,900**	**139**	**123**
Total VW division (D/I)	**70,700**	**95**	**94**
VW GROUP OF AMERICA	**101,500**	**96**	**94**
Total car	**1,403,800**	**54**	**53**
Total truck	**1,942,900**	**89**	**76**
TOTAL	**3,346,700**	**70**	**64**

†Dealer stock only
*Estimate
††Total truck stock figure is actual, but domestic and import truck breakdown is estimated
**Total stock figure is actual, but domestic car and truck breakout is estimated

Source: Automotive News Data Center and company sources

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding; (D) = produced in North America; (I) = imported to U.S.

Days supply: Number of days needed to sell all vehicles in inventory, based on the previous month's daily selling rate

Inventory: Unit count of vehicles on hand at dealerships, factory lots, ports of entry and in transit on a specific date

U.S. sales per franchise, April

Make	Car Apr. 2008	Truck Apr. 2008	Total Apr. 2008	Total Mar. 2008
Toyota/Scion	99	60	**159**	158
Honda Div.	74	46	**120**	123
Lexus	62	43	**105**	112
BMW div.	62	17	**79**	68
Nissan Div.	39	23	**62**	87
Mercedes-Benz	44	16	**60**	61
Mini	57	–	**57**	51
Infiniti	39	14	**53**	76
Hyundai div.	37	14	**51**	56
Acura	28	21	**49**	49
Kia	27	20	**47**	39
Ford div.	16	29	**45**	51
Chevrolet	19	20	**39**	41
Saturn	17	22	**39**	42
Mazda	23	12	**35**	49
VW div.	32	1	**33**	33
Dodge	10	20	**30**	31
Audi	24	4	**28**	29
Subaru	26	2	**28**	28
Volvo	15	5	**20**	26
Suzuki	11	8	**19**	21
Mitsubishi	13	4	**17**	22
Land Rover	–	15	**15**	17
Hummer	–	14	**14**	20
Porsche	8	6	**14**	12
GMC	–	13	**13**	17
Jeep	–	12	**12**	15
Chrysler Div.	6	5	**11**	14
Cadillac	7	3	**10**	12
Jaguar	10	–	**10**	10
Pontiac	8	1	**9**	9
Lincoln	4	4	**8**	8
Mercury	5	2	**7**	8
Saab	6	1	**7**	12
Maserati	6	–	**6**	6
Aston Martin	5	–	**5**	5
Buick	3	2	**5**	5
Ferrari	5	–	**5**	5
Isuzu	–	3	**3**	3
Rolls-Royce	1	–	**1**	1

Source: Automotive News Data Center

Stockpiles by brand

Days supply on May 1, 2008

Smallest

1. Mini†	18
2. Kia*	35
3. BMW division†	35
4. Porsche†	46
5. Lexus†	47

Largest

1. Saab†	141
2. GMC†	114
3. Isuzu†	105
4. Audi*	104
5. Hummer†	99

†Dealer stock only *Estimate
Source: Automotive News Data Center

Stockpiles by maker

Days supply on May 1, 2008

Smallest

1. BMW†	32
2. Hyundai-Kia	45
3. Porsche†	46
4. Toyota Motor Sales†	52
5. Daimler AG†	59

Largest

1. Isuzu†	105
2. Mitsubishi	97
3. VW Group of America	96
4. Nissan North America	89
5. General Motors†	82

†Dealer stock only
Source: Automotive News Data Center

Perspective

Total industry days supply on May 1

2004	79
2005	71
2006	68
2007	63
2008	**70**

Source: Automotive News Data Center

Domestics vs. imports

Days supply on May 1, 2008

	As of May 1	As of Apr. 1
Detroit 3	79	73
European	62	61
Japanese	63	57
Korean	45	45
Total industry	**70**	**64**

Source: Automotive News Data Center

TOP 150

Many U.S. suppliers lost sales in a decade

continued from Page 1

quisition work. But if the experience of American suppliers is any guide, it won't be easy.

Decade of change

A decade ago, U.S. suppliers held eight of the top 10 slots. But failed deals and financial engineering cost them position. And the Detroit 3's plunging production volumes slammed U.S.-based suppliers that rely heavily on those customers.

Another factor: Many U.S.-based suppliers lost North American sales as they followed automaker customers on overseas expansions.

Delphi, for instance, is in Chapter 11 reorganization in the United States but not overseas. So it has sold off North American operations, while making markets such as China the centerpiece of its global growth strategy.

Automotive News bases its annual ranking on sales of original-equipment parts to automakers and other suppliers in North America.

The bulk of the data come directly from the companies, but in some cases the sales numbers are estimated.

Pulling back

Some of the companies that suffered the greatest sales drops last year can't blame falling Detroit 3 sales. For some, the cause was a retreat from grandiose growth plans.

Take Lear Corp. It slipped a notch to the No. 4 position after its sales declined 26.6 percent to $7.19 billion. Last year Lear dumped its money-losing North American interior trim businesses.

ArvinMeritor Inc.'s sales fell 34.6 percent. That dropped the sunroof and chassis supplier from No. 10 to No. 15. Last week the company said it will spin off its light-vehicle operations into a new company, eight years after the merger of Arvin Industries Inc. and Meritor Inc.

Or consider the Detroit 3's former parts-making arms. After being spun off from General Motors, Delphi held the No. 1 spot in both North America and the world for more than a decade. But in 2006 Robert Bosch GmbH passed it in global sales. And in 2007 it fell to No. 2 in sales to customers in North America.

Asset sales, driven by the Chapter 11 filing of its North American operations, contributed to a 14.8 percent drop in its North American revenues.

Former Ford Motor Co. division Visteon Corp. long ranked No. 2. Last year it slipped to No. 12.

3 big gainers

In dollar terms, the three largest sales gains this year were by foreign suppliers: Continental AG, Robert Bosch LLC, and Denso International America Inc.

Denso's rise in North America may be the most remarkable. Its growth was generated internally. The one-time spinoff from Toyota Motor Corp. benefited from the Japanese auto giant's rising North American volumes.

While Magna overtook Delphi, its sales rose just 5.4 percent to $13.59 billion. Magna is focused on the Russian automotive market. Its recent purchases include Steyr Daimler Puch, Donnelly, CTS Fahrzeug-Dachsysteme GmbH and New Venture Gear Inc.

Since 2006, Robert Bosch parent Robert Bosch GmbH acquired or announced the buyout of a half dozen companies, most of them in Europe.

Acquisitions often involve two steps forward and one back. Take Continental. After boosting sales with the Siemens VDO acquisition, it now is trimming because of overlap. Kozyra says his North American operations could shed "a few hundred" jobs.

"We're slimming down where we have duplication in efforts," he said. But growth plans means not everyone in duplicated operations will be let go.

"We have a strategy of redeploying technical people to other parts of the company that are growing, such as hybrid drive, which has a need for more engineers." AN



autonews.com

Go to autonews.com/2007top150 for a more detailed list of the top 150 suppliers.

Top OEM parts suppliers to North America – Ranked on 2007 OEM sales to North America

Dollars in millions

2007 rank	Company	2007 N. America OEM parts sales	2006 N. America OEM parts sales	2007 worldwide OEM parts sales	2006 worldwide OEM parts sales	2006 rank
1	Magna International Inc.	$13,592	$12,897	$25,645	$23,883	2
2	Delphi Corp.	11,810	13,870	22,283	22,737	1
3	Johnson Controls Inc.	7,585 f	8,580 f	18,500 f	19,500 f	4
4	Lear Corp.	7,198	9,811	15,995	17,839	3
5	Robert Bosch LLC	6,460 fe	4,453 fe	34,000 f	29,687 f	7
6	Denso International America Inc.	5,805 fe	4,558 fe	37,510 fe	28,530 fe	6
7	Continental AG	5,250 fe	2,409 f	25,000 fe	11,470 f	18
8	Dana Corp.	4,797 f	5,187	8,721 f	8,504	5
9	TRW Automotive Inc.	4,067 f	4,135 f	13,555 f	12,162 f	8
10	ThyssenKrupp USA Inc.	3,876 fe	3,879 fe	11,075 fe	10,207 fe	11
11	Aisin World Corp. of America	3,755 fe	3,486 fe	21,705 fe	19,367 fe	13
12	Visteon Corp.	3,431	4,068 e	10,721	10,706 e	9
13	International Automotive Components	3,290	2,489	5,307	4,306	–
14	American Axle & Manufacturing	3,086 e	3,032	3,248 e	3,192 f	16
15	ArvinMeritor Inc.	3,008	4,598	6,400	9,195	10
16	Yazaki North America Inc.	2,793 e	3,704 e	11,308 e	10,583 e	14
17	Faurecia	2,610	1,950	17,400	15,000	21
18	Navistar International Engine Group	2,545 e	2,718 e	3,305	3,397 e	17
19	Flex-N-Gate Corp.	2,394 fe	1,887 fe	2,720 f	2,120 f	58
20	Tenneco Inc.	2,337 f	1,407 f	5,080 f	3,608 f	35
21	Hitachi Automotive Products Inc.	2,280 fe	1,589	7,600 fe	5,478	30
22	Sumitomo Electric Industries Ltd.	2,151 e	1,932	10,241 e	9,200	24
23	Cummins Inc.	2,104	2,457	3,628	3,780	12
24	BorgWarner Inc.	1,972	1,742	5,329	4,585	25
25	TK Holdings Inc.	1,964 f	1,904 f	4,364 f	4,051 f	22
26	Toyota Boshoku Corp.	1,944 f	1,899 fe	9,172 f	9,043 fe	23
27	GKN Driveline	1,925 e	1,785 e	5,500 f	5,100 f	31
28	Martinrea International Inc.	1,866	703	1,964	740	–
29	Valeo Inc.	1,861 e	1,651 e	13,290 e	12,700 e	28
30	CalsonicKansei North America Inc.	1,792 fe	1,480	7,141 fe	6,270	33
31	Benteler Automotive Corp.	1,773	1,234	6,568	5,610	42
32	Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.	1,755 e	1,763 e	3,900 e	3,750 e	26
33	DuPont Automotive	1,743 fe	2,012	4,980 fe	5,029	20
34	PPG Industries Inc.	1,700 e	1,628 e	3,090 e	2,759 e	29
35	ZF Group NAO	1,661 e	1,792 e	15,100 e	12,800 e	39
36	Nemak North America	1,651 f	1,055 f	2,897 f	1,336 f	52
37	Autoliv North America	1,632	1,671 f	6,800	6,188 f	27
38	TS Tech North America Inc.	1,563 f	1,267 f	3,634 f	2,981 f	41
39	Cooper-Standard Automotive	1,531 f	1,426 e	2,510 f	2,160	34
40	Plastech Engineered Products Inc.	1,400	1,070 e	1,400 e	1,070 e	51
41	Linamar Corp.	1,379 e	1,400	1,532 e	1,522	37
42	Alcoa Inc.	1,375 fe	1,350 fe	2,500 fe	2,700 fe	40
43	Metaldyne Corp.	1,341	1,406 e	1,863 e	1,850 e	36
44	Federal-Mogul Corp.	1,313 f	1,358 f	4,236 f	3,773 f	43
45	Panasonic Automotive Systems	1,311	1,080 e	4,715	3,600 e	49
46	Mahle Inc.	1,303 fe	896 e	6,967 fe	4,768 e	57
47	Koyo Corp. of USA	1,303	925	8,685 f	6,166	54
48	Toyoda Gosei North America Corp.	1,160	1,099 e	5,526	4,780 e	46
49	Bridgestone Americas Holding Inc.	1,125 e	1,092 e	4,892 e	4,200 e	47
50	Eaton Corp.	1,120	1,400	1,600	2,000	38
51	Trim Masters Inc.	1,115 e	1,118	1,115 e	1,118	45
52	Michelin North America Inc.	1,109 e	1,215 e	4,620 e	4,500 e	44
53	Tower Automotive Inc.	1,068 e	1,485 e	2,542 e	2,856 e	32
54	Tyco Electronics	977 e	884 e	2,640 e	2,390 e	–
55	Timken Co.	960 e	1,072	1,500 e	1,600	50
56	Superior Industries International Inc.	957 f	790 f	957 f	790 f	63
57	Keihin Indiana Precision Technology Inc.	944 f	907 f	2,800 f	2,562 f	56
58	Behr America Inc.	889	880	4,233	3,667	55
59	Intermet	825 e	823 e	1,019 e	980 e	59
60	TRAM Inc.	791	721	3,766	3,434	67
61	TI Automotive Ltd.	790 fe	795 e	2,634 fe	2,409 e	62
62	Dura Automotive Systems Inc.	758 f	1,087 f	1,895 f	2,090 f	48
63	NTN USA Corp.	750 e	803	3,000 e	2,675	60
64	ABC Group	744	698	800	750	68
65	American Showa Inc.	742 f	690 e	2,577 f	2,178 e	69
66	Mitsubishi Electric Automotive	714 fe	710 f	4,437 fe	3,856 f	65
67	Ernie Green Industries Inc.	704 fe	724 f	711 fe	731 f	66
68	Meridian Automotive Systems	700 fe	800 e	700 fe	800 e	61
69	F & P America Mfg. Inc.	686 fe	661 f	1,372 fe	1,259 f	73
70	Honeywell Transportation Systems	672	960	3,200	3,200	53
71	Hella Corporate Center USA Inc.	652	637	5,134	4,753	96
72	Alpine Electronics of America Inc.	648	623	1,751	1,640	76
73	BASF Corp.	629 e	599 e	2,993 e	2,721 e	79
74	Freudenberg-NOK	623 fe	656 fe	2,967 fe	2,735 fe	72
75	Kautex Textron North America	613	580	1,658	1,487	81
76	NSK Americas	$600 fe	$588 e	$4,003 fe	$3,675 e	74
77	Modine Corp.	595 f	816 f	1,700 f	1,600 f	–
78	Inergy Automotive Systems	594	532	1,800	1,900	83
79	Shiloh Industries Inc.	590	620	590	620	77
80	Dow Automotive	590	595 f	1,735	1,383 f	80
81	Grede Foundries Inc.	573	626	585	645	75
82	TAG Holdings LLC	566	392	572	400	–
83	Stanley Electric U.S. Co. Inc.	562 f	555 f	2,868 f	2,641 f	71
84	Bayer MaterialScience LLC	561 fe	618	2,440 fe	2,376	78
85	Rieter Automotive North America Inc.	551	522	1,969	1,739	87
86	Stoneridge Inc.	523	538	727	708	82
87	Foamex Automotive Products Group	511	426	516	430	99
88	Brose North America Inc.	510	441	3,400	2,939	93
89	GECOM Corp./Ohi Automotive America	501 fe	529 fe	1,192 fe	1,175 fe	84
90	Saint-Gobain Sekurit U.S.A. Inc.	492 e	426 e	3,281 e	2,665 e	98
91	Grupo Antolin North America Inc.	489	352	2,982	2,425	114
92	Woodbridge Group	488 e	524 e	729 e	749 e	86
93	Henniges Automotive *(previously GDX Automotive)*	476 e	317 e	865 e	755 e	119
94	Pioneer Automotive Technologies Inc.	476 fe	471 fe	1,160 fe	1,070 fe	91
95	Plastic Omnium	475 f	385 f	2,260 f	1,748 f	146
96	Mando America Corp.	469 f	235 f	2,367 f	1,958 f	140
97	Multimatic Inc.	466 f	454 f	541 f	525 f	92
98	Philips Automotive Lighting N.A.	466 fe	325 fe	2,590 fe	2,324 f	118
99	Osram Sylvania Automotive Lighting	462 fe	398 fe	1,127 fe	926 fe	103
100	Akebono Brake Corp.	458 e	452 f	1,090 e	1,005 f	95
101	3M Automotive Market Center	446 e	412 e	1,215 e	1,114 e	101
102	Mark IV Automotive	445 e	433 e	873 e	801 e	97
103	Tomkins PLC	443 fe	661 e	1,475 fe	1,272 e	70
104	Webasto Roof Systems Inc.	440 f	362	2,093 f	1,647	109
105	Guardian Automotive Corp.	434 e	335 e	700 e	516 e	117
106	Hutchinson SA	433 e	456 e	2,062 e	1,900 e	105
107	Hayes Lemmerz International Inc.	430 f	443 f	2,047 f	1,702 f	64
108	Eberspaecher North America Inc.	426	308	2,660	2,200	122
109	Siegel-Robert Automotive	426 f	363 f	426 f	363 f	108
110	North American Lighting	422 f	440 f	3,833 f	3,384 f	90
111	Key Safety Systems Inc.	410 e	441	1,000 e	1,025	94
112	SKD Automotive Group	399 f	355	401 f	359	113
113	American Mitsuba Corp.	396 fe	492 fe	1,980 fe	1,757 fe	89
114	Citation Corp.	394 f	527 f	402 f	543 f	85
115	PBR International USA Ltd.	393 e	379 e	604 e	557 e	106
116	AZ Automotive Corp.	392 e	413	392	413	100
117	J.L. French Automotive Castings Inc.	388	360	485	450	110
118	Freescale Semiconductor Inc.	382	343	1,908	1,716	–
119	Remy Inc.	381	264	568	394	130
120	SKF Automotive Division	374 e	363 e	1,780 e	1,652 e	107
121	Kolbenschmidt Pierburg	371 e	385 e	3,090 e	2,750 e	104
122	Cadence Innovation LLC	366 e	358	763 e	650	112
123	NHK International Corp.	363 f	359	3,626 f	3,261	111
124	CRH North America Inc.	360 e	106	1,200 e	481	–
125	Omron Automotive Electronics Inc.	360 fe	315 fe	940 fe	841 fe	120
126	Total Interior Systems America	351 fe	372 f	351 fe	372 f	–
127	Novelis Corp.	350 e	238 fe	1,000 e	700 fe	138
128	Neaton Auto Products Manufacturing Inc.	330	325	330	325	115
129	Wescast Industries Inc.	314	254	393	318	–
130	Ogihara America Corp.	314 e	343 e	641 e	659 e	116
131	A.G.S. Automotive Systems	300	255 e	300	255 e	133
132	Johnson Electric Automotive Motors	289 f	263 f	1,157 f	1,051 f	148
133	Sanden International (USA) Inc.	287 fe	249 fe	1,592 fe	1,381 fe	135
134	Shape Corp.	286	248 e	304	264 e	136
135	DAA DraexImaier Automotive of America	285	163	2,372	2,041	–
136	Gentex Corp.	284 f	252 f	630 f	548 f	134
137	Nissin Brake Ohio Inc.	283 f	267 f	1,043 f	936 f	128
138	Clarion Corp. of America	272 fe	265 fe	1,600 fe	1,100 fe	129
139	KEIPER LLC	246 fe	274 f	1,117 fe	1,193 f	–
140	UGN Inc.	245	235	245	235	139
141	Pilkington North America Inc.	241 e	268 e	1,664 e	1,534 e	126
142	Trelleborg Automotive	238 e	288	883 e	800	123
143	Karmann USA Inc.	236 e	311 e	3,373 e	3,109 e	121
144	Illinois Tool Works Inc.	236 e	404 e	813 e	708 e	102
145	Inalfa Roof Systems Inc.	233 f	221	543 f	526	144
146	Lacks Enterprises	233 e	256 e	291 f	324 f	132
147	AGC Automotive Americas	233 fe	241 e	2,326 fe	2,192 e	137
148	Hyundai Mobis	231 f	188 e	6,074 f	5,686 e	–
149	Magneti Marelli Holding (USA)	230 e	278 e	4,995 e	4,970 e	125
150	Edscha North America	226 e	258 e	1,329 e	1,290 e	131

