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Michelle Killen, lead creative designer, GM color and trim studio.

Sonic Designers Like Baseball, Hot Dogs, Orange Chevrolets

WARREN – Inferno Orange is the second-most requested color for Chevrolet Sonic hatchbacks, accounting for nearly one in five dealer orders and signaling a new color trend in the subcompact market. Its popularity trails only the ever-popular black hatchback.

Pantone named PANTONE 17-1463 Tangerine Tango the Color of the Year for 2012, recognizing orange's widespread appeal and prominence.

Taking cues from the fashion, architecture and furniture industries, Sonic's design team monitored color to identify hues with longevity that best fit the Sonic attitude.

"Fashion houses can quickly jump on the latest color craze, since their products are designed for shorter life spans, but long-lasting Chevy vehicles must feature colors that will remain attractive and on-trend for multiple years," says Michelle Killen, lead creative designer in the color and trim studio and exterior paint expert at General Motors Design.

"We had a strong feeling that Sonic's Inferno Orange would hit the trend at the per-

HFCC Is Host of Manufacturing Event on Aug. 8

DEARBORN – Henry Ford Community College will host "Filling the Skills Gap in Manufacturing: New Learning Tools & Opportunities," an event showcasing the College's manufacturing workforce program at the M-TEC Building located at 3601 Schaefer Road in Dearborn.

This event runs from 2-4 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 8, followed by a reception.

The College continues to collaborate with various partners, including Ford Motor Co., to create the next generation of manufacturing programs across the country. These programs have been designed by the Automotive Manufacturing Technical Education Collaborative (AMTEC), which is sponsored by the National Science Foundation (NSF).

Gary Saganski, director of HFCC's Corporate Training Division, said that for the past three years "We have been building new targeted and flexible educational tools for manufacturing maintenance with colleges and automotive companies through NSF/AMTEC."

"We are working to fill the gaps that exist in applied manufacturing higher education. Companies have new technology and new manufacturing processes, and this has necessitated the need for new types of educational products. Our programs will be designed to address that," Saganski added.

White, Silver Cars to Fade as Blues, Greens Return

By Gerald Scott

For all of the improvements made by the OEMs, car programs still necessarily run on about three-to-five-year development cycles.

That's why a supplier like BASF Automotive Coatings is currently reporting to their auto customers on paint trends looking ahead already out to 2016.

BASF has announced the results of its latest automotive color trend report. In the report, BASF color experts from North America, South America, Europe, and Asia provide a forecast of the automotive colors of the future.

Results from this year's report show future colors will be "naturally cultivated" with nuanced berry and copper tones, along with natural colors such as brown, blue and green.

"Although popular staple colors such as silver, black and white can make up approximately 50 to 80 percent of current production, there is a rich diversity of potential shades that is returning to the market," said Paul Czornij, technical manager for the BASF Color Excellence group. "The increasing inclination of society to celebrate beauty in earth tones and more traditional green and blue hues is the basis for this trend."

In recent years, the color green has hardly played a role on the roads, yet in four to five years, the color is predicted to become more popular. Similarly, white, silver, and gray will gradually wane in popularity at the expense of more saturated colors like blues and browns.

"There are signs from automakers and consumers that the desire for more color on the roads is continuing. We will be tapping into further color spaces, such as bronzes and emeralds," says Mark Gutjahr, head of Design for BASF in Europe.

"The continued high value assigned to the notion of ecology may now again be signified by the color green."

Indeed, automakers equating the color green with the

notion of eco-friendliness and increased fuel economy began as a western notion that will likely sweep globally in the next several years.

The topic of sustainability continues to be on the radar, attracting attention to not only the environment, but also the everyday world.

Finding novel ways to use materials, simplifying lifestyles, and having a closer focus on daily experiences are the main inspirations for this trend.

"The innovation that arises from this mindset nurtures a stronger awareness for things great and small, which in turn raises social responsibility,"

said Czornij.

"Colors are being developed that evoke this sense of purpose, stretching the aforementioned blue, green, and browns into both strong and subtle tones."

What's more, modern communication technologies are triggering huge changes. Setting the tone are phenomena such as the increasing "de-materialization" of technology.

In the future, technology will be less tangible in a haptic sense, and instead, will be increasingly more intuitive. For example, smart phones use a touch display instead of a keypad.

"We are observing new nar-

ative and haptic qualities in many areas. Heavy substances, striking surfaces and expressive materials such as wood and stone create a stronger emotional connection to the world we live in.

"In the automotive world, this means that we can expect more intensive colors and bolder effects," said Corinna Sy, designer at BASF Coatings Europe.

"The new colors are expressive, but not blatant, like a good story." With dark berries, intensive browns and coppers, along with radiant emeralds, BASF designers anticipate powerful color experiences further on the roads.



Paul Czornij, technical manager, Color Excellence Group at BASF Corp. in Southfield.

Roush Sells 100 Propane Units to DHL

PLANTATION, Fla. – DHL Express, an international express services provider, has announced the launch of 100 pickup and delivery vans fueled by clean, safe and economical propane autogas.

The new Ford E-250 cargo vans, each equipped with a Roush CleanTech-dedicated liquid propane autogas fuel system, will be on the road by late August 2012 and will support DHL Express pickup and delivery service within Cali-

fornia, Florida, Georgia, Missouri and Texas.

"Customers in the U.S. and worldwide are increasingly demanding greener logistics and sustainable business procedures," said Ian Clough, CEO of DHL Express U.S.

"Initiatives like our all 'green' fleet in Manhattan and this propane autogas fleet not only lower our DHL carbon footprint, but are a smart, clean and cost-effective choice for our business."

The new alternative-fuel vehicles join other propane vehicles already operating for DHL Express in Ohio, Tennessee and Louisiana. They all complement Deutsche Post DHL's GOGREEN program and its target to improve the company's worldwide carbon efficiency 30 percent by 2020, using 2007 levels as a baseline. Through the use of propane autogas, each alternative fuel vehicle saves over 22,587 pounds of CO2.

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