

### Tech Center News

31201 Chicago Road South  
Warren, Michigan 48093  
586-939-6800

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William Springer II, publisher  
and interim news editor;  
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## Every GM Brand Chips in to Raise May Sales Marks

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er fleet sales were due mainly to customer delivery timing.

Cadillac's 40 percent sales increase marked its best May since 2007.

It was the largest year-to-year sales increase since 1976. Chevrolet had its best retail sales month since August 2009.

Retail sales of GM's redesigned medium crossovers were very strong: the Chevrolet Traverse was up 14 percent, and GMC Acadia and Buick Enclave were up 15 percent and 19 percent, respectively.

Chevrolet sold 179,510 vehicles in May, representing a 0.9 percent increase over May 2012. Of the total Chevys sold, 124,897 were retail sales, representing a year-over-year increase of 5.4 percent.

Strong Chevrolet Spark sales and double-digit increases for the Buick Verano, Chevrolet Sonic and Cruze drove a 27 percent increase in sales of mini, small and compact cars.

The Chevrolet Cruze had its best May sales ever, and the Sonic had its best month ever.

Chevrolet dealers delivered more than 2,350 new 2014 Impalas.

Buick retail sales have increased for 13 consecutive months.

Buick sold 17,982 vehicles in May, a decline of 3.1 percent compared with May of 2012. Buick spokesman Phil Colley said that overall Buick sales are up for the year, and the reason for the difference in May sales isn't bad news.

"Last May, we had a large fleet order of Enclaves," Colley said. "That's a big reason for the difference in May vs. May sales. But, overall retail sales are up 16.9 percent calendar year to date, and total Buick sales are up 16 percent calendar year to date."

Year-to-date truck sales were up 12 percent, including a 22 percent increase in sales of large pickups and a 23 percent increase for large SUVs.

GM sold 41,594 vehicles in May of 2013, representing a 7 percent increase over May of 2012.

Of those sales, 33,814 were retail, an increase of 11.5 percent compared with last year.

Crossover sales were up 17 percent and car sales were essentially equal to a year ago.

GM's fleet mix was 26 percent, which is in line with the company's full-year strategy.

# Autonomous Driving? Not for a While, Says Expert Panel

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don't have airbags, Zuby said, adding that, overall, autonomous tech promises fewer crashes and fewer deaths from crashes.

Kirk Steudle, director of the Michigan Department of Transportation (M-DOT), said he looks at autonomous tech from the infrastructure perspective. He asked, "What happens when 50 percent of vehicles on the road have this tech? That means that 50 percent won't.

"There will still be a lot of 'dumb' cars on the road," Steudle said. "That means there will be a messy transition from dumb to smart cars."

He said that it's not up to the OEMs to figure out all the rules. That's where the government comes in. And that won't be easy, because in Michigan there are about 600 agencies that have jurisdiction over roads and bridges. And most communities have at least one traffic light.

Rules and regulations dealing with autonomous tech, he said, must answer questions like, who's responsible in case of an accident – the "driver?" The company that made the technology? The owner of the vehicle?

Steudle said that Nevada has regs that cover "driverless" cars, but they require additional licenses and training. He said that he thought the purpose of a driverless car was to make transportation easier, not be so complicated that additional training and licenses were required.

"Our approach is to have less government interaction and let the OEMs innovate," Steudle

said. "We want an environment that provides the most flexibility and innovation."

WWJ's John McElroy said the driverless car is not new. GM has prototypes that go back to the 1950s.

He said we started seeing this technology in a more serious fashion back in the 1980s in Japan – but the infrastructure wasn't there yet.

But, McElroy said, we'll probably see this technology used in other countries first because of legal issues. OEMs won't want to have driverless cars until they can present a body of evidence backing up the technology, he said.

And, ultimately, that won't stop people from suing OEMs if there is an accident.

He added that Detroit should be leading the world in the development of this technology.

McElroy said that he believes that trucking and agriculture will lead the way to developing this technology, noting that Caterpillar is already working on tractors that can be told to plow the south 40.

He said trucks that can, for example, haul tar sand in Canada following regular routes would provide great savings and be more efficient because there would be no drivers who had to stop for bathroom breaks.

Steudle said people and governments are adaptive. We've gotten used to dumb drivers on the roads who cause accidents, he said, so we can adjust to smart cars that reduce accidents.

John Capp, director of Safety

and Electronics Innovation for GM's Global Vehicle Engineering, said people have to look at this technology much the same way they looked at devices like the automatic transmission.

In the old days, he said, people shifted gears using a clutch, then the automatic transmission came along, and while some people still use a clutch, most people adapted to this new technology that makes driving easier.

"We have to figure out what we can do easily," Capp said. "As the technology progresses, there's no reason to think drivers won't progress as well, like they did with the automatic transmission."

Alan Korn, director of Advanced Brake Systems Integration for Meritor WABCO, said that as he gets older he has become more conservative.

"I am concerned about what

happens when something happens and the driver isn't paying attention at the time of the incident," Korn said.

If people get used to not paying attention because the car is doing the driving, what happens when a system fails?

McElroy said Audi has already demonstrated a self-parking car.

Capp said that no matter what Google says, he doubts there will be a driverless car in the next five years.

Korn agreed, saying that ABS brakes were introduced in 1990. The technology is simple by today's standards, but we're still learning about it.

We will need to learn a lot about driverless technology and its uses before it becomes universal, he said, noting that this technology will have to be proven safe before it's put on the market.

## GM's Ferguson – 'Cadillac is Back'

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about 10 percent of Cadillac sales."

Caldwell said Cadillac's ATS is seeing growth among new buyers. The ATS sport sedan is the 2013 North American Car of the Year and Esquire Car of the Year. Roughly 70 percent of ATS buyers are choosing their first Cadillac.

The XTS luxury sedan, introduced in the summer of 2012, had its best retail sales in May. Cadillac's total sedan portfolio is up 122 percent so far in 2013.

Total ATS sales for May of 2013 were 3,249, up from April's 2,725.

January sales were 2,781.

Caldwell said that some of the 66 percent of Cadillac buyers who traded in a different brand were trading in other GM brands, but that's all right.

"We're certainly happy to have people stay within the GM family," Caldwell said.

"But we're also happy to see people who drove non-GM cars buy Cadillac. We're happy, overall, that the luxury market is expanding and we're happy to see that we're getting our share of that market."

Caldwell said Cadillac's Escalade in all its iterations reported its best May sales since 2008.

## Ford Sales Show Growth in May

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Edge sales, on the other hand, increased 14.9 percent, going from 11,749 to 13,501. Explorer sales also saw an increase in May vs. May of last year – going from 14,662 to 16,861 for a 15 percent increase. The F-Series had its strongest May sales result since 2005. F-Series' 71,604 sales in May represented a 31 percent increase versus last year and its 22nd straight monthly sales increase.

In May, Lincoln MKZ sales increased 42 percent versus last year. This is MKZ's best-ever May

sales, building on MKZ's best-ever sales month in April.

In addition, Ford announced plans to build 740,000 vehicles in the third quarter, up 10 percent from the 673,000 vehicles produced in the third quarter of 2012.

The third-quarter plan includes the company's recent announcement to add 40,000 vehicles from a reduced July summer shutdown and the addition of 200,000 units of annualized straight-time capacity starting in the fall. Second-quarter production of 800,000 vehicles is unchanged from previous plans.

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