

## Tech Center News

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## Chrysler Reports 12 Percent Rise In U.S. Sales

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

was the sixth consecutive month in which the Ram Truck brand registered the largest percentage year-over-year sales gain of any Chrysler Group brand. Sales of the Ram pickup truck were up 31 percent, its 40th consecutive month of year-over-year sales gains and its best August sales since 2006. Sales of the light-duty Ram pickup were up 34 percent in August, driven by a sharp increase in Crew Cab pickups, while heavy-duty Ram sales increased 26 percent.

Dodge brand sales were up 12 percent in August, the brand's best August sales since 2003 and its 27th consecutive month of year-over-year sales gains. The Dodge Challenger and Dodge Dart compact sedan each recorded their best August sales, while the Dodge Journey midsize crossover, with its 12 percent increase, had its best sales month ever. The Dart recorded its third straight month of year-over-year sales gains.

Dodge Charger sales were up 37 percent in August, while sales of the Dodge Durango full-size SUV increased 117 percent. Durango registered its best August sales in eight years.

Jeep brand sales were up 8 percent in August, the brand's best August sales in 11 years. All Jeep brand models in production recorded sales gains in August compared with the same month a year ago.

The Jeep Wrangler, Jeep Compass, and Jeep Patriot each recorded their best sales ever for the month of August.

Chrysler brand sales were up 2 percent in August led by the Chrysler 300 full-size sedan's 27 percent year-over-year sales gain. It was the 300's best August sales since 2007 and best sales month so far this year.

Sales of the Chrysler Town & Country minivan were up 11 percent, its best August sales since 2002, as well as the vehicle's best sales month so far this year.

# There's No Dirt on Ford Trucks – Until They Leave the Plant

Here's the dirt on Ford's new paint technology: There isn't any. That's what Ford said in a recent public announcement.

The new Ford F-Series models are the latest vehicles to benefit from the automaker's industry-first dirt detection technology.

The system uses high-resolution cameras and reflected light to digitally identify surface imperfections finer than a grain of salt in final vehicle assembly, and to cue operators where to polish and buff out imperfections.

By using dirt detection technology, Ford improved paint quality and reduced customer complaints of vehicle surface finish by 82 percent within one year, as measured by customer warranty data for F-Series models produced at the company's Dearborn Truck Plant.

"This system ensures better paint jobs and surface finishes for Ford customers around the world," said Tom Dougan, project manager, Global Paint Applications at Ford.

In the past, Dougan said, paint and surface inspections were based on human-eye examination.

The 3D imaging system applies varying degrees and angles of light while scoping the paint surface of vehicle bodies to identify dirt in paint and other irregular paint conditions, he said. High-resolution images – 3,150 images are captured in 15 seconds for every vehicle made – are stitched together for a full 3D image that is digitally compared with a perfect computer model.

Dirt particles in paint are difficult to manage with conventional quality control methods, Dougan said.

Minute particles can enter a shop floor from multiple environmental sources, machinery or workers, which makes paint qual-

ity one of the toughest variables to control in production.

Along with Dearborn Truck Plant, the automated inspection system is now being used in the United States at Ford's Kentucky Truck Plant.

"This is one of the most exciting integrations of optical science and digital technology in the automotive industry," said Dougan.

"By combining innovations in vision technology, processing speed and software, Ford continues to invent new technologies that give our customers better paint quality and surpass competitor offerings."

Globally, dirt detection technology is used at three Ford assembly plants:

- Valencia Assembly Plant, Valencia, Spain – Ford C-MAX (Grand C-MAX and compact models);

- Dearborn Truck Plant, Dearborn, Mich. – Ford F-Series;

- Kentucky Truck Plant, Louisville, Ky. – Ford Expe-

dition, Ford Super Duty.

The technology launches later this year at these plants:

- Louisville Assembly Plant, Louisville, Ky. – Ford Escape;
- Chicago Assembly Plant, Chicago – Ford Taurus, Ford Police Interceptor, Ford Explorer;
- Oakville Assembly, Oakville,

Ontario – Ford Edge, Ford Flex.

