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All-Time Sales Record for Dodge Journey Boosts Chrysler

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Chrysler Group brand for the month. August marked Chrysler Group's 29th consecutive month of year-over-year sales gains.

The Dodge brand produced three record-setting models while registering the largest sales volume of any Chrysler Group brand in August.

The Dodge Journey full-size crossover set an all-time sales record while the sporty Dodge Avenger mid-size sedan and Dodge Challenger muscle car each set a sales record for the month of August.

The FIAT, Chrysler and Jeep brands also produced record-setting models in August. The Fiat 500 set an all-time sales record with its 34 percent sales gain while the Chrysler 200 mid-size sedan and the Jeep Wrangler established sales records for the month of August.

"Our Iron Man streak continued

last month as we posted our 29th consecutive month of year-over-year sales growth," said Reid Bigland, president and CEO - Dodge Brand and head of U.S. Sales.

"Our hard work over the past few years is starting to pay some dividends in our sales growth, quality awards and profitability. Not to mention, an incredibly resilient U.S. new vehicle sales industry doesn't hurt either."

Chrysler Group's 14 percent increase in August was driven in part by sales of the new Dodge Dart compact sedan (3,045 units). Dart sales were up 294 percent in August compared with the previous month of July, as the Belvidere, Ill., assembly plant continues to ramp up Dart production.

Meanwhile, the Chrysler 300 flagship sedan, with its substantial 65 percent increase, contributed to Chrysler Group's August increase, as did the Chrysler

Town & Country and Dodge Grand Caravan minivans, each posting double-digit percentage gains for the month.

The Jeep Grand Cherokee, with a 13 percent hike, had its best August in six years while the Ram pickup truck extended its lengthy streak of consecutive

year-over-year sales gains with a 19 percent increase in August.

Chrysler Group finished the month with a 66 days' supply of inventory (362,407 units). U.S. industry sales figures for August are projected at an estimated 14.6 million units Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate (SAAR).

Hot Fusion, Escape Lead Ford's August Sales

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fuel efficiency and the power to choose which vehicles meet their needs."

Ford also added a third crew at the Louisville Assembly Plant in August to support demand for the new Escape small utility - still the fastest-turning vehicle in Ford's U.S. lineup in spite of another recall. Escape posted its best August sales results ever, a 37 percent gain versus last year, with 28,188 vehicles sold.

The Escape was completely redesigned for the 2013 model year, leaving its earlier, boxier exterior styling behind in favor of curved lines and the public continues to respond to it in kind.

Meanwhile, the Explorer posted its best August sales results since 2006, with 13,168 vehicles sold.

Note that Ford passenger car sales were up 7 percent in August, including 35 percent in retail sales. Fusion posted a sixth consecutive monthly sales record, with best-ever August sales totaling 21,690 vehicles - a 21 percent increase over last year.

Focus sales totaled 19,073 vehicles, a 35 percent increase versus last year. And Mustang posted a 12 percent increase, with 6,387 units sold.

Also, sales of Ford trucks in-

creased 6 percent in August. America's best-selling vehicle, the Ford F-Series, reported sales of 58,201 vehicles - a 19 percent increase, year over year - for its 13th straight month of sales increases and its best sales month of 2012.

EcoBoost-equipped F-150s surpassed the 200,000 sales threshold in August.

In addition to reporting August sales, Ford is also announcing its fourth-quarter, North American production plan. The company plans to build 725,000 vehicles in the fourth quarter, up 7 percent (50,000 vehicles) from the fourth quarter of 2011.

The company also said it will be slightly below its previous third-quarter 2012 North American production guidance of 690,000 vehicles, with one month of production left in the quarter.

Zoo Visits Up, Hand In Paw with Autos

ROYAL OAK - The community said "thanks a million" to the Detroit Zoo for the seventh consecutive year when 2012 attendance surpassed the 1 million mark.

Officials attributed the record to mild spring weather together with a variety of new exhibits the public wanted to see.

Sailors, Marines See '14 Impala Roll off Line

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(standard on LTZ and LT) reveal a storage tub under the seat when the cushions are flipped forward, for stashing items. A pass-through from the trunk can be created by flipping the seat bottoms forward and the seat backs flat.

Also, for 2013, Crystal Red Tintcoat, available on LT and LTZ, joins Impala's existing colors of Silver Ice Metallic, Black, Summit White, Victory Red and Ashen Gray Metallic.

Interior colors include Ebony; two-tone Neutral with Ebony door, console and instrument panel trim; and Gray.

Dual-zone climate control on LTZ and LT, with up to 12 degrees F temperature-setting difference between the two front zones, provides personalized temperatures.

Impala offers a choice of audio systems and connectivity features. The standard system is an AM/FM stereo with CD and MP3 playback, seek-and-scan, digital clock, auto-tone control, Radio Data System, automatic volume, TheftLock and auxiliary input jack.

The Luxury Edition Package, available on LT and standard on



Plant Manager Doneen McDowell, right, gives Lt. Jarrett Parker a tour.

LTZ, adds a Bose eight-speaker audio system and a full year of SiriusXM Satellite Radio.

The Luxury Edition Package also includes front leather seating surfaces, heated driver and front passenger seats, front passenger six-way power seat adjuster, inside auto-dimming rearview mirror, Universal Home Remote and outside heated power-adjustable mirrors.

The FE1/FE2 suspensions are standard on LS and LT models.

The FE3 suspension is standard on LTZ.

And so the visiting Navy types got an insider's look at a major auto plant in the GM Hamtramck Assembly Center, which was a beehive of industrial and automotive activity during the week that the sailors and Marines visited. Several banners on the riverfront touted the military's discount from GM to purchase their variety of new vehicles.

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