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Athletic Club Site of Chrysler 200 S Unveiling

by Jim Stickford

Chrysler has been able to remake its image despite not having a lot of money to do so because they focused on targeted, smaller opportunities.

That's how Saad Chehab, president and CEO of the Chrysler Brand, explained the brand's turnaround to the Automotive Press Association at a special luncheon March 21.

Besides telling the group how the Chrysler brand has remade itself, he introduced the new Chrysler 200 S to the world.

Chehab said another key factor in the turnaround was teaming up with successful entrepreneurs such as Motown's Berry Gordy and fashion maven and "son of Detroit" John Varvatos.

The entrepreneurs have their own brand and they are "sons of Detroit," Chehab said, adding that they wanted to be a part of helping promote the city and the people who make it go.

These efforts have been successful by bringing attention from media not normally associated with the auto industry, Chehab said. At the most recent fashion week in New York City, Varvatos hosted a special event to show off a limited edition Chrysler 300 that featured interior designs with the "Varvatos"

touch.

These designs, Chehab said, are meant to make the 300 appeal to the Wall Street executive and the Miami entrepreneur equally. There will be only 2,000 of these special Varvatos 300s produced. And the campaign that launched them was reported in media outlets that usually cover the fashion industry because of the special fashion week event Varvatos hosted.

Berry Gordy's Motown edition 300 comes pre-loaded with 100 tracks of Motown songs. Other unique features include a 10-speaker Beats audio system with 12-channel amplifier.

Motown: The Musical makes its Broadway debut April 14, and will help showcase the partnership between Motown and Chrysler.

Chehab said Chrysler's willingness to team up with other companies who have a story that supports the Chrysler's "Imported from Detroit" philosophy of led the company to join forces with Carhartt, a local company that has been in metro Detroit for 120 years and is known around the country for the tough work clothes it manufactures.

The result of this joining of forces is the 2013.5 Chrysler 200 S Special Edition. Chehab said Carhartt collaborated with

Chrysler in the interior design and choice of materials of the 200 S. The vehicle also has a unique interior and exterior appointments.

The exterior features a new gloss black mesh grille accented with a platinum grille collar, a lower front fascia in platinum black, and platinum chrome fog light "spears. There is also a sport suspension meant to give the driver a more responsive driving experience, Chehab said.

In addition to helping design the special edition, Carhartt is able to produce and sell "Imported from Detroit" clothing that

will be available to the public in Carhartt factory stores and at carhartt.com

Chehab said the alliance with Carhartt made sense because their clothing products also represent the themes of hard work, perseverance, determination and "never letting go of your dreams."

When Chehab was asked what the criteria was for choosing a partner, he said Chrysler is selling itself not as a luxury brand, but a brand for hardworking people who want more in their cars

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Lidia Gulawsky

Defense Supplier Mixer Held At GM Heritage Ctr.

by Jim Stickford

Members of the Michigan chapter of the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) had the chance to meet, mix and hear the latest news at a special mixer held in the GM Heritage Center in Sterling Heights March 20.

Chapter President Nancy Loerch said they have these get-togethers every once in a while to give members a chance to network and to share news of value within the defense community. She said they gather hundreds of members from many different companies, as well as from the government, to talk with each other about the issues of the day in a relaxed setting.

One attendee was Tom Labada, director of business development at Waltonon. He attended the mixer with a colleague at Waltonon, Shawn Morrissey, who is a retired U.S. Army colonel.

Labada said Waltonon is an engineering firm that employs about 200 people. It's based in Warren and about 40 percent of its business comes from the auto industry, 40 percent from defense and 20 percent from aerospace.

"I've been a member of NDIA for about five years," Labada said. "For the military, we work on anything from combat vehicles to the Air Force's A-10 plane. Right now, we're re-engineering

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The new Chrysler 200 S Special Edition

Ford Van Dyke Working Hard At Reducing Landfill Waste

by Jim Stickford

The Ford Van Dyke Transmission Plant's efforts to reduce its waste-to-landfill ratio by 40 percent is part of a larger effort by the parent company to be green.

To that end, the company saw a 40 percent reduction of waste sent to landfill per vehicle between 2007 and 2011, when the amount of waste sent to landfill per vehicle dropped from 37.9 to 22.7 pounds.

At the Van Dyke plant, the company found a way to keep 10 tons' worth of 8-foot-long, 350-pound fabric coolant filters from being landfilled monthly. That makes the Van Dyke facility Ford's first North American zero waste-to-landfill transmission plant and now diverts 15 tons of waste-from-landfill monthly.

