

Chevy Focuses on Versatility, Value for Equinox Owners

Versatility and value are helping make compact crossovers and SUVs among the hottest vehicles in the country.

Chevrolet is among those meeting the demand with its strongest lineup in history, including the Equinox and – early next year – the new Trax, said Steve Majoros, Marketing director for Chevrolet.

“Compact crossovers and SUVs make sense for so many consumers,” said Majoros. “Suited to adapt to whatever life throws at them, our customers want a vehicle that can do – and go – anywhere, and they want it with expressive design and fuel efficiency.

“It’s a tall order and it’s why Equinox sales have risen nearly every year since we introduced the original in 2006.

“Next year, the Trax will provide this same flexibility in a smaller footprint.”

Equinox retail sales in June were up 11 percent from June 2013. Chevrolet has sold nearly 1.5 million Equinoxes since the first generation was introduced in 2005.

A second generation was released for the 2010 model year.

The popularity of Equinox has helped Chevrolet grow its share of the segment from 7 percent to more than 10 percent in the past eight years.

Overall, demand for compact crossovers and SUVs has nearly doubled since 2008, from 10 percent to 18 percent of the market, according to AutoTrader.com.

“Sales of crossovers of all sorts have been growing significantly in recent years, but the growth in sales of smaller crossovers and SUVs has been nothing short of phenomenal,” said Michelle Krebs, senior analyst for AutoTrader.com.

“It’s easy to see why, with the segment being so versatile to meet the needs of a wide variety of car buyers.

“They can carry people, serve as a substitute truck or haul bigger cargo while still driving like a car.”



2015 Chevrolet Equinox

According to AutoTrader.com’s research, crossovers and small SUVs are the only growing segments within the SUV market and, for the first time,

outpace two other segments that have experienced consistent growth in the past eight years –

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Robert E. Ferguson

GM Names Ferguson Head Of Its Global Public Policy

General Motors last week appointed Robert E. Ferguson to the position of senior vice president, Global Public Policy.

Ferguson will report directly to GM CEO Mary Barra and is responsible for GM’s federal, state and international government relations and public policy activities in the U.S. and its markets around the globe. The appointment is effective immediately.

Ferguson returns to the top public policy position having guided GM’s ignition switch recall response among lawmakers and regulators while also serving as senior vice president, Global Cadillac.

During his tenure at Cadillac, the nameplate became the world’s fastest-growing full-line

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Hackel Says ‘Yes’ Vote Important to Regain Revenue

A business tax on out-of-state purchases, along with use taxes on hotel and motel rooms, cars and telecommunications services can pay for the elimination of a now-in-place personal property business tax.

That’s only if voters approve Proposal 1 in the upcoming August elections.

Among others, Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel has endorsed the passing of Proposal 1.

The proposal seeks voter approval to reimburse local communities for lost revenue resulting from the elimination of the personal property tax.

Hackel said Michigan is the only state in the region that levies a personal property tax on business equipment for as long as the business owns that equipment, making it hard to attract new investment.

“A ‘yes’ vote for Proposal 1 solves two major problems for Michigan and Macomb County without raising taxes,” said Hackel.

“Proposal 1 replaces 100 percent of the estimated revenues lost from the elimination of the personal property tax for impor-

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OSU Students Win GM’s EcoCAR 2 Contest By Getting the Weight Out of Car’s Seats

by Jim Stickford

Talk about winning by the seat of your pants.

The Ohio State University’s design team ended up the winner of the EcoCAR 2 automotive design contest – sponsored by GM and the U.S. Department of Energy – in large part thanks to the materials and expertise supplied by Johnson Controls of Plymouth.

Students worked with Johnson Controls engineers to lightweight the vehicle’s seats.

David Emerling, the Ohio State faculty member who supervised the team of 40 undergraduate and graduate students, who have majors in various fields from photography to mechanical engineering, said they were able to achieve their targeted goals in part because of the help provided by Johnson Controls.

Emerling described EcoCAR 2 as a three-year competition managed by Argonne National Laboratory and sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy, GM and 30 other government and industry leaders.

The contest gave students the opportunity to gain real-world automotive engineering experience while striving to improve the environmental impact and energy efficiency of an already efficient vehicle – the 2013 Chevrolet Malibu, Emerling said.

“The contest’s length allowed it to follow the cadence of the development time used by automakers to build a car,” Emerling said.

