

# Vertrek Stands Alone at Show

by Stefanie Carano  
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Ford Motor Co. recently released the Ford Vertrek Concept, a small concept SUV Ford Global Vice President of Product Development Derek Kuzak said is designed to meet the demands of global customers.

The new Vertrek Concept is based on Ford's C global compact platform and Ford said the vehicle offers more interior cargo space than its Ford Kuga (a European market vehicle) and as much cargo space as its Ford Escape.

Vehicle styling includes a panoramic roof, slimmer head and tail lamps, and the interior features tanned leather seats trimmed in fluorescent orange and a "swooping" center console that extends through the vehicle.

The concept is engineered to accommodate a variety of powertrains, including 4-

cylinder EcoBoost and diesel engines, though the actual vehicle features Ford's new 1.6L EcoBoost i4 engine.

This same engine will be available in the new C-Max model that comes to North America next year.

It also features auto start-stop and seamless restart-stop. These technologies turn off the engine when the vehicle is idle and restart the engine when it's ready to go.

"In heavy traffic, auto start-stop can reduce fuel consumption and CO2 emissions between 4 and 10 percent," Kuzak said.

To help the vehicle's battery cope with the start-stop system, the Vertrek also offers smart, regenerative charging, which keeps the battery charged by converting the vehicle's kinetic energy into electric energy during braking.

The Vertrek Concept is meant to exude both design and fuel efficiency.

The Vertrek, by the way, was the first Ford vehicle that U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow visited when she toured the Cobo Center auto show floor together with Ford President of the Americas Mark Fields and other senior Ford executives last Tuesday.

"Concept cars are moving from maybe 20 years out at just very conceptual, to more and more real-looking," said Ford's director of global electrification Nancy Gioia.

"So, a lot of the things you see on this vehicle and its capability in terms of opening up the interior, making it very spacious, all the connectivity, hands on the wheel, eyes on the road, all of these elements are fundamental to our (One Ford) strategy."



PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

Ford Vertrek Concept SUV

## Ford Economist Eyes Modest Global Sales Growth

by Stefanie Carano  
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The automotive industry is indeed in a growth industry, declared Ford Chief Economist Ellen Hughes-Cromwick.

Hughes-Cromwick spoke at the Jan. 9 meeting of the Society of Automotive Analysts (SAA) at Cobo Center, summarizing Ford's outlook for 2011 which predicts positive economic growth in many markets worldwide, leading to higher overall vehicles sales.

"We do expect global growth between 3 and 4 percent this year, the economic fundamentals really look favorable in most markets," Hughes-Cromwick said. "For example, we do expect a recovery here in the U.S. rising toward the 4-percent range."

In the U.S. in particular, she said, the 2011 tax cut package is very supportive of future growth.

"And many of you know that buried in the package is 100 percent-business expensing for businesses in 2011," she said. "In fact, it was retroactive to September 8 of 2010, and that should be supported, maybe back loaded this year, but should be very positive for commercial vehicle sales this year."

Hughes-Cromwick said that on the conservative side, the package could add as much as 50,000 units or more this year to commercial fleet, depending upon if small businesses in particular see the growth in their end-markets and take advantage of the 100 percent-business expensing.

She said Canada, Asia and

Brazil are projected growth-positive for the year, too.

"Many of you have seen the headlines in terms of rising interest rates, detained inflation in those markets, I think that's going to bring growth down from the very robust rates that we saw in '10, but still very strong," she said. "In terms of overall economic policy, still very supportive with low interest rates and, in some markets liquidity programs."

In Europe, she said, the outlook is mixed.

"We are seeing a lot of budget cuts in those periphery markets and restructuring at banks," she said.

In U.K., Germany, France and other markets, she said, still look to be in a growth mode, though she had concerns about the U.K. service sector.

"We're in a little bit of a transition in terms of the U.K. economy and we'll have to watch that very closely," Hughes-Cromwick said.

She said the global economy is reaching a dynamic phase, with incomes in many emerging markets reaching a very good level for affordability of vehicles.

The current phase of global economic development, she said, is actually within a 10-15 year, very special period in economic history.

"Where we see so many people worldwide reaching affordability on so many levels, when they want to buy a vehicle, they have the ability to do so," she said.

She mentioned a projection that predicts the number of potential drivers worldwide

to rise from 5 billion in 2009, rising to 5.7 by 2020.

"Mature markets, they're growing too, 5 percent growth in the decade representing about 14 percent of all drivers worldwide," she said.