e = estimate f = fiscal fe = fiscal estimate

Source: Automotive News Data Center

Supplier deals are smaller, fewer

Deal making by suppliers peaked in 1999 with 41 deals, according to Merrill Lynch. In 2007, 14 deals were done.

Many of today's deals are smaller. But they add up. And, looking back over the past 10 years or so, it often was the company that did several small deals, rather than one blockbuster, that made them work.

Flex-N-Gate Corp., a bumper and fascia supplier, is an active buyer. The Urbana, Ill., company's sales jumped 26.9 percent to $2.39 billion in 2007. Flex-N-Gate jumped from No. 58 to No. 19 last year.

Billionaire investor Wilbur Ross bought Lear's European and U.S. interior-trim business, the North American assets of the former Collins & Aikman Corp. and a number of smaller targets. His International Automotive Components Group now ranks No. 13 at $3.29 billion in sales.

— Robert Sherefkin

Kings of carbon fiber

A look at the top 3 carbon fiber manufacturers and their plans for autos

1. **Toray Industries Inc.** Building $24.3 million automotive center in Nagoya to develop carbon fiber composites for use in cars.
2. **Teijin Ltd.** Aiming to supply carbon resin composites to auto parts makers as early as 2010 and to develop a faster molding process.
3. **Mitsubishi Rayon Co.** Reportedly installing prototype equipment to make carbon fiber brake components and propeller shafts.

CARBON

Japan firms push alternative to steel

continued from Page 3

makers of auto parts as early as 2010, through its subsidiary Toho Tenax.

Automotive sales account for just 3 percent of Teijin's carbon fiber business today, but that is seen rising to 7 percent by 2010, says Toho Tenax spokesman Kaoru Fujii.

Teijin aims to first make engine undercovers for high-range sports cars and then move toward mass market models when higher volumes bring down the price.

The reason carbon fiber remains pricey is twofold. First, it requires enormous amounts of energy to heat and treat fibers. Second, it takes hours to mold carbon fiber components.

Teijin wants to tackle the second problem by developing a 10-minute molding process, Fujii says. But that's still an eternity compared with one-second sheet metal stamping.

Cost control

Carbon fiber makers are counting on growing global demand to push up production and bring down prices. Toray forecasts annual output of all carbon fiber to climb to 53,000 tons in 2010, from about 35,000 tons last year.

And several trends are converging to spur demand.

New fuel economy regulations and record gasoline prices are forcing carmakers to slash vehicle weight. Meanwhile, soaring steel prices are eroding that metal's cost advantage.

The average price of cold rolled sheet steel in Japan shot up 27.8 percent between November and March to ¥101,000 ($959) a ton. Hot rolled sheet steel has climbed 22.9 percent to $1,050 per ton.

And the trend is expected to continue. Japanese steel makers already are seeking price increases of up to 40 percent this year in negotiations with automakers and other big customers, local media report.

Such outside factors will be key in clearing the road for carbon fiber. But Japanese carmakers are clearly banking on carbon fiber producers to make the needed breakthroughs.

Even Toyota, known for its penny-pinching, has plans on the drawing board.

At last October's Tokyo auto show, the company unveiled its 1/X concept car, which boasts a body frame made from carbon fiber reinforced plastic. Not only does it offer the same interior space as the popular Prius hybrid car, it weighs only one-third as much. AN

GM's truck inventories up despite strike

David Barkholz
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Pickup and SUV inventories rose at General Motors last month despite massive production disruptions caused by the UAW strike at American Axle & Manufacturing Holdings Inc.

Sales of light trucks were so slow in April that inventories, measured in days supply, increased from the previous month on the Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra pickups and the Chevrolet Tahoe and GMC Yukon SUVs. Dealers now hold more than 120 days of supply of each of those vehicles.

The strike cut GM's light-truck production to just 99,611 units in April, from 203,512 in April 2007. But the walkout has had minimal effect on truck availability, said auto analyst Erich Merkle, a forecaster at IRN Inc. in Grand Rapids, Mich.

"American Axle's Mexican plant can pretty much supply all the axles that GM needs for the rest of the year," he said.

Since the strike began Feb. 26, American Axle has nearly doubled the capacity of its plant in Guanajuato, Mexico. That plant is now capable of producing about 6,000 axles a day.

In a sign of how little it has been hurt by the strike, GM recently said it would cut light-truck production schedule by 138,000 units in the remainder of 2008 after the automaker comes back from a summer shutdown July 14.

Inventory table ➤ 34

In unit terms, GM's light-truck inventory dipped slightly in April to 569,293 vehicles at the end of the month, from 590,100 vehicles at the end of March. That's well below the 635,625 vehicles at the end of April 2007.

But this year's days-supply figure rose to 108 days, from 98 days at the end of March, because the pace of sales has slowed. AN

PARTNERS

Dell needed someone with auto experience

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erate more than $500 million in annual revenue. Sandler's investment firm represents dealers in buying and selling dealerships.

Dell and Rachor "are going to do large deals to get a critical mass established," Sandler said. "It is long-term capital not looking for a short-term exit. I would say in the next five years they will invest as much as half a billion dollars."

Sandler noted that Dell previously has sought to invest in auto retailing. In 2006, sources told *Automotive News* that Dell had expressed interest in buying the public retailer Asbury Automotive Group and taking it private.

'Missing piece'

"We worked on a number of very big deals with" MSD Capital, Sandler said. "They were never able to pull the trigger on the deals because they are smart enough to know what they don't know. They needed someone who had real hands-on experience" in auto retailing.

Sandler said Rachor, a 27-year industry veteran, supplies the "missing piece."

Rachor said he and his partners are not bothered by the industry's current slump. He said the new venture already has been "inundated" with inquiries from potential sellers.

"This cycle might create some opportunities," Rachor said. "In this environment, it is more difficult to operate your dealership. It could motivate some dealers to consider selling."

To attract and retain dealership talent, Rachor said his company will offer minority equity stakes to qualified general managers. He declined to provide details.

Last month, Rachor quit his job as CEO of Pep Boys, an automotive aftermarket retailer.

Before he joined Pep Boys in 2007, he had executive posts at Sonic Automotive for the previous decade. As president, Rachor expanded and restructured Sonic, shifting its mix of dealerships toward luxury and import brands.

Rachor said he's excited to be back in auto retailing.

He said his new venture "will capture the benefit of scale without sacrificing the entrepreneurial spirit that has always been the foundation" of dealership success. AN

calendar



Auto racing legend Carroll Shelby, seated, poses with a fan at last year's SEMA show in Las Vegas. This year's show is scheduled for Nov. 4-7.

AUTO SHOWS

May 15-18 — Budapest International Motor Show, Budapest Fair Center, Budapest, Hungary, 36 1 263 6884, www.automobil.hungexpo.hu

May 23-June 1 — Madrid International Auto Show, Feria de Madrid, Madrid, (34) 91-722-30-00, www.salondemadrid.com

July 1-7 — Syrian International Motor Show, New Damascus International Fairground, Damascus, Syria, 963-11-322-0732, www.syrmotorshow.com

July 12-20 — Indonesia International Motor Show, Jakarta Convention Center, Jakarta, Indonesia, 62 21 315 7178, www.indonesianmotorshow.com

July 23-Aug. 3 — British International Motor Show, Canary Wharf, London, 020 76540600, www.britishmotorshow.co.uk

Aug. 28-Sept. 1 — Moscow International Motor Show, Crocus Centre, Moscow, 7 495 935 7350, www.motorshows-ite.com

Oct. 2-5 — Orange County Auto Show, Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, Calif., 323-782-2216, www.motortrendautoshows.com

Oct. 2-5 — San Antonio Auto & Truck Show, Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, San Antonio, 210-732-9647, www.saautodealers.com

Oct. 4-19 — Paris International Motor Show (press days: Oct. 2 and 3), ParisExpo – Porte de Versailles, Paris, 33-1-56-88-2240, www.mondial-automobile.com

Oct. 10-12 — Northwood University International Auto Show, Northwood University, Midland, Mich., 989-837-4823, www.northwood.edu/mi/studentlife/autoshow

Oct. 16-19 — Long Island Auto Show, Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Uniondale, N.Y., 717-671-4300, www.autoexpo.com

Oct. 31-Nov. 2 — Central California Auto Show, Fresno Convention and Entertainment Center, Fresno, Calif., 323-782-2216, www.motortrendautoshows.com

Nov. 6-9 — Tampa Bay International Auto Show, Tampa Convention Center, Tampa, Fla., 323-782-2216, www.motortrendautoshows.com

Nov. 7-16 — South Florida International Auto Show, Miami Beach Convention Center, Miami Beach, Fla., 305-947-5950, www.sfliautoshow.com

Nov. 20-23 — Charlotte International Auto Show, Charlotte Convention Center, Charlotte, N.C., 704-364-1078, www.charlotteautoshow.com

GENERAL

May 14-16 — World Automotive Congress: Plastics-in-Motion, Corinthia Towers Hotel, Prague, Czech Republic, 734-737-0507, www.executive-conference.com

May 19-20 — Automotive News Europe Congress, Lingotto Fiere, Turin, Italy, 313-446-0420, www.autonews.com/anevents

May 28 — Automotive News Marketing Seminar, Westin Bonaventure Hotel and Suites, Los Angeles, 313-446-0420, www.autonews.com/anevents

May 31-June 3 — SME Annual Meeting: A Passion for Manufacturing, Society of Manufacturing Engineers, Marriott Renaissance, Detroit, 313-271-1500, www.sme.org

June 3-4 — Automotive CRM Summit, Ritz-Carlton, Marina del Ray, Calif., 415-553-4142, www.tlsummits.com

June 11-12 — Diesel Emissions Conference, Sheraton Brussels Hotel and Towers, Brussels, Belgium, +44 20 7503 1265, www.integer-research.com

June 19-20 — Clean Air & Energy Independence Conference, National Alternative Fuels Training Consortium, Crowne Plaza Resort, Asheville, N.C., 304-293-7882, www.naftc.wvu.edu

June 20-22 — Fixed Ops Training and Education Conference, Marriott Irvine, Irvine, Calif., 714-206-8485, www.fixedopsconference.com.

June 24-28 — NIADA Convention and Expo, National Independent Automobile Dealers Association, Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center, Grapevine, Texas, 817-640-3838, www.niada.com

June 25 — Auto Russia (conference), Astoria Hotel, St. Petersbrg, Russia, +44 (0) 20 7368 9465, www.wbr.co.uk/autorussia

July 22-24 — Plug-in 2008 Conference & Exposition: A Short Drive to Tomorrow, San Jose McEnery Convention Center, San Jose, Calif., 408-395-0059, www.plugin2008.com

July 25 — SEMA Internet Symposium, Specialty Equipment Market Association, Hyatt Regency Irvine, Irvine, Calif., 909-396-0289, www.sema.org

Aug. 11-15 — Management Briefing Seminars, Center for Automotive Research, Grand Traverse Resort & Spa, Traverse City, Mich., 734-929-0463, www.cargroup.org

Oct. 16-19 — Manufacturing in Mexico Summit, Offshore Group, Camino Real Hotel, Saltillo, Mexico, 520-889-0022, ext. 1251, www.offshoregroup.com

Oct. 20-22 — Convergence, Society of Automotive Engineers, Cobo Center, Detroit, 724-776-4841, www.sae.org

Nov. 4-7 — SEMA Show, Specialty Equipment Market Association, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, 909-396-0289, www.semashow.com

Nov. 20 — Automotive News Green Conference/Exhibition, Rock Financial Showplace, Novi, Mich., 313-446-0420, www.autonews.com/anevents

autonews.com
For a complete listing of events, see our Web site.

To see our online list of auto shows and other events or to add your event to the list, go to **www.autonews.com/calendar.**

E-mail calendar information, including Web site address, to: **autonews@crain.com**

Or send it to:
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No pickup for Hyundai, Kia

SEOUL — Rising oil prices have scuttled plans for mid-sized Hyundai and Kia pickups in the United States. **Hyundai Motor Co.** CEO Kim Dong-Jin said last week: "Because of high oil prices, the light-truck market is declining significantly, so now is not the right time to produce a pickup" at Kia's plant in West Point, Ga.

AUTO NEWS digest

Toyota raises some prices

LOS ANGELES — **Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A. Inc.** has raised prices on at least 11 Toyota and Lexus models for the 2008 model year. The average increase is 0.7 percent. The Prius hybrid rose 1.8 percent to $22,160, up $400. The biggest increase was on the FJ Cruiser SUV, up 2.1 percent to $23,730. Prices include shipping.

Ford touts 6-speed transmissions

DETROIT — **Ford Motor Co.** plans to equip nearly all its vehicles with more fuel-efficient six-speed transmissions by 2012. Ford said it will more than double the number of North American vehicles with the transmissions, which boost fuel economy 4 to 6 percent.

The automaker's newest six-speed, the 6F35, will replace the current four-speed in the 2009 Ford Escape and Mercury Mariner crossovers. According to a press release, Ford's Van Dyke transmission plant in suburban Detroit will double production of the 6F35 annually.

eBay Motors courts automakers

DETROIT — **eBay Motors** says it wants to build on an agreement with General Motors by adding other automakers' certified used-vehicle programs to its online listings. In February, eBay and GM signed a deal that will enable about 3,900 GM dealers to list certified used vehicles on eBay's Web site.

Rob Chesney, eBay Motors vice president, said eBay is talking with other automakers about similar deals but gave no details.

Autobytel posts $2 million loss

LOS ANGELES — Internet marketing services company **Autobytel Inc.** reported a first-quarter net loss of $2.0 million, compared with net income of $7.7 million in the first quarter of last year. Revenue fell slightly to $20.7 million, compared with $21.9 million in the same period last year.

