

## GM Plans \$190 Million Investment in Lansing Plant

LANSING, Mich. – General Motors last week announced a \$190 million investment in its Lansing Grand River assembly plant for the production of a new Cadillac model. The investment will create 600 jobs and result in the addition of a second shift.

"America's fastest-growing luxury brand this year is about to get even more competitive with the addition of an all-new small luxury car," said GM Chief Executive Officer Dan Akerson. "This investment demonstrates GM's commitment to Cadillac and to a strong U.S. manufacturing base."

The announcement brings the total of new U.S. investment to more than \$3.1 billion and more than 7,900 jobs that GM has created or retained in 21 U.S. plants since emerging from bankruptcy in July 2009.

Built in 2001, Lansing Grand River is GM's second-newest U.S. assembly plant and the manufacturing home of the Cadillac CTS and STS as well as their V-series performance versions. Earlier this year

Lansing Grand River received the J.D. Power and Associates Bronze Plant Award for initial quality.

Joe Ashton, UAW vice president of the GM Department, said, "Today's announcement is further proof of what UAW President Bob King said earlier this summer, 'The UAW recognizes the paramount importance of innovation, flexibility and partnership with management to respond to global economic pressures. We are proud to play our part in the turnaround at GM. Our mission is to make the highest quality products for the best base.'"

"The members of UAW Local 652 have consistently demonstrated that they can compete with any labor force on the globe," Ashton added. "The commitment, dedication, and hard work of GM's UAW members provide the foundation for the positive news coming from the company."

This year, the Lansing Grand River team launched the CTS Coupe, lauded by the

automotive press for groundbreaking design and outstanding performance. The Coupe extends the CTS line, which has been named to Car and Driver's 10 Best list for three straight years. It shares de-

sign cues with the CTS Sport Sedan, but the Coupe has a wider track, lower roofline and shorter length, giving it an aggressive stance and sleek, athletic profile, GM says.



PHOTO: JEFFREY SAUGER FOR GM

**GM CEO Dan Akerson, left, greets UAW President Bob King, far right, and other VIP visitors at the Lansing Grand River Assembly Plant during last week's product announcement.**

## Chrysler Trenton South Engine Plant Earns Kudos

By Jim Stickford  
Staff Reporter

Chrysler Group LLC was awarded Keep Michigan Beautiful's Michigan Plaque in recognition of the company's efforts to enhance the environmental quality of its Trenton South engine plant.

Trenton South builds the all-new Pentastar V-6 engine and was designed to be an efficient manufacturing plant while having a minimal environmental impact.

Keep Michigan Beautiful Inc. annually recognizes programs and activities that substantially contribute to environmental improvement, beautification, site restoration and historical preservation. About 10 Michigan plaques are awarded every year.

Eric Goedel, project and site manager – manufacturing and engineering, Chrysler Group LLC, said the Trenton, Mich., engine plant was designed in 2006, with construction beginning in 2007.

"The architect did a great job designing the plant," Goedel said. "When the blueprints for the new Trenton plant were drawn up, the plans incorporated more environmentally sustainable principles. That's the advantage of a new building. You can make it environmentally sound. You can still that with older buildings, but it's a lot harder and more expensive."

The 800,00 square-foot engine plant was built on an old parking lot, Goedel said. It is not connected with the nearby Trenton North Plant.

Goedel said people are often surprised at how much energy can be saved just by

making simple changes in the lighting. The bulbs aren't the older variety that to the newer fluorescent types. Putting in widows means on sunny days, natural light can shine in the plant, allowing them to turn off some lights.

"We were able to reduce lighting energy use from 1.3 watts per square foot to .54 watts per square foot," Goedel said. "That's quite a drop."

Chrysler used energy consumption figures provided by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) as a baseline to measure how much energy they were able to save by incorporating the latest efficiency designs and the best equipment.

The Trenton plant is 39 percent more efficient over ASHRAE's national standards, Goedel said.

