

# Domestics Make List of KBB's 'Top 10 in Best Resale Value'

by Jim Stickford

Thanks to Kelley Blue Book's internet listings of vehicles with the best residual value, Nov. 18 was a big day for the Big Three as all of Detroit's manufacturers placed vehicles at the top of the list.

kbb.com named the 2014 Jeep Wrangler and 2014 Dodge Challenger winners of its 2014 Best Resale Value Awards. For the fourth consecutive year, Jeep Wrangler has been named Best Resale Value in its class and ranked on the Top 10 list for the third year in a row.

With record setting sales numbers month-over-month this year, Dodge Challenger also earned a spot on this year's Top 10 list of vehicles with the best resale value.

"Jeep continues to dominate in its segment and among the top 10 list, increasing its residual value 3.9 percentage points from just last year," said Eric Ibara, director of residual consulting for Kelley Blue Book.

"New to this year's list is the Dodge Challenger, which heavily contributes to Dodge's success for the 2014 model year, along with other strong vehicles from the brand."

Ibara also said that in addition to Chrysler's success, both Ford and GM had a number of vehicles that made KBB's list.

"I believe that seeing so many Big Three vehicles on our list is a continuation of a turnaround that we've been seeing for the past couple of years," Ibara said.

"What we've observed is that the vehicles that have been redesigned have improved resale value and the Detroit manufacturers have put a lot of time and money during the past few years redesigning their lineups."

Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com Best Resale Value Awards are based on projections from the Kelley Blue Book Official Residual Value Guide and determined by a skilled staff of automotive analysts, Ibara said. These honored vehicles are expected to maintain the greatest proportion of their original list price after five years of ownership.

"Chrysler Group is honored that Kelley Blue Book has named the 2014 Jeep Wrangler and 2014 Dodge Challenger winners of its Best Resale Value Awards," said Reid Bigland, head of Chrysler's U.S. Sales. "These prestigious awards serve as great recognition of our commitment to producing quality, reliable, and desirable products, all while maintaining great resale value."

GM also did well. The 2014 Impala was listed as one of the top three vehicles to keep residual

value in the full-sized car category.

KBB wrote of it, "Style, value, quality and quiet never lose their allure, and the totally redesigned Chevrolet Impala sedan embodies all of these gifts in a roomy 4-door package."

Other GM vehicles that placed high on KBB's list included the 2014 Corvette Stingray, the 2014 Camaro and the 2014 Silverado.

Ibara said he was surprised that the Impala rose a lot on the list so quickly.

"Last year, the Impala was just a non-descript vehicle," Ibara said. "It wasn't bad or anything, but it wasn't at the top of the list."

"With its redesign, it went from the bottom of its segment to hitting one of the top spots."

But that is often the case with a vehicle that's been redesigned, Ibara said. The improvements made to a well-designed vehicle increases its residual value. That's certainly what happened with the Stingray.

"I'll tell you this," Ibara said, "when we were test-driving the Stingray in Southern California, people would drive up next to us just to get a look at the Stingray, which was very new to the market. It's a sharp, good-looking car."

GM spokesman Jim Cain said the KBB list was a reflection of the hard work GM has put into improving its vehicles.

"A good way to think of this is to look at car sales as the ultimate left brain/right brain sales decision," Cain said.

"You have to connect with the buyer on an emotional level through design and performance. But you also have to deliver good value and not just on day one."

"Our customers want cars that will hold their value over the years. This has required us to step up our game with higher-quality vehicles."

"We've also been disciplined with fleet sales and incentives. Those have an effect on residual values."

Ultimately, Cain said, GM has been able to deliver quality vehicles that their customers can trust over time.



2014 Dodge Challenger



2014 Ford Fusion



2014 Impala

The end result has been that people can make an emotional decision on what GM car to buy without regret.

Ford spokesman Wes Sherwood said that Ford's placement of the 2014 Fusion and the 2014 Fusion Energi, as well as the 2014 Ford Transit Connect van, on the KBB's list is a reflection of a trend Ford people have been noticing for a while.

"Overall, our vehicles' resale values have been trending upward across its line of vehicles," Sherwood said. "A hallmark of our recent marketing and sales strategy has been to better serve our customers with vehicles that are fresh and are leaders in fuel economy, safety, quality and smart technology."

"This focus, I mean no pun, can be seen in the 2014 Fusion. It's at the top of the KBB list and it has been a great symbol of what we've done with our vehicles across the board."

"Not only have Fusion sales increased, a lot of the buyers are 'coastal' customers. These are buyers on the East and West Coasts that we haven't seen in a while."

"A lot of Fusion buyers are new Ford customers."

"By offering them fresh and exciting cars, it's really helped Ford move the needle in terms of both sales and residual value."

# Late-Month Surge Boosts November Sales for Big 3

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ities up 3 percent and trucks up 17 percent, Merkle said. Ford passenger cars achieved the best November retail sales result since 2002, with Ford's Fusion and Fiesta both posting records.

"We continued to see sales increases across our full family of vehicles - particularly with our passenger cars and utilities in conquest coastal markets - helping us post our best November retail sales performance since 2004," said John Felice, Ford vice president, U.S. Marketing, Sales and Service.

"Fusion and Fiesta were particular standouts, setting November records, and Ford trucks maintained their strong selling pace."

Fusion sales of 22,839 vehicles for the month are up 51 percent year over year, for the car's best-ever November sales performance, Merkle said. Fusion sales continue to expand fastest in the western U.S., where retail sales are up 79 percent - including a 101 percent increase in California. Fiesta also had its best-ever November sales performance with 4,642 vehicles sold.

Ford F-Series continued its pace of selling more than 60,000 trucks for the seventh straight month, strengthening its position as America's best-selling pickup and best-selling vehicle for another consecutive year, Merkle said. Sales of 65,501 F-Series trucks in November represent an increase of 16 percent compared with a year ago.

Lincoln MKZ sales of 2,854 cars represent a 114 percent increase compared with the same period a year ago, leading the Lincoln brand to an overall increase of 17 percent. November MKZ retail sales in California more than tripled for the period, Merkle said.

Ford also announced it will build 770,000 vehicles in the first quarter of 2014 in North America. This compares with 784,000 vehicles in the first quarter of 2013.

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