Profits up at Superior Industries

LOS ANGELES — Aluminum wheel supplier **Superior Industries International Inc.** said it turned a slightly higher profit in the first quarter despite feeling a pinch from the American Axle strike. For the quarter ending March 31, Superior said it had net income of $3.18 million on revenue of $222.2 million, compared with net income of $2.0 million on revenue of $244.9 million during the same period a year ago.

stock watch

Manufacturers

	Closing price May 9	Closing price May 2	Weekly percent change	52-week high	52-week low
BMW-ADR	$57.65	$56.20	2.6%	$68.80	$48.60
Fiat S.p.A.-ADR	25.50	25.50	–	34.85	14.15
Ford	8.08	8.27	–2.3	9.70	4.95
General Motors	20.28	23.20	–12.6	43.20	17.47
Honda-ADR	31.09	33.10	–6.1	37.80	27.01
Hyundai-ADR	16.80	16.80	–	23.16	4.90
Nissan-ADR	18.23	18.28	–0.3	23.75	15.88
PSA-ADR	69.80	71.45	–2.3	92.50	66.15
Renault-ADR	108.75	105.90	2.7	165.75	98.10
Suzuki-ADR	25.50	25.50	–	33.25	23.60
Toyota-ADR	101.35	104.94	–3.4	128.33	91.21
Volkswagen-ADR	58.05	58.20	–0.3	60.60	27.85

Retail Groups

	Closing price May 9	Closing price May 2	Weekly percent change	52-week high	52-week low
Asbury Automotive Group	$16.03	$17.33	–7.5%	$27.71	$11.71
AutoNation	16.01	16.57	–3.4	22.86	11.72
Group 1 Automotive	27.41	28.11	–2.5	43.23	19.81
CarMax	20.53	21.31	–3.7	27.42	15.81
Lithia Motors	7.60	9.07	–16.2	27.58	7.59
Penske Auto Group	20.02	21.43	–6.6	22.92	13.57
Sonic Automotive	18.88	20.18	–6.4	31.88	15.82

Suppliers

Biggest weekly swings from among the Automotive News top 150 suppliers to North America whose stocks are traded in the United States

	Closing price May 9	Closing price May 2	Weekly percent change	52-week high	52-week low
Winners					
Hayes Lemmerz Int.	$3.98	$3.29	21.0%	$6.37	$2.75
Stoneridge Inc.	15.45	14.74	4.8	18.74	6.86
Superior Industries	21.58	20.72	4.2	24.52	16.06
ArvinMeritor	16.12	15.50	4.0	23.65	9.08
Visteon Corp.	4.45	4.31	3.3	9.00	3.02
Losers					
Cooper Tire & Rubber	$12.41	$13.52	–8.2%	$28.50	$11.91
Autoliv North America Inc.	58.80	61.00	–3.6	65.09	44.00
Eaton Corp.	85.62	88.69	–3.5	104.12	66.27
American Axle	21.53	22.19	–3.0	31.00	15.73
Johnson Controls	34.02	34.88	–2.5	44.46	29.47

Information obtained as of 4:00 p.m. on Friday, May 9, 2008. Because of a lag in the reporting of trades the closing prices disclosed above may differ slightly from the eventual closing prices.
ADR = American Depository Receipt Compiled by PricewaterhouseCoopers, Intraweek data provided by Comstock. Powered by Stockgroup

Toyota reports record profit but sees tough times ahead

Hans Greimel
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TOKYO — Toyota Motor Corp. racked up record results for the fiscal year that ended March 31, but the good news ends there.

The world's biggest and most profitable car company is warning that earnings in the current year will fall for the first time in nine years.

What's more, Toyota backed off its optimistic outlook for a 2008 sales increase in North America. A top executive now says his company's volume is likely to decline.

That would be a dramatic reversal from the year that ended March 31. Sales, operating profit and net income set records, President Katsuaki Watanabe said last week.

Revenues rose 9.8 percent to ¥26.29 trillion ($230.60 billion). Operating profit rose 1.4 percent to ¥2.27 trillion ($19.91 billion). And net income advanced 4.5 percent to ¥1.72 trillion ($15.07 billion). All those results were company records.

But Toyota finds itself buffeted by a triple whammy of outside forces: an unraveling U.S. market, surging raw material prices and a Japanese yen that is rising against the dollar.

"The business environment surrounding us has changed very rapidly to become tougher," Watanabe said here.

Toyota says operating profit will tumble 29.5 percent to ¥1.60 trillion ($16.00 billion) in the current fiscal year. That would be the first decline in operating profit in nine years.

Trouble ahead

After a record-setting fiscal year, Toyota predicts that profits will decline for the first time in 9 years.

	FY ENDED 3/2008	OUTLOOK FY ENDING 3/'09
Operating profit	$19.91 billion	$16.00 billion
Net income	$15.07 billion	$12.50 billion

Source: Toyota

Toyota missed its North America sales goal of 2.97 million units in the fiscal year just ended, selling 2.96 million. This year, it sees a 6.4 percent drop to 2.77 million.

For the 2008 calendar year, Toyota had been predicting a 1 percent sales increase to 2.64 million light vehicles in the United States, despite the deteriorating market.

But that, too, is under pressure, said Senior Managing Director Takeshi Suzuki.

"We are thinking it's going to decline a little," Suzuki said after the financial results were released. "We are now examining the sales plan and will announce the figures soon."

Toyota is struggling with record inventory levels in the United States, largely because it misjudged how bad the U.S. market downturn would be. Suzuki said the company had predicted total volume in the high 15 millions but was now working with the low 15 millions. AN

EXPORTS

Factories get tough, dealers play defense

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ers. Exporters hired straw purchasers, he says.

"Some customers said they wanted to register their car in California because their mother or sister lives there," Schumacher says. "They looked like nice people, but they were lying through their teeth."

Schumacher says he now requires out-of-state buyers to register their vehicles through his dealership.

Other dealers are protecting themselves from export penalties by demanding written agreements from buyers that they won't resell vehicles outside the United States. Dealers also are lobbying for state laws to limit the factories' ability to punish them.

Exporters typically buy vehicles from a U.S. dealer, then ship them to foreign clients or to brokers. Those foreign consumers often can import new vehicles from the United States more cheaply than they can buy them at home.

Most go to Canada

About two-thirds of last year's gray-market vehicles went to Canada, says Brian Osler, president of the North American Automobile Trade Association, an organization of dealers involved in importing and exporting.

Other hot markets are China, Russia, Saudi Arabia and South America. The greatest demand, say dealers and exporters, is for European-brand luxury vehicles.

Nearly all automakers forbid U.S. dealers to sell new vehicles for export, citing warranty concerns and their own sales plans. Automakers work with customs officials to track unauthorized exports, using vehicle identification numbers to determine which dealerships sold the vehicles.

Manufacturers' penalties include charge-backs against dealerships' retail and fleet incentives and holdback allowances. Last month, Mercedes raised the "administrative fee" it charges dealers for unauthorized exports by 20 percent, to $300 per vehicle.

Keep 'em here

Dealers are taking steps to protect themselves from factory penalties when they sell new vehicles that turn up on the global gray market. Dealers are

- Charging customers steep fees if they export vehicles
- Requiring vehicles to be titled, registered through dealership
- Investigating out-of-state buyers
- Warning on Web sites that exporters aren't welcome
- Lobbying for state laws to limit automakers' penalties

Dealers say other automakers are stiffening export restrictions.

Jack Fitzgerald owns 13 dealerships, most of them in the Washington, D.C. area, that sell 19 brands. Fitzgerald notes that Chrysler LLC now charges an export penalty of $3,000 a vehicle. Fitzgerald says his five dealerships that sell Chrysler brands have not had to pay penalties.

Mike Charapp, a lawyer in suburban Washington who represents dealers, says several clients are appealing factory charges and other penalties — some amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

"It's a big problem," he says. "With the dollar weak, there is a lot of money to be made by these brokers."

One exporter, who asked not to be named because he fears factory retribution, says he provides a legal service.

"A Mercedes-Benz in China sells for four times what it costs in the U.S.," he says. "We have people from Europe buying European cars in the U.S. Because of the value of the euro vs. the dollar, it is like getting 50 percent off."

But because of the factory restrictions, he says, he expects to export no more than seven or eight new vehicles this year, down from as many as 100 in his best years.

The exporter concedes that he sometimes resorts to "subterfuge" to buy vehicles from dealers because of factory prohibitions against exports.

"What if all of the BMW dealers in Chicago decided it was OK to export new vehicles?" he says. "The factory couldn't do anything about it."

The American Automotive Shippers Association Inc., a group of 37 exporters, is considering a trade-restraint lawsuit against automakers over export restrictions, says association President Max Ruefenacht, an exporter in Rockaway, N.J.

Self-protection

Dealers are taking steps to protect themselves against sales that could lead to export penalties. Joel Weinberger, an Audi dealer in suburban Chicago, just posted a notice on the dealership's Web site: "Persons interested in purchasing vehicles for export are kindly asked to refrain from contacting us."

Says Weinberger: "We turn them all away. We don't want to play that game."

Other dealers demand that customers pledge in writing not to export vehicles. A Chicago Mercedes dealership owned by megadealer Fletcher Jones requires buyers to sign an agreement to pay the dealership $10,000 for each vehicle they export.

Last year, a Nevada exporter sued Mercedes-Benz of Laguna Niguel in Southern California over a similar contract with a $7,500 charge per export. Aaron Jacoby, a lawyer for the dealership, says an out-of-court settlement favored his client.

Meanwhile, dealers in several states seek protection in franchise laws against factory export penalties.

New York, Florida and Virginia prohibit automakers from penalizing dealers who can show they did not know the new vehicles they sold would be exported. A measure before Florida's legislature would ban penalties if an exported vehicle is titled or registered in the United States.

Dealer Schumacher says the export problem will disappear on its own once the dollar strengthens. "When it does not make economic sense anymore," he says, "that will be the end of it." AN

Harry Stoffer contributed to this report

RIVALS

On mpg, crossovers run neck and neck

continued from Page 4

edge over the Flex; the Enclave, Acadia and Saturn Outlook siblings have been widely praised.

The Flex is the first vehicle on Ford Motor Co.'s D4 vehicle platform, created by re-engineering the automaker's D3 platform used for the Ford Taurus, Taurus X and Mercury Sable. The Flex's wheelbase is 5.0 inches longer than the Taurus X, resulting in loads of second-seat legroom.

Gee-whiz features: Flex buyers can order a compressor-operated refrigerator that holds seven 12-ounce cans or two 20-ounce bottles. It cools beverages to 41 degrees, making coolers with melting ice cubes and wet soda cans a thing of the past.

Looking for the lowest-priced gasoline? The Flex's optional navigation system incorporates Sirius' Travel Link, which is free for the first six months. Even local gasoline prices (and station addresses) are available.

The Traverse's optional navigation system relies on the XM team to hold your hand. The driver pushes the OnStar button and gives an address to the call center. The center then downloads directions into the Traverse's navigation system. This service is included in the one-year free subscription to OnStar.

Fuel economy: There is no clear high-mileage champ because the fuel-economy ratings for the two models are nearly identical.

Under the hood: Both crossovers offer six-speed automatics; the Traverse packs a bit more horsepower and torque.

Safety zone: Both vehicles have standard features such as head curtain airbags and stability control with rollover mitigation. The Traverse adds OnStar Generation 7: Even if airbags are not deployed, sensors determine whether a front crash, rear crash or rollover occurs and measure the force of the impact. Information is relayed to the call center.

Seats: The Traverse scores for maximum passenger space with a choice of seven- or eight-passenger seating. Flex buyers can pick seating for six or seven.

The Flex's third row accommodates two people, while the Traverse can handle three. But the Traverse's third-row hip room is just 7.2 inches wider than Flex's, meaning it's a tight fit for three.

Hauling stuff: Both vehicles offer a large, deep, wide storage space behind the raised third seat. Second and third-row seats fold flat. The Flex scores extra points for the front passenger seat, which folds flat. When lowered, Ford says there is 10 feet of cargo space from instrument panel to tailgate.

Prices, sales: The Flex reaches dealerships in June. The base Flex SE carries a $28,995 sticker including shipping.

The Traverse will be shipped to dealers in September. Pricing has not been announced, but the Traverse will be priced under the Saturn Outlook, currently the lowest-priced Lambda-based vehicle at $28,995, including shipping. AN

Customer Incentives

Incentives in this table are a summary of retail programs offered. Programs may vary by region and model.

BMW

Expires June 30.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2008 models		
5 series, 6 series, 7 series, M6, X5	–	2.9%
3 series, X3, Z4, Z4 M	–	3.9%

CHRYSLER LLC

Expires June 2. In lieu of rebates, cut-rate financing is available. A $2.99-per-gallon gasoline incentive is offered on qualifying 2008 and 2009 vehicles. See dealer for details.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2009 models		
Dodge Journey	$1,000	–
2008 models		
Chrysler Aspen, 300C	$3,000	0-5.9%
PT Cruiser (excl. convertible)	$1,500-$3,000	0-5.9%
Pacifica	$2,000-$2,500	0-5.9%
Sebring	$500-$2,500	0-5.9%
Town & Country	$2,500	0-7.9%
300 (excl. SRT8 and C)	$2,000	0-5.9%
PT Cruiser convertible	$1,000	0-5.9%
Dodge Ram 1500	$5,500	0-4.9%
Ram 2500/3500	$4,500	0-4.9%
Dakota, Durango	$2,500-$3,000	0-5.9%
Charger, Magnum	$2,000-$3,000	0-5.9%
Grand Caravan	$2,500	0-7.9%
Avenger, Caliber, Nitro	$750-$1,250	0-5.9%
Jeep Commander	$3,500	0-5.9%
Grand Cherokee, Liberty	$1,500-$3,500	0-5.9%
Compass, Patriot	$500	0-5.9%
Wrangler	–	0-9.9%

FORD MOTOR CO.

Expires June 2. In lieu of rebates, cut-rate financing is available.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2008 models		
Ford F-Super Duty	$3,500-$5,000	0-5.9%
Expedition, Expedition EL, Explorer Sport Trac	$2,500-$4,000	0-4.9%
F-150	$2,000-$3,500	0-6.9%
Explorer	$1,500-$3,000	0-6.9%
Econoline, Fusion, Ranger	$1,000-$2,500	0-6.9%
Edge, Escape, Taurus, Taurus X	$500-$2,500	0-6.9%
Focus	$0-$2,000	0.9-6.9%
Mustang	$0-$1,500	0-7.9%
Escape Hybrid	–	4.9-8.9%
Lincoln Town Car	$5,000	0.9-4.9%
Mark LT, Navigator	$1,500-$5,000	0-3.9%
MKZ	$2,000-$2,500	0-5.9%
MKX	$1,000-$2,000	0-4.9%
Mercury Grand Marquis	$5,500-$6,000	0-2.9%
Mountaineer	$2,200-$4,000	0-4.9%
Sable	$500-$3,000	0-6.9%
Mariner, Milan	$200-$1,700	0-7.9%
Mariner Hybrid	–	4.9-8.9%
2007 models		
Ford Edge	$2,000-$3,000	0-1.9%
Mustang	$0-$2,500	0-2.9%
Lincoln MKX	$2,000-$3,000	0-1.9%