The direct fire natural gas heaters are a little more expensive than indirect fire heaters, but are more efficient so they will save money in the long run, Goedel said. Indirect heaters are used in many commercial buildings, but don't burn the natural gas directly. They don't produce as much CO<sub>2</sub>, which makes ventilation easier. But because the Trenton plant is so large, they are able to ventilate it using monitors that indicate when to pump in fresh air, thus dispersing the CO<sub>2</sub> before workers are affected.

By planting hearty native plant and tree species, they have drastically reduced water consumption.

Earlier this year the plant was awarded a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold Green Building System certification from



**No, it's not a botanical garden. It's the outside of Chrysler's Trenton South engine plant, which has earned Keep Michigan Beautiful's Michigan Plaque for its environmental quality.**

the United States Green Building Council. It's the first auto engine plant in the world to achieve that honor, Goedel said. What's important to remember is that outside organizations are auditing the plant and determining how "green" it is. It's not Chrysler making claims.

"A lot of businesses are claiming to be green," Goedel said. "But it's often hard to see by what measurements those claims are being made. It's the third-party certification that shows you are what you say you are. The effort to get certified and meet outside standards also allows us to track and identify sustainable environmental features that were overlooked in the design stage."

The Trenton engine plant has been designated green by two independent groups, Goedel said. This is becoming the company's standard. At the same time Chrysler

built the Trenton plant, it were also building our Marysville, Mich., transaxle plant. The company is looking to get LEED certified as well, he said.

## New 2011 Dodge Journey Described As 'Cross Between Minivan and Car'

By Jim Stickford  
Staff Reporter

Chrysler Group LLC continues to introduce new products at a steady cadence with its recent unveiling of the 2011 Dodge Journey to the public.

The new Journey has been overhauled with a redesigned and retuned suspension as well as a new V-6 engine and revamped interior.

The navigation system, has undergone an upgrade through the all-new Uconnect Touch media center. Drivers will now have the choice of four different Utouch models, with all featuring easy-to-use controls and class-leading technology.

The touch-screen displays and touch-key categories make connecting and controlling personal devices simple, intuitive and customizable.

Dodge says the ride and handling has been improved through re-engineered suspension geometry, redesigned steering and new and improved premium tires.

Improvements have also been made to the vehicle's interior, starting with a one-piece instrument panel. Designers have softened the radius to make more room for the driver's knees.

The center console gets a lot of extra cushion on the tilt-and-slide armrest and there's a larger center storage bin with a 120-volt outlet and USB port where owners can attach their MP3/iPod charging connections and hide them away.

Bruce Belzowski, associate director of the automotive analysis division for the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, said he's always liked the Journey and was impressed with its storage space.

"The Journey is a nice cross between a minivan and a car," Belzowski said. "It fits the crossover niche well. It

## U.S. Auto Scene

– First Published in 1993 –

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AD DEADLINE: Thursday 5:00 p.m. for the next edition  
Ads@SpringerPublishing.com 586-939-5850 Fax - SPC Warren

William L. Springer II, Publisher  
Hal Watts, Local News Editor  
Debra Joswick, Ad Design  
Chris Zawislinski, Circulation

Springer Publishing Co., Inc. © 2010  
31201 Chicago Road South  
Warren, Michigan 48093  
586-939-6800

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## GM China Exports Its New Sail Car to Chile

SHANGHAI (AP) – General Motors Co. said last week that its Shanghai GM joint venture has begun exports of its Chevrolet New Sail, a small family sedan, to Chile and plans to expand such sales to other markets.

Major global automakers are just beginning to use China, the world's biggest vehicle market, as a low-cost manufacturing base for sales in other emerging markets. Demand inside this country has slowed in recent months, easing pressure on automakers to keep up with local orders.

"The New Sail is the first locally developed and manufactured passenger car from an international brand to be exported," Terry Johnsson, Shanghai GM vice president of vehicle sales, service and marketing, said in a statement. "It represents a breakthrough in our strategy to create products for China and other emerging markets."

GM, which holds a 49 percent stake in Shanghai GM, its flagship China joint venture with Shanghai Automotive Industrial Corp., said in the future it plans to sell the car elsewhere in Latin America,

North Africa and the Middle East.

The New Sail, which was launched earlier this year, has been retooled to suit the Chinese market.

