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Ford F-150 Drives Need to Hire 2,000

Strong demand for the Ford F-150, Ford's best-selling pickup truck, and the planned production of the new Ford Transit at the site has resulted in the automaker announcing plans to add more than 2,000 jobs to its Kansas City Assembly Plant, in Kansas City, Mo.

"Customer demand for today's F-150 is strong and continues growing, the truck segment is growing three times faster than the overall industry, the housing market is strengthening, and we are seeing growth in the U.S. economy," said Joe Hindrichs, Ford's president of the Americas.

"Our 'Built Ford Tough' F-150 is America's favorite pickup, and we are going to expand operations in Kansas City to ensure we have enough trucks to meet customer demand."

Ford is adding 900 jobs and a third crew to build the F-150; and will add another 1,100 jobs in the fourth quarter to prepare for the introduction of the new Ford Transit full-size van in 2014.

Autonomous Autos May Someday Make Human Drivers Obsolete

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

enthusiasts and they say that driving is too much fun to leave it to the car," Reed said. "But when I say, 'What about during city driving in heavy traffic?' and the idea of an autonomous car becomes more acceptable."

Hall said he believes that autonomous technology could bring about profound changes not only in driving, but in the cars themselves.

"I believe the last car as we understand the term, will be a high-performance vehicle that goes around a track," Hall said.

He went on to say that young people expect different things from their technology than older drivers.

Borroni-Bird said that when autonomous technology becomes available on demand, there will be a market for it.

Reed brought up the question of liability. His students want to know who pays in case of an accident involving autonomous cars. Hall said that given the legal situation in the U.S., it's usually the person with the biggest bank account.

"Given the bumper crop of lawyers we have in this country, I would expect that the U.S. would be a secondary market for autonomous cars. I expect the technology to be used first in Shanghai or a similar place."

The question of design was brought up. Reed said that if cars become much safer, then perhaps they won't have to be built as strongly and OEMs can start using materials other than steel. That presents design challenges for manufacturers.

"Design will become even more important when autonomous driving becomes a reality," Reed said.

Dodge Teams Up with Syfy to Sponsor New TV Show

The Dodge brand has partnered with Syfy and Trion Worlds for "Defiance," the first-ever convergence of television and online gaming featuring an interconnected world and storylines that coexist throughout a scripted drama television series and an online game.

As the exclusive automotive sponsor, the Dodge brand partnership includes vehicle integrations in the TV show (Dodge Charger), which debuted April 15 and online video game (Dodge Challenger), launched April 2, as well as custom co-branded advertising and promotions crossing multiple media platforms, including television, digital, social media, mobile, gaming and on-demand. "Defiance" allows Dodge a prime opportunity to speak to its socially engaged customers.

"Dodge has a long history of innovation, and this new partnership with Syfy is the latest example, as it represents the first-ever merging of TV and online gaming," said Tim Kuniskis, president and CEO - Dodge Brand, Chrysler.

"While 'Defiance' is set in the year 2046, the featured Dodge Charger stays true to its DNA. It has timeless performance and technological capabilities needed to survive in a futuristic world, while the Challenger video game integration allows enthusiasts to interact with the iconic muscle car in ways they might not have imagined possible."

"We couldn't be more thrilled by Dodge's partnership with 'Defiance,' Syfy's biggest, boldest and most ambitious project in our 20-year history," said Chris Czarkowski, Syfy's VP of Ad Sales. "As a forward-thinking brand, Dodge was able to leverage the innovative opportunities with this groundbreaking experience to completely and organi-

cally engage our valuable consumers with their brand."

Both the television series and game are standalone experiences that unfold concurrently in one world. However, they also seamlessly intertwine to create a dynamic interactive experience in which the show impacts the game, and the game influences the show.

Two Dodge Chargers, with exterior modifications to fit the futuristic storyline, are the hero vehicles driven by main character Nolan (Grant Bowler), the city of Defiance "law-keeper." The vehicles are integrated into the storylines beginning with the sixth episode, becoming main characters in the story.

In mid-May, coinciding with the first appearance of the Dodge Chargers in the TV program, Dodge will debut a new co-branded television spot and a social gaming experience and contest.

Set in the near future, "Defiance" introduces an exotically transformed planet Earth, its landscapes permanently altered following the sudden - and tumultuous - arrival of seven unique alien races.

In this somewhat unknown and unpredictable landscape, the richly diverse, newly-formed civilization of humans and aliens must learn to co-exist peacefully. Each week, viewers will follow an



Two Chargers star in a Syfy/Trion Worlds interconnected experience.

immersive character drama set in the boom-town of Defiance, which sits atop the ruins of St. Louis, while in the game, players will adventure in the new frontier of the San Francisco Bay area. The dramatic tapestry of the series and the intense action of the game will exist in a single universe where their respective narratives will inform one another and evolve together into one overall story.

The series stars Grant Bowler, Julie Benz, Stephanie Leonidas, Tony Curran, Jaime Murray, Graham Greene and Mia Kirshner. It is executive produced by Kevin Murphy ("Desperate House-

wives," "Caprica," "Hellcats") and Michael Taylor ("Battlestar Galactica"). Kevin Murphy serves as showrunner. Scott Stewart ("Legion," "Priest") directed the pilot; Michael Nankin will serve as director/producer on the series. "Defiance" is produced by Universal Cable Productions. Among other accolades, the game was named "Best MMORPG" from GameSpy at the June 2012 E3 conference.

