

Oakland Tech News

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TI Automotive Named as Core Supplier for Manufacturer

TI Automotive, a leading global supplier of fluid storage, carrying and delivery technology with offices in Auburn Hills, was named a "Core Supplier" by PSA Peugeot Citroen last week.

During a ceremony held at TI Automotive's Chalons-en-Champagne, France, location, Jerome Quilhot, executive director of Powertrain and Chassis purchasing for PSA, discussed his company's process of designating supplier relationship excellence.

He said beyond PSA Peugeot Citroen's 13 "Strategic Suppliers," the company also identifies and recognizes its "Core Suppliers" – companies with an international

footprint and leaders in their specialized portion of the industry. PSA's objective is to label 100 Core Suppliers by 2015.

TI Automotive currently supplies PSA Peugeot Citroen with fuel tank systems, pump and module systems, diesel additive systems and brake lines to distribute to PSA facilities around the world.

PSA cited TI Automotive's adherence to quality and delivery deadlines and its respect for the fundamentals of the customer-supplier relationship, as well as its technical competence and high level of flexibility.

"We are quite pleased to be named a Core Supplier of PSA, as

it provides another excellent opportunity to further develop new technology and demonstrates our commitment to furthering our customer relationships," said Hans Dieltjens, executive vice

president, Tank Systems, TI Automotive.

"We have enjoyed a strong relationship with PSA, and we look forward to continued growth and success together."

Oakland U. Plans \$30 Million Facility To House Growing Student Population

The Oakland University Board of Trustees passed a resolution last week allowing administrators to begin the process of designing and constructing a \$30 million student housing facility that will accommodate up to 550 students starting in the fall of 2014.

The action comes in response to considerable demand for housing on Oakland's nearly 20,000-student campus. Fifteen consecutive years of student enrollment growth has fueled this demand and boosted student housing rental agreements by 37 percent over the last four years.

"We've known for some time that as the quality and value of Oakland's academic programs have grown, more and more prospective students have wanted to become part of our campus community," said Oakland University President Gary Russi.

"The university is now in an excellent position to begin implementing its strategic plan for housing development and answer the strong demand we're hearing from students both locally and across the region."

University administrators will now negotiate with Southfield-based Neumann/Smith Architecture and Rochester-based Frank Rewold & Son construction managers to oversee the design and construction of the new housing.

Planners anticipate that greater availability of on-campus living will enhance both the academic and extracurricular experience of

Oakland's students – a prospect bolstered by recent survey results indicating that 84 percent of the university's student body endorse expansion plans.

"We've paid great attention to enhancing student life on campus, and I believe a great deal of the demand we're seeing can be attributed to prospective students wanting to dive into the college life experience we offer," said Mary Beth Snyder, Oakland's vice president for student affairs and enrollment management.

"We're excited to welcome more students who want to live on campus, especially when they come from the farther corners of our expanding geographic reach. The addition of this new housing for freshmen and sophomores will make campus life at Oakland more inviting and interesting for everyone here."

Maintaining a focus on energy-efficient and environmentally friendly design, the Board of Trustees asked that administrators pursue Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for the new housing facility.

Oakland has incorporated these principles in the design of its recently opened Human Health Building, as well as its soon-to-be-constructed Engineering Center.

In coming months, university administrators will return to the Board of Trustees for approval of housing facility design and financing.

Chrysler, Ford, GM See Sales Gains During November

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The Chrysler brand posted a modest increase of 1 percent, Ram Truck an increase of 23 percent, Dodge an increase of 32 percent, and Fiat a 123 percent increase.

The impressive sales increases can be linked to the success of particular models, including the popular Fiat 500, Dodge Journey crossover, and Jeep Wrangler, each setting their own sales record for the month of November.

Reid Bigland, president and CEO of the Dodge brand and head of U.S. Sales, is optimistic about the future.

"We are expecting a strong December as the industry continues to recover from the East Coast hurricane and consumers continue to respond to our popular year-end Big Finish event," Bigland said.

GM reported its strongest November sales period since 2007. Deliveries were up 3 percent compared with November 2011 figures, with deliveries amounting to 186,505 vehicles.

Total Chevrolet sales for November 2012 were 128,867, representing a zero percent change from last year. Retail sales were 88,640, which were down 4.3 percent from 2011.

Overall, Chevy has sold 1,684,555 vehicles up to December, which is a 4.3 percent increase from 2011.