About 90,000 were sold in January through September, making it a bestseller for its category, GM says.

GM has exported Chevrolet minivans to Peru and the original Sail to Chile. The company did not provide details on sales or shipments of those models in Latin America, or of its planned sales of the New Sail in other countries.

Many local Chinese manufacturers export vehicles, mainly to the developing world but in some cases to Europe and Russia.

Volkswagen AG's venture with SAIC has exported the Polo to Australia and Japan's Honda Motor Co. has been successfully exporting its Jazz compact car from China to Europe since 2005.

But, so far, China has not made much progress in achieving its ambitions to export to major developed markets, such as the U.S. and various counties throughout Europe.



**The overhauled 2011 Dodge Journey, with a redesigned and retuned suspension, as well as a new V6 engine and interior, was recently introduced to the public**

hasn't been as powerful as Dodge's mini-van, sales-wise, but it's done OK."

Belzowski said that while Chrysler has detailed the vehicle's 283 horsepower and 260 pound-foot torque, there was no mention of gas mileage.

"If they don't tell you what the mileage is, that's not a good sign," Belzowski said. "Both the government and the public are much more concerned about mileage these days, especially with gas hovering around \$3 a gallon."

Belzowski said the Journey plays an important role in Chrysler's portfolio by giving the company a competitive crossover.

## Tesla Occupies NUMMI

FREMONT, Calif. (AP) – Electric car maker Tesla Motors Inc. is unveiling the retooled California factory where it plans to produce its Model S sedan in partnership with Toyota.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein and Tesla CEO Elon Musk are expected to be on hand as the company shows off changes to the New United Motor Manufacturing Inc. (NUMMI) factory in Fremont.

Production of the sedan is not expected to begin until

2012, but Tesla spokeswoman Khobi Brooklyn says new equipment needed to make electric cars has already been brought in. She says about 70 workers have been hired.

The work force is expected to grow to around 1,200 when production reaches its peak.

NUMMI was a joint venture between General Motors Co. and Toyota Motor Corp. until the Detroit auto giant filed for bankruptcy last year.

## GM Develops Carbon Fiber Sunscreen

WARREN – In an effort to produce lighter, more fuel-efficient and better handling models, Chevrolet Corvette features advanced materials such as carbon fiber.

Until now, exposed-weave carbon fiber, one of the coolest looks for fast, hot cars, was unavailable to consumers because the sun degrades the material on the exterior surface.

In fact, materials experts thought that putting exposed carbon fiber on the outside of any retail car was nearly impossible. Painting over the carbon fiber was the only option.

But now all of that has changed due to an industry-first technology breakthrough: "sunscreens" for the Chevrolet Corvette ZR1.

"Everyone said it couldn't be done, and we were crazy for trying," said Mark Voss, senior design engineer for the ZR1.

Undaunted, Voss and his team worked for three years on their own time to develop a glossy, UV-resistant clear coat that allows exposed carbon fiber to be used on the body of the car.

It also shields the carbon fiber components from chips and scratches.

"Our challenge was finding a way to give our customers exposed-weave carbon fiber with the durability they have

come to expect from a Corvette," Voss said.

"Other automakers have opted for fake attempts at a carbon-fiber look. With the Corvette ZR1, we wanted to give customers the real deal."

Carbon fiber on the Corvette emerged from the technology transfer between the production Corvette and the Corvette C6.R that races in the American Le Mans Series. Carbon fiber reduces weight and improves stiffness compared to steel. Carbon fiber is approximately one-fifth the weight of steel and one-third the mass of traditional composite panels.



**The 2011 Corvette ZR1 will feature an exposed carbon roof thanks to a new technology that provides a sunscreen for the material so it doesn't degrade.**

tional composite panels.

That means a lighter, more fuel-efficient vehicle with a lower center of gravity for better handling on the road and on the race track.

For a consumer vehicle, exposed-weave carbon fiber, with its honeycombed appearance, offers the fuel efficiency of painted carbon fiber, but has a unique aesthetic.

The ZR1 features exposed-weave carbon fiber on the roof panel, roof bow, rocker moldings, front fascia splitter, and the underside of the hood.