

SAE Panel Says Industry Is On The Right Track

by Gerald Scott
News Dept.

More good than bad. That was the summary from one speaker about what the auto industry is facing of late at the annual SAE State of the Industry dinner at the San Marino Club in Troy last week.

Speaking were Dr. David Cole from the Center for Automotive Research, Neil DeKoker of the Original Equipment Suppliers Association (OESA), Anthony Pratt, director of Forecasting at R.L. Polk and automotive journalist Jason Stein.

Sponsored by the SAE Detroit Section, the annual dinner event allows local experts to offer their view of where the overall industry, OEMs and suppliers are heading into the new year.

Speaker DeKoker, from the supplier lobby, put things in a good-bad-ugly perspective.

"The good things that are happening certainly outweigh the bad and certainly the ugly as we see it today - you see all the optimism that's in the room," said DeKoker.

"Production volumes are certainly good things, break-even points are still a very good thing.

"Some of the bad stuff is: raw material pricing, volatility and availability are a growing concern in our industry . . . operational constraints, capacity availability and so forth, to meet customer demand . . . and the 'ugly' is certainly the war on talent - there's a tremendous shortage of people in our industry with the skill sets needed to get the job done."

Cole, chairman emeritus from CAR in Ann Arbor, echoed this theme, pointing out that the current and future retirement of the Baby Boomers from the U.S. auto industry will have a destabilizing effect for years to come.

He said that the days of leaving high school for a well-paying auto assembly line job in Detroit are over - that the minimum education level on the line now is a two-year college degree, and as assembly gets more complex, blue collar training and education will grow in proportion.

"If you look back at the last couple years, we now have very good reason for optimism," said Cole.

"It doesn't mean that life is going to be easy or fun all the time. We talked about a recession, having a recession in the economy (from 2008-2010).

"In the auto industry, this was not a recession . . . what we have been in, and are still in today, is an Auto Depression.

"So when you put that into context, where you see profitability in manufacturers and suppliers. It's really amazing that this industry has done such a remarkable thing in the last couple of years.

"Taking the break-even point (in annual car sales) from 15 million down to 10.5 million. Unbelievable change in a very short period of time. Keep in mind that we're still at a Depression level of sales in this business."

All things considered, the SAE panel was remarkably optimistic about the current and near-future fortunes of the auto business.

MVP Eli Manning Drives Home in Corvette Convertible

INDIANAPOLIS - Chevrolet, the official sponsor of the Super Bowl XLVI MVP Award, presented New York Giants quarterback Eli Manning with a 2012 Corvette Grand Sport Convertible Centennial Edition in recognition of his tremendous effort on the field in the Giants' 21-17 win over the New England Patriots.

A media panel and fan vote on www.superbowl.com determined the MVP Award winner, announced during the Super Bowl Postgame Show on NBC, presented by Chevrolet.

The Corvette Grand Sport Convertible sports car features a 6.2-liter small-block V8, with 436 horsepower and 424 pound-feet of torque.

Chevy says the convertible is capable of accelerating from 0-to-60 mph in less than four seconds, and reaching more than 1g of cornering force.

For 2012, all Corvettes are available with the black-on-black Chevrolet Centennial edition, commemorating 100 years of Chevrolet history.

The Super Bowl MVP receives the Pete Rozelle Trophy, a silver trophy made by Tiffany & Co., and the Corvette Grand Sport Convertible.

Chevrolet went big on Super Bowl Sunday with five new ads, including a first-of-

its-kind music video with the new Sonic subcompact and the band, "OK Go."

"The Super Bowl is a huge opportunity for Chevrolet to connect with millions of consumers - before, during and after the game - with our ads and digital extensions," said Joel Ewanick, global chief marketing officer, General Motors. "At the core of our efforts are great Chevrolet cars and trucks.

"The Sonic and 'OK Go' partnership is the perfect match-up of an innovative small car with a band known for its unique videos and musical interpretations," said Ewanick.

"The Sonic was built to be fun to drive and the 'Needin'/Getting' music video highlights its agility, power, and spaciousness."

In the music video, the four members of "OK Go" are shown in a specially equipped Sonic, driving through a race course lined with musical instruments and other homemade sound-generating objects.

The car is used to play the instruments along the route with devices attached to the body panels, as well as to the wheels and tires. The sounds generated along the course make up the music in the song.

"We always strive to find a new path with our music and



2012 Super Bowl MVP Eli Manning, right, receives the keys to a new 2012 Corvette Grand Sport Convertible Centennial Edition from sports caster Dan Patrick after leading the New York Giants to a 21-17 victory over the New England Patriots.

our videos, so it's really great to partner with a company like Chevrolet that is willing to push boundaries to connect with their audience, too," said Damian Kulash, Jr., lead vocalist for "OK Go."

"They gave us free reign to indulge our deep-seated stunt driving fantasies and we're thrilled that they liked the results enough to incorporate our video into their Super Bowl plans."

In addition to the music video, Chevrolet debuted two other ads for the Sonic and one each for the Volt electric vehicle with extended range and Silverado full-

size pickup.

Also airing during the telecast was the Chevrolet Route 66 Contest winning ad, "Chevy Happy Grad," created by 26-year-old Long Island resident Zach Borst.

Finally, because it was a close game with the lead changing several times in the third and fourth quarters, NFL experts say that the competitive game is one of the main reasons that advertisers were drawing as many as 111 million viewers with two minutes to play in the game. During blowout games, viewer dropoff is usually precipitous.

Hundreds Turn Out for 'Driving America' Kick-Off

by Gerald Scott
News Dept.