GMC saw total November sales rise to 29,832 which was up 1.2 percent from 2011.

But retail sales at 25,101 were down 3.4 percent from last year. Buick's retail sales at 12,232 were up 18.4 percent and Cadillac's retail sales at 13,547 were up 25.9 percent.

Year-over-year sales to retail customers were essentially equal to a year ago and sales to fleet customers were up 16 percent.

"In November, we saw strong car and crossover sales and we continue to make inroads with younger customers, import drivers and buyers focused on fuel economy," said Kurt McNeil, vice president of U.S. sales operations.

"Sales at Cadillac and Buick are benefiting from the buzz generated by new products, including the Buick Verano, Cadillac XTS and Cadillac ATS."

Sales of GM passenger cars increased 19 percent in November compared with a year ago. Crossovers were up 9 percent and sales of trucks were down 11 percent. Buick and Cadillac had their best November sales since 2006 and 2007, respectively.

Passenger car sales were up 77 percent at Cadillac, 22 percent at Buick and 13 percent at Chevrolet. Combined sales of mini, small and compact cars were up 51 percent compared with a year ago, driven by the new Buick Verano and Chevrolet Spark, a 27

percent increase for the Chevrolet Cruze, a 33 percent increase for the Chevrolet Volt and a 12 percent increase for the Chevrolet Sonic.

Ford sales analyst Erich Merkle reported that Ford saw a 6 percent increase in total sales, with retail sales up 12 percent. He added that the sale of small cars drove November figures.

"When we look at small cars, sales totaled almost 27,000 vehicles in November and represented our best November for small-car sales since 2000," Merkle said. "(That's) a 76 percent increase over last year in small car sales."

Ford has also seen success with pickup truck sales, Merkle said. November represented the 16th consecutive year-over-year monthly sales increase for Ford pickups. November 2012 sales figures were up 18 percent compared with November 2011.

The future looks bright as well. Overall, the first quarter of 2013 should be strong for Ford.

"We are planning to build 750,000 vehicles in the first quarter," Merkle said.

Chevy SS RWD Debuts for NASCAR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

This is the first time in 17 years that Chevrolet has brought a rear-wheel-drive sedan for sale in the United States. The limited production version of the Chevrolet SS will be a 2014 model, slated to arrive in dealer showrooms in late 2013.

"It's an all-new vehicle that we will be bringing to the United States," said Michelle Maicho, Chevrolet Communications.

"NASCAR really asked and worked with the industry to come forward with vehicles that you can take from the race track to the road, all the brands – Ford, Toyota and ourselves have done that, and our debut is with the SS," Maicho said in explaining the change.

"It just makes sense to have that large V8 rear-wheel-drive vehicle. It just was a nice fit."

The new NASCAR Chevrolet joins a long line of nameplates representing Chevrolet at NASCAR, replacing the Impala, which carved out 151 wins from 1959-64 and 2007-12.

Maicho could not share specifics on the yet-to-be-released Chevrolet SS but to get an idea, buyers of the Camaro SS, for example, can opt for the powerful 6.2-liter LS3 V8, producing 426 hp with 420 lb.-ft. of torque, paired with a Tremec six-speed manual transmission.

The available 1LE package includes fully independent front and rear shocks, unique suspension and drive train components for more than 1g cornering capa-

bility, and an intelligent electric power steering system that permits nearly effortless maneuverability at parking speeds, while providing higher resistance and more direct feedback at higher speeds.

"Buyers will be very excited to see the close resemblance and technology that Chevrolet takes from the race track to the daily road," Maicho said. "So in the race car and now the production car, there will be a direct linkage from what you watch on Sunday to what you'll see on the road."

Meanwhile, the racing world is ready to embrace Chevrolet's newest SS (Super Sport) race car. That designation was first used by Chevrolet in 1957 to tag a Corvette prototype race car with plans to enter the car in the Le Mans 24-hour race, followed few years later by the 1961 Impala.

That '61 model was the first production vehicle available with an optional SS package. Chevrolet returned the SS designation to its lineup in 2010 when it launched the fifth-generation Camaro.

"We are looking forward to another exciting year of NASCAR competition and expect that the new SS race car, with some of the most skilled drivers on the circuit behind the wheel, will distinguish itself on the track," said Jim Campbell, U.S. vice president of Performance Vehicles and Motorsports.

Maicho added, "I think it's going to be a real thrill to watch the new SS on the track and we're looking forward to a great year."



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