Jeff Czich, senior environmental engineer, said, while he is proud of what's going on at the Van Dyke facility, it is part of a larger effort at Ford. What they've done in Sterling Heights to reduce waste was find a way to recycle filter paper used in the manufacturing process.

Czich said that at places like the Van Dyke Transmission Plant, they do a lot of cutting and honing of metal. That produces friction, which in turn produces heat. To keep the equipment cool, and the process smooth, lubricant and coolant is used on the cutting tools. These liquids are cleaned up using filter paper, much the same way an oil filter cleans out impurities from an engine block.

The end result of the manufacturing process was a lot of soiled filter paper, Czich said.

"The Van Dyke plant was very close to having zero waste going

to landfills," Czich said. "The filter paper was part of the waste stream. By developing a reclamation process, the plant went from 10 tons of waste a month to close to no waste."

Between 2010 and 2012, Van Dyke kept 111 tons of waste from landfill. Van Dyke became a zero waste-to-landfill plant in late 2012 after the environmental committee there figured out on their own how to deal with giant, 8-foot-long, 350-pound fabric coolant filters that were creating 10 tons of waste a month.

Local employees worked with Ford's Powertrain Operations and the Environmental Quality Office to develop a way to properly manage the waste filters by

finding separate recyclers for the used filters and the materials they contained post-use.

This local effort reflects a larger effort Ford is making on a worldwide basis.

The company has a five-year global waste reduction strategy. Under the plan, waste-to-landfill will drop to just 13.4 pounds – or by 40 percent – per vehicle by 2016.

The strategy covers all angles of Ford's waste reduction plans – from working with global suppliers to use more eco-friendly packaging, to enabling employees such as those at Van Dyke to play an active role in coming up with ways to help Ford reach its goals. Even kitchen waste is ad-

dressed.

"Reducing waste is a crucial part of our strategy toward building a world-class manufacturing system," said John Fleming, executive vice president, Global Manufacturing and Labor Affairs. "By applying standard waste reduction processes across our global facilities, we are, through our actions – and not just words – improving the quality of life where we do business."

There can also be financial benefits: In 2012, Ford generated \$225 million in revenue through the recycling of 568,000 tons of scrap metal in the U.S. and Canada alone.

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How New Program Brought Customers to Buick

GM's Experience Buick leasing program – which comes with a two-year term with a single monthly payment that includes entertainment, safety and maintenance features – has led Buick to double its leasing business as a share of total sales over the last 12 months.

Launched in mid-March of 2012, Experience Buick leases come with such extras as SiriusXM satellite radio, OnStar Directions and Connections, designed to make the leases more attractive to the public.

According to customer data collected late last year, 55 percent of Experience Buick customers are new to the brand. That number rises to 63 percent for the Regal luxury sport sedan and 66 percent for the Verano compact luxury sedan. Including leases and sales, a higher per-

centage of customers in 2012 were new to Buick – 43 percent – than any year on record.

About 74 percent of customers polled said Experience Buick played a major role in their decision, and that each element – maintenance, two-year term, satellite radio and OnStar – were all among their top 10 decision factors. Two-thirds of the customers indicated they would definitely consider another Buick for their next vehicle.

Dealers in some cities have seen even more dramatic lease penetration with Experience Buick. From mid-March last year through February 2013, leasing as a share of sales was up 23 percentage points in Los Angeles, 19 percentage points in San Francisco, 15 percentage points in Miami and 11 percentage points in Atlanta.

"When this was introduced, I knew it was going to be special for us," said Mark Naszaradi, general manager at Williamson Buick in Miami. "Our city is a very lease-dominated market, so we knew if we could get the word out about Experience Buick, it'd be a great thing."

"Since then," said Naszaradi, "we've gone from averaging about 30 Buicks each month to as high as 80 in September, with a majority of our customers trading in import brands. And leasing has risen from 30 percent of our business to more than 70 percent."

Naszaradi is confident that Experience Buick's momentum will continue. "Within the next year, we'll start seeing these customers coming back, and with everything that's included in these leases, the experience

they're getting, we've gotten feedback that they'll stay with us."

When the Experience Buick customers who leased vehicles in March 2012 return in 2013, every model in the Buick showroom will be new or significantly updated, with redesigned Encore, LaCrosse and Regal models, a Verano with an available 250-hp turbocharged engine and new safety features, and the all-new Encore luxury small crossover.

"Our vehicles and our dealership facilities deliver on what today's luxury car customers expect," said Brian Sweeney, vice president of Buick Sales and Service. "Experience Buick gives customers a low-commitment, all-inclusive way to see that we're a modern and inviting brand with five unique and appealing models."

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