Detroit's Automakers Taking the Competition for a Ride

Cherokee, Charger and Challenger Brands Scoring Well with AutoPacific

AUBURN HILLS – The Jeep Grand Cherokee, Dodge Charger and Dodge Challenger are winners of AutoPacific's 2012 Ideal Vehicle Awards based on owners' ratings of their 2012 cars and trucks.

"Winning awards for Jeep and Dodge vehicles based on customer feedback is very gratifying," said Doug Betts, Senior Vice President – Quality, Chrysler Group. "Recognition by the customers proves we take consumer input very seriously in all the vehicles we design and build at Chrysler."

The Ideal Vehicle Awards are based on owner ratings of 15 key attributes of their 2012 vehicles after 90 days of ownership. Measures evaluated by customers include power and acceleration, ride and handling, interior roominess and cargo space. More than 75,000 vehicle owners were surveyed by AutoPacific and were asked if they would change characteristics of their vehicles.

Praised for its smoothness on-road, the 2012 Jeep Grand Cherokee claimed top honors in the Mid-Size SUV category. Jeep Grand Cherokee is the most-awarded SUV ever and delivers premium on-road performance while maintaining the Jeep brand's legendary four-wheel-drive, torque-on-demand two-speed transfer case and towing capability. It offers a driving range of more than 550 miles, superb on-road ride and handling, a world-class interior cabin, more than 45 safety and security features, and a variety of advanced technology features.

Contributing to Grand Cherokee's class-leading capability is the combination of Jeep's Quadra-Lift™ air suspension system and the Jeep Selec-Terrain™ traction control system that lets customers choose the 4x4 setting for the optimum driving experience on all terrains. The 2012 Jeep Grand Cherokee is available with three 4x4 systems, and with either a 290 horsepower Pentastar 3.6-liter V-6 or an available 360 horsepower 5.7-liter V-8 engine.

According to owners, the 2012 Dodge Charger is the Ideal Large Car. Approximately 90 percent or more of Charger owners rated the Charger's exterior size, passenger roominess, cargo space, ride and handling and ease of getting in and out of the vehicle as ideal. A great majority of owners, 80 percent or more, also appreciate the Charger's interior lighting, driver's seat comfort, tires, interior storage compartments and safety features.

In addition to its iconic Dodge styling and spacious, finely crafted, easy to access interior, the Dodge Charger offers performance that is unmatched in its class. Charger features the award-winning Pentastar 3.6-liter V-6 engine with an available eight-speed transmission that delivers the ultimate combination of power and fuel efficiency with 292 horsepower and up to 31 miles per gallon. It also features the available 370 horsepower 5.7 HEMI V-8 engine.

The 2012 Dodge Challenger, which took top honors as the Ideal Vehicle for Sporty Cars, delivers more of what enthusiasts want – a more powerful and efficient engine lineup, maximum grip with a performance suspension design and athletic styling – all executed with quality and precision. It's unlike any other car in the way that it allows customers to customize their classic American muscle car.

The 2012 Dodge Challenger combines world-class ride, refinement and braking performance with more power and new track-tuned suspensions to deliver a thrilling driving experience. With its award-winning 3.6-liter Pentastar V-6 engine producing 305 horsepower – 55 more horsepower than the engine it replaced – the 2012 Dodge Challenger SXT is the most powerful, refined and technologically advanced entry-level Challenger ever.

Orion-Made Sonic Places Third On Kelley's Back-to-School List

DETROIT – The Chevrolet Sonic is one of KBB.com's top picks for its 10 Best Back-to-School Cars, placing third on the list. The Chevrolet Cruze was a top pick in 2011.

"Sporty design, vibrant colors, lots of space for friends and even that cool name make the Sonic hatchback and sedan attractive to younger drivers," said Jack R. Nerad, executive editorial director and executive market analyst for Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com.

"Their parents, meanwhile, will be keen on this subcompact's outward visibility, easy-to-drive manners, good fuel economy and eager (but not overwhelming) engines."

Starting at $14,495, the Chevy Sonic is the only subcompact built in the United States. The Sonic comes with the most standard safety equipment in the subcompact class, including 10 air bags, and has earned an Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) Top Safety Pick and a 5-star overall vehicle score for safety from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The Sonic is produced at the GM Orion Assembly Center along with the Buick Verano. The plant was retooled recently to support the manufacture of these cars on behalf of GM.

Note that the Sonic's Ecotec 1.4L turbocharged engine delivers an EPA-estimated 40 mpg on the highway and 138 horsepower (103kW) – 18 horsepower (14KW) more than the Ford Fiesta.

Meanwhile, founded in 1926, Kelley Blue Book is the only vehicle valuation and information source trusted and relied upon by both consumers and the industry.

Each week, the company provides the most market-reflective values in the industry on its top-rated website www.kbb.com, including its famous Blue Book Trade-In and Suggested Retail Values and Fair Purchase Price, which reports what others are paying for new cars this week.

The company also provides vehicle pricing and values through various products and services available to car dealers, auto manufacturers, finance and insurance companies as well as governmental agencies.

KBB.com provides consumer pricing and information on cars for sale, minivans, pickup trucks, sedan, hybrids, electric cars, and SUVs.

Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com ranked highest in its category for brand equity and was named Online Auto Shopping Brand of the Year by the 2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend study. Kelley Blue Book Co. Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of AutoTrader.com.

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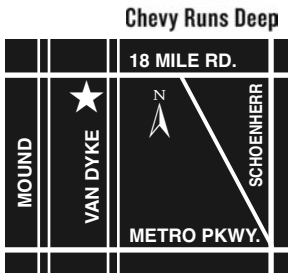

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