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Cadillac Headlamp Restyling Adds Dazzle

Cadillac's efforts to build the next generation of luxury car extend down to the headlights.

A look at Cadillac models reveals new approaches to how designers are streamlining the form and function of headlamps, what designers call the "eyes" of a car.

The upcoming 2014 Cadillac CTS luxury sport sedan combines light-emitting diode and high-intensity discharge lights to create a sleeker new "face" for Cadillac, befitting the new sedan's distinction of being the lightest car in its class, GM officials say.

The CTS sedan features 16 indirect-fire LED lights on each headlamp with eight LEDs beginning on the fender of the car and an additional eight LEDs continuing down

the front bumper. The eight LED lights on the front bumper also double as a turn indicator, helping eliminate additional lights.

Together, these LEDs function as daytime running lights (DRLs), enabling a safety feature to add an element of drama to the front of the car.

The main headlights, called projectors, are also multipurpose. A single HID element acts as both low and high beams. Active Forward Lighting helps drivers see more clearly through corners by turning with steering direction.

"The CTS is the first Cadillac to combine DRL and turn signal under the same lens," said Brian Smith, CTS exterior design manager. "Giving the HID projectors a

dual purpose allowed us to shorten the front headlamps and give the CTS the most dramatic signature lighting of any Cadillac to date."

Introduced at the recent New York International Auto Show, Cadillac officials said the new CTS ascends to the heart of the midsize luxury market with expanded performance, elevated luxury and sophisticated technology.

The third-generation CTS adopts engineering and design solutions from the award-winning architecture of the ATS sport sedan and will be the segment's lightest car, GM officials say. Production of the CTS begins this fall in Lansing.

Ford Marks 65th Birthday of Top-Selling F-Series

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

21st-century descendants today.

"The new trucks are attractively styled without losing ruggedness necessary for good performance and long life," said a Ford press release on the F-Series pickup dated Jan. 16, 1948. "Radiator grille and headlights are recessed in a functional pattern in the modern front end, which contributes to massive appearance and gives added protection."

Interestingly, according to Wikipedia, the F-Series was introduced in 1948 as a replacement for the previous car-based pickup line introduced in 1941. The F-Series was sold in eight different weight ratings, with pickup, panel truck, cab-over engine (COE), conventional truck, and school bus chassis body styles.

The 1948 Ford news release touts, for the driver's comfort, coach-type seats with cushions, ash tray, sun visor and three-way air control system.

Today's F-Series trucks offer amenities such as air conditioning, satellite radio plus CD and MP3 device playback, satellite navigation, rear view backup cameras, leather upholstery, tastefully designed interiors, and a menu of high-powered, fuel-efficient engine and transmission choices to fit the needs of just about every truck customer out there. Then, as now, Ford emphasized things like horsepower, tire clearance, compression ratios and gross vehicle weights.

Back then, the all-new F-Series pickups had three available powertrain combinations: A 95 horsepower six-cylinder engine; a 100 horsepower V8; and a 145 hp V8.

According to Eric Peterson, Ford F-150 Marketing manager, when it comes to the F-Series truck, the key to its success has always been its ability to get the job done.

"It's always been about capability, reliability and durability," he said, citing the 95 hp engine option listed in 1948.

"That would be an ample amount of power... and then the progress over time (where Ford) continued to add horsepower, add torque to get into the hundreds, the 200s, the 300s to where we're at today, it's quite a model of progression... Everything the truck has been about up to where it is today is really all about providing someone with the ability to max out their performance, max out their ability to do work at some level," said Peterson.

"It made (the truck) special when it was an F-1, to where it's at today. It'll give you the best, basically of what a pickup truck can offer to get the job done."

The other aspect of the dawn of the F-Series that Peterson found interesting is the solid presence these have always had even when sitting parked.

"It is primarily about capability but what sets the vehicles apart is the presence they have and the design," he explained.

"Even as pickup trucks have

some level of commonality to them, there's a certain element of design and style that's been present throughout the years with the F-150... Not only is it capable, but it has to have a presence that conveys capability."

What buyers look for, he said, is not only the ability to, say, tow more than anybody else, they also want to have maximum payload, and they have to have that sense the truck can do it, that it communicates that and gives the driver confidence.

Peterson conceded that the F-Series trucks' appearance was even more important back in the days when information was harder to come by, but said it still matters today.

"Exterior appearance is so very important," he said. "... the truck had to convey a sense of capability, but ultimately, if it wasn't durable and reliable, that would have played itself out, so it was a good way to get started."

"F-150s all had that look, and we just launched a concept truck, the Atlas, and it's got this presence that conveys capability even though no one's been able to drive one," he said.

"Yet, you'd be hard-pressed to find anybody who would think that truck isn't capable, and it's the look and the stance and the grille and the proportions of the vehicle, and it's also backed up by the 'Built Ford Tough' shield. ... it's an earned reputation, but it's also something the design characteristics clearly convey."