GENERAL MOTORS

Expires June 2. In lieu of rebates, cut-rate financing is available.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2008 models		
Buick Lucerne	$1,500	2.9-6.9%
LaCrosse	$1,000	2.9-6.9%
Enclave	–	5.9-7.9%
Cadillac DTS	$3,000	2.9-7.9%
Escalade	$2,000	2.9-7.9%
CTS	–	1.9-4.9%
XLR, XLR-V	–	2.9-5.9%
STS, STS-V	–	2.9-7.9%
SRX	–	5.9-7.9%
Chevrolet TrailBlazer	$2,000	2.9-5.9%
Avalanche, Express cargo, Suburban, Silverado 1500, Tahoe	$1,500-$2,000	0-6.9%
Express	$1,500	2.9-6.9%
Silverado 2500HD, Silverado 3500HD	$1,500	1.9-6.9%
Impala	$1,500	2.9-6.9%
Equinox	$1,000	0.9-4.9%
Colorado	$0-$500	3.9-7.9%
HHR	$500-$1,000	2.9-7.9%
Cobalt	$500	2.9-7.9%
Aveo, Malibu	–	4.9-7.9%
Uplander	–	5.9-7.9%
GMC Envoy, Yukon, Yukon XL	$2,000	2.9-6.9%
Sierra 1500	$1,500-$2,000	0-6.9%
Savana cargo	$1,500-$2,000	2.9-6.9%
Savana	$1,500	2.9-6.9%
Sierra 2500HD, Sierra 3500HD	$1,500	1.9-6.9%
Acadia	$500	5.9-7.9%
Canyon	$0-$500	3.9-7.9%
Hummer H2, H3	$2,000	2.9-7.9%
Pontiac Grand Prix	$2,000	2.9-5.9%
G6	$1,500	2.9-6.9%
Vibe	$1,250	4.9-6.9%
Torrent	$1,000	0.9-4.9%
G5	$500	2.9-7.9%
G8	–	5.9-7.9%
Saab 9-3, 9-7X	–	5.9-7.9%
9-5	–	0-7.9%
Saturn Vue (excl. hybrid)	$1,500	2.9%
Aura (incl. Green Line)	$500-$1,000	4.9-7.9%
Outlook	$500	5.9-7.9%
2007 models		
Buick Rainier, Rendezvous	$3,000	0%
Lucerne	$2,500	0-6.9%
LaCrosse, Terraza	$2,000	0-7.9%
Cadillac XLR, XLR-V	$7,500	0-1.9%
DTS	$5,000	0%
Escalade, Escalade ESV, Escalade EXT	$4,500	0-1.9%
CTS, CTS-V, STS, STS-V	$1,000-$4,000	0%
SRX	$3,500	0-1.9%
Chevrolet Silverado 1500 Classic, Silverado 1500 SS Classic, Silverado 1500HD Classic, Silverado 2500HD Classic, Silverado 3500 Classic	$5,000	0%
Avalanche, Suburban, Tahoe	$3,750	0-6.9%
Silverado 2500HD, Silverado 3500HD	$2,500-$3,500	0-5.9%
Silverado 1500, TrailBlazer	$2,000-$3,000	0-4.9%
Equinox	$2,500	0-3.9%
HHR, Impala, Monte Carlo	$2,500	0-6.9%
Express, Express cargo, Uplander	$2,000	0-7.9%
Colorado	$500-$2,000	0-7.9%
Cobalt	$1,750	0-6.9%
Aveo, Malibu, Malibu Maxx	$1,250	0-6.9%
Corvette	–	0%
GMC Sierra 1500 Classic, Sierra 1500HD Classic, Sierra 2500HD Classic, Sierra 3500 Classic	$5,000	0%
Yukon, Yukon XL	$3,750	0-6.9%
Sierra 2500HD, Sierra 3500HD	$2,500-$3,500	0-5.9%
Envoy, Sierra 1500	$2,000-$3,000	0-4.9%
Savana, Savana cargo	$2,000-$2,500	4.9-7.9%
Canyon	$500-$2,000	0-7.9%
Acadia	$500	0-7.9%
Hummer H2	$6,500	0-2.9%
H3	$3,500	0-2.9%
Pontiac G6, Torrent	$2,500	0-6.9%
Grand Prix	$2,000	0-6.9%
G5, Vibe	$1,750	0-6.9%
Solstice	$1,000	0-1.9%
Saab 9-7X	$5,500	0-4.9%
9-3, 9-5	$4,000-$5,500	0-6.9%
Saturn Vue (incl. hybrid)	$2,750	0%
Ion (incl. Red Line)	$2,000	0%
Aura (incl. Green Line), Relay, Sky	$2,000	0-7.9%
Outlook	$1,500	5.9-7.9%

AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR CO.

Expires June 30.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2008 models		
Acura MDX, RDX	–	0.9-2.9%
Honda Accord, Element, Ridgeline, S2000	–	0.9-2.9%
Civic	–	1.9-2.9%

HYUNDAI

Expires June 2. In lieu of rebates, cut-rate financing is available.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2009 models		
Sonata	$1,000-$1,500	–
2008 models		
Sonata	$3,000	–
Azera, Elantra, Santa Fe	$1,500-$2,500	–
Entourage	$2,000	–
Tucson, Accent	$1,000-$1,500	–
Tiburon, Veracruz	$500-$1,500	–
2007 models		
Azera, Sonata	$3,000	–
Entourage, Santa Fe	$2,500	–
Elantra, Tucson	$1,500-$2,000	–
Veracruz	$1,500	0-4.9%
Tiburon, Accent	$1,000-$1,500	–

KIA

Expires June 2. In lieu of rebates, cut-rate financing is available.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2008 models		
Amanti, Sorento	$1,000-$3,250	–
Sedona	$500-$3,000	–
Optima	$3,000	0-1.9%
Sportage, Spectra	$0-$2,000	0-1.9%
Rio, Rondo	$500-$1,500	–
2007 models		
Sedona, Sorento	$1,500-$4,500	–
Amanti	$3,000-$4,000	0-2.7%
Rondo	$2,500-$4,000	–
Optima, Spectra, Sportage	$0-$3,500	0-1.9%
Rio	$1,000	–

LAND ROVER

Expires June 30.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2008 models		
LR2, LR3	–	0-5.9%

MAZDA

Expires June 2. In lieu of rebates, cut-rate financing is available.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2008 models		
RX-8	$3,000	1.9%
Mazda6	$2,250-$2,750	0%
Tribute	$2,250-$2,500	1.9-4.9%
B series	$2,000	–
CX-7, CX-9	–	1.9%
Mazda3, Mazda5	–	1.9-3.9%
MX-5 Miata, Tribute Hybrid	–	1.9-4.9%
2007 models		
RX-8	$3,750	–
Mazda6	$3,000	0%
B series	$3,000	–
CX-7, CX-9	–	0.9%
MazdaSpeed3	–	5.9%

MITSUBISHI

Expires June 2. In lieu of rebates, cut-rate financing is available.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2009 models		
Galant	$1,500	0-5.9%
Lancer		3.9-5.9%
2008 models		
Raider	$4,000	–
Endeavor	$4,000	3.9-5.9%
Galant	$3,000	0-2.9%
Eclipse	$1,500	0-2.9%
Eclipse Spyder	$1,500	3.9-5.9%
Lancer	$0-$1,000	1.9-4.9%
Outlander	–	3.9-5.9%
2007 models		
Raider	$4,500	–
Endeavor, Galant	$3,500-$4,000	1.9-4.9%
Eclipse, Eclipse Spyder	$2,500	1.9-4.9%
Outlander	$2,000	1.9-4.9%

NISSAN NORTH AMERICA

Expires June 30. In lieu of rebates, cut-rate financing is available.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2008 models		
Infiniti G35, G37	–	1.9-2.9%
FX35, M35, M45, QX56	–	2.9-3.9%
Nissan Armada, Titan	$4,000-$5,000	0.9-2.9%
Pathfinder, Quest	$2,250-$3,500	1.9-4.9%
Maxima, Xterra	$2,500	0.9-3.9%
Frontier, Sentra	$1,500-$2,500	0.9-2.9%
Altima (incl. Hybrid)	$1,250	1.9-3.9%
Versa	$1,000	1.9%
2007 models		
Nissan Murano	$2,000	1.9-4.9%

SUBARU

Expires June 2. In lieu of rebates, cut-rate financing is available.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2009 models		
Forester	–	4.5-4.9%
2008 models		
Forester	$500-$2,250	0-4.9%
Outback	$750-$1,500	0-4.9%
Legacy	$750-$1,250	0-4.9%
Tribeca	$1,000	0-4.9%
Impreza	–	0-4.9%

SUZUKI

Expires June 30. In lieu of rebates, cut-rate financing is available.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2008 models		
XL7	$0-$2,500	0%
Grand Vitara	$1,750-$2,250	0%
SX4	$750-$1,500	0%
Reno, Forenza	$500	0%
2007 models		
XL7	$4,000	0%
Grand Vitara	$3,250	0%
Aerio, SX4	$1,500-$2,000	0%
Forenza, Reno	$1,000	0%

TOYOTA MOTOR SALES

Expires June 2. In lieu of rebates, cut-rate financing is available.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2009 models		
Toyota Matrix, Corolla	$0-$750	0-2.9%
Camry (excl. Hybrid)	$0-$500	0-4.9%
2008 models		
Toyota Tundra	$0-$4,500	0%
4Runner, Sequoia, Tacoma	$0-$2,000	0-4.9%
Corolla	$0-$1,500	–
Camry (incl. Hybrid), Sienna	$0-$1,500	0-4.9%
Matrix	$0-$1,000	–
Camry Solara	$0-$1,000	2.9-4.9%
Yaris	$500	–
Highlander		0-4.9%
2007 models		
Toyota Tundra	$0-$3,500	0%
4Runner	$0-$2,500	0-3.9%
Sequoia	$0-$2,000	–
Tacoma, Highlander (excl. Hybrid) Sienna	$0-$2,000	0-3.9%
Camry, Corolla, Matrix, FJ Cruiser	$0-$1,000	–
Yaris	$0-$500	–

VW GROUP OF AMERICA

VW expires June 30. Audi expires July 2.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2008 models		
Audi A3, RS4, S4	–	2.9%
A4	–	0.9-2.9%
R8	–	5.34-5.84%
Volkswagen New Beetle convertible	–	0%
Touareg 2, GLI, GTI, Jetta, New Beetle sedan, Rabbit, Eos, R32	–	2.9-4.9%
Passat	–	2.9-5.9%

VOLVO

Expires June 30.

	Cash rebate	Finance rate
2008 models		
S80, XC90	–	0-2.9%
S60, V70, XC70	–	3.9%
C70, S40, V50	–	4.9%
C30	–	5.9%

Dealer Incentives

Incentives in this table are a summary of dealer programs offered. Programs may vary by region and model.

BMW

Expires June 30.

2008 models	
7 series, Z4 M	$2,500-$5,000

CHRYSLER LLC

Expires June 2.

2007 models	
Chrysler 300, Pacifica, Town & Country	$4,000-$6,250
Aspen, Sebring	$0-$5,000
PT Cruiser	$2,500-$4,000
Dodge Durango, Ram 1500, Ram 2500/3500	$6,000-$7,500
Grand Caravan, Dakota	$5,000
Caravan, Charger, Magnum, Nitro	$1,500-$4,500
Caliber	$1,000-$2,250
Jeep Commander	$6,500
Grand Cherokee	$2,000-$6,500
Compass, Liberty	$4,750-$5,000
Patriot	$2,750-$3,750
Wrangler	$0-$500

AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR CO.

Expires June 30.

2008 models	
Acura RL	$4,000
MDX	$2,000
RDX	$1,500
TSX	$1,000-$1,500
Honda Ridgeline	$4,500
Odyssey, Pilot	$2,000-$3,500
Element	$1,000-$1,500

LAND ROVER

Expires June 30.

2008 models	
LR2	$2,750
LR3	$6,000-$7,000

MAZDA

Expires June 2.

2007 models	
MX-5 Miata	$1,500
Mazda5, Mazda3	$1,000

MITSUBISHI

Expires June 2.

2008 models	
Raider	$1,500
2007 models	
Raider	$1,500

NISSAN NORTH AMERICA

Expires June 30.

2008 models	
Infiniti EX35, FX45	$2,000-$3,000
FX35	$1,500
Nissan Altima	$500
2007 models	
Infiniti M35, M45	$6,000-$7,000
Nissan 350Z	$1,000-$3,500

SUBARU

Expires June 2.

2008 models	
Tribeca	$1,000
Impreza	$0-$1,000

TOYOTA MOTOR SALES

Expires June 2.

2008 models	
Matrix, FJ Cruiser	$0-$1,000
2007 models	
FJ Cruiser	$0-$1,000

VOLVO

Expires June 30.

2008 models	
S80, XC90	$4,000-$4,250
S60, V70, XC70	$2,000-$2,500
C30, C70, S40, V50	$750-$1,500

Source: Automotive News and Edmunds.com

Scheduled plant overtime

Plant		5/12-5/17‡
Chrysler LLC		
Belvidere, Ill.	car/truck	x
Sterling Heights, Mich.	car	x
Toluca, Mexico	car/truck	x
St. Louis (South)	truck	x
Toledo (Ohio) Supplier Park	truck	x
Ford Motor Co.		5/12-5/17‡
Wayne, Mich.	car	x
Kansas City, Mo. (SUV)	truck	x
Michigan Truck (Wayne, Mich.)	truck	x
General Motors		5/12-5/17‡
Bowling Green, Ky.	car	x
Orion Township, Mich.	car	x
Nissan		5/12-5/17‡
Canton, Miss.	truck	x
Smryna, Tenn.	car/truck	x

Plant closings

Plant	Week(s) down	Units lost per week
AutoAlliance		
Flat Rock, Mich.	5/12	4,475
Chrysler LLC		
Newark, Del.	5/12	1,625
Ford Motor Co.		
Dearborn, Mich.	5/12	6,475
General Motors		
Oshawa (Ontario) Car (Line 1)†		
Nissan		
Canton, Miss.*	5/12-5/31	250
Smyrna, Tenn.*	5/12-5/31	1,175
Total units		**14,000**

‡Overtime worked during the week could be daily, Saturday or both.
†Down for changeover until 4th quarter of 2008 to install flex line and add Chevrolet Camaro *Down 1 day
Source: Automotive News Data Center and company sources

April output drops 7.8%

North America car and truck production dipped in April to 1,199,037 units, a drop of 101,044, or 7.8 percent, from April 2007. General Motors lost 113,492 units of production because of several strikes.

North America car output rose 4.1 percent for the month. North America truck production fell 16.0 percent.

U.S. production was down 12.2 percent. Canada output fell 7.9 percent, and Mexico production rose 18.9 percent.

— Debi Domby

North America car and truck production

Unless noted vehicles are cars and assembled in the United States.

	5/5-5/10/08†	April total	1/1-5/10/08†	1/1-5/12/07
AM GENERAL Hummer H2 (trk.)	**0**	**0**	**2,417**	***4,186***
Ford Mustang	2,877	9,493	40,339	*64,325*
Mazda Mazda6 sedan	1,592	4,775	27,765	*22,002*
Mazda Mazda6 hatchback	0	0	1,564	*3,258*
Mazda Mazda6 wagon	0	0	0	*477*
AUTOALLIANCE	**4,469**	**14,268**	**69,668**	***90,062***
Z4 Coupe	34	241	907	*2,791*
Z4 Roadster	204	1,145	5,675	*8,948*
X5 (trk.)	2,882	13,026	51,763	*40,492*
X6 (trk.)	921	3,902	8,967	*0*
Total U.S. car	**238**	**1,386**	**6,582**	***11,739***
Total U.S. truck	**3,803**	**16,928**	**60,730**	***40,492***
BMW MFG. CORP.‡	**4,041**	**18,314**	**67,312**	***52,231***
Chevrolet Equinox (trk.)	2,525	11,111	43,118	*35,310*
Pontiac Torrent (trk.)	850	3,742	16,033	*12,715*
Suzuki XL-7 (trk.)	280	1,241	7,315	*13,343*
CAMI	**3,655**	**16,094**	**66,466**	***61,368***
300 (Can.)	1,456	6,407	30,218	*40,511*
PT Cruiser (Mex.)	1,094	5,348	21,086	*39,492*
PT Cruiser convertible (Mex.)	0	0	0	*6,182*
Sebring	554	2,436	22,509	*34,031*
Sebring convertible	533	2,346	15,756	*6,806*
Aspen (trk.)	627	2,131	12,949	*11,564*
Pacifica (Can. trk.)	0	0	0	*47,557*
Town & Country (trk.)	243	1,070	6,497	*19,749*
Town & Country (Can. trk.)	4,194	18,452	63,849	*42,411*
Total Chrysler Division	**8,701**	**38,190**	**172,864**	***248,303***
Avenger	1,340	5,896	37,665	*47,588*
Caliber	1,869	8,225	50,101	*73,240*
Challenger (Can.)	159	42	301	*0*
Charger (Can.)	3,138	13,809	53,028	*42,216*
Magnum (Can.)	0	0	4,732	*9,388*
Viper	41	182	724	*0*
Dakota (trk.)	0	3,553	14,136	*23,810*
Durango (trk.)	1,006	3,422	14,023	*24,912*
Grand Caravan/Caravan (trk.)	2,011	8,849	26,906	*79,882*
Gr. Caravan/Caravan (Can. trk.)	2,778	12,224	42,484	*29,999*
Journey (Mex. trk.)	2,819	13,781	41,851	*0*
Nitro (trk.)	1,305	5,743	20,981	*47,093*
Ram (trk., 2008 model)	2,865	19,518	64,883	*77,939*
Ram (trk., 2009 model)	26	87	173	*0*
Ram (Mex. trk.)	0	12,735	45,218	*53,024*
Sprinter (trk.)†	355	2,006	7,690	*5,716*
Total Dodge	**19,712**	**110,072**	**424,896**	***514,807***
Commander (trk.)	499	2,194	10,376	*23,071*
Compass (trk.)	892	3,923	17,963	*29,208*
Grand Cherokee (trk.)	1,912	8,414	31,898	*44,974*
Liberty (trk.)	2,718	11,960	41,972	*37,491*
Patriot (trk.)	2,343	10,311	34,207	*25,089*
Wrangler (trk.)	924	4,065	19,735	*23,318*
Wrangler Unlimited 4-door (trk.)	1,692	7,443	36,176	*35,598*
Total Jeep	**10,980**	**48,310**	**192,327**	***218,749***
Total Chrysler group	**39,393**	**196,572**	**790,087**	***981,859***
Mitsubishi Raider	**0**	**1,184**	**3,137**	***2,345***
Volkswagen Routan (Can. trk.)	**0**	**0**	**23**	***0***
Total U.S. car	**4,337**	**19,085**	**126,755**	***161,665***
Total Canada car	**4,753**	**20,258**	**88,279**	***92,115***
Total Mexico car	**1,094**	**5,348**	**21,086**	***45,674***
Total U.S. truck	**19,418**	**95,873**	**363,702**	***511,759***
Total Canada truck	**6,972**	**30,676**	**106,356**	***119,967***
Total Mexico truck	**2,819**	**26,516**	**87,069**	***53,024***
CHRYSLER LLC*	**39,393**	**197,756**	**793,247**	***984,204***
*DAIMLERCHRYSLER AG**	*0*	*0*	*0*	*1,044,626*
Crown Victoria (Can.)	1,570	6,908	26,974	*31,510*
Fiesta Ikon (Mex.)	0	0	0	*3,087*
Five Hundred	0	0	0	*13,349*
Focus	4,955	21,801	84,351	*67,066*
Fusion (Mex.)	3,475	14,769	70,678	*58,277*
New Taurus	2,095	6,284	23,585	*267*
E series, Econoline (trk.)	3,784	16,649	64,628	*75,091*
Edge (Can. trk.)	4,311	18,969	72,520	*68,144*
Escape (trk.)	5,073	22,322	86,520	*72,342*
Expedition (trk.)	1,820	8,008	28,433	*50,890*
Explorer (trk.)	2,874	6,897	47,679	*68,127*
F series (trk.)	4,455	47,344	186,388	*186,206*
F-series Heritage (Mex. trk.)	539	2,968	11,431	*14,145*
F-series Super Duty (trk.)	6,468	24,579	106,314	*126,543*
F-series chassis (trk.)	83	367	2,867	*3,755*
Flex (Can. trk.)	59	0	59	*0*
Freestyle (trk.)	0	0	0	*11,564*
Ranger (trk.)	2,169	9,544	33,842	*33,751*
Taurus X (trk.)	1,243	3,729	11,375	*98*
Total Ford brand	**44,973**	**211,138**	**857,644**	***884,212***
MKS	50	0	50	*0*
MKZ (Mex.)	909	3,864	13,395	*11,777*
Town Car	0	0	0	*18,721*
Town Car (Can.)	444	1,955	8,952	*0*
Mark LT (trk.)	0	719	3,426	*4,619*
MKX (Can. trk.)	835	3,674	18,338	*20,257*
Navigator (trk.)	549	2,415	8,654	*12,824*
Total Lincoln	**2,787**	**12,627**	**52,815**	***68,198***
Grand Marquis (Can.)	888	3,909	12,767	*22,698*
Milan (Mex.)	868	3,691	11,448	*13,145*
Montego	0	0	0	*4,041*
Sable	343	1,030	4,250	*26*
Mariner (trk.)	783	3,446	15,594	*13,714*
Mountaineer (trk.)	307	737	6,622	*9,397*
Total Mercury	**3,189**	**12,813**	**50,681**	***63,021***
B series (trk.)	147	646	2,438	*2,883*
Tribute (trk.)	304	1,337	8,091	*10,026*
Total Mazda	**451**	**1,983**	**10,529**	***12,909***
Total U.S. car	**7,443**	**29,115**	**112,236**	***103,470***

