

# GM's Numbers Are In: \$7.6B Profits, \$7,000 Checks

by Gerald Scott  
News Dept.

For a company that almost went belly up three years ago, GM's annual earnings numbers for 2011, announced last week, were pretty impressive, after all.

GM said that it earned \$7.6 billion in profits for calendar year 2011, an all-time high figure for the 103-year old Detroit automaker.

GM's earlier best was back in 1997 when it pulled down \$6.7 billion – but that was in an era when it was buoyed by large truck and SUV sales.

GM is now positioning itself as a carmaker relative to being a truckmaker in the 1990s.

GM further said its revenues increased 11 percent to \$150.3 billion, compared with \$135.6 billion in 2010. Full-year earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) adjusted was \$8.3 billion, compared with \$7.0 billion in 2010.

"In our first full year as a public company, we grew the top and bottom lines, advanced our global market share and made strategic investments in our brands around the world," said Dan Akerson, chairman and CEO.

"We will build on these results as we bring more new cars, crossovers and trucks to market, and make GM a far more efficient global team. This includes reducing our break-even level in Europe and South America and driving higher revenues around the world."

Auto analysts said that GM's profits were largely concentrated in North America and China, while Opel in Europe continues to struggle.

Strong earnings also allowed GM to announce \$7,000 bonuses for its hourly employees, the largest annual bonus payout in GM-UAW history. In the late 1990s, Chrysler's UAW employees enjoyed similar-sized bonus checks but most domestic auto industry bonuses shrunk severely following 9/11.

Meanwhile, a reasonable analysis of GM's 2012 market outlook was offered by Alec Guitierrez, an analyst with Kelley Blue Book.

"GM has plans to continue to grow sales in the U.S. in

2012, while maintaining their current market share position," Guitierrez said.

"In 2011, GM maintained 19.6 percent share of all sales overall, an improvement over 2010's 19.1 percent, but down from the 23.5 percent share GM maintained in 2007. We believe that while GM may continue to improve their sales overall in 2012 along with the industry, they will likely lose market share on increased competition.

"Ford, Chrysler, Toyota, Honda, Hyundai and Volkswagen have been releasing top-quality products during the last several years and GM will have a difficult time maintaining their edge in market share with so many strong offerings competing with every vehicle they produce.

"Not to say that GM is uncompetitive, in fact, their current portfolio of vehicles is on par with the best the industry has to offer in most cases.

"If January gives us any indication of things to come (GM claimed 18.4 percent market share in January), GM will likely end the year with market share in the mid to high 18 percent range, potentially a full percentage point below their strong 2011 performance," Guitierrez added.

"In 2011, GM benefitted from Toyota and Honda's lack of inventory that resulted from the earthquake in Japan, and with Toyota and Honda

back up to full production capacity, GM will likely give back some of that gained share. With sales expected to surpass 13.3 million units in 2012, there will be plenty of opportunity for GM to continue to grow its business; however, with the industry more competitive than ever, they will need to continue to invest in new product innovations to remain competitive in today's sales environment."

Still, GM is buoyed by cus-

tomers acceptance of its current popular products.

GM ended the year with strong total automotive liquidity of \$37.5 billion compared with \$33.5 billion at the end of 2010.

"We are executing an aggressive product plan that will give customers around the world even more reasons to purchase a General Motors vehicle," said Dan Ammann, senior vice president and chief financial officer.



*Seth Valentine, Chevrolet Sonic Quality Manager, at the Tonto National Forest in Arizona. Over one six-week period, Valentine drove more than 14,000 miles in the first Sonic to leave the General Motors Orion Assembly Plant in Orion Twp.*

## From Florida Sun to Mountain Snow, Sonic Gets 14,000-Mile Punishing Test

DETROIT – There are miles and then there are "Seth miles."

Both measure 5,280 feet, but a "Seth mile" is different. More extreme. More grueling. More punishing. All that rigor is part of the durability story of the 2012 Chevrolet Sonic.

"Seth miles" are named for Chevrolet Sonic Quality Manager Seth Valentine. Each mile Valentine puts on a test vehicle is called a "Seth mile" by Sonic engineers because of his reputation for extreme testing on long road trips.

Valentine's duty: Make the Sonic the most reliable and durable small car in North America.

The efforts are paying off as Sonic more than doubled the sales of its predecessor, the Aveo, in January. Sonic is the only subcompact built in the United States.

Over one six-week period, Valentine drove more than 14,000 miles in the first Sonic to leave the General Motors Orion (Mich.) Assembly Plant.