The first year of the contest was what Emerling called the design phase. Participating schools

were given the Computer Assisted Design (CAD) specs of the 2013 Malibu for the 2011-12 school year. They had a year to work on the specs to design a more fuel-efficient Malibu.

The criteria for energy efficiency was from “well to wheel,” Emerling said. That meant that the success of the design would be determined by more than just fuel efficiency.

For example, if a school designed a totally electric car, it wouldn’t use gasoline, but judges would look at how much energy was used to mine the rare metals and to transport the rare metals to the factory. They would look at how energy was needed to transport the various parts to the vehicle construction point.

In year two, Emerling said, students have their work reviewed by experts from companies like Johnson Controls. They then built a working prototype

establishing proof of concept.

In year three, students then turn the prototypes into working vehicles that are ready for the showroom floor.

That meant vehicles had to look good as well as work. No loose threads on seats and the

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The winning car in GM’s EcoCar 2 design contest



Lightweight EcoCar2 seat

GM’s Ignition Lawsuit Reveals New Facts

By TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) – General Motors’ deadly ignition switch flaws emerged from an effort to improve its cars.

As the company began developing new small cars in the late 1990s, it listened to customers who complained about “cheap-feeling” switches that required too much effort to turn. GM set about making switches that would work more smoothly and give drivers the impression that they were better designed, a GM switch engineer testified in a lawsuit deposition in the spring of 2013.

The switches, though, were too loose, touching off events that led to at least 13 deaths, more than 50 crashes and a raft of legal trouble for the Detroit automaker.

Former U.S. Attorney Anton Valukas, hired by GM in March to investigate the switch problems, told a congressional subcommittee last month that GM wanted each small-car ignition to “feel like it was a European sports car or something.” After years of lag-

ging behind the Japanese, GM was eager to make better, more competitive small cars.

But, as it turned out, the new switches in models such as the Chevrolet Cobalt and Saturn Ion can unexpectedly slip from “run” to “accessory,” causing engines to stall. That shuts off the power steering, making cars harder to control, and disables air bags in crashes. GM says the problem has caused at least 13 deaths, but some members of Congress put the death toll near 100.

The problem led GM to recall 2.6 million small cars in February, and forced the company to admit it knew about the switch troubles for more than a decade before taking action. It has touched off federal investigations and prodded GM to review other safety issues, leading to 54 recalls this year covering 29 million vehicles.

The Associated Press traced the history of the problem using Valukas’ report as well as a deposition of GM switch engineer Ray DeGiorgio that was released by a House subcommittee. The deposition was also released by lawyers suing GM, but DeGior-

gio’s comments were redacted in that version.

In a wrongful death case in Georgia, DeGiorgio testified that he started out trying to make the switches easier to turn. But from the beginning he was consumed by electrical issues in the switch, not its mechanical parts.

When the switch supplier, Delphi, pointed out tests showing the switches turned too easily, DeGiorgio told Delphi not to change them because he was concerned mechanical alterations would harm the switch’s electrical performance, according to Valukas.

Delphi spokeswoman Claudia Tapia said the company isn’t commenting on the details of GM’s recall.

In the end, DeGiorgio approved switches that were far below GM’s specifications for the force required to turn them. The result was a smooth-turning key, but also one that could slip out of position. Several years later, DeGiorgio signed off on a design change that fixed the problem, but he didn’t change the part number,

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Tech Center News

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Deadline: Thursday 5:00 p.m.
for the next edition of Monday

William Springer II, publisher
Lisa A. Torretta, operations
Jim Stickford, news

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Ford Recalls 100,000 Vehicles For Safety Issues

DETROIT (AP) – Ford is recalling 100,610 vehicles in North America for various safety defects.

The company announced the six separate recalls July 8. No injuries, accidents or fires related to any of the defects have been reported, Ford officials said.

The largest recall, of 92,022 vehicles, affects the 2013-14 Ford Taurus, Lincoln MKS and Police Interceptor sedans; 2013-14 Ford Flex and Lincoln MKT crossovers; 2012-14 Edge crossover, and 2014 Lincoln MKX crossover.

Ford says the right-hand half-shaft, which is part of the axle, isn't properly seated and may disengage over time, making the vehicles inoperable.

The vehicles are also at risk of rolling unexpectedly if they are parked without the parking brake on.

Ford will notify owners of the vehicles in the halfshaft recall by mail beginning the week of Aug. 25.