	5/5-5/10/08†	April total	1/1-5/10/08†	1/1-5/12/07
Total Canada car	**2,902**	**12,772**	**48,693**	***54,208***
Total Mexico car	**5,252**	**22,324**	**95,521**	***86,286***
Total U.S. truck	**30,059**	**148,739**	**612,871**	***681,830***
Total Canada truck	**5,205**	**22,643**	**90,917**	***88,401***
Total Mexico truck	**539**	**2,968**	**11,431**	***14,145***
FORD MOTOR CO.	**51,400**	**238,561**	**971,669**	***1,028,340***
LaCrosse/Allure (Can.)	604	3,502	18,391	*16,131*
Lucerne	792	642	16,689	*31,651*
Enclave (trk.)	0	3,254	18,988	*4,343*
Rainier (trk.)	0	0	0	*2,435*
Terraza (trk.)	0	0	0	*2,291*
Total Buick	**1,396**	**7,398**	**54,068**	***56,851***
CTS (2007 model)	0	0	0	*17,269*
CTS (2008 model)	1,924	8,467	32,863	*0*
DTS	535	434	11,249	*21,344*
STS	505	2,223	7,904	*7,088*
XLR	33	147	667	*499*
Escalade (trk.)	474	1,707	13,042	*14,595*
Escalade ESV (trk.)	59	214	6,246	*4,961*
Escalade EXT (Mex. trk.)	86	473	2,698	*2,840*
SRX (trk.)	543	2,387	7,269	*7,895*
Total Cadillac	**4,159**	**16,052**	**81,938**	***76,491***
Chevy C2 (Mex.)	733	4,034	17,469	*19,868*
Cobalt	4,537	19,964	84,910	*83,097*
Corvette	748	3,291	13,519	*14,391*
HHR (Mex.)	555	4,419	27,548	*29,767*
Impala (Can.)	4,490	26,040	99,009	*127,239*
Classic/Malibu	0	0	0	*48,766*
Malibu	2,030	22,124	85,484	*0*
Monte Carlo (Can.)	0	0	0	*8,370*
Avalanche (Mex. trk.)	728	4,004	17,711	*19,844*
Captiva Sport (Mex. trk.)	157	866	3,206	*0*
Colorado (trk.)	1,642	7,225	26,278	*30,499*
Express (trk.)	0	0	21,790	*38,783*
Medium (trk.)	78	343	1,554	*4,156*
Medium (Mex. trk.)	0	159	689	*865*
Silverado (trk.)	3,671	11,380	75,668	*175,618*
Silverado (Can. trk.)	998	1,796	22,050	*90,392*
Silverado/Cheyenne (Mex. trk.)	1,402	7,711	39,866	*22,035*
Suburban (trk.)	676	2,435	15,074	*10,571*
Suburban (Mex. trk.)	164	902	4,292	*9,009*
Tahoe (trk.)	1,555	5,598	43,295	*59,018*
TrailBlazer (trk.)	0	0	20,263	*55,720*
Uplander (trk.)	1,918	8,441	33,762	*29,149*
Total Chevrolet	**26,082**	**130,732**	**653,437**	***877,157***
Acadia (trk.)	0	4,674	29,865	*35,330*
Canyon (trk.)	444	1,952	7,350	*7,763*
Envoy (trk.)	0	0	6,134	*15,951*
Medium (trk.)	458	2,015	4,992	*9,024*
Savana (trk.)	0	0	8,281	*12,751*
Sierra (trk.)	987	3,060	27,588	*57,803*
Sierra (Can. trk.)	635	1,144	13,243	*37,134*
Sierra (Mex. trk.)	377	2,075	11,142	*6,662*
Yukon (trk.)	599	2,154	20,791	*27,399*
Yukon XL (trk.)	320	1,152	14,976	*14,995*
Yukon XL (Mex. trk.)	114	627	3,394	*11,418*
Total GMC	**3,934**	**18,853**	**147,756**	***236,230***
Hummer H3 (trk.)	**0**	**0**	**6,091**	***18,627***
Ascender (trk.)	0	0	100	*584*
i-280, i-350 pickup (trk.)	18	80	578	*810*
Medium (trk.)	8	34	76	*298*
Total Isuzu	**26**	**114**	**754**	***1,692***
Opel GT roadster	**150**	**661**	**2,069**	***1,675***
G5/Pursuit	1,267	5,574	18,524	*21,621*
G6	3,543	15,588	61,322	*35,641*
Grand Prix (Can.)	0	0	0	*31,235*
Solstice	109	480	2,800	*9,712*
Montana SV6 (trk.)	466	2,052	9,191	*8,106*
Total Pontiac	**5,385**	**23,694**	**91,837**	***106,315***
Saab 9-7X (trk.)	**0**	**0**	**446**	***2,014***
Aura	0	6,639	24,255	*23,251*
Ion	0	0	0	*27,502*
Sky	227	997	3,663	*4,732*
Outlook (trk.)	0	1,461	6,269	*17,535*
Relay (trk.)	0	0	0	*5*
Vue (trk.)	0	0	0	*16,929*
Vue (Mex. trk.)	1,704	9,373	34,292	*2,673*
Total Saturn	**1,931**	**18,470**	**68,479**	***92,627***
Total U.S. car	**16,400**	**87,231**	**365,918**	***348,239***
Total Canada car	**5,094**	**29,542**	**117,400**	***182,975***
Total Mexico car	**1,288**	**8,453**	**45,017**	***49,635***
Total U.S. truck	**13,916**	**61,618**	**425,957**	***685,958***
Total Canada truck	**1,633**	**2,940**	**35,293**	***127,526***
Total Mexico truck	**4,732**	**26,190**	**117,290**	***75,346***
GENERAL MOTORS	**43,063**	**215,974**	**1,106,875**	***1,469,679***
CSX (Can.)	88	123	1,326	*1,093*
TL	853	4,207	17,720	*24,368*
MDX (Can. trk.)	1,586	5,881	27,544	*27,027*
RDX (trk.)	549	2,158	10,384	*8,808*
Total Acura	**3,076**	**12,369**	**56,974**	***61,296***
Accord	7,300	35,028	149,312	*141,318*
Accord (Mex.)	0	0	0	*7,911*
Civic	2,915	9,344	53,188	*67,971*
Civic (Can.)	5,417	26,750	102,597	*80,593*
CR-V (trk.)	1,453	8,863	30,776	*12,526*
CR-V (Mex trk.)	1,032	4,643	18,203	*0*
Element (trk.)	295	2,701	7,749	*14,014*
Odyssey (trk.)	4,206	15,938	75,126	*75,904*
Pilot (trk.)	2,144	8,199	38,677	*40,579*
Pilot (Can. trk.)	0	0	0	*16,867*
Ridgeline (Can. trk.)	776	2,334	13,602	*19,443*
Total Honda Division	**25,538**	**113,800**	**489,230**	***477,126***

	5/5-5/10/08†	April total	1/1-5/10/08†	1/1-5/12/07
Total U.S. car	**11,068**	**48,579**	**220,220**	***233,657***
Total Canada car	**5,505**	**26,873**	**103,923**	***81,686***
Total Mexico car	**0**	**0**	**0**	***7,911***
Total U.S. truck	**8,647**	**37,859**	**162,712**	***151,831***
Total Canada truck	**2,362**	**8,215**	**41,146**	***63,337***
Total Mexico truck	**1,032**	**4,643**	**18,203**	***0***
HONDA	**28,614**	**126,169**	**546,204**	***538,422***
Sonata	3,205	14,097	55,915	*55,178*
Santa Fe (trk.)	2,120	9,320	39,380	*45,435*
HYUNDAI	**5,325**	**23,417**	**95,295**	***100,613***
GL class (trk.)	1,186	5,354	18,061	*18,975*
M class (trk.)	1,979	9,229	40,085	*29,110*
R class (trk.)	576	1,987	8,337	*12,337*
MERCEDES-BENZ*	**3,741**	**16,570**	**66,483**	***60,422***
Eclipse	116	1,003	3,513	*9,959*
Eclipse convertible	105	544	2,236	*3,344*
Galant	722	2,581	16,553	*10,551*
Endeavor (trk.)	122	645	3,256	*7,369*
Total U.S. car	**943**	**4,128**	**22,302**	***23,854***
Total U.S. truck	**122**	**645**	**3,256**	***7,369***
MITSUBISHI MOTOR MFG.	**1,065**	**4,773**	**25,558**	***31,223***
Infiniti QX56 (trk.)	**82**	**679**	**5,274**	***2,647***
Altima coupe	1,112	4,913	17,082	*0*
Altima sedan	5,751	25,312	111,007	*126,328*
Maxima	667	2,996	13,996	*15,993*
Platina (Mex.)	270	1,483	3,608	*8,832*
Sentra (2007, Mex.)	1,522	8,373	34,328	*63,012*
Tiida (Mex.)	783	4,307	8,947	*14,636*
Tsuru (Mex.)	1,253	6,891	29,017	*33,173*
Versa (Mex.)	1,979	10,885	42,817	*50,781*
Armada (trk.)	818	3,346	11,759	*14,201*
Frontier (trk.)	998	4,397	20,712	*25,669*
Pathfinder (trk.)	853	3,631	14,336	*25,069*
Pickup (Mex. trk.)	841	3,926	13,251	*18,584*
Quest (trk.)	387	1,854	8,969	*6,434*
Titan (trk.)	997	4,209	17,497	*27,963*
Xterra (trk.)	701	3,160	18,608	*17,759*
Total Nissan Division	**18,932**	**89,683**	**365,934**	***448,434***
Renault Clio (Mex.)	**258**	**1,417**	**4,510**	***4,536***
Total U.S. car	**7,530**	**33,221**	**142,085**	***142,321***
Total Mexico car	**6,065**	**33,356**	**123,227**	***174,970***
Total U.S. truck	**4,836**	**21,276**	**97,155**	***119,742***
Total Mexico truck	**841**	**3,926**	**13,251**	***18,584***
NISSAN‡	**19,272**	**91,779**	**375,718**	***455,617***
Pontiac Vibe	1,485	6,933	21,800	*21,488*
Toyota Corolla	3,350	14,679	45,990	*73,182*
Toyota Tacoma (trk.)	2,780	12,114	55,272	*58,873*
Total U.S. car	**4,835**	**21,612**	**67,790**	***94,670***
Total U.S. truck	**2,780**	**12,114**	**55,272**	***58,873***
NUMMI‡	**7,615**	**33,726**	**123,062**	***153,543***
Subaru Legacy	1,807	6,959	26,907	*31,584*
Toyota Camry	1,886	8,296	34,673	*2,357*
Subaru Tribeca (trk.)	433	2,269	9,796	*3,734*
Total U.S. car	**3,693**	**15,255**	**61,580**	***33,941***
Total U.S. truck	**433**	**2,269**	**9,796**	***3,734***
SUBARU‡	**4,126**	**17,524**	**71,376**	***37,675***
Lexus RX 350 (Can. trk.)	**1,661**	**7,392**	**30,113**	***28,741***
Avalon	1,240	5,501	25,142	*32,996*
Camry	7,485	33,147	135,701	*142,119*
Camry Hybrid	845	3,995	19,164	*16,648*
Camry Solara	530	2,179	9,326	*11,217*
Corolla (Can.)	2,365	11,034	37,351	*66,265*
Matrix (Can.)	2,380	11,022	37,364	*26,933*
Sequoia (trk.)	1,483	6,452	27,004	*9,177*
Sienna (trk.)	2,991	13,253	56,122	*64,244*
Tacoma (Mex. trk.)	818	4,489	17,852	*11,147*
Tundra (trk.)	4,376	18,656	80,082	*78,591*
Total Toyota Division	**24,513**	**109,728**	**445,108**	***459,337***
Total U.S. car	**10,100**	**44,822**	**189,333**	***202,980***
Total Canada car	**4,745**	**22,056**	**74,715**	***93,198***
Total U.S. truck	**8,850**	**38,361**	**163,208**	***152,012***
Total Canada truck	**1,661**	**7,392**	**30,113**	***28,741***
Total Mexico truck	**818**	**4,489**	**17,852**	***11,147***
TOYOTA‡	**26,174**	**117,120**	**475,221**	***488,078***
New Beetle	955	2,816	12,202	*10,839*
New Beetle Cabrio	272	2,073	9,137	*8,888*
Jetta (old)	1,688	6,715	29,087	*18,197*
Jetta/Bora	4,298	16,315	69,570	*78,855*
Jetta/Bora/Golf wagon	229	12,153	37,974	*2,940*
Medium (trk.)	48	220	762	*657*
Total Mexico car	**7,442**	**40,072**	**157,970**	***119,719***
Total Mexico truck	**48**	**220**	**762**	***657***
VOLKSWAGEN (Mex.)	**7,490**	**40,292**	**158,732**	***120,376***
Med./hvy. truck (Can. trk.)	487	2,143	9,563	*11,001*
Med./hvy. truck (Mex. trk.)	1,101	4,845	21,029	*23,028*
Med./hvy. truck (trk.)	4,480	19,712	87,964	*101,209*
OTHER (trk.)	**6,068**	**26,700**	**118,556**	***135,238***
Total U.S. car	74,261	332,799	1,440,384	*1,501,776*
Total Canada car	22,999	111,501	433,010	*504,182*
Total Mexico car	21,141	109,553	442,821	*484,195*
Total North America car	**118,401**	**553,853**	**2,316,215**	***2,490,153***
Total U.S. truck	103,205	481,284	2,150,903	*2,624,852*
Total Canada truck	21,975	90,103	379,854	*500,341*
Total Mexico truck	11,930	73,797	286,887	*195,931*
Total North America truck	**137,110**	**645,184**	**2,817,644**	***3,321,124***
Total U.S.	**177,466**	**814,083**	**3,591,287**	***4,126,628***
Total Canada	**44,974**	**201,604**	**812,864**	***1,004,523***
Total Mexico	**33,071**	**183,350**	**729,708**	***680,126***
TOTAL NORTH AMERICA	**255,511**	**1,199,037**	**5,133,859**	***5,811,277***

†Automotive News estimate ‡Actual
*DaimlerChrysler sold the Chrysler group on Aug. 3, 2007; DaimlerChrysler totals reflect Chrysler group and Mercedes-Benz production totals through July 2007 and are not included in grand totals. Source: Automotive News Data Center and company sources

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final assembly

SUPPLIER RECOVERY ›› Dana Holding Corp. on Thursday releases its first quarterly report since emerging from Chapter 11. Go to www.autonews.com.

comment

Daimler seems to be betting on peace in Iraq

You have to wonder about **Daimler's** decision to open an office in Baghdad by year end.

