

GM China Joint Venture Begins Production; First Baojun 630 Sedan Rolls Off the Line

SAIC-GM-Wuling (SGMW), GM China's joint venture with SAIC and Wuling Motors, opened its new passenger car production base on Nov. 18 in Liuzhou, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

During SGMW's celebration of its 10th anniversary, a Baojun 630 midsize sedan rolled off the production line. The architecture of the Baojun 630 Sedan is unclear, but it appears to be that of the older Buick Excelle (China)/Opel-Saturn Astra, known as GM's Delta II platform. The investment for the first phase of the plant is RMB 8 billion (\$1.28 billion).

The 2-million-square-meter facility has an annual manufacturing capacity of 400,000 units. It has adopted GM's Global Manufacturing System and other world-class systems and processes.

The passenger car production base is initially producing vehicles from the Baojun family. SGMW's indigenous brand began offering the Baojun 630 in August 2011. It added the Le Chi minicar earlier this year. Baojun products are targeted primarily at first-time car buyers in China's second-, third- and fourth-tier cities.

A powertrain manufacturing facility capable of producing up to 400,000 engines annually is under construction at the passenger car production base. It is scheduled to begin operation in September 2013.

In addition, several local and global suppliers have set up operations at the site.

"SGMW has recorded many achievements in the space of 10 years," said Bob Socia, president, GM China, and chief country operations officer, China, India and ASEAN.

"It has set a global benchmark for low-cost, high-value manufacturing. Its new facility will help ensure its continued growth in the world's largest vehicle market."

"The passenger car production base represents the latest milestone for our joint venture," added SGMW President Shen Yang. "It will lay a solid foundation for the expansion of SGMW's important pas-

senger car business."

SGMW also plans to enhance its R&D capability after the passenger car production base is completed, integrating engineering design and testing resources, and establishing a systematic capability for product development and technical research.

The aim is to fully support the overall development strategy of SGMW by helping it achieve 2 million annual vehicle sales, grow its export business and enhance its technology by the end of China's



Baojun 630 Sedan

12th Five-Year Plan period.

SGMW was established in 2002. SAIC has a 50.1 percent stake, GM China 44 percent, and Wuling a 5.9 percent stake.

2013 Cadillac ATS Called 'Fun,' Named Motor Press Guild Vehicle of the Year

The Motor Press Guild (MPG), the largest automotive media association in North America, on Nov. 20 announced the all-new 2013 Cadillac ATS as the winner of the second-ever Motor Press Guild Vehicle of the Year (VOTY) Award.

MPG President Laura Burstein will present the award at Cadillac's press conference on the second day of the Los Angeles Auto Show press days on Thursday, Nov. 29.

The 2013 Cadillac ATS was one of six finalists chosen by a select panel of MPG journalist members who test and review cars on a regular basis. The final vehicles were evaluated and ranked by all voting journalist and analyst members at MPG's annual Track Day event in October.

Vehicles were rated in the categories of safety, quality, value, performance/handling, design/style, environmental/green impact and technology/innovation. In addition, journalists were encouraged to consider models that reflect the unique style of Southern California.

"In many ways, the ATS is a breakthrough vehicle for Cadillac," said Laura Burstein, president, Motor Press Guild. "Not only is it smaller and leaner than other Cadillacs on the market, it's the first American luxury car that truly goes head-to-head with compact luxury sport sedans



2013 Cadillac ATS

from well-known European and Asian brands.

"Our members remarked that the ATS is capable on both the street and the track, offers a well-made and attractive interior, is replete with the latest technology and - perhaps most importantly - is fun to drive."

Don Butler, vice president of Cadillac Marketing, said, "The ATS is the result of an extensive, all new, ground-up mission to deliver a segment-winning vehicle. That makes it especially rewarding when our efforts are recognized and awarded by a large and influential panel of automotive experts."

To be eligible for the Motor Press Guild Vehicle of the Year award, models must be all-new or substantially changed from the previous year and available at dealerships on or before Jan. 1, 2013.

Other 2012 VOTY finalists (in alphabetical order) are all 2013 models - Ford Fusion, Honda Accord, Nissan Altima, Scion FR-S and Subaru BRZ.

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