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## Auburn Hills Tops For Engineers

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"These organizations thrive largely because of their top-notch engineering talents, so it's not surprising to see the city in the top five markets for engineers. For engineers and manufacturing employers alike, this designation is another reason to work and grow in Auburn Hills."

He said the demand for engineers has been great. The city works with organizations on short and long-term solutions to help fill the gap, often connecting employers with instructors at one of the five colleges and universities based in the city to develop and implement training programs as needed by local employers.

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## Detroit OEMs Doing Well in Quality

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er took solo honors in the Heavy-Duty Pickup segment for the Ford F-250 and F-350.

"There's no questioning domestic carmakers want to lead. For the first time in over a decade our comprehensive and complete study of Quality resulted in more domestic winners than imports," said Alexander Edwards, president of Strategic Vision. "Don't misunderstand – imports like Hyundai are a force to be reckoned with and Toyota has regrouped with Total Quality winners Lexus LS, Tacoma and FJ Cruiser. But, domestics are running in the tight race also, and it's now forcing all manufacturers to build the most superior, innovative and holistically quality vehicles possible to gain the hearts and minds of the customer."

Strategic Vision has been measuring quality since 1994 with its "Total Quality" concept, which examines 155 aspects of total quality.

"In our vehicle study, we look at over 442 variables, many using a scale that involves love," said Darrel Edwards, Ph.D., founder and executive chairman, Strategic Vision.

## GM Pickups Are Scientifically Sound

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ed airflow between the cab and bed, new sealing has been added.

"We discovered that in the computational analysis we perform," said Bloch. "The most harmful air between the cab and bed was coming over the cab and down through the gap, so we paid the most attention to that specific area."

The pickup market has a great number of available aftermarket accessories, and Bloch says those have varying effects on aerodynamics. Add-ons like bug

# Four Chrysler Models Tops in 2013 Quality Index Study

by Irena Granaas

It wasn't so long ago that Chrysler trailed behind its domestic rivals in product quality. In fact, in a *Consumer Reports* reliability ratings report cited in a Feb. 3, 2011, article in *Money-watch*, Chrysler ranked last among manufacturers.

But the automaker has staged an impressive comeback in that regard, and, for evidence, one need seek no further than the recent awards given to four of Chrysler's vehicles in recent Strategic Vision's annual Total Quality Index.

(See story below.)

"In today's competitive market, customers expect and deserve a highly reliable vehicle," said Doug Betts, senior vice president – Quality at Chrysler

"This particular study recognizes that to excel in overall quality, it's important to also deliver well-crafted, exciting vehicles and ensure customer satisfaction after the sale.

"These honors show that customers appreciate the innovations in the all-new Dart as well as the ongoing improvements we're making throughout our product lineup."

Strategic Vision Vice President Christopher Chaney said, "Dodge Dart's leading in the small car segment is extraordinary when you consider how much focus, design and competitive engineering exists within this important segment."

Chrysler spokesperson Ann Smith attributed the quality improvements to the company's investing heavily in quality processes, as well as overall product improvements Chrysler has made over the past several years.

"We started really overhauling our entire product line in 2011," she said. "And this survey is based on owner feedback . . . It mentions when people had a problem with their vehicles, but this survey, unlike some other ones, takes into account the positive experiences people have with their vehicles, too, so it really gives you more of their overall impression of these vehicles' quality."

Smith explained that at Chrysler, quality goes into the design of the vehicle, but also into the manufacturing process every step of the way.

"Really, every employee has a hand in the quality of our vehicles," she said. "We're certainly happy with (the quality awards)."

She added, "It's nice to see that



2013 Chrysler 200 Convertible ranked best convertible under \$30K.

both a vehicle like the Dart, which is an all-new vehicle, but also vehicles like the Town & Country and the 200 Chrysler

convertible, that have just sort of been steadily updated through the years, also got recognition from their owners."

## Chrysler Says 'Welcome' to Area's Robotics FIRST Teams

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about their futures, noting she too was once a participant in the FIRST Robotics program.

"You have no idea the kinds of offers that are going to come to you as a result of your participation in this program – it's widely recognized and people look for it," she said.

Brian Ha, 18, a senior at Lake Orion High School and member of the FIRST Robotics team, the Lake Orion Dragons, spoke in an interview about his experience with the program.

Ha said he's been a part of the FIRST Robotics program at his school since his freshman year. He started as a programmer as a freshman and by his junior year Ha had moved on to the fabrication and design team.

"Teamwork is everything," he said. "I make sure everyone is organized and that they know what

to do. I am the team's fabrication and design leader and I organized everything.

"I had to bridge the gap between the CAD and the shop group, and made sure they could talk coherently together."

Ha has set his sights on a career in electrical engineering and computer science and will be attending the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He said he's grateful for the leadership skills he gained as a result of being part of FIRST Robotics.

"I got what I wanted done and I didn't need to yell at anybody to get it done," he said.

Summing up, Ha calls his FIRST participation, "The experience of my life."

After a late-morning session of robot demos and contests, where the 'bots threw Frisbees toward slots to win points, students helped themselves to a pizza and salad lunch, followed by

another key Chrysler speaker.

"Congratulations to all of you on your investment in FIRST Robotics," said Mark M. Chernoby, senior vice president, Vehicle Engineering. "More importantly, I hope you have a little bit of appreciation of what goes into things mechanically as well as from an engineering standpoint."

Chernoby advised keeping grades high and said he "can't emphasize enough the importance of GPA," but added that for many students, attending their local community college or a smaller college for the first two years is a practical option.

"We want to see all you guys go to college and graduate," he said, putting an emphasis on getting a bachelor of science in engineering.

"The engineering job market is red hot right now, and given the current U.S. economy it won't slow down anytime soon," said Chernoby.

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