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Rick Ferrell's 'Ron Burgundy' and new Dodge Durango in TV commercial.

## 'Ron Burgundy' Anchors Dodge Durango Launch

by Jim Stickford

Hurray for Hollywood. That's the tune that the folks at Dodge are singing.

Olivier Francois, Chrysler's chief marketing officer, introduced the new spokesman for the 2014 Durango launch – famed 1970s anchorman Ron Burgundy, better known as actor Will Ferrell.

Francois said that the Burgundy character is funny and beloved by Americans.

"I am from Europe and didn't know much about Ron Burgundy," Francois said. "I learned about him from Youtube videos that (Dodge brand CEO) Tim Kuniskis showed me."

By having Ferrell as Burgundy be a spokesman, said Francois, Dodge is trying to show that the brand appeals to people with "attitude and irreverent sense of humor." And, he said, the movie studio Paramount benefits from

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## GM Orion Assembly Employees Honored

by Jim Stickford

Quality is getting to be a habit at the GM Orion Assembly plant in Orion Township. And that's the way they want it.

GM held a special in-plant celebration Oct. 10 in recognition of the Chevrolet Sonic winning the 2013 J.D. Power Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout (APEAL) Study Award, as well as for the plant winning for the third time GM's Built-In Quality (BIQ) award.

Roman Lesnau, senior director, Global Automotive – J.D. Power, spoke to the crowd of employees and congratulated them on their achievement.

"We don't rate the vehicles ourselves," Lesnau said. "APEAL just keeps score."

And the Sonic scored very well with its drivers, Lesnau said, for the second year in a row. To put everything in perspective, APEAL measures 77 attributes across 10 different categories. Vehicles are judged on everything from seats and HVAC to driving dynamics.

"APEAL measures the things manufacturers get right," Lesnau said. "And, according to your customers, you got a lot of things right."

He said that Toyota and Honda, in the same vehicle category, finished well behind the Sonic.

The biggest advantage the Sonic has is its engine performance and exterior style.

And most importantly, Lesnau said, there is a direct correlation between APEAL ratings and transactions. Vehicles with high

APEAL ratings have better customer loyalty and turn faster on dealership lots.

"There's one final point I want to make," Lesnau said. "It's about

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Gerald Johnson, vice president, North American Manufacturing

## A Hundred Years Ago in a Factory in Highland Park

### – Ford Founder's System Was Felt 'Round the World –

The date was Oct. 7, 1913, the site was Highland Park, and the event was felt around the automotive world – and, ultimately, the total industrial world.

It was the first day of the moving assembly line.

Henry Ford and his team at Highland Park assembly plant launched one of the world's great contributions to manufacturing that day.

The moving assembly line of the Ford Model T's 3,000 parts broke the task into 84 distinct steps performed by groups of workers as a rope pulled the vehicle chassis down the line.

The new process revolutionized production and dropped the assembly time for a single vehicle from 12 hours to about 90 minutes.

By reducing the money, time and manpower needed to build cars as he refined the assembly line over the years, Ford was able to drop the price of the Model T from \$850 to less than \$300. For the first time in history, quality vehicles were affordable to the masses.

Eventually, Ford built a Model T every 24 seconds and sold more than 15 million worldwide by 1927, accounting for half of all automobiles then sold.

"Ford's new approach spread rapidly, not only to other automakers but also to manufacturers of phonographs, vacuum cleaners, refrigerators and other consumer goods," said Bob Casey, former curator of transportation at The Henry Ford, and author of "The Model T: A Centennial History."

Casey continued, "The assem-

bly line became the characteristic American mode of production."

At an event at the Highland Park plant last week, Ford celebrated the 100th anniversary of the creation of the moving assembly line. Ford Executive Chairman Bill Ford said, "One hundred years ago, my great-grandfather had a vision to build safe and efficient transportation for everyone."

"I am proud he was able to bring the freedom of mobility to millions by making cars affordable to families and that his vision of serving people still drives everything we do today."

In 1914, Ford instituted the \$5 workday, a significant wage at the time, to enable his employees to buy the vehicles they built. The move created loyalty among Ford workers and is credited with giving rise to a new middle class of consumers unencum-

bered by geography, free to travel the open roads, free to live where they please and free to chase the American dream.

National Geographic Channel will mark the production line's anniversary on Friday, Oct. 18, with an in-depth new documentary as part of its "Ultimate Factories" program.

Ford's innovation in automotive production didn't stop in 1913.

For example, today, Ford engineers are developing a highly flexible, first-of-its-kind, patented technology to rapidly form sheet-metal parts for low-volume production use.

The technology, known as Ford Freeform Fabrication Technology, or F3T, will lower costs and speed delivery times for prototype stamping molds – the delivery time for prototypes now will be made within three business days instead of two to six months

using conventional methods.

Additionally, said Kristina Adamski, Ford Manufacturing and Purchasing Communications manager, Ford is expanding its capabilities in 3D printing, which creates production-representative 3D parts layer by layer for testable prototypes. With 3D printing, Adamski said, Ford can create multiple versions of one part at a time and deliver prototype parts to engineers for testing in days rather than months.

Ford also is investing in robotic innovations to improve vehicle quality and production efficiencies, Adamski said.

For example, the company's new dirt detection system uses robotic vision to create a digital model of each vehicle in final assembly to analyze paint and surface imperfections in comparison

with a perfect model. The result has significantly improved surface quality on Ford vehicles and provided more time for operators on the assembly line to address complex issues, Adamski said.

Robotics, in this case, she said, allow Ford to work smarter in improving products for customers and allow workers to focus on more critical thinking tasks.

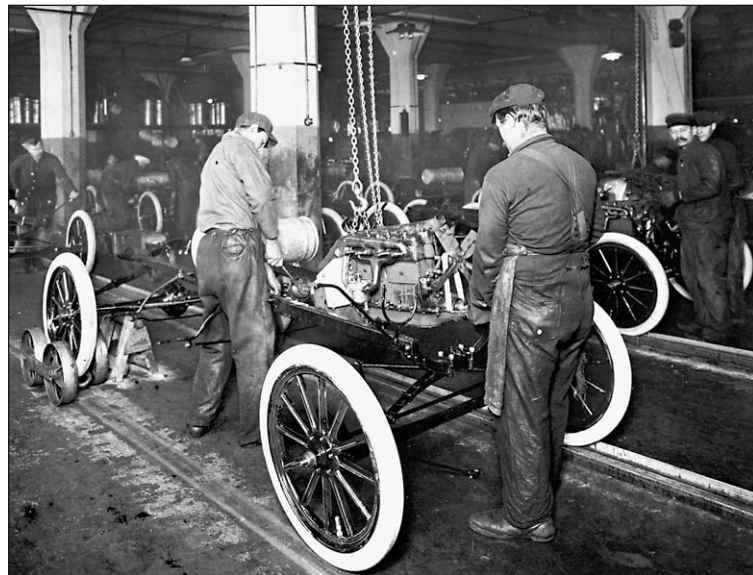
Finally, through Ford's "virtual factory," the automaker can improve quality and cut costs in real-world manufacturing facilities by creating and analyzing computer simulations of the complete vehicle production process, Adamski said.

This includes simulations of how assembly line workers have

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Ford Michigan Assembly's John Bizek, left, and Rob Hanson.



A historical photo of the 1913 Ford Highland Park moving assembly line.

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