



PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

Visitors check out the 3.5L/V6 engine display stand inside the Ford pavilion at the SAE Congress in Detroit last week.

SAE Congress Draws 10,000 Engineers

by Gerald Scott
Editor
U.S. Auto Scene

They came, they saw, they engineered.

So it was as an estimated 10,000 engineers and related auto industry professionals descended upon Cobo Center in Detroit last week for the 2011 SAE Congress.

The show has shrunk over the years in about the same proportion that the auto industry itself has shrunk – from 30,000 visitors a decade ago down to 10,000 now, but SAE International organizers are grateful all the same.

Thanks to ongoing support from major corporate sponsors like Ford Motor Co. last year and General Motors this year, the SAE Congress appears to now have a much brighter and more stable future than coming off the challenges of 2008-09.

Detroit Mayor Dave Bing gave the welcoming talk to attendees inside the AVL Theater at Cobo Center.

Cobo, of course, was where Bing played when he was an

NBA star guard for the Detroit Pistons back in 1966-74.

Bing made parallels to Detroit's comeback and the SAE's own persistence.

"Contrary to what you may hear or what you may read about the city of Detroit, about Michigan – I think things have bottomed out and we're about to come back," Bing said.

"As we look back at the last several years of the automotive industry and the struggles that they went through, it was very difficult for us, in

this area, to see two of the largest corporations on a global basis have to file for bankruptcy.

"The devastation it caused throughout our country, but more specifically to South-eastern Michigan and here in Detroit, was a very tough thing to deal with. They were able to come out of bankruptcy in a very short period of time.

"Now that the industry is starting to get its feet under them, things are starting to bloom, things are starting to

get better."

The only minor surprises on the show floor was that, although Chrysler had a number of executives, managers and engineers participating on various SAE panels, Chrysler Group did not have pavilion, booth or floor presence, even though Ford and GM did. Likewise, the TARDEC engineering llab didn't have any Army trucks on display like they have had in the past.

But otherwise, it can safely

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New '11 5.0-Liter Ford Mustang Among The Industry's Last Passenger Car V8s

by Gerald Scott
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What with all the talk at the recent SAE Congress about downsizing engine displacements, let's celebrate for a moment the 2011 Ford Mustang GT.

You know – the car that still proudly carries the "5.0" emblem on the side.

Now one of the last passenger cars at Ford and even across the Big Three with a V8 engine, it's worth discussing and debating if only because V8s seem to have been demonized in the current rush to paint the auto industry ecological green. That's even though the 5.0/V8 in the Mustang nonetheless delivers an impressive 25 mpg hwy. and 18 mpg city driving.

The 2011 Ford Mustang GT arrived on the scene with an all-new 5.0-liter V8 engine, developed by a passionate team of engineers who rallied around the common goal of delivering more than 400 horsepower along with best-in-class fuel economy and driving fun.

Complementing those goals, a pair of new six-speed transmissions – one manual and one automatic – take advantage of the flexibility and fuel economy benefits of having six forward ratios, helping Mustang GT give powerful launches while also delivering relaxed cruising with exceptional fuel economy.

Chassis enhancements help improve the outstanding balance and driving behavior Mustang owners expect. Damper tuning and spring rates were revised to provide a smooth highway ride, while new rear lower control arms and firmer stabilizer bar bushings improve stiffness and handling for better cornering response over the highly praised 2010 model.

"The overall refinements to Mustang are really brought to

life by its new engine," said David Pericak, Mustang chief nameplate engineer.

"The car benefits from better handling, better braking and more refinement, and now it's powered by a high-tech 5.0-liter V8 that Mustang enthusiasts and new customers alike are going to love."

The modern 5.0-liter four-valve Twin Independent Vari-

able Camshaft Timing (Ti-VCT) V8 engine in the new Mustang GT will deliver 412 horsepower and 390 ft.-lb. of torque. At the same time, fuel economy is projected to be better than the previous model and unsurpassed in the segment.

"This all-new 5.0-liter engine is the next chapter in the

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Gearheads are pleased to see that the Ford Mustang hasn't yet succumbed to the auto industry urge to downsize all powertrains in all instances. The 2011 Mustang, to its credit, comes with a 5.0L V8 engine that generates 400 h.p. – enough vroom to keep the pony car market happy.



Ford launched a nostalgic new national advertising campaign last week aimed at urban audiences.

Focus Customers 'Excited About Thrill of the Drive'

DEARBORN – Do you remember that warm, fuzzy feeling you had when you pedaled your first bicycle, minus the training wheels?

Ford is looking to spark that memory and many other childhood experiences as part of the launch of a new urban advertising campaign tied to the new Ford Focus, called, "Inner Child," that debuts on BET and TV One.

"After engaging with some of our target customers for Focus, we found that a great deal of them had a childlike reaction to the driving experience of the Focus," said Shawn Lollie, Ford manager, Multicultural Marketing. "They were extremely excited about the thrill of the drive."

"We wanted to find a way to combine this excitement with some of the key technologies and features of the Focus in a way that emotionally connected the consumer to the car."

The TV spot, shot in Los Angeles, starts off with a young girl learning how to ride a bicycle years before she is shown all grown-up and driving her new Ford Focus.

The young woman shows off her MyFord Touch Driver Connect Technology, and tells

her friend that her new Focus gets 40 mpg. The spot also finds her reverting back to her younger self through her voice as she highlights the features of the Focus.

