

Ford, Unifi Team to Reuse Plastic Bottles in Focus, Fusion Seats

by Irena Granaas
Special Writer

According to a 2011 Web posting by Corporate Accountability International (www.stopcorporateabuse.org), U.S. consumers discard more than half-a-billion empty plastic water bottles each week, enough to circle the Earth five times.

Ford Motor Company is stepping up to find a productive second life for about 2 million of these bottles.

In partnership with Unifi, Inc., the automaker will help collect these discards as raw material for REPREEVE seat fabric, initially for the 2012 Ford Focus Electric.

Manufactured by Greensboro, N.C.-based Unifi Inc., the REPREEVE process creates a sturdy, comfortable seat fabric made with a hybrid blend of fibers from a mix of discarded plastic PET

(polyethylene terephthalate) bottles and other consumer waste products.

"We estimate that in the Focus Electric and later on in the Fusion we're going to be using this material," said Ford spokesman Eddie Fernandez.

"We've estimated that at least 2 million bottles will be recycled just on the seat fabrics alone, so, if you break that down a little bit more, about 22 plastic bottles go into each vehicle to span the amount of fabric."

Fernandez said Ford is getting consumers involved in the recycling effort with special collection bins for plastic bottles at the recently concluded North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) in Detroit and the Consumer Electronics Show (CES), held in Las Vegas.

"Ford puts on these huge events at NAIAS and at CES," he said. "We're drawing some-

times tens of thousands of people to our booths and our exhibit areas to try to get them understanding what Ford is doing, especially from an environmental perspective, and . . . that's a great opportunity to educate folks, but it's also a great opportunity to help be part of the solution . . .

"By having the bins there with a great visual, showing, 'Look, if you recycle your plastic bottle here with us in our booth area, or at one of our facilities, or one of our dealerships . . . this is a great way you can actually be part of the process . . .

"It's kind of a nice tie-in to say, 'Look, if you were ever to come back and buy a Focus Electric or a Fusion, what you're recycling today could be ending up in a car that you'd be driving.'"

Bett Anderson, corporate marketing manager for Unifi,

Inc., said Ford and Unifi collected "several large bags" of between 1,000 to 2,000 plastic bottles at NAIAS and CES.

"It's a slow start, but we just have to start the education process. Ford and REPREEVE are committed to recycling and sustainability, and this launch of the program is only the start."

Fernandez said, "What we're doing at Ford is to broaden the conversation a little bit, to get people to realize you don't need to be an early adopter or someone who's super technologically advanced, or wealthy or what-not to enjoy an electric vehicle."

"So, part of our job at Ford is to bring these vehicles to the masses and educate people."

Unifi stands to take many millions more plastic bottles out of American landfills and reuse them in advanced prod-

ucts. "We're very excited to be working with Ford on this initiative, and it's very rewarding to see another company take sustainability as seriously as Unifi does," Anderson said.

Ford is touting the Focus Electric, Ford's first all-electric passenger car, as being the first vehicle with interior materials comprised of 100 percent "clean" technology, with use of REPREEVE fibers being just one example.

Fernandez said the all-electric Focus will produce no harmful emissions, uses oil refined from soybeans to produce the car's seats, cushions, carpeting and moldings; and uses other bio-materials in its interior – for example, waste from processing wheat is used in the Focus' bin, plastic parts and center console.

"Ford is committed to delivering vehicles with leading



Consumers can conveniently recharge their Focus Electric using the Ford 240-volt at home charging station, available at major retailer Best Buy. The car can be fully recharged in as little as three to four hours.

fuel efficiency, etc."

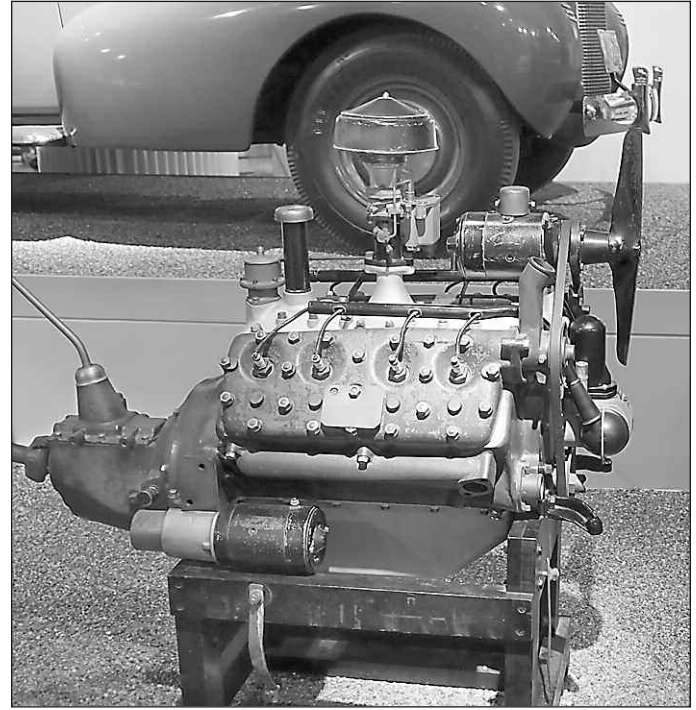


PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

The new "Driving America" exhibit at the Henry Ford Museum contains more detail than imagined. Here, the 1932 Ford V8 engine gets its due as the first such car engine able to "democratize speed and power" when employed in a less expensive model.

'32 Ford V8 Accelerated Powerful Engine Revolution

by Gerald Scott
News Dept.

That new "Driving America" exhibit that opened at the Henry Ford Museum recently isn't just about cars.

It's also about engines, transmissions and other pieces of the larger auto industry puzzle.

