

Tech Center News

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2014 Silverado

Chevrolet Trucks Prove Grit in Rugged Tests

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Validation and durability testing pushed the trucks to their limits before they went into production in Silao, Mexico, Flint and Fort Wayne, Ind., Hubler said. In many of the tests, the trucks are loaded to gross vehicle weight. While most customers do not drive fully loaded on a regular basis, these tests ensure the Silverado can withstand demanding conditions.

The trucks proved their mettle by traversing Belgian blocks (much like a cobblestone road), splashing through an off-road-simulating grit trough, climbing and descending a 30 percent grade, and driving at high speeds, Wilkinson said.

Grit intrusion is a challenge for any off-road vehicle, Hubler said. The grit trough test ensures the trucks have enough sealing to protect bearings and key suspension points, while a trip along a dusty road helps determine all seals are functioning properly and that dust does not contaminate the bearings or other moving parts.

Some of the key durability improvements from the previous-generation trucks include:

- A frame formed from high-strength steel to ensure it will not crack, even when loaded to full capacity;

- A new four-wheel-disc brake system with Duralife brake rotors that offer up to double the service life, along with brake-tuning revisions that improve pedal feel for more confident braking performance on any driving surface.

BorgWarner is on Pace for Another Innovation Award

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Vehicles with stop/start systems shut the engine off when the vehicle stops, increasing fuel economy 3 to 10 percent, depending on driving patterns, Verrier said. However, when the driver accelerates from the stop mode, current stop/start systems can cause vehicles equipped with automatic transmissions to lurch or roll back, he said.

Verrier pointed out that BorgWarner's solenoid experts developed an exceptionally low-noise,

high-flow, low-leak solenoid valve with a hydraulic accumulator to prime the transmission in as little as 0.33 seconds, achieving quick hydraulic pressure for smooth launches when the engine restarts.

For automatic transmission designs that currently offer stop/start capability, Eco-Launch solenoid valves offer better performance at significantly lower cost than alternative systems, Verrier said.

Specifically designed for easy integration, he said, the technology also allows automakers to

upgrade existing automatic transmissions – including dual-clutch, stepped automatic and continuously variable transmissions – to expand stop/start capabilities across their vehicle fleet.

Several patents are pending for the innovation, and a major automaker has already committed to using the technology in several of its transmissions, said Verrier.

Sponsored by *Automotive News*, Ernst & Young and the Transportation Research Center Inc., the 20th annual PACE

Awards honor superior innovation, technological advancement and business performance among automotive suppliers.

Known around the world as the industry symbol of innovation, PACE stands for Premier Automotive Suppliers' Contribution to Excellence.

Winners are selected by an independent panel of judges and will be announced in Detroit on April 7, 2014. Since 2005, BorgWarner has received seven PACE Awards, four PACE Innovation Partnership Awards and one PACE Environmental Award.

2014 Ford Transit Connect Taxi Features New Powertrain

Ford Motor Company has added Hong Kong to the list of global cities served by its Transit Connect Taxi.

"Ford Transit Connect Taxi has proven itself in taxi fleets across the U.S.," said Raj Nair, group vice president, global product development. "Now, we are building on that success, offering the vehicle for sale in even more markets, including global cities like Hong Kong."

The Transit Connect Taxi Ford unveiled in Hong Kong comes equipped with a Ford-engineered, clean-burning liquefied petroleum gas fuel system. Nair said the vehicle is designed to run on Hong Kong's well-established LPG infrastructure, providing dependability, low maintenance and long-range travel.

In the United States, Ford owns nearly 60 percent of the taxi market, Nair said. On sale since 2010, Ford Transit Connect Taxi serves passengers in some of the most demanding taxi markets, including New York City, Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Philadelphia and Boston.

The 2014 Ford Transit Connect Taxi comes with a new powertrain – a 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine paired with a new, fuel-efficient six-speed automatic transmission – providing drivers with quick response as well as durability, low-rpm cruising and an expected best-in-class highway fuel economy rating.

In addition, Transit Connect will be the only taxi in America offered with a compressed natu-

ral gas and LPG engine prep package. Conversion to CNG and LPG is supported by Ford Qualified Vehicle Modifiers, enabling significant fuel cost savings, Nair said.