The Henry Ford threw a big party to open its new "Driving America" exhibit in Dearborn and simply everybody was there.

Guests visiting the big kickoff party at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn included Bill and Lisa Ford, Gov. Rick Snyder and his wife Sue, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and many, many more.

The party was held the night prior to the new exhibit's public opening on Jan. 29 and heralded the opening of the new exhibit that replaces the earlier "Automobile in American Life," which had debuted in the mid-1980s.

So, hundreds of visitors turned out for the kickoff event, which even included the Detroit Roller Derby girls dressed as 1950s roller-skating car hops. Suffice to say a grand time was had by all.

One of the largest automotive-centric exhibitions of its kind, "Driving America" is a sweeping 80,000 square feet and includes 130 vehicles and more than 60 cases of artifacts.

Sprinkled throughout the experience are 18 interactive, 42-inch touchscreens offering thousands of additional details, images, videos and oral histories, all of which give the visitor greater access, beyond the museum floor, to the collections of The Henry Ford.

"Driving America" is more than an exhibition with cars on display," said Patricia Mooradian, president of The Henry Ford.

"It is really an interactive, state-of-the-art story of us - us as drivers, consumers and enthusiasts.

"It examines the car as an innovation and explores how it has changed almost every aspect of our lives and heavily influenced the decisions we make.

"It is an exhibition that resonates with us all and it will challenge us to think differently about what we drive."

Guests can create their



The Jumpers Orchestra provided the entertainment at the kickoff party for the new "Driving America" exhibit at the Henry Ford Museum.

own custom collection that can be accessed through their mobile device or home computer for viewing later.

"We wanted to develop content around what the visitor was seeing," said Mooradian.

"All of the interactives are designed to be learning experiences and activities that utilize artifacts from the extensive Henry Ford collection."

For those who are all about the cars themselves, "Driving America" offers up a stellar and unprecedented collection of some of the most important and significant vehicles of our time, including an 1896 Duryea, the last remaining example of America's first production car, the 1865 Roper, the oldest surviving American car, and the 1931 Bugatti Royale, the third of only six ever built in the world.

Century-old electric cars, current hybrids, muscle cars, racers and modern-day SUVs fill the exhibition's 20 focal areas that cover everything from hot rods and road trips to road food and racing.

"What makes this exhibition different from most is that it looks at cars through the eyes of the people who use them, or in some cases, don't use them," said Bob Casey, senior curator of transportation for The Henry Ford.

"Visitors will be asked to think about what attracted them to automobiles in the first place."

"Driving America" gives The Henry Ford a new signature collection for millions of annual visitors to view. That's on top of its IMAX Theater, which rotates three major films for viewing on a regular basis. The joint is jumpin,' as they say.

The Changing Weather... Means Changing Footwear

- Waterproof & Insulated
- Work & Sport
- Professional Fitting
- Wide Widths In Stock



M-F 10-8; Sat. 10-5; Sun. 12-4

SHELBY TWP.
13989 Hall Rd.
(NE. corner of Schoenherr)
586-566-9600

RED WING SHOE STORE

STERLING HEIGHTS
33289 Mound Rd.
(N. of 14 Mile Rd.)
586-264-4500

HOUGHTON LAKE AREA GETAWAY



HOT TUB, FIREPLACE, KING BED... is awaiting you at the Springbrook Inn. All rooms offer a 6x6 hot tub, fireplace, king size bed, private bathroom & Cable/DVD. A hot breakfast is served to your room & dinner pkgs. avail on some nights (\$129-\$229). The Frog Tiki Bar is open on Thursday, Friday & Saturday (Trivia Thursday every week).

Ask about romantic extras & specials or visit us online at www.springbrookinn.com or call 800/424-0218. 3 hours from Detroit • One mile E. of Houghton Lake on M-55.

Winter Fun Fest!

ON BEAUTIFUL LAKE HURON IN CASEVILLE, MICHIGAN

Shanty Days 2012

Feb. 17th-19th

Jager Girls, Murder Mystery, Pool Tournament, Polar Bear Dip, Broom Ball, Potty Trotty, Human Bowling & Much More!!

Top 40 DJ & Dancing Call for Room Rates & Reservations

989-856-2650 bella-caseville.com

INDEPENDENCE AUTO REPAIR

Full Service American Owned & Operated
★ We Have Tires ★ We do all factory scheduled maintenance!

OPEN: Mon-Fri 7:30 am-6pm, Sat. 8am-3pm

28775 Van Dyke • Warren 15075 32 Mile Rd. • Romeo
12 & Van Dyke 586-751-4440 Corner of 32 Mile & Powell Rd. 586-336-4440

Trans. Flush w/ cleaner & additive. Includes 17 qts. transmission fluid. \$99.99 w/ cleaner & additive. Inclu. 3 gal. of Coolant. In-store offer good through 2-29-12	Full Service Oil, Lube & Filter Change w/ Tire Rotation \$179.99 \$26.99 In-store offer good through 2-29-12	Front End Alignment \$39.99 4-Wheel Alignment \$79.99 Camber & Caster Adj. Additional	Ceramic Brake Special \$99.99 Includes pad installation. In-store offer good through 2-29-12	10% Off Parts to All GM Employees w/ Badge. In-store offer good through 2-29-12
---	--	--	--	--

JIM DOUGLAS AUTO SALES

Serving Metro Detroit customers since 1975

Top \$\$\$ paid for your vehicle

Great selection of vehicles for sale!

Come To You -or- Shuttle Available

248-332-8326