Haven't the top Daimler execs in Stuttgart been watching CNN? Don't they realize that Iraqi militia leaders — especially those backed by Iran, such as Moktada al-Sadr — make the ruthless killer Anton Chigurh from *No Country for Old Men* seem like a choirboy?



EDWARD LAPHAM IS EXECUTIVE EDITOR OF AUTOMOTIVE NEWS.

Even if you believe there eventually will be a booming market in Iraq, why go now?

There can be only one answer: The Daimler brass have access to different intelligence from the Arab street than we do.

Don't forget that Daimler has a regional office in Dubai. For years, many Middle Eastern leaders enjoyed a taste for Mercedes-Benz automobiles. The automaker sold more than 16,000 passenger vehicles in the region last year. Sales of Mercedes-Benz trucks in the Middle East were up 44.3 percent to 6,000 vehicles.

And the Kuwaiti government is the company's biggest shareholder, with about 7.2 percent of Daimler stock. That's a bigger chunk of Daimler than the piece of Ford controlled by Kirk Kerkorian … so far. Although once upon a time, Kerkorian was a big shareholder in DaimlerChrysler, too.

Now that the decision has been made, it shouldn't surprise anyone that the company's first emphasis will be on selling trucks. Iraq's various commercial enterprises will need trucks — lots of trucks — on the road to peace and normalcy. And Daimler is the world's largest manufacturer of medium- and heavy-duty trucks.

The Daimler team must believe the outlook for peace there is promising. I hope they're right.

■ Edward Lapham writes five commentaries each week for autonews.com. Read them at autonews.com/edwardlapham.



AHMAD AL-RUBAYE/AFP/NEWSCOM

Baghdad is a tough place for vehicles these days. But Daimler sees a better future.

Trustee must untangle the Chamco debacle

A retired New Jersey judge, armed with subpoena power and access to company records, has been enlisted to sort out the train wreck that is **Chamco Auto.**

Last week, after three months of firings, lawsuits and accusations by feuding execs had immobilized the wannabe importer of Chinese light trucks, New Jersey Superior Court Judge Catherine Langlois ordered retired jurist Gerald Escala to determine who owns how much of Chamco, manage the company's affairs, scrutinize the books and supervise the election of a new board of directors.

The company, which wants to import vehicles made by Hebei Zhongxing Automobile Co., has been paralyzed for two months, since feuding factions claimed control.

The two main combatants are E. Michael Daspin, who helped launch Chamco two years ago; and CEO Mario Ferla, a former Fiat executive hired by Chamco last year. On March 3, Ferla and seven other execs sued Daspin and others, alleging fraud, then decamped with 43 Chamco employees to another building. But the Daspin forces say they control a majority of shares and voted the same day to fire the Ferla team.

This month an exasperated Langlois said she was "undoing the entire day" of the March 3 mud bath, and now Escala must try to hose off and untangle the mess.

Meanwhile, 37 would-be dealers who paid franchise fees of up to $300,000 watch and wait.



Chamco's feuding factions are led by E. Michael Daspin, left, and Mario Ferla.

Scientists say Chrysler's gas plan is just a dodge

Chrysler grabbed headlines last week by offering customers a three-year, $2.99-per-gallon price guarantee on gasoline. But a group of green-minded scientists called it a lame gimmick that typifies the nation's short-sighted thinking on energy.

Said David Friedman, research director of the Clean Vehicles Program for the Union of Concerned Scientists: "Chrysler is trying to pull a fast one on potential car buyers. It's using this cynical deal to distract consumers from the fact that its cars get poor gas mileage.

"Rather than sticking customers with gas guzzlers, Chrysler should focus on delivering more miles per gallon. That would not only save their customers money at the pump, it would help cut America's oil addiction and reduce global warming pollution at the same time. Instead of gambling with Chrysler on the price of gas over the next three years, car buyers should go with the certainty of a fuel-efficient vehicle."



Chrysler's $2.99-a-gallon gasoline cards: Just a way to sell guzzlers?

The latest comprehensive EPA figures — from 2007, when Chrysler was part of DaimlerChrysler — show DaimlerChrysler vehicles with fleet fuel economy of 22.7 mpg, the worst of any of the eight major automakers operating in the United States.

THE FINAL SAY



KEVIN DIETSCH/UPI/NEWSCOM

"The car I learned to drive on was my grandfather's Ford Granada. … It may be the worst car that Detroit ever built. This thing was a tin can. It was during the '70s when oil had just gone up, so they were trying to compete with the Japanese. They wanted to keep the cars big, so they made them out of tin foil. It would rattle and shake. You basically couldn't go over 80 without the thing getting out of control."

— Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., on Indianapolis radio station WFBQ-FM

When soccer booms, VW will be ready

If Americans ever start to follow pro soccer in the way that's been forecast for, oh, 30 years, **Volkswagen** stands to benefit.

The jerseys worn by players for D.C. United, the Major League Soccer team in the nation's capital, now sport the VW logo.

The display is part of a five-year, $14 million sponsorship deal announced last week by Volkswagen Group of America. VW is moving its U.S. headquarters to suburban Washington, and "we wanted to find opportunities to support the local community," said VW CEO Stefan Jacoby.

Other U.S. sports leagues mostly avoid ads on uniforms, but MLS is following the soccer custom in Europe and elsewhere. The Los Angeles Galaxy jersey features a Herbalife logo, and Chicago Fire uniforms tout Best Buy.

But D.C. United was in last place in the MSL Eastern Division last week, and wags are weighing in on the VW deal. One commenter remarked on a Washington sports blog: "With the way United is sputtering and crapping out, Yugo would have been a more likely sponsor."



D.C. United's Marcelo Gallardo wears his sponsor's logo on his chest.



From cookie sales to auto dough?

If Girl Scouts can sell Thin Mints and Do-Si-Dos now, why not cars, parts and service contracts tomorrow?

The **National Automobile Dealers Association** wants members to contact local Girl Scout troops in an effort to interest young girls in dealership careers. NADA notes that Girl Scouts of the USA has done groundwork with a booklet called *Fast-Track to Automotive Careers: A Girl's Guide*, funded by the U.S. Department of Labor.

NADA suggests that dealers follow up with career videos from the association and invitations to troops for dealership visits.

Finding and keeping employees are big challenges for dealers. Automotive Retailing Today, a coalition of automakers and dealer groups, reported last year that dealerships had more than 100,000 job openings and would create tens of thousands more jobs over the next decade.

In Europe, small SUVs soar; GM's snore

Europe's compact-SUV boom has been a washout for **General Motors;** the Opel Antara and Chevrolet Captiva are selling far slower than their rivals.

Take Germany, for example. In 2007, the Antara's first full year on the market, registrations totaled 7,051, compared with 16,179 for the segment-leading Toyota RAV4.

Even automakers with fewer dealers and much lower overall market shares attracted more customers. Suzuki sold 7,249 Grand Vitaras in Germany last year, and Honda sold 9,789 CR-Vs.

In all of Europe, GM sold 29,235 Captivas and 23,879 Antaras in 2007, according to JATO Dynamics. By comparison, Honda sold 68,562 CR-Vs, and RAV4 sales totaled 90,329.

"The Antara lags behind our expectations," said Jonathan Browning, GM Europe's vice president for global sales, service and marketing.

No improvement is in sight, at least in Germany. In the first quarter, Antara registrations totaled just 1,609, compared with 6,502 for the Volkswagen Tiguan.

Major model updates are not planned any time soon.

"The vehicle just came on the market at the end of 2006," an Opel source said. "A face-lift typically comes after 2½ years."



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Top 150 suppliers

The largest suppliers to North America ranked by sales of original equipment parts in 2007

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1	**Magna International Inc.** (905) 726-2462	337 Magna Drive Aurora, Ontario L4G 7K1 Canada	Donald Walker & Siegfried Wolf co-CEOs	**$13,592**	$12,897	$25,645	$23,883	Interiors, exteriors, body and chassis systems; seats, mirrors, closures, electronics, engines, transmissions, drivetrains	2
2	**Delphi Corp.** (248) 813-2000	5725 Delphi Drive Troy, MI 48098	Robert Miller executive chairman	**11,810**	13,870	22,283	22,737	Mobile electronics and transportation systems including powertrain, safety, thermal, controls and security systems, electrical/electronic architecture, in-car entertainment technologies, consumer electronics military, medical systems and independent aftermarket	1
3	**Johnson Controls Inc.** (734) 254-5000	49200 Halyard Drive Plymouth, MI 48170	Beda Bolzenius president, automotive experience	**7,585** f	8,580	18,500 f	19,500 f	Seat systems, interior electronics, door panels, instrument panels, overhead systems, center and floor consoles, lead-acid and hybrid vehicle batteries	4
4	**Lear Corp.** (248) 447-1500	21557 Telegraph Road Southfield, MI 48034	Bob Rossiter chairman, president & CEO	**7,198**	9,811	15,995	17,839	Seating, electrical distribution, electronics	3
5	**Robert Bosch LLC** (248) 553-9000	38000 Hills Tech Drive Farmington Hills, MI 48331	Peter Marks chairman, president & CEO	**6,460** fe	4,453 fe	34,000 f	29,687 f	Gasoline systems, diesel systems, brake and chassis sytems, electrical drives, starter motors and generators; car multimedia, automotive electronics, steering systems	7
6	**Denso International America Inc.** (248) 350-7500	24777 Denso Drive, P.O. Box 5133 Southfield, MI 48086	Haruya Maruyama president & CEO	**5,805** fe	4,558 fe	37,510 fe	28,530 fe	Thermal, powertrain control, electronic and electric systems; small motors, telecommunications, industrial and environmental systems	6
7	**Continental AG** (248) 393-5300	One Continental Drive Auburn Hills, MI 48326	William Kozyra president & CEO Continental, North America	**5,250** fe	2,409 f	25,000 fe	11,470 f	Electronic brakes, stability management systems, tires, foundation brakes, chassis systems, safety system electronics, telematics, driver systems, powertrain electronics, interior modules, instrumentation	18
8	**Dana Corp.** (419) 535-4500	4500 Dorr St. Toledo, OH 43615	Gary Convis CEO	**4,797** f	5,187	8,721 f	8,504	Axles, driveshafts, structures, sealing and thermal management products, off-highway vehicle transmissions	5
9	**TRW Automotive Inc.** (734) 855-2600	12025 Tech Center Drive Livonia, MI 48150	John Plant president & CEO	**4,067** f	4,135 f	13,555 f	12,162 f	Steering, suspension, braking and engine components, fasteners, occupant restraint systems, electronic safety and security	8
10	**ThyssenKrupp USA Inc.** (248) 643-3500	3155 W. Big Beaver Road Troy, MI 48084	Christian Koenig vp, public & government affairs	**3,876** fe	3,879 fe	11,075 fe	10,207 fe	Powertrains, suspensions, steering systems, drivetrains, camshafts, crankshafts	11
11	**Aisin World Corp. of America** (734) 453-5551	46501 Commerce Center Drive Plymouth, MI 48170	Don Whitsitt president	**3,755** fe	3,486 fe	21,705 fe	19,367 fe	Body systems, brake and chassis systems; electronics, drivetrain & engine components	13
12	**Visteon Corp.** (800) 847-8366	One Village Center Drive Van Buren Township, MI 48111	Michael Johnston chairman & CEO	**3,431**	4,068 e	10,721	10,706 e	Interiors, climate control and electronics/lighting	9
13	**International Automotive Components** (313) 240-3000	5300 Auto Club Drive Dearborn, MI 48126	Jim Kamsickas president & CEO, North America & Asia	**3,290**	2,489	5,307	4,306	Instrument panels/cockpits, door panels, headliner systems, flooring and acoustics; exterior fascia, trim	–
14	**American Axle & Manufacturing** (313) 758-3600	One Dauch Drive Detroit, MI 48211	Richard Dauch chairman & CEO	**3,086** e	3,032	3,248 e	3,192 f	Driveline and drivetrain systems; axle driveline modules	16
15	**ArvinMeritor Inc.** (313) 551-2400	6401 W. Fort St. Detroit, MI 48209	Chip McLure CEO	**3,008**	4,598	6,400	9,195	Axles, brakes, aperture systems, drivelines, wheels, chassis systems	10
16	**Yazaki North America Inc.** (734) 983-1000	6801 Haggerty Road Canton, MI 48187	George Perry president & CEO	**2,793** e	3,704 e	11,308 e	10,583 e	Wiring harnesses, connectors, clusters, junction blocks, plug cords	14
17	**Faurecia** (248) 409-3500	2050 Auburn Road Auburn Hills, MI 48326	Michael Heneka president, North America	**2,610**	1,950	17,400	15,000	Seats, cockpits, doors, acoustic packages, front ends, exhaust systems	21
18	**Navistar International Engine Group** (708) 865-4304	10400 W. North Ave. Melrose Park, IL 60160	Jack Allen president	**2,545** e	2,718 e	3,305	3,397 e	Diesel truck engines	17

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19	**Flex-N-Gate Corp.** (217) 278-2600	1306 E. University Ave. Urbana, IL 61802	Shahid Khan president & CEO	**$2,394** fe	$1,887 fe	$2,720 f	$2,120 f	Plastic and steel bumpers, fascias, stamping, mechanical assemblies, running boards, sheet metal	58
20	**Tenneco Inc.** (847) 482-5000	500 N. Field Drive Lake Forest, IL 60045	Gregg Sherrill chairman & CEO	**2,337** f	1,407 f	5,080 f	3,608 f	Shocks, struts, NVH products, springs, electronic suspension systems, exhaust systems, manifolds, catalytic converters, mufflers, diesel aftertreatment, SCR and NOx abatement systems, manifold-converter modules, exhaust heat exchangers	35
21	**Hitachi Automotive Products Inc.** (859) 734-9451	955 Warwick Road Harrodsburg, KY 40330	Ken Funasaki president	**2,280** fe	1,589	7,600 fe	5,478	Engine management, electric powertrain, drive control and car information systems	30
22	**Sumitomo Electric Industries Ltd.** (81) 6-6220-4141	5-33 Kitahama, 4-chome, Chuo-ku Osaka City, 541-0041 Japan	Masayoshi Matsumoto president & CEO	**2,151** e	1,932	10,241 e	9,200	Electrical distribution systems, electronics, connection systems	24
23	**Cummins Inc.** (812) 377-5000	500 Jackson St. Columbus, IN 47201	Tim Solso chairman & CEO	**2,104**	2,457	3,628	3,780	Diesel engines	12
24	**BorgWarner Inc.** (248) 754-9200	3850 Hamlin Road Auburn Hills, MI 48326	Timothy Manganello chairman & CEO	**1,972**	1,742	5,329	4,585	Engine air management systems, transmission assemblies, all-wheel-drive, transmission components, 4 wheel-drive systems	25
25	**TK Holdings Inc.** (248) 373-8040	2500 Takata Drive Auburn Hills, MI 48326	Tim Healy executive vp	**1,964** f	1,904 f	4,364 f	4,051 f	Airbags, seat belts, electronics, steering wheels, interior trim	22
26	**Toyota Boshoku Corp.** (859) 817-4000	1360 Dolwick Drive, Ste. 125 Erlanger, KY 41018	Nate Furuta chairman & CEO	**1,944** f	1,899 fe	9,172 f	9,043 fe	Seats, door trim, carpet, headliners, oil & air filters, door panels, fabrics and substrates	23
27	**GKN Driveline** (248) 377-1200	3300 University Drive Auburn Hills, MI 48326	Philippe Cabasol managing director, Operations, America	**1,925** e	1,785 e	5,500 f	5,100 f	Sideshafts, propshafts, torque management systems and geared components	31
28	**Martinrea International Inc.** (416) 749-0314	30 Aviva Park Drive Vaughan, Ontario L4L 9C7 Canada	Fred Jaekel CEO	**1,866**	703	1,964	740	Body, chassis and fluid handling components, assemblies and modules.	–
29	**Valeo Inc.** (248) 619-8300	150 Stephenson Hwy. Troy, MI 48083	Lawrence Lyng group vp North America	**1,861** e	1,651 e	13,290 e	12,700 e	Microhybrid systems, electrical and electronic systems, thermal systems, transmissions, wiper systems, camera/sensor technology, security systems, interior controls	28
30	**CalsonicKansei North America Inc.** (931) 684-4490	One Calsonic Way Shelbyville, TN 37162	Kiyoto Shinohara president	**1,792** fe	1,480	7,141 fe	6,270	Climate control, engine cooling and exhaust systems, instrument clusters, console boxes, cockpit modules, instrument panels, front-end modules	33
31	**Benteler Automotive Corp.** (248) 377-9999	1780 Pond Run Auburn Hills, MI 48326	Joachim Perske president	**1,773**	1,234	6,568	5,610	Chassis & exhaust systems, structural products, engine application components, bumber/impact management	42
32	**Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.** (330) 796-2121	1144 E. Market St. Akron, OH 44316	Robert Keegan chairman, president & CEO	**1,755** e	1,763 e	3,900 e	3,750 e	Tires, hoses, belts, interior trim, air springs, molded rubber products	26
33	**DuPont Automotive** (248) 583-8000	950 Stephenson Hwy. Troy, MI 48007	Marty McQuade vp OE	**1,743** fe	2,012	4,980 fe	5,029	Coatings, engineering polymers, bio-based, renewably sourced materials, advanced fibers, chemicals, refrigerants; small motor & transmission components	20
34	**PPG Industries Inc.** (412) 434-3131	One PPG Place Pittsburgh, PA 15272	Charles Bunch chairman & CEO	**1,700** e	1,628 e	3,090 e	2,759 e	Coatings and paint	29
35	**ZF Group NAO** (734) 416-6200	15811 Centennial Drive Northville, MI 48168	Julio Caspari president	**1,661** e	1,792 e	15,100 e	12,800 e	Transmissions, steering systems, suspension components, axles, clutches, dampers	39