Ford's second-generation Transit Connect Taxi features a lower vehicle height, providing improved roof clearance for taxicab companies to place advertising on the cabin roof.

A new interior hood release gives drivers easy access, said Nair, to check fluid levels prior to starting a shift.

The new Transit Connect Taxi also is longer, offering seating for five and increased cargo capacity.

It has an expected best-in-class 60.5 cubic feet of cargo volume behind the second row, Nair said. He added that the vehicle can accommodate a compressed gas tank, while still leaving ample room for luggage.

The Transit Connect Taxi floor has been lowered for improved access to the cabin, and it can be modified for wheelchair accessibility through Ford's Qualified Vehicle Modifier program, Nair said.

In addition to Transit Connect Taxi's success, Ford C-MAX Hybrid is being adopted by taxi operators right from dealer lots. Taxi operators like the vehicle's utility, maneuverable size and class-leading U.S. EPA combined fuel economy of 43 mpg.

C-MAX Hybrid taxis are on the road in San Francisco and New York.

Taxi operators attribute Ford

C-MAX Hybrid's class-leading fuel economy, 522-mile overall range and spaciousness to its success in taxi fleets, Nair said.

C-MAX Hybrid offers best-in-class passenger volume, plus best-in-class front- and second-row headroom and legroom, and

plenty of room for cargo, Nair said.

In addition, Ford C-MAX Hybrid's ease of entry and exit is one of its top-rated features by customers – important for passengers quickly entering and exiting the vehicle.

Gala Raises \$200K For Judson Center

The Judson Center had something to celebrate at its 30th annual gala, thanks to a \$50,000 donation from General Motors.

The gala, titled, "A Night to Embrace Our Children and Families," raises money for the Judson Center, said spokesperson Janice Morgan.

The Center stretches back to 1924, when it was called the Detroit Baptist Children's Home. It became the Judson Center in the 1970s and provides comprehensive services to children and families in need in southeast Michigan.

The gala, held in the Townsend Hotel in Birmingham on Oct. 5, raised \$200,000, Morgan said.

"A large part of that amount was raised during the 'Take a Stand' portion of the evening, where guests make cash donations to support the individuals Judson Center serves," Morgan said.

GM was a presenting sponsor of the event, Morgan said. Melissa Howell, a GM senior vice president of Global Human Re-



Julie Heisel of GM

sources, is also a Judson Center board member and chaired the gala. She wrote a \$25,000 check – presented by GM's Julie Heisel – as a matching gift to GM's \$25,000 sponsorship. ITC of Novi also presented a \$10,000 grant check that evening as well, Morgan said.

The ITC grant was used to extend a summer program for children with autism.

"With one in 88 children being diagnosed with some form of autism, the need for services is great," Morgan said.

MADD Donation

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

dedicated to the Power of Parents program. This initiative offers materials and workshops to give parents the tools they need to help prevent underage drinking.

"This contribution will help MADD achieve its mission by allowing us to serve more drunk driving victims and prevent underage drinking," said MADD National President Jan Withers.

FOR RENT CONDO

18 | Van Dyke

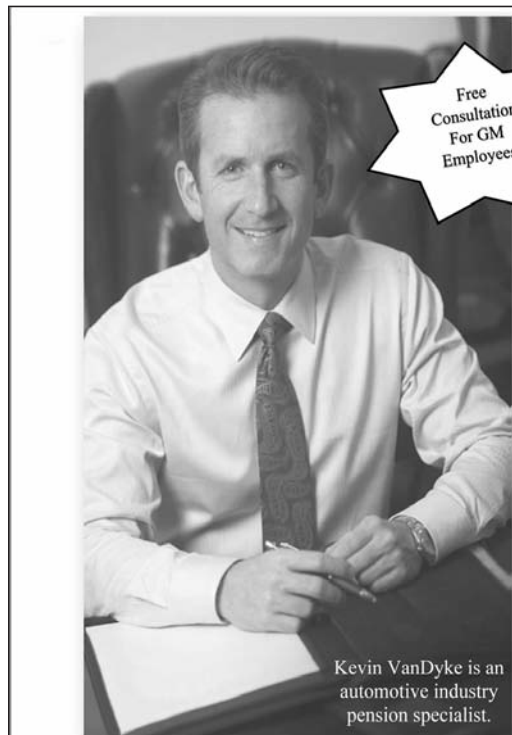
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