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Trucks Were King of the Road in Detroit 3 Sales in 2013

Sierra, Silverado Lead Way for GM, With Ram Truck Pacing Chrysler, Ford's F-Series Nation's Best Seller

Sales for December and the year are in, and while all three Detroit automakers reported stronger vehicle sales, it was the truck that led the way for each manufacturer.

The news for GM was mixed. While GM dealers delivered 2.8 million vehicles in the United States in 2013, retail sales increased 11 percent and total sales were up 7 percent compared with 2012.

In December, dealers delivered 230,157 vehicles, down 6 percent versus a year ago. Retail sales were down 6 percent and fleet sales were down 9 percent.

The all-new Chevrolet Silverado 1500 and GMC Sierra 1500 helped the company increase its full-size pickup sales by 14 percent. GMC sales were the strongest since 2007, and the Sierra now has the highest average transaction price of any full-size pickup truck line in the industry, according to J.D. Power PIN estimates.

Overall, GM's share of the \$40,000-and-up light-duty pickup segment, which is about one-third of the market, has increased 7 percentage points to 36 percent.

"2013 was the year that GM and the auto industry put the last traces of the recession in the rearview mirror," said Kurt McNeil, vice president, U.S. Sales Operations, "so now we can devote our full attention to the things that matter most to customers: compelling design, world-class quality and delivering the best ownership experience in the business."

"GM has laid a strong foundation to pursue all of these goals. We have announced more than

\$10 billion in capital investments in the United States since 2009 and plowed billions more into R&D to refresh our product portfolio at twice the rate of the last few years."

Cadillac finished the year as the industry's fastest-growing full-line luxury brand, said spokesman Jim Cain.

Buick had its best sales year since 2006 as the brand expanded into new segments with the

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2013 Ram 1500



2013 GMC Sierra



2013 Ford F-150

Built in 1958, Tech Center's Chevy Building Coming Down

by Jim Stickford

The end of 2013 has also brought the end of the Chevrolet building on the grounds of the General Motors Tech Center facilities in Warren.

The building is in the midst of being torn down and dates back more than 55 years.

GM archivist Larry Kinsel said his research on the Chevrolet building shows that it was built in 1958 and was originally occupied by the GM Ternstedt Divisional Offices and Engineering Center. Ternstedt was responsible for automotive components such as door handles, seats and certain other mechanisms found in cars.

"According to GM handbooks from the GM Heritage Center, Ternstedt moved into the building between 1961 and 1962 as the division was first listed as having the 30007 Van Dyke address in the 1962 handbook," Kinsel said. "Beginning in 1969, there is no mention of Ternstedt as a division in any of the handbooks."

It was not until the 1980 GM handbook that the Chevrolet Motor Division was listed as having the 30001 Van Dyke address.

"It appears the transition happened in 1979, as press releases from Chevrolet were distributed from both the Grand Boulevard and Van Dyke addresses," Kinsel said.

The building and surrounding areas had some interesting features, Kinsel said. The south section of the property consisted of a pond with seven fountains along with an extended lobby and administrative building.

The attached north section consisted of machine and engineering shops.

The Chevrolet building was just one part of the overall Tech Center. According to a brochure published for GM's Heritage Center, the Tech Center was needed because "by 1945, Harley Earl's design team had grown to the point where they could no longer fit their studio and shop facilities in the Argonaut Building behind the GM's headquarters in downtown Detroit."

"The Styling Staff had been forced to move the fabrication shops, the Truck Studio and Industrial Design department to a nearby Fisher Body plant," the brochure said. "Mr. Earl knew that separating key functions was at best a short-term solution. He also knew that a permanent solution was under development."

"Just prior to World War II," the brochure said, "key GM executives began discussing the possibility of creating a GM Technical Center which would include the Styling Staff."

"In July, 1945, GM's Chairman, Alfred P. Sloan, unveiled the Technical Center concept for the first time at a business luncheon in New York City. The facility

would include GM's Research Labs and its Engineering, Styling and Manufacturing Staffs.

"Harley Earl received the assignment to select an architect and coordinate the project for GM."

"GM commissioned Finnish architect Eero Saarinen who would be supported by Earl's team throughout the project."

"By October, 1945, a 320-acre site had been selected and purchased in suburban Detroit."

In 2006, GM celebrated the anniversary of the Tech Center and according to the information released at the time, the Tech Center was "designed by Eero Saarinen and Associates, the architect-engineering firm was Smith, Hinchman & Grylls, Inc. The general contractor was Bryant & Detwiler Co."

"Construction began in 1949 and was completed in 1955. The

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The Chevrolet building as it looks today – a skeletal frame



The Chevrolet building from 1980 until mid-2013

Parts Thieves Beware: Tahoe No Easy Target

Customers of the 2015 Chevrolet Tahoe will get a vehicle that offers a new level of security and one designed to deter thieves who target vehicle parts, say Chevy officials.

Thwarting theft was a design focus of Chevrolet's full-size SUVs, said GM spokesperson Michelle Malcho.

New standard features include a steering column lock that deters push-away and tow-away theft, which account for a significant portion of today's stolen vehicle incidents.

The 2015 Tahoe also features side-cut keys that deter lock picking and more robust door lock cylinders and shields to prevent access with "slim jims" and other tools.

Also new for 2015 is "creative and hidden storage," Malcho said, such as a compartment behind the available infotainment screen as well as third-row seats that are bolted down, all but eliminating theft of third-row seats, which are removable in the current generation full-size SUVs. In 2015 models, the second and third rows fold flat to make storing cargo easier.

Available on the Tahoe's LT and LTZ models is a Theft Protection Package, which features glass breakage sensors, interior motion sensors, and an inclination/tilt sensor, Malcho said.

They all sound an alarm if the vehicle is lifted off the ground, attempted to be broken into, or if motion is detected within the vehicle when the alarm is armed.

Additional features reinforce

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