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36	**Nemak North America** (52) 818-748-5200	Libramiento Arco Vial Km. 6.8 Garcia, NL 66000 Mexico	Armando Tamez CEO Nemak North America	**$1,651** f	$1,055 f	$ 2,897 f	$1,336 f	Aluminum cylinder heads, aluminum engine blocks, aluminum transmission components, aluminum suspension components	52
37	**Autoliv North America** (248) 475-9000	1320 Pacific Drive Auburn Hills, MI 48326	Mike Ward president	**1,632**	1,671 f	6,800	6,188 f	Airbags, seat belts, safety electronics, steering wheels	27
38	**TS Tech North America Inc.** (614) 575-4100	8458 E. Broad St. Reynoldsburg, OH 43068	Kazuhisa Saito president & CEO	**1,563** f	1,267 f	3,634 f	2,981 f	Seats, interior trim, roof and door liners	41
39	**Cooper-Standard Automotive** (248) 596-5900	39550 Orchard Hill Place Drive Novi, MI 48375	James McElya chairman & CEO	**1,531** f	1,426 e	2,510 f	2,160	Sealing and fluid systems; NVH control system	34
40	**Plastech Engineered Products Inc.** (313) 791-3001	835 Mason Ave. Dearborn, MI 48124	Julie Brown CEO	**1,400**	1,070 e	1,400 e	1,070 e	Interior trim, wiring harness, cockpit modules	51
41	**Linamar Corp.** (519) 836-7550	287 Speedvale Ave. W. Guelph, Ontario N1H 1C5 Canada	Linda Hasenfratz CEO	**1,379** e	1,400	1,532 e	1,522	Cylinder heads, camshafts, crankcases and connecting rods	37
42	**Alcoa Inc.** (248) 489-4900	36555 Corporate Drive, Ste. 185 Farmington Hills, MI 48331	Alain Belda chairman & CEO	**1,375** fe	1,350 fe	2,500 fe	2,700 fe	Electrical and electronic systems, wheels, extrusions, closure panels, hoods and trunks, bumper systems and crash management systems	40
43	**Metaldyne Corp.** (734) 207-6200	47603 Halyard Drive Plymouth, MI 48170	Thomas Amato chairman & CEO	**1,341**	1,406 e	1,863 e	1,850 e	Powertrain and chassis applications; transmission and transfer cases; axles, drivelines, suspensions, noise and vibration control products	36
44	**Federal-Mogul Corp.** (248) 354-7700	26555 Northwestern Hwy. Southfield, MI 48033	José Maria Alapont president & CEO	**1,313** f	1,358 f	4,236 f	3,773 f	Pistons, rings, cylinder liners, piston pins, bearings, valve seats & guides; gaskets, seals, heat shields, friction materials, systems protection	43
45	**Panasonic Automotive Systems** (770) 487-3356	776 Hwy. 74 S. Peachtree City, GA 30269	Vincent Sarrecchia president	**1,311**	1,080 e	4,715	3,600 e	Audio & video equipment; navigation systems, compressors, batteries, motors, monitors, sensors, switches, premium sound systems	49
46	**Mahle Inc.** (423) 318-3170	One Mahle Drive, P.O. Box 748 Morristown, TN 37815	Martin Hempston president	**1,303** fe	896 e	6,967 fe	4,768 e	Piston systems, cylinder components, valve train systems, air management systems, liquid management systems	57
47	**Koyo Corp. of USA** (440) 835-1000	29570 Clemens Road Westlake, OH 44145	Henry Takagi president & CEO	**1,303**	925	8,685 f	6,166	Bearings, hub units, steering systems, driveshafts	54
48	**Toyoda Gosei North America Corp.** (248) 280-2100	1400 Stephenson Hwy. Troy, MI 48083	Yuzo Saito president	**1,160**	1,099 e	5,526	4,780 e	Sealing systems, interior systems, optoelectronics, exterior trim, safety systems, fuel systems	46
49	**Bridgestone Americas Holding Inc.** (615) 937-1000	535 Marriott Drive Nashville, TN 37214	Mark Emkes CEO	**1,125** e	1,092 e	4,892 e	4,200 e	Tires, tubes, components	47
50	**Eaton Corp.** (216) 523-5000	1111 Superior Ave. Cleveland, OH 44114	Alexander Cutler chairman & CEO	**1,120**	1,400	1,600	2,000	Engine valves, valve actuation components, superchargers, cylinder heads, differentials, engine & transmission controls; fuel emission and safety controls	38
51	**Trim Masters Inc.** (859) 734-6969	1090 Industry Road Harrodsburg, KY 40330	Masaki Katsuraga president	**1,115** e	1,118	1,115 e	1,118	Seats, door panels and trim	45
52	**Michelin North America Inc.** (864) 458-5000	One Parkway S. Greenville, SC 29615	James Micali chairman & president	**1,109** e	1,215 e	4,620 e	4,500 e	Tires	44
53	**Tower Automotive Inc.** (248) 675-6000	27175 Haggerty Road Novi, MI 48377	Bill Pumphrey president, North America	**1,068** e	1,485 e	2,542 e	2,856 e	Body structures and assemblies; lower vehicle frames & structures; chassis modules and systems; suspension components	32
54	**Tyco Electronics** (800) 522-6752	1050 Westlakes Drive Berwyn, PA 19312	Thomas Lynch CEO	**977** e	884 e	2,640 e	2,390 e	Connectors and interconnect systems, relays, switches, circuit protection devices, touch screens, sensors and wires, cables	–
55	**Timken Co.** (248) 433-2090	28875 Cabot Drive, Ste. 100 Novi, MI 48377	Ken Hopkins vp, light-vehicle systems	**960** e	1,072	1,500 e	1,600	Bearings, hub units, transmissions, steering and engine products	50

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56	**Superior Industries International Inc.** (818) 902-2700	7800 Woodley Ave. Van Nuys, CA 91406	Steven Borick president & CEO	**$957** f	$790 f	$957 f	$790 f	Aluminum wheels	63
57	**Keihin Indiana Precision Technology Inc.** (317) 462-3015	400 W. New Road Greenfield, IN 46140	Greg Young vice president	**944** f	907 f	2,800 f	2,562 f	Air and fuel management systems; electronic systems, HVAC systems, electronic management systems	56
58	**Behr America Inc.** (248) 743-3700	2700 Daley Drive Troy, MI 48083	Frank Mueller president & CEO	**889**	880	4,233	3,667	Engine cooling, air conditioning components, modules and systems	55
59	**Intermet** (817) 348-9190	301 Commerce, Ste. 2901 Forth Worth, TX 76102	Jeff Mihalic president & CEO	**825** e	823 e	1,019 e	980 e	Chassis, powertrain & structural cast metal components	59
60	**TRAM Inc.** (734) 254-8500	47200 Port St. Plymouth, MI 48170	Yutaka Yamauchi president	**791**	721	3,766	3,434	Switches, steering wheels, airbags, shifters, key cylinders, key set locks, interior & lever combination switches; floor transmission shift levers	67
61	**TI Automotive Ltd.** (586) 758-4511	12345 E. Nine Mile Road Warren, MI 48090	William Laule CEO	**790** fe	795 e	2,634 fe	2,409 e	Fluid storage/delivery systems, hydroformed components, brake, air conditioning applications	62
62	**Dura Automotive Systems Inc.** (248) 299-7500	2791 Research Drive Rochester Hills, MI 48309	Larry Denton chairman, president & CEO	**758** f	1,087 f	1,895 f	2,090 f	Driver controls, integrated glass and seating control systems; structural door modules, engineered assemblies, seat mechanisms, park brakes, shift systems, cables, jack and tire carriers; pedals	48
63	**NTN USA Corp.** (847) 298-7500	1600 E. Bishop Court P.O. Box 7604 Mount Prospect, IL 60056	Osamu Wakisaka senior managing director	**750** e	803	3,000 e	2,675	Driveshafts, constant velocity products, hub and clutch units, bearings	60
64	**ABC Group** (416) 246-1782	2 Norelco Drive Toronto, Ontario M9L 2X6 Canada	Mike Schmidt president & CEO	**744**	698	800	750	Air and fluid management and HVAC systems; fuel systems, flexible products, interior and exterior systems; instrument panels, spoilers, CVJ boots, spoilers, running boards	68
65	**American Showa Inc.** (740) 965-1133	707 W. Cherry St. Sunbury, OH 43074	Yoshitaka Terazawa president	**742** f	690 e	2,577 f	2,178 e	Shock absorbers, power steering gearbox & pump; propeller shaft, gas springs	69
66	**Mitsubishi Electric Automotive** (513) 398-2220	4773 Bethany Road Mason, OH 45040	Kiyoshi Shima president	**714** fe	710 f	4,437 fe	3,856 f	Engine management systems, ignition systems, audio systems, alternators, starter motors, navigation systems	65
67	**Ernie Green Industries Inc.** (937) 320-9690	3500 Pentagon Blvd., Ste. 400 Beavercreek, OH 45431	Ernie Green president	**704** fe	724 f	711 fe	731 f	Interior and exterior plastic trim; components & assembled systems	66
68	**Meridian Automotive Systems** (313) 336-4182	999 Republic Drive Allen Park, MI 48101	Richard Newsted president & CEO	**700** fe	800 e	700 fe	800 e	Bumper systems, composites, exterior lighting, console modules & trim	61
69	**F & P America Mfg. Inc.** (937) 339-0212	2101 Corporate Drive Troy, OH 45373	Masafumi Yamano president	**686** fe	661 f	1,372 fe	1,259 f	Chassis, suspension systems, control arms, pedal assemblies, hydroforming	73
70	**Honeywell Transportation Systems** (310) 791-9101	23326 Hawthorne Blvd., Ste. 200 Torrance, CA 90505	Adriane Brown president & CEO	**672**	960	3,200	3,200	Turbochargers, brake friction materials and systems; air and oil filters; antifreeze, spark plugs and sensors	53
71	**Hella Corporate Center USA Inc.** (734) 414-0900	43811 Plymouth Oaks Blvd. Plymouth, MI 48170	Martin Fischer president	**652**	637	5,134	4,753	Lighting and electronics systems	96
72	**Alpine Electronics of America Inc.** (310) 326-8000	19145 Gramercy Place Torrance, CA 90501	Jim O'Neil executive vp sales & marketing	**648**	623	1,751	1,640	Navigation, telematics, sound and video systems	76
73	**BASF Corp.** (973) 245-6000	100 Campus Drive Florham Park, NJ 07932	Kurt Bock chairman & CEO	**629** e	599 e	2,993 e	2,721 e	Coatings, plastics	79

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74	**Freudenberg-NOK** (734) 451-0020	47690 E. Anchor Court Plymouth, MI 48170	Mohsen Sohi president & CEO	**$623** fe	$656 fe	$2,967 fe	$2,735 fe	Seals, NVH components, precision molded components for suspension, fuel and electrical systems	72
75	**Kautex Textron North America** (248) 616-5100	750 Stephenson Hwy. Troy, MI 48083	Lothar Rosenkranz president & CEO	**613**	580	1,658	1,487	Fuel tank systems, clear vision systems, selective catalytic reduction systems, air ducts, camshafts, packaging	81
76	**NSK Americas** (734) 913-7500	4200 Goss Road, P.O. Box 134007 Ann Arbor, MI 48113	Tsutomu Komori president & CEO	**600** fe	588 e	4,003 fe	3,675 e	Bearings, hub bearings, steering columns, electric power steering, automatic transmission products	74
77	**Modine Corp.** (262) 636-1200	1500 DeKoven Ave. Racine, WI 53403	James Rulseh regional vp, Americas	**595** f	816 f	1,700 f	1,600 f	Thermal management products and systems	–
78	**Inergy Automotive Systems** (248) 743-5700	2710 Bellingham, Ste. 400 Troy, MI 48083	Mark Sullivan CEO	**594**	532	1,800	1,900	Fuel systems	83
79	**Shiloh Industries Inc.** (330) 558-2600	880 Steel Drive Valley City, OH 44280	Theodore Zampetis president & CEO	**590**	620	590	620	Engineered welded blanks, structural components and assemblies; body in white stampings and assemblies; welded blanks	77
80	**Dow Automotive** (248) 391-6300	1250 Harmon Road Auburn Hills, MI 48326	Peter Sykes president	**590**	595 f	1,735	1,383 f	Plastics, adhesives, plastics enhanced products, body structure adhesives, NVH systems	80
81	**Grede Foundries Inc.** (414) 257-3600	9898 W. Bluemound Road Milwaukee, WI 53226	Bruce Jacobs president & CEO	**573**	626	585	645	Bearing caps, brake calipers, control arms, steering knuckles, turbocharger housings, power steering pump housings, differential and carriers; engine brackets	75
82	**TAG Holdings LLC** (248) 822-8056	2075 W. Big Beaver Road, Ste. 500 Troy, MI 48084	Joseph Anderson Jr. chairman & CEO	**566**	392	572	400	Chassis modules, interior assembly modules, temperature sensors, ceramic components, torsional vibration dampers	–
83	**Stanley Electric U.S. Co.** (740) 852-5200	420 E. High St. London, OH 43140	Makio Natsusaka president	**562** f	555 f	2,868 f	2,641 f	Exterior lighting, air conditioner panels & current sensors, LED devices, optical sensors and devices for communications; sub miniature lamps, cold cathode fluorescent lamps	71
84	**Bayer MaterialScience LLC** (412) 777-2000	100 Bayer Road Pittsburgh, PA 15205	Greg Babe president & CEO	**561** fe	618	2,440 fe	2,376	Coating, adhesives, sealants, plastics, polyurethanes	78
85	**Rieter Automotive North America Inc.** (248) 848-0100	38555 Hills Tech Drive Farmington Hills, MI 48331	Richard Derr president & CEO	**551**	522	1,969	1,739	Acoustic systems, interior trim, carpet, thermal management systems, heat shields	87
86	**Stoneridge Inc.** (330) 856-2443	9400 E. Market St. Warren, OH 44484	John Corey president & CEO	**523**	538	727	708	Electronic component systems and modules; switches, sensors, power actuators	82
87	**Foamex Automotive Products Group** (248) 553-1010	28700 Cabot Drive, Ste. 500 Novi, MI 48377	Donald Phillips executive vp	**511**	426	516	430	Seat foam and laminates; headliner cores, carpet underlay, acoustic materials, energy management foams	99
88	**Brose North America Inc.** (248) 339-4000	3933 Automation Ave. Auburn Hills, MI 48326	Jan Kowal president	**510**	441	3,400	2,939	Window regulators, door modules, seat adjusters, closure systems, power closure systems for side doors and liftgates; seat adjuster, power head restraints	93
89	**GECOM Corp./Ohi Automotive America** (812) 663-2270	1025 Barachel Lane Greensburg, IN 47240	Harufumi Sakai president	**501** fe	529 fe	1,192 fe	1,175 fe	Latches, power slide door and liftgate systems	84
90	**Saint-Gobain Sekurit USA Inc.** (586) 532-9500	51010 Celeste Drive Shelby Township, MI 48315	Norm Chazka general manager	**492** e	426 e	3,281 e	2,665 e	Glass, abrasives, fiberglass reinforcements, coatings, compounds, bearings, seals	98
91	**Grupo Antolin North America Inc.** (248) 373-1749	1700 Atlantic Blvd. Auburn Hills, MI 48326	Miguel Angel Vicente president, North American	**489**	352	2,982	2,425	Overhead systems, door function and seat function products	114

