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Big 3 Sales Continue to Climb

If you think a marque is passé, or print media passé, forget that.

Chrysler Group started another media blitz last week with a full

wrap of *USA Today*, giving top billing to Detroit and Belvidere with "Designed in Michigan" and "Made in Illinois" at the back.

The momentum began with the "Imported from Detroit" message. It has benefited us all.

Detroit is doing it right!



2013 Chevrolet Equinox LTZ



2013 Ford Escape



2013 Dodge Journey



The Dodge Dart ad campaign has shifted into high gear.

GM Up 10 Pct. Over Year Ago

Passenger cars and a small SUV together boosted GM's August new car sales report.

That's because GM reported August sales of 240,520 vehicles in the U.S., up 10 percent compared with a year ago.

GM increased its sales to retail customers by 11 percent, making August its best retail month of the year. Sales to fleet customers were up 6 percent compared with a year ago. All four GM brands posted higher total and retail sales.

GM added that thanks in part to extensive national advertising during the Olympic Games, Chevrolet passenger car sales were up 25 percent, with the Spark, Sonic, Cruze and Volt all posting their best-ever monthly sales. In addition, the Chevrolet Equinox set an August record with a 22 percent, year-over-year, sales increase.

"The single message Chevrolet communicated this summer was 'confidence' and it rang true with customers when they saw how our product lineup is being transformed," said Kurt McNeil, vice president of U.S. Sales Operations. "All four of our brands are building momentum behind new products, so we're very well positioned as the economy continues to slowly improve."

Other sales highlights for August include an 11 percent, year-over-year, increase in Cadillac sales driven by strong demand for the SRX crossover, the Escalade and the new XTS large sedan.

Buick sales increased 12 percent on the strength of the Verano, which has seen nine such back-to-back monthly sales increases. Buick recorded its best retail sales since September, 2007, by the way.

Also, GMC sales were up 4 percent, following a 35 percent reduction in fleet sales. GMC Acadia sales rose 26 percent in August and GMC Terrain sales were up 16 percent.

GM is in the midst of an aggressive rollout of new products in the United States.

Some 70 percent of all of GM's nameplates will be redesigned or all-new over the course of 2012 and 2013, GM officials say, with the four-cylinder 2013 Chevrolet Malibu and the 2013 Cadillac ATS reaching the market now.

Chevrolet officials said that the redesigned Malibu arriving in dealerships will replace deleted stocks of 2012 models.

The compact Cadillac ATS sport sedan is that brand's second such all-new sedan this year and it will compete in the highest-volume luxury segment in the U.S. market.

New Escape Up 37 Pct.

Ford Motor Co.'s U.S. total sales increased 13 percent in August compared with last year – and 19 percent for retail sales – with gains posted in cars, utilities and trucks.

"As fuel prices rose again during August, we saw a growing number of people gravitate toward our fuel-efficient vehicles – cars, utilities and trucks," said Ken Czubay, Ford vice president, U.S. Marketing, Sales and Service.

"Customers increasingly value savings at the pump, and Ford is answering the call with a full family of vehicles with leading

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Journey Sets Sales Record

AUBURN HILLS – A full-size crossover, among several other products, boosted the Chrysler monthly sales report for August.

Chrysler Group LLC last week reported U.S. sales of 148,472 units, a 14 percent increase compared with sales in August 2011 (130,120 units), and the group's best August sales since 2007.

The Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge, Ram Truck and Fiat brands each recorded year-over-year sales gains in August compared with the same month a year ago. The Fiat brand's 34 percent increase was the largest sales gain of any

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Chrysler Creates Another Media Blitz – Dodge Ad Touts Michigan, Illinois –

Chrysler continues to be the king of automotive marketing irreverence as it launched a broad advertising campaign touting the merits of the all-new Dodge Dart.

The extensive Dodge Dart campaign includes digital, newspaper and magazine advertising, including a newspaper cover wrap of *USA Today* on Sept. 6.

What's irreverent here is that the Dart car is placed upside down as viewed by someone picking up the paper at a newsbox or newsstand.

"There are reasons not to put your car upside down on the cover of this newspaper," Dodge ad copy reads inside the spread.

"Some good reasons. Some bad reasons. Mainly though, it's just because it's not what people do. But when you plan on building a vehicle like no one else has ever built, you have to question every single convention and rule, no matter how established or trivial," it further reads.

Said John Caldwell, general sales manager at Galeana's Van Dyke Dodge in Warren, "I knew they were starting a blitz. The car is doing well – we've only had the Dart for six weeks now and we've moved 15 of them, which is pretty good. No one is aware of it yet (prior to the blitz). But we're very happy overall with the Dart."

Navy Visitors Get a Glimpse of New Impala

by Gerald Scott

GM Navy Week visitors got quite a treat in Detroit last week.

Not only were U.S. Navy sailors and Marines given a fine fete at the RenCen, they also got to view some auto-related eye candy at the GM Hamtramck Assembly Center, where the Chevrolet Volt is manufactured.

Add to the list of vehicles being built at Hamtramck the 2014 Chevrolet Impala. U.S. Navy visitors to the plant were able to see the first pre-production Impala come off the line there.

"This car was our first plant-built Impala. It's a pre-production unit," said Dave Darovitz, GM Manufacturing Communications.

"We have several build iterations or 'pre-production' builds that occur in the plant prior to the start of production early next year."

As has been noted earlier, the Hamtramck Assembly Center will be soon be idled for four weeks, from Sept. 17 to Oct. 15, to ostensibly draw down Volt volumes at dealerships as well as to allow for the addition of the Impala at the plant.

When the plant returns to production in mid-October, it will be assembling four vehicles simultaneously, including the Chevrolet Volt/Opel Ampera, Chevrolet Malibu and, sometime next year, the Chevrolet Impala, too.

Note that when the GM Hamtramck Assembly Center was built back in 1985, it was ostensibly online to assemble upscale and large-sized Cadillac cars of that era.

Today, it has since morphed into one of Chevrolet's most visible car factories in the country. Located just 10 minutes from GM RenCen headquarters, it has be-



U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Gregory M. Nosal and GM executive and retired U.S. Navy Captain Kenneth J. Barrett.

come the factory of choice for visitors to GM's Detroit headquarters.

So the Navy types got a treat in seeing the first Impala pre-production model coming off the line. Earlier, it was built in Canada and now the Impala production line will be housed in Detroit.

The 2014 Impala is an important car for GM and has an interesting history and provenance. Built on the Epsilon II (Super Epsilon) platform, the car is intended as a higher-performance fami-

ly car, giving buyers shopping the Malibu a larger vehicle that is still in the Chevrolet family.

As Chevrolet prepares to make way for an all-new Impala for the 2014 model year, Chevrolet is offering a Luxury Edition Package on LT retail and fleet models for 2013. The package includes front leather seating surfaces, heated driver and front passenger seats, a full year of SiriusXM Satellite Radio and other comfort and convenience features.

The Impala seats up to six with the optional front bench seat and

is offered in LS, LT and LTZ models.

Meanwhile, a 3.6L V6 DOHC direct injection engine with variable valve timing and E85 Flex-Fuel capability is standard on all Impala models. It is rated 300 horsepower and delivers an EPA-estimated 30 mpg highway. A six-speed automatic transmission also contributes to the Impala's fuel efficiency.

Features such as flip-and-fold rear seats with armrests

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2