Valentine drove Sonic Vehicle Identification No. 1 from

north to south and east to west, across subtropical Florida, the arid deserts of Arizona, the mountains of Colorado, and the South Carolina low country.

In addition to amassing miles with other Sonic team members, Valentine would play typical consumer and pack the Sonic to the hilt for a family vacation.

Valentine's attention to technical detail makes him a road warrior with a cause.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

## Kid Rock to have Four Vehicles on Display at 2012 Autorama Show

by Jennifer Knightstep  
Special Writer

There's a familiar low rumble in metro Detroit this week as America's greatest hot rod show, Autorama, revs up at Cobo Center, opening to the public Feb. 24-26.

With a long list of celebrities on hand for photos and autographs, more than a thousand souped-up hot rods and custom classic cars, a rockabilly band, and a pinup calendar girl contest, this year's Autorama has a little something for the whole family – all that's missing is a petting zoo.

"On this the 60th anniversary of Detroit Autorama, we are jam-packed with legendary hot rods, special events and celebrity appearances," said Bob Larivee, Jr., CEO of Championship Auto Shows, Inc., producers of De-

troit Autorama.

Headlining the array of hot rods are four vehicles owned by Detroit native Kid Rock, the 1960s Bubbletop Mantaray by designer Dean Jeffries, the BASF 1957 Mercedes Gullwing designed by customization star Chip Foote, Charley Ryan's original "Hot Rod Lincoln" mentioned in the Commander Cody song, and the Chevy Camaro from the "Transformers 3" movie.

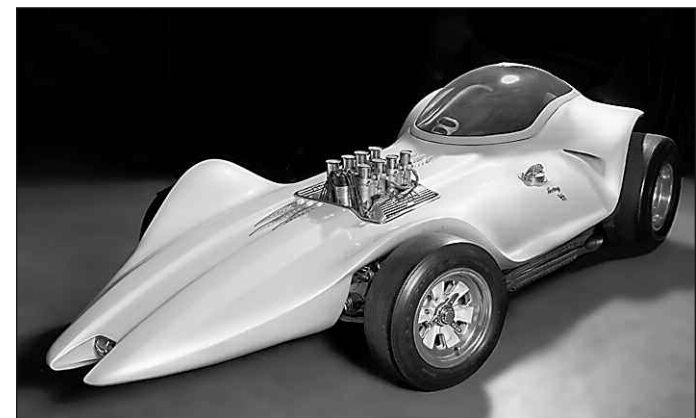
Also featured will be a long list of pop culture icons, such as WWE Superstar Rey Mysterio, Deena "The Blast" Nicole from MTV's "Jersey Shore," Austin Russell (aka "Chumlee") from the History Channel's "Pawn Stars," Billy Bretherton, from A&E's "Billy the Exterminator," Nick-

elodeon's SpongeBob SquarePants, and (for the pre-teen girl set) Zendaya Coleman, who plays Rocky Blue in Disney's "Shake It Up."

There truly is something for everyone at this year's event. Vintage race car fan? Check out the "Drag City USA" feature. El Camino enthusiast? The "Cowboy's Cadillac" exhibit, featuring 10 custom 1950s El Caminos and Rancheros, can't be missed.

Considering a career in the growing field of automotive customization? Sign up to participate in this year's Autorama Student Career Day, highlighted by keynote speaker Chip Foote.

Supporter of Leader Dogs for the Blind? Be sure to have a peek at the Motor City



*The Manta Ray bubble top, a custom car from the early 1960s, will be on display at Autorama in Detroit from Feb. 24-26.*

Mavens 2012 Auto Art Panel Jam and Charity Auction benefiting Leader Dogs for the Blind, featuring outrageous pinstripe art from across the

country. Of course, there are also the more than 1,000 one-of-a-kind hot rods and classic cars on display at Cobo Center.

## Simplicity Drives GMC's 'IntelliLink' Offering

DETROIT – The 2012 GMC Terrain smaller SUV's standard Color Touch Radio is now available with IntelliLink, which provides smartphone connectivity and voice activated control of the audio system. Simple commands initiate a phone call, change a station, stream internet radio, and even control an iPod.

IntelliLink's interface is designed to be used with two hands on the wheel as often as possible, and its layout was created with specific emphasis on minimizing distractions. Here are some other important things to know about the system:

Like most smartphones, the IntelliLink homescreen is configurable. An array of icons for phone, radio, and other functions mimics the displays of popular mobile devices, and each icon can be shifted or removed, based on the driver's needs and wants.