In 2014, Ford will launch dirt detection technology at the following plants:

- Flat Rock Assembly Plant, Flat Rock, Mich. – Ford Mustang, Ford Fusion;
- Kansas City Assembly Plant, Claycomo, Mo. – Ford F-Series.



Dirt detection technology improves Ford's F-Series paint quality.

## Special Mustang Stars in Movie, Benefit

A movie star will make its Michigan debut at Henry Ford Health Systems' "Get Your Heart Racing" Pit Party benefit dinner and auction at Eastern Market's Shed 3 on Friday, Sept. 13.

The new star's name is Mustang, Ford Mustang, and it will star along with Aaron Paul, Dominic Cooper and Michael Keaton in DreamWorks' upcoming "Need for Speed."

The upcoming film is a highly anticipated action adaptation of the popular Electronic Arts' video game series of the same name.

The hero car, a unique Mustang, is being shipped directly from the studio in Los Angeles to make a grand appearance at the annual "Get Your Heart Racing" Pit Party.

It was designed in conjunction with Ford Studio and EA/DreamWorks and features a custom-designed wide body, unique 22-inch alloy wheels and beefed-up air intakes to feed the supercharged engine under its twin-nostril hood.

"Previewing this one-of-a-kind movie star car adds to the excitement and is a great example of the cooperation we get from our lead sponsor, Ford Motor Company, and from other sponsors and participants who support the work we do," said Sandy Hudson,

chief development officer at Henry Ford Hospital.

"Get Your Heart Racing' is a unique event and it promises to be better than ever this year."

"Need for Speed" marks a return to the great car culture films of the 1960s and '70s.

The story chronicles a cross-country journey for the film's heroes.

The Get Your Heart Racing Pit Party will be the second time that the vehicle has visited Detroit, as portions of the film were shot in and around the city this summer.

The celebrity Mustang is planned to be auctioned by Barrett-Jackson shortly after the film's release date of March 14, with proceeds benefiting The Edith and Benson Ford Heart & Vascular Institute at Henry Ford Hospital.

The fundraiser is co-produced by Henry Ford Health System and Ford Motor Company.

The Pit Party is followed by a day at the track on Saturday, Sept. 14, at Ford's Dearborn Development Center and Proving Grounds.

The track event features

celebrity drivers offering thrill rides, driving demonstrations, and opportunities for participants to get behind the wheel themselves to experience select Ford vehicles.

Honorary chairpersons of this year's event are Paul and Lynn Alandt and Raj Nair, Ford group vice president, Global Product Development.

For more information and to purchase event tickets, visit [www.GetYourHeartRacing.org](http://www.GetYourHeartRacing.org) or call Kim Streich at 734-246-9639.

The "Heart Racing" website also offers a complete list of live auction items and celebrity drivers.

Get Your Heart Racing sponsors for 2013 include:

Ford Motor Company, Ford Fund, Crest Automotive Group, Lear Corporation, KPMG, Comerica Bank, Village Ford, Superior Ambulance, Heidie M. Gorno, Continental Canteen, Cooper Standard, Powerlink, Suburban Collection, Penske Corporation, Ken & Marilyn Way, Huntington Bank, Superior Industries, Avis Ford, WF Whelan Co., Racing for Kids, ISIS Medical and Team Detroit.

## Ford Retail Sales Up 20 Percent – Best Since 2006

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

F-Series sales of 71,115 vehicles were up 22 percent, for the 25th consecutive monthly increase – and for the second time this year, sales have topped 70,000 vehicles.

The last time F-Series had sales of more than 70,000 vehicles in two separate months in a calendar year was 2006.

Lincoln MKZ sales were up 10 percent to 3,652 vehicles, for a best-ever August sales month. MKZ has now reported record sales for four of the last five months.

Ford also announced it will build 785,000 vehicles in the fourth quarter of 2013, a 7 percent increase (50,000 vehicles) from the fourth quarter of 2012. Third-quarter production of 740,000 vehicles is unchanged.

## Got News?

If you have solid business news for this paper, please contact us at News@DetroitAutoScene.com.

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