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92	**Woodbridge Group** (248) 288-0100	1515 Equity Drive Troy, MI 48084	Daniel Sceli vp & general manager	**$488** e	$524 e	$729 e	$749 e	Foam products and assembly	86
93	**Henniges Automotive** (248) 553-5300 *(previously GDX Automotive)*	36600 Corporate Drive Farmington Hills, MI 48331	Rob DePierre CEO	**476** e	317 e	865 e	755 e	Sealing, encapsulated glass systems, vibration control products	119
94	**Pioneer Automotive Technologies Inc.** (248) 449-6799	22630 Haggerty Road Farmington Hills, MI 48335	Steven Moerner president & COO	**476** fe	471 fe	1,160 fe	1,070 fe	Audio and video entertainment; navigation systems	91
95	**Plastic Omnium** (248) 458-0711	1050 Wilshire Drive, Ste. 170 Troy, MI 48084	Pierre Perdoux president, business unit North America	**475** f	385 f	2,260 f	1,748 f	Fascias, front-end modules, rear-end modules, fenders, body panels	146
96	**Mando America Corp.** (334) 364-3600	4201 Northpark Drive Opelika, AL 36801	Tae Kwak president	**469** f	235 f	2,367 f	1,958 f	Brake, steering and suspension systems; components	140
97	**Multimatic Inc.** (905) 470-9149	85 Valleywood Drive Markham, Ontario L3R 5E5 Canada	Peter Czapka president & CEO	**466** f	454 f	541 f	525 f	Hinge systems, stamped welded assemblies, suspension systems and engineering services	92
98	**Philips Automotive Lighting N.A.** (248) 553-9080	34119 W. 12 Mile Road., Ste. 102 Farmington Hills, MI 48331	David Davoudi vp & general manager	**466** fe	325 fe	2,590 fe	2,324 f	Lighting, playback modules, car radio integrated circuits, liquid crystal displays	118
99	**Osram Sylvania Automotive Lighting** (603) 464-5533	275 W. Main St. Hillsboro, NH 03244	Aldo Kamper executive vp & general manager	**462** fe	398 fe	1,127 fe	926 fe	Lighting and connector products	103
100	**Akebono Brake Corp.** (270) 234-5500	310 Ring Road Elizabethtown, KY 42701	Go Kashiwagi chairman & CEO	**458** e	452 f	1,090 e	1,005 f	Brake products and linings	95
101	**3M Automotive Market Center** (734) 953-9300	19460 Victor Pkwy. Livonia, MI 48152	Frank Loftus sales director	**446** e	412 e	1,215 e	1,114 e	Abrasives, acoustical insulation, adhesives, lighting, optical films, fasteners, safety equipment, catalytic converter mat mounts and insulation; filtration, tape attachment solutions, paint protection, paint replacement films, graphic films	101
102	**Mark IV Automotive** (248) 853-8300	1955 Enterprise Drive Rochester Hills, MI 48309	Dennis Welvaert president	**445** e	433 e	873 e	801 e	Power transmission products, air intake manifolds, fuel and fluid handling systems	97
103	**Tomkins PLC** (44) 20-8871-4544	East Putney House 84 Upper Richmond Road London SW15 2ST United Kingdom	Jim Nicol CEO	**443** fe	661 e	1,475 fe	1,272 e	Drive belts, synchronous timing belts, grease and oil pumps; hoses and connectors; oil & fuel caps; remote type pressure monitor systems, wiper systems	70
104	**Webasto Roof Systems Inc.** (248) 997-5100	1757 Northfield Drive Rochester Hills, MI 48309	Brett Healy president & CEO	**440** f	362	2,093 f	1,647	Sunroofs, large roof systems, convertible systems roof modules, vehicle pre-conditioning systems, power tonneaus	109
105	**Guardian Automotive Corp.** (586) 757-7800	23751 Amber Ave. Warren, MI 48081	D. James Davis president & CEO	**434** e	335 e	700 e	516 e	Glass, exterior trim	117
106	**Hutchinson SA** (33) 1-40-74-83-00	124 Avenue des Champs-Elysees Paris 75008, France	Pierre-Christian Clout chairman & CEO	**433** e	456 e	2,062 e	1,900 e	Anti-vibration products, fluid transfer systems, sealing systems, transmission systems	105
107	**Hayes Lemmerz International Inc.** (734) 737-5000	15300 Centennial Drive Northville, MI 48168	Curtis Clawson chairman, president & CEO	**430** f	443 f	2,047 f	1,702 f	Wheels	64
108	**Eberspaecher North America Inc.** (248) 994-7010	29101 Haggerty Road Novi, MI 48377	Dennis Berry president	**426**	308	2,660	2,200	Heaters, exhaust systems, silencers, catalytic converters, particulate filters	122

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109	**Siegel-Robert Automotive** (636) 305-2800	240 Larkin Williams Ind. Ct. Fenton, MO 63026	David Gilchrist CEO	**$426** f	$363 f	$426 f	$363 f	Grilles, door handles, nameplates, exterior trim, molding	108
110	**North American Lighting** (248) 553-6408	2277 S. Main St. Paris, IL 61944	Noriaki Yonezawa president	**422** f	440 f	3,833 f	3,384 f	Exterior lighting	90
111	**Key Safety Systems Inc.** (586) 726-3800	7000 19 Mile Road Sterling Heights, MI 48314	Jason Luo president & CEO	**410** e	441	1,000 e	1,025	Airbags, seat belts, steering wheels, electronics	94
112	**SKD Automotive Group** (248) 267-9670	1450 W. Long Lake Road, Ste. 210 Troy, MI 48098	John Chen president	**399** f	355	401 f	359	Bumper beams, control arms, pillars, wheel housings, crossmembers, skid plates, frame rails, quarter panel inners	113
113	**American Mitsuba Corp.** (810) 225-2458	1032 Karl Greimel Drive Brighton, MI 48116	Toshifumi Kohno president & CEO	**396** fe	492 fe	1,980 fe	1,757 fe	Sunroof motors, power slide door assemblies, power tailgate systems, wiper systems, starter motors, power window motors, fan motors	89
114	**Citation Corp.** (248) 522-4500	27275 Haggerty Road, St. 420 Novi, MI 48377	Doug Grimm CEO	**394** f	527 f	402 f	543 f	Chassises, transmissions, drivelines, engines, brakes, aluminum and iron cast and machined components	85
115	**PBR International USA Ltd.** (248) 391-8900	1797 Atlantic Blvd. Auburn Hills, MI 48326	Derek Hodgson president	**393** e	379 e	604 e	557 e	Aluminum and cast iron disc brakes; calipers and park brakes; brake corner modules, rotors	106
116	**AZ Automotive Corp.** (586) 880-2324	23745 Mound Road Warren, MI 48091	Terry Bernander president & CEO	**392**	413	392	413	Metal formed components, modules and mechanical assemblies	100
117	**J.L. French Automotive Castings Inc.** (920) 458-7724	3101 S. Taylor Drive Sheboygan, WI 53081	John Falcon president & CEO	**388**	360	485	450	Powertrain and engine components	110
118	**Freescale Semiconductor Inc.** (800) 521-6274	6501 William Cannon Drive W. Austin, TX 78735	Rich Beyer chairman & CEO	**382**	343	1,908	1,716	Semiconductors, microcontrollers & sensor products	–
119	**Remy Inc.** (765) 778-6461	600 Corporation Drive Pendleton, IN 46064	Jay Pittas president	**381**	264	568	394	Starter motors, alternators & hybrid drive systems	130
120	**SKF Automotive Division** (734) 414-6800	46815 Port St. Plymouth, MI 48170	Gregg Rasmussen vp car business, North America	**374** e	363 e	1,780 e	1,652 e	Bearings, seals, clutch assemblies, molded rubber products, drive-by-wire systems	107
121	**Kolbenschmidt Pierburg** (248) 836-3000	975 S. Opdyke Road Auburn Hills, MI 48326	Gerd Kleinert chairman	**371** e	385 e	3,090 e	2,750 e	Pistons, emission control products, oil/water pumps, engine blocks, manifolds, bearings	104
122	**Cadence Innovation LLC** (248) 457-4400	977 E. 14 Mile Road Troy, MI 48083	Jerry Mosingo president & CEO	**366** e	358	763 e	650	Instrument panels and cockpits; consoles, door panels and modules; interiors, hard trim, fascias, exterior plastics, cargo management airbag covers, door panels, door modules	112
123	**NHK International Corp.** (248) 926-0111	50706 Varsity Court Wixom, MI 48393	Ryuji Yashiro president & CEO	**363** f	359	3,626 f	3,261	Stabilizer bars, coil springs, seats and valve springs	111
125	**CRH North America Inc.** (205) 755-9994	2541 7th Street South Clanton, AL 35045	Michael Chupa CEO	**360** e	106	1,200 e	481	Mechanical structures, seat adjuster systems, steering column adjusters, powered seatbacks	–
124	**Omron Automotive Electronics Inc.** (248) 893-0200	29185 Cabot Drive Novi, MI 48377	Mike VanGendt president	**360** fe	315 fe	940 fe	841 fe	Electronic control units, keyless entry, switches, closure controls, laser sensors, relays, electronic power steering	120
126	**Total Interior Systems America** (812) 491-9100	1698 S. 100 West Princeton, IN 47670	Hiromi Harada president	**351** fe	372 f	351 fe	372 f	Interior seats, door panels	–

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127	**Novelis Corporation** (440) 423-6600	6060 Parkland Blvd. Cleveland, OH 44124	Kevin Greenawalt president, Novelis North America	**$350** e	$238 fe	$1,000 e	$700 fe	Aluminum sheets, body panels, finstock and brazing sheets, heat exchangers, foundry ingot for cast products	138
128	**Neaton Auto Products Manufacturing** (937) 456-7103	975 S. Franklin St. Eaton, OH 45320	Masayuki Furugori president	**330**	325	330	325	Steering wheels, interior trim, airbag modules, instrument panels, consoles, ventilators	115
129	**Wescast Industries Inc.** (586) 323-2278	6300 18 1/2 Mile Road Sterling Heights, MI 48314	Ed Frackowiak chairman & CEO	**314**	254	393	318	Cast iron exhaust manifolds, turbocharger	–
130	**Ogihara America Corp.** (517) 548-4900	1480 W. McPherson Park Drive Howell, MI 48843	Toshihide Saeki president	**314 e**	343 e	641 e	659 e	Stamped body parts, stamping dies, sheet metal body parts	116
131	**A.G.S. Automotive Systems** (416) 438-6650	675 Progress Ave. Scarborough, Ontario M1H 2W9 Canada	Joseph Leon & Joseph Loparco co-presidents	**300**	255 e	300	255 e	Bumpers, chassis and suspension systems; metal stamping	133
132	**Johnson Electric Automotive Motors** (734) 392-5300	47660 Halyard Drive Plymouth, MI 48170	Doug Eberle general manager	**289** f	263 f	1,157 f	1,051 f	Motion subsystems, actuators, motors, switches, solenoids	148
133	**Sanden International (USA) Inc.** (972) 442-8400	601 S. Sanden Blvd. Wylie, TX 75098	Kazuo Nishimura president & CEO	**287** fe	249 fe	1,592 fe	1,381 fe	Air conditioning compressors, HVAC component systems and solenid assemblies	135
134	**Shape Corp.** (616) 846-8700	1900 Hayes Grand Haven, MI 49417	Gary Verplank CEO	**286**	248 e	304	264 e	Bumper beams, xenoy energy absorbers, door beams, tubular frame members, single motor seat adjusters	136
135	**DAA Draexlmaier Automotive of America** (864) 433-8910	1751 E. Main Street Duncan, SC 29334	Martin Gall president & CEO, America	**285**	163	2,372	2,041	Interior components, cockpits, linings for roofs, doors and sides; center consoles, shift levers, trim elements, electrial systems, wire harnesses, optical fibers, night design, wipers, roofs, doors, seats, audio, engines, cockpits, functional integrated systems & modules	–
136	**Gentex Corp.** (616) 772-1800	600 N. Centennial St. Zeeland, MI 49464	Fred Bauer CEO	**284** f	252 f	630 f	548 f	Interior and exterior auto-dimming mirrors and advanced electronic phones for hands-free cell phones, and automatic high-beam headlamp assist systems	134
137	**Nissin Brake Ohio Inc.** (419) 425-6725	1901 Industrial Drive, P.O. Box 866 Findlay, OH 45839	Hideaki Yanagisawa CEO	**283** f	267 f	1,043 f	936 f	ABS, VSA, brake systems, knuckles, mounts, clutch master cylinders slave cylinders	128
138	**Clarion Corp. of America** (310) 327-9100	6200 Gateway Drive Cypress, CA 90630	Matt Matsuda president	**272** fe	265 fe	1,600 fe	1,100 fe	Audio systems, mobile multimedia and navigation systems; satellite and digital radio; rear vision camera systems, audio and entertainment systems; in-vehicle computing	129
139	**KEIPER LLC** (248) 655-5100	2600 Bellingham Drive, Ste. 100 Troy, MI 48083	Harald Arndt president & CEO	**246** fe	274 f	1,117 fe	1,193 f	Complete front and rear seat structures, mechanisms, recliners, locks, tracks, seat adjusters, active headrest	–
140	**UGN Inc.** (773) 437-2400	18410 Crossing Drive Tinley Park, IL 60487	Peter Anthony president & CEO	**245**	235	245	235	Acoustic insulation, interior trim, carpet, headliners, thermal management	139
141	**Pilkington North America Inc.** (419) 247-3731	811 Madison Ave., P.O. Box 0799 Toledo, OH 43697	Pat Zito CEO	**241** e	268 e	1,664 e	1,534 e	Glass products, glazing systems	126
142	**Trelleborg Automotive** (269) 637-2116	400 Aylworth Ave. South Haven, MI 49090	Peter Nilsson president	**238** e	288	883 e	800	Engine, suspension and exhaust mounts; thermal management, air suspension, gas springs, brake shims, boots, interior and exterior trim	123
143	**Karmann USA Inc.** (734) 582-5900	14967 Pilot Drive Plymouth, MI 48170	Erik Roeren CEO	**236** e	311 e	3,373 e	3,109 e	Convertible roof systems, body manufacturing	121

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144	**Illinois Tool Works Inc.** (847) 724-7500	3600 W. Lake Ave. Glenview, IL 60026	David Speer CEO	**$236** e	$404 e	$813 e	$708 e	Metal and plastic fasteners; components	102
145	**Inalfa Roof Systems Inc.** (248) 371-3060	1370 Pacific Drive Auburn Hills, MI 48326	Les Morrell CEO	**233** f	221	543 f	526	Roof systems, sunroofs, panorama roofs, truck hatches, roof prep and sheet metal	144
146	**Lacks Enterprises** (616) 949-6570	5460 Cascade Road S.E. Grand Rapids, MI 49546	Richard Lacks Jr. president & CEO	**233** e	256 e	291 f	324 f	Interior and exterior plastic trim, wheel trim products	132
147	**AGC Automotive Americas** (859) 334-8900	2300 Litton Lane, Ste. 100 Hebron, KY 41048	Tom Throop president	**233** fe	241 e	2,326 fe	2,192 e	Glazing systems	137
148	**Hyundai Mobis** (82) 2-2018-5114	679-4 ING Bldg., Yeoksam1-dong, Gangnam-gu, Seoul, 135-977 Korea	Chung Suk-soo president & CEO	**231** f	188 e	6,074 f	5,686 e	Chassis and cockpit modules; front end modules, ABS, MDPS, airbags	–
149	**Magneti Marelli Holding (USA)** (919) 775-6216	2101 Nash Sandford, NC 27330	Silverio Bonfglioli CEO	**230** e	278 e	4,995 e	4,970 e	Engine control systems, air and fuel systems; lighting instrumentation and electronic systems; shock absorbers, suspension and exhaust systems; steering mechanisms, engine dampers, instrument clusters	125
150	**Edscha North America** (248) 205-3704	2800 Centerpoint Pkwy. Pontiac, MI 48341	Darlene Knight president	**226** e	258 e	1,329 e	1,290 e	Hinge systems, door checks, sliding door systems, powered systems, parking brakes, pedal boxes, convertible tops, spare tire carriers	131

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