One interesting case in point is the 1932 Ford V8 engine, on display by itself to illustrate how that particular powerplant actually helped to rev the car industry during the depths of the Great Depression.

Under the title, "Democratizing Speed and Power," the exhibit says that "from the beginning of the automobile age, luxury cares featured powerful engines with many cylinders while inexpensive cars did not."

"The 1932 Ford V8 changed all that. It was the first V8 engine light enough and cheap enough to put in an inexpensive car like a Ford."

"It made Fords some of the fastest cars around and raised buyers' expectations about the kind of performance even the cheapest (less expensive) cars should provide."

Another history of the engine says that The Model B was a Ford automobile with production starting with model year 1932 and ending with 1934. It was a much updated version of the Model A and was replaced by the 1935 Ford Model 48.

The history adds that, strictly speaking, the Model B was a four-cylinder car with an improved version of the engine used in the Model A, but Ford also began producing a very similar car with Ford's new flathead V8 engine. The V8 car was marketed as the Model 18, though it is commonly called the Ford

V8, and, other than the engine, is virtually indistinguishable from the Model B.

Up to this time, Ford had produced only one "model" at each time with a range of body options and retained the idea of a single basic platform, despite the engine choice and two associated model designations.

(This explains why the colloquial name, "Ford V8," by itself was sufficiently descriptive in the early 1930s; it was the Ford with a V8, unlike in later decades, when the paradigm of various models to a make became universal.)

Model B and Model 18 Fords came in a large variety of body styles: two-door roadster, two-door cabriolet, four-door phaeton, two-door and four-door sedans, four-door "woodie" station wagon, two-door Victoria, two-door convertible sedan, Panel and sedan deliveries, five-window coupe, a sport coupe (stationary softtop) and the three-window Deluxe Coupe. Prices ranged from US\$495 for the roadster and the coupe's \$490

to the \$650 convertible sedan.

Clyde" drove.

The Museum display further notes: "The 1932 Ford with the V8 cost between \$460 and \$600, depending on options. Its closest price competitor with a V8 engine was the 1932 LaSalle – which cost four times as much, at \$3,295."

Finally, let's not forget that gangster Clyde Barrow once wrote a personal letter to Henry Ford, praising the performance of what was believed to be a 1932 Ford V8 getaway car that "Bonnie and

"While I still have got breath in my lungs I will tell you what a dandy car you make. I have drove Fords exclusively when I could get away with one. For sustained speed and freedom from trouble the Ford has got ever other car skinned and even if my business hasn't been strictly legal it don't hurt anything to tell you what a fine car you got in the V8 – (signed, Clyde Champion Barrow)."

The Driving America exhibit opened on Jan. 29.

Chrysler Eyes Future of Its Stalwart Minivans

By TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) – The chief executive of Chrysler – which invented the minivan – says people don't really like driving them.

But with kids, they have to. That attitude has hurt sales and will keep growth very low in coming years, says Sergio Marchionne. But Chrysler is trying to make the minivan more appealing.

Marchionne, 59, discussed the vehicle and other topics at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit. His remarks are edited for length and clarity.

The Minivan's Future: Sales of the versatile people haulers began falling in 2000 when they became passe. And Marchionne thinks the market will grow by only a small amount in the coming years.

"People buy minivans because they have to," Marchionne says. "We've determined that it's a question of utility and necessity, otherwise people don't want to be driving minivans."

Chrysler must upgrade its vans on quality, fuel efficiency and appearance, with better engines and transmissions, he says.

Chrysler showed off a minivan concept at the auto show in Detroit: the sleek-looking 700c. It looks more like an ultra-modern Ford Explorer than it does a minivan. But it still has sliding doors for entry into the rear seats.

Already the company has fixed brake problems and made the interiors nicer on its Chrysler Town & Country and Dodge Caravan vans, but Marchionne says that's not enough. The next generation needs to be totally reinvented.

"We can light-weight the structure, we can deal with suspensions, we can deal with the powertrains, transmissions – all that stuff, in a relatively short period of time," he says. "We need to get there a lot faster than I thought."

Marchionne expects to have a version of the 700c to test-market early in the

spring. A revamped van can reach showrooms by the end of next year, he says.

Future Sticker Shock: Hybrid vehicles will become more common because of government requirements that America's car and truck fleet get 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025, he says. That will lift overall prices because hybrids typically cost several thousand dollars more than conventional cars.

"Fifty-plus miles per gallon by 2025 is something which cannot be achieved," with the combustion engine, he says.

But when hybrids become more prevalent, economies of scale will drive down costs. They will never eliminate it.

Village Automotive Repair

COMMERCIAL ACCOUNTS WELCOME – "FREE SHUTTLE"

FREE ❄️
Winter INSPECTION ❄️

FREE
Battery Check

AMSOIL Full Synthetic
OIL CHANGE \$60
5 QTS. · MOST CARS & TRUCKS

ACDelco
BATTERIES
Sold Here

RENTAL CARS & TOWING AVAILABLE

GM DEALER CERTIFIED TECHS

31470 Mound Rd. Warren
East side of Mound 2 blocks North of 13 Mile
1-586-275-2777

Tech Center News
DETROIT AUTO SCENE

NOW HIRING
Advertising Sales
and Service Rep.

Send your resume or
a letter by email to
Jobs@TechCenterNews.com

Tech Center News
DETROIT AUTO SCENE

a credit union in your corner...

Cornerstone still offers
FREE CHECKING!

Free Mobile Banking | Free E-Alerts | Free Visa Debit Card

Locations in:
Troy
Auburn Hills
Somerset
Center Line
Perrysburg

www.CCFinancial.com
800-777-6728

NCUA

CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY FINANCIAL
in your corner.