The fully integrated campaign includes TV, radio and print ads as well as a digital execution on www.fordurban.com. The campaign touches on both the Smart and Green Ford brand pillars, which were particularly important to the target customer of the Focus.

The radio spots will air on the Tom Joyner Morning Show, Steve Harvey Morning Show and on Radio One stations across the country. The TV ads will appear on BET and TV One, while the print ads will be featured in Essence, Upscale, Vibe, Sister 2 Sister Magazine, Juicy and Rolling Out.

"The Focus has a dynamic design, cutting-edge technology and the ability to not only keep you connected to your world, but also provide you with a driving experience that brings out your 'inner child,'" said Lollie. "At the end of the day, our goal was to show the driving experience in a way that sparked an emotional connection to the vehicle."

CAR's McAlinden Discusses Ways that Product Mix is Affected by Gas Prices

by Gerald Scott
Editor
U.S. Auto Scene

Alas, the recovered Motor City is still a work in progress.

That was the general conclusion of Dr. Sean McAlinden of the Center for Auto Research (CAR), who spoke at Wayne State about Michigan's recovery from the worst automotive industry downturn in 70 years.

The lecture, entitled, "Michigan's Auto Recovery and the Role of Advanced Transportation Infrastructure," was also wisely subtitled, "Not All the Way Back . . . Michigan's Auto Industry in Recovery."

With gas prices now hovering at \$4 nationally, McAlinden of course discussed how this would impact automaker product mix and so forth.

During Q&A, he also tackled the persistent if thorny question about why the U.S. auto market has never embraced passenger car diesels with quite the same fervor that the Europeans have.

"Direct fuel-injected, modern diesels give the French, already, 46 mpg for their fleet average," McAlinden said in pointing out the advantages of using diesel. "But many cars are 60 mpg in the B class, Fiats and Peugeots and the like.

"Here's an obvious solution to reducing our dependence

on oil, (but) the answer is we still have a lot of environmental objections to diesel, particularly in California.

"The Europeans have ignored particulate emissions and especially NOx emissions – nitrous oxide.

"In other words, to reduce greenhouse gases by improving fuel efficiency, they've actually increased the amount of emissions of nitrous oxide, which is the primary ingredient with sunlight, to produce smog.

"That's why Europe appears to be more Americans to be smoggy – because all these diesels are running on the road.

"The other point (in the U.S.) is that diesel is not cheap. It's anywhere from 50 to 90 percent more expensive than a gasoline motor. Frankly, the Europeans bet on diesel, the Japanese on hybrids and the American government bets on nothing."

Although McAlinden modified that observation to include that the Obama administration is effectively betting on electric cars because there wasn't anything else left in the auto-industrial portfolio to bet the proverbial farm on.

Otherwise, McAlinden was reasonably optimistic about the domestic auto industry's chances, but he pointed out that the industry's recovery from the challenging events of

2008-09 was still a work in progress.

Other highlights are as follows:

- U.S. auto sales are expected to increase 16 percent this year over sales in 2010, and another 11 percent by 2013;

- Michigan auto manufacturing employment is expected to increase this year by 15 percent compared with 2010, and by another 17 percent by 2012;

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PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

Dr. Sean McAlinden from the Center for Auto Research (CAR) gave a briefing about the domestic auto industry's ongoing fortunes at Wayne State University in Detroit last week.

Ford, AAA Host Student Auto Skills Competition

by Gerald Scott
Editor
U.S. Auto Scene

Mix the support of Ford Motor Co., a bunch of Ford Mustangs, 10 sets of teenagers and AAA Michigan's Dearborn office and what do you get?

Well, if you were at Macomb Community College's athletic fieldhouse in Warren last week, you sure got the annual Ford/AAA Auto Skills Contest and competition.

The popular event drew 20 juniors and seniors from 10 high schools and tech centers across Michigan April 13, all to challenge each other in the annual competition among teens to de-bug 2012 Ford Mustangs.

Each two-student team raced the clock to correctly identify and fix intentionally installed bugs on otherwise identical 2012 Ford Mustangs, lined up in a row in the college fieldhouse.

After properly diagnosing and repairing their respective vehicles, teammates must then drive their assigned vehicle across the finish line, where the car was inspected

for accuracy and workmanship.

"In an economy where drivers are looking to extend the lives of their cars through maintenance and repair, the need for skilled automotive technicians is strong," said Marcia Wright, Automotive Services Director at AAA Michigan.

"The Ford/AAA Student Auto Skills competition helps fund automotive education for talented students and prepares future automotive professionals for promising careers in the automotive repair industry – possibly even with Ford or AAA."

Speaking of Ford, the Dearborn automaker provides the lion's share of the necessary ingredients to make all this happen, including a small fleet of 2012 Mustangs together with various service personnel and professional engineers who served as judges and support staff on the day of the event in Warren.

Leading field support for the Auto Skills competition was Tim Pancioli, technical meeting specialist, Technical Support Operations/SEO in the



PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

Student high school teams competed to debug identical 2012 Ford Mustangs in the Ford/AAA Auto Skills Contest last week.

Ford Customer Service Division. Pancioli works in Fairlane Business Park III, which is very near the Detroit Lions training facility in Allen Park.

"With the move to online information, pretty much a Ford

technician today uses web-based information – our service information is all on the web, it allows us to keep it up-to-date," Pancioli said. "I mean,

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