IntelliLink has icons for popular internet radio providers Pandora and Stitcher for Bluetooth streaming through a smartphone, Pandora listeners can give a song a "thumbs-up" or "thumbs-down" through Terrain's seven-inch touchscreen.

Most of IntelliLink's features can be controlled through a hands-free voice control system powered by



*Most of GMC's new IntelliLink telematics features can be controlled through a hands-free voice control system powered by Nuance. Drivers can place a phone call, play an artist, or tune to a radio station without their eyes leaving the road.*

Nuance. Drivers can place a phone call, play an artist, or tune to a radio station without their eyes leaving the road.

An MP3 player isn't required to play music through IntelliLink.

Owners can bring their music collections into the car by plugging a USB flash drive into a port in the center console.

Album art and artist information for songs playing from a device are displayed on Terrain's color touch screen.

The Gracenote data that allows this also makes voice activation more conversational, identifying nicknames like "The Boss" or "The Stones" or "The Floyd" for Pink Floyd.

## Chrysler SRT Delivers Two 'Ferrari-Style' Jeeps

AUBURN HILLS – Custom-built versions of the high-performance Jeep Grand Cherokee SRT8 feature exclusive Rosso Corsa colored exteriors, red leather interiors and additional Ferrari looks pay tribute to the two Ferrari "ambassadors."

The vehicles are the first two 2012 Jeep Grand Cherokee SRT8 models to be delivered in Europe where the introduction of the high-performance model of the Jeep flagship SUV will start in May.

Both vehicles were prepared by Chrysler Group's Street and Racing Technology (SRT) design and engineering teams in Auburn Hills.

Last week, two specially prepared models of the new 2012 Jeep Grand Cherokee SRT8 – the most powerful and best handling Jeep vehicle ever – were delivered to Scuderia Ferrari Formula One drivers Fernando Alonso and Felipe Massa at the Fiorano circuit in Maranello, Italy.

The identically built vehicles were handed over to the two star drivers by Beth Paretta, Director of Marketing and Operations – SRT Brand and Motorsports, Chrysler Group LLC.

Each Jeep Grand Cherokee SRT8 features an aggressive exterior look with an SRT-exclusive design, which adds classic Ferrari brand styling cues and the unmistakable Rosso Corsa signature color.

The iconic, seven-slot Jeep front grille is painted matte black and features custom red inserts. A race-inspired, offset

black driver's stripe with a white accent customizes the front and rear bumpers, hood, the entire surface of the roof and the rear spoiler.

Additional exclusive details include a matte black painted dual-pane sunroof, Carbon fiber mirror caps and a gloss black rear light bar with red accents on the Jeep logo. To complete the unique exterior trim of the two custom-built SRT8 models, the Italian flag has been painted on the underside of the rear spoiler: a tribute to the Ferrari F150 degree Formula One car.

Ride height has been lowered 1.5 inches and both vehi-

cles ride on unique forged aluminium, 20-inch wheels painted black giving them an even more aggressive stance.

In line with the vehicle's custom exterior, the interior cabin is enhanced by exclusive Ferrari Red leather inserts on the seats with sculpted bolsters.

Also the door trim panels, the central armrest and the instrument panel boast exclusive red leather. The leather-wrapped SRT8 steering wheel with mounted paddle shifters features red contrasting stitching. The unique instrument cluster features yellow dials which give the cabin the

look of the GT cars produced in Maranello.

The Jeep Grand Cherokee SRT8 is powered by the all-new 6.4-liter HEMI V-8 engine with Fuel Saver technology that turns off four of the eight cylinders when full power is not required to ensure increased fuel economy.

Thanks to the powerful HEMI V-8 powertrain delivering 470 horsepower and 465 lb.-ft. of torque, the SRT8 model achieves benchmark performance of 0-60 mph in 4.8 seconds, 0-100-0 mph in the mid-16 second range, can cover the quarter mile in the mid-13 second range.



*Beth Paretta, center, Director of Marketing and Operations – Street and Racing Technology (SRT) Brand and Motorsports, Chrysler Group LLC, delivered two specially prepared models of the new 2012 Jeep Grand Cherokee SRT8 to Scuderia Ferrari Formula One drivers Fernando Alonso, left, and Felipe Massa, right, at the Fiorano circuit in Maranello, Italy. Both one-off vehicles were prepared by the SRT design and engineering teams in Auburn Hills.*