The China and India markets, she said are experiencing 13-percent growth, representing 37 percent of all potential drivers.

Outside of the major markets, she said there are 50 additional markets - in countries such as Egypt, Romania, Belarus and Costa Rica - that are expected to experience strong growth in vehicle ownership as well.

Hughes-Cromwick said the company's global sales forecast for this year is somewhere between 75 and 85 million units of sales with a pretty strong distribution or share for Asia Pacific and Africa but good for the Americas with U.S. recovery and good remaining volume in Canada.

"That's a fairly wide range but, again, it highlights the fact that we are in a dynamic period and some of what may transpire this year will depend on policy," she said.

She said the anti-congestion policy in Beijing, for instance, will restrict the number of licenses in Beijing to



Ellen Hughes-Cromwick

240,000 from a registrations level in 2010 of about 800,000.

"So, those types of policies will have an impact on the sort of sales outcome that we're likely to see this year," she said.

In Europe mixed results are expected.

"Frankly, I think the austerity budget programs in the periphery markets is a part of the story - but more importantly what are the policy makers going to do to resolve the debt crisis, we don't know the answer to that yet," she said.

The SAA gathering at Cobo came on the Sunday evening prior to the first press day at the NAIAS auto show.

## Snyder Says Government's Role Is to Support Creation of Jobs With Tax, Regulatory Reform

by Stefanie Carano  
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Michigan's new Governor Rick Snyder said he's pleased with the progress made by the domestic automakers and the products they're offering customers.

Gov. Snyder talked with representatives of GM, Ford and Chrysler on Jan. 11, touring each company's exhibits, as well as that of other automakers during the press preview days of the North American International Auto Show.

"This is great. I appreciate the opportunity to see the wonderful things going on and hopefully we can respond by our role in making sure we create a great, competitive environment in terms of a tax regulatory environment, to make it easier for people to do successful business," Snyder said.

"We're actually using the auto industry in many respects as a good role model. A lot of the tools and things they've brought in over the last few years, we don't need to reinvent those things. How do we apply them to government so we can have metrics and measures to measure our success? So, you're going to see much more of that."

General Motors President for North America Mark Reuss, who demonstrated the Chevrolet Volt, Sonic, Camaro convertible Super Sport, Buick Verano and others during Snyder's visit to GM's exhibit, said the company just wants a fair shot when it comes to doing business in the state.

In showing the Sonic, Reuss said GM is the only manufacturer to actually make a car in the subcompact segment in Detroit for profit.

"We just introduced it here last night," Reuss said.

Snyder said a GMC Hybrid was his main vehicle during the campaign. They ran it hard and it worked great.

Touring Ford Motor Co.'s exhibit, Ford's Director of Global Electrification Nancy Gioia demonstrated the Transit Connect Electric, Focus Electric and the Vertrek Concept, among others.

Viewing the showfloor, Snyder remarked that Michigan Assembly is one of the "old line" plants and to have it reinvented is a great opportunity.

Touring Chrysler Group, which now includes the Chrysler, Dodge, Ram Truck, Fiat, Jeep and Mopar brand names. Snyder met with company CEO Sergio Marchionne, who demonstrated the Chrysler 200 and Jeep Grand Cherokee.

"It's a great tribute to Chrysler," Marchionne said of the 200. "We've got a lot of hope for this."

Gov. Snyder was invited to NAIAS by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. He said that the auto show is one of the true highlights of the state.

"So I appreciate all the hard work of the Detroit Auto Dealers Association and the people putting on the show," Snyder said. "It's just one of the great things that we have going and we're going to continue to be a showcase around the world because of their hard work making this event happen."

He said the reinvention of Michigan is a credit to the companies and the universities within the state.

"Not the fact that government is here," he said. "It is companies, it is innovators, it is entrepreneurs that are going to create more and better jobs of our future, and our role as government is to be a supporting player in that, to create the very best environment to make that happen and we are committed to that."

He said this will happen with tax reform, regulatory reform and having the very best economic development people in the world.

## CR Survey Says Ford Equals Best of Toyota

DETROIT (AP) - Ford Motor Co. has gained ground on rival Toyota Motor Corp. in the perceptions of car owners, according to a survey by Consumer Reports that is closely watched by the auto industry.

Toyota scored 147 points in the 2011 Car Brand Perception Survey while Ford received 144 points, a margin that the magazine called a "statistical dead heat." The magazine, which is widely read by car shoppers, said Ford had made strides in safety, quality and value, three key parts of the survey.

Toyota and Ford were followed by Honda Motor Co. with 121 points, General Motors' Chevrolet brand with 102 points and BMW with 93 points. Mercedes-Benz finished sixth with 90 points, followed by Volvo with 84 points, Toyota's Lexus brand with 69 points, GM's Cadillac brand with 66 points and Subaru with 50 points.

Toyota, the world's No. 1 automaker, has struggled with a series of high-profile safety recalls during the past year and Consumers said the survey reflected the recalls' impact on the company's image. Toyota had a substantial lead over Ford in last year's survey, the magazine said.

But the Japanese automaker, which sells the Prius hy-

brid, still held a significant lead over the competition for building environmentally friendly vehicles, helping it hold onto the top overall score.

Toyota said in a statement that that given the challenges of 2010, "we expect that some public perception of Toyota's longstanding reputation for quality and reliability might be influenced in the short term. Other indicators are showing that we've turned the page and we anticipate regaining leadership in this very important and influential survey in the very near future."

Ford scored highest for value and was among the leaders in several categories, including safety, quality and environmentally friendly considerations.

Ford spokeswoman Kristen Kinley said the survey offered more proof that "consumers are recognizing and responding to the quality that is built into every Ford vehicle. The gap between the true quality of Ford products and the public perception of that quality is closing."

The magazine said the scores were based on a survey that looked at consumer perception of each brand in safety, quality, value, performance and design/style.

## 'We're Bringing Leading-Edge Technology' - Bill Ford

by Stefanie Carano  
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Ford is moving into 2011 with a plan that opens the highways to all mankind, offering a new line of electric, hybrid and advanced internal combustion engines meant to move the world into the future of vehicle ownership.

"Once again, Ford is doing the same thing my great grandfather did with the Model T," said Ford Executive Chairman Bill Ford, Jr. "We're bringing leading-edge technology to the market on a larger scale."

"We're offering a range of electrified vehicles because we recognize that our customers will have a range of needs that can't be satisfied finding one solution."

"In addition, we're doing everything we can to make these vehicles as affordable as possible. We have the flexibility to build what works best for any region in the world and to ramp up production quickly if demand exceeds our projections."

Ford made his remarks at the Ford Motor Co. press conference, held at Cobo Arena on the first press day of NAIAS last week in Detroit.

Ford said the Escape Hybrid and Fusion Hybrid were the first phase in its electrification plan and the company is now moving into the next phase, which includes a complete family of electrified vehicles, all created by electrifying Ford's global C car platform.

The C-Max Hybrid comes to North America in 2012 and is targeted to deliver more miles per gallon than the Fusion Hybrid, which, according to

Ford, is the company's most fuel-efficient mid-sized sedan in America. The Fusion Hybrid currently offers 41 mpg in the city.

The C-Max Energi will be the company's first plug-in hybrid-electric and will offer more than 500 miles of overall driving range, which is more, Ford said, than any other plug-in or extended-range electric vehicle.

The Focus Electric, which is scheduled to be launched this year as a 2012 model, is the company's first emissions-free, battery electric passenger car.

Ford said these new vehicles join Ford's Transit Connect Electric, available to fleet customers. With these new vehicles coming to the market, Ford said the automaker is doing everything it can to make it easy for customers to embrace fuel-saving technology.

"As executive chairman at Ford, I'm proud that our company is leading the way," Ford said. "I'm pleased this is just one of the steps we're taking to a cleaner, greener, healthier future."

Ford CEO Alan Mulally said today Ford has moved from fixing the fundamentals of its business to profitably growing globally and taking every element of its business to a world-class level.

"As Henry Ford knew well, we earn business growth by serving our customers with the very best products and services," Mulally said.

He said nowhere is the company's growth more dramatic than in Asia Pacific and Africa, where the company has invested more than \$4 billion in the past five years.

He said the growth for Ford

is not just about emerging markets - the company is just as enthusiastic to serve customers in established markets and expand into new segments with its new line of global products.

Finally, it's always amusing to notice that when the formal Ford press conference breaks up, both Ford Chair-

man Bill Ford and CEO Alan Mulally get mobbed like proverbial rock stars by reporters seeking supplemental quotes and comments. So it was onstage at Cobo Arena, where both Ford's lineup of cars and its lineup of senior executives these days, kept the scribes scribbling away for seemingly hours at a time.



PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

Ford Chairman Bill Ford, Jr., answers a question following the Ford press conference at the Cobo Arena stage last week.