In all of the cases, dealers will repair the vehicles for free.

Ford is also recalling:

- 5,264 2011-14 F59 commercial stripped chassis. The company says corrosion in the electrical junction block could cause the vehicles to short-circuit, increasing the risk of a fire or the loss of electrical power.
- 2,124 2014 Ford Escape SUVs. Ford says their panoramic glass roofs have an improperly cured bond that could cause the roofs to leak or separate from the vehicles.
- 635 2014 F53 motor home stripped chassis and F59 commercial stripped chassis. The company says the brake calipers may have been incorrectly made, which could result in a leak and a loss in braking performance.
- 368 2014 Transit Connect vehicles. Ford says the brake reservoir caps in vehicles shipped to Puerto Rico have European labels that don't conform to U.S. labeling requirements.
- 197 2014 Ford Fiesta subcompacts. Ford says their fuel tanks may be missing an adhesive layer, which could cause them to leak fuel and increase the risk of a fire.

Ford said it identified all of the problems through internal tests, as well as warranty claims.

Ford will begin notifying owners affected by the five additional recalls this month.

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GM's Ignition Lawsuit Reveals New Facts

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which stymied later attempts to figure out what was wrong.

Repeated efforts to reach DeGiorgio have been unsuccessful. He was one of 15 employees dismissed by the company last month due to the recalls. At a House subcommittee hearing last month, GM CEO Mary Barra didn't mince words when lawmakers asked her about DeGiorgio's statements to Valukas and congressional investigators.

"I don't find Mr. DeGiorgio credible," Barra said.

GM spokesman Greg Martin said Valukas' report cites several opportunities that the company missed to fix the problem before

the switches went into production. "It should never have happened regardless of what the reasons for changing the initial specifications for the switches were," he said.

Subsequent safety reviews also found ignition switch troubles in other cars. The company has issued five recalls for 17.1 million cars with switch problems this year.

Among the recalls are 3.4 million large cars like the Chevrolet Impala, which had switches DeGiorgio worked on. GM says the combined force of a large bump and a swinging key chain can cause those switches to slip and stall the engine. GM is changing the key hole from a slot to a

small circle to limit how much key chains can swing and tug on the ignition.

Unlike the Cobalt and Ion switches, GM says the ignition switches on the large cars meet its specifications, and the key design is the problem. GM says it conducted eight different driving tests with the new key and the ignition didn't move out of the "run" position in any of the tests.

But some experts believe the switches can still slip out of "run" too easily. "They're finding that it's still possible for it to happen," said Erin Shipp, a mechanical engineer who helped uncover the small-car ignition switch problems while working for attorneys suing GM.

GM's Recent Recalls Focus on Older Models

DETROIT (AP) – General Motors' safety crisis deepened dramatically June 30 when the automaker added 8.2 million vehicles to its ballooning list of cars recalled over faulty ignition switches.

The latest recalls involve mainly older midsize cars and bring GM's total recalls in North America to 29 million this year, surpassing the 22 million recalled by all automakers last year. They also raise questions about the safety of ignition switches in cars made by all manufacturers.

In the latest recalls, GM said keys may be jostled or accidentally bumped, causing the ignition to slip out of the "run" position. The recalls cover seven vehicles, including the Chevrolet Malibu from 1997 to 2005, the Pontiac Grand Prix from 2004 to 2008, and the 2003-14 Cadillac CTS.

The company is aware of three deaths, eight injuries and seven crashes involving the vehicles, although it says there's no clear evidence that faulty switches caused the accidents.

Air bags didn't deploy in the three fatal accidents, which is a sign that the ignition was out of position. But air bags may not

deploy for other reasons as well.

A GM spokesman couldn't say last week if more recalls are imminent. But this may be the end of the recalls associated with a 60-day review of all of the company's ignition switches.

At the company's annual meeting earlier in June, CEO Mary Barra said she hoped most recalls related to that review would be completed by the end of the month.

Karl Brauer, an industry analyst with *Kelley Blue Book*, said the number of recalls – while huge – may be a good thing for the company in the long run.

"I think there's a new standard for what GM considers a potential safety defect, and Mary Barra has no tolerance or patience for potential safety defects that are unresolved," he said.

In a statement last week, Barra said "we will act appropriately and without hesitation" if any new issues come to light.

GM has been reviewing the performance of its ignition switches since the first recalls were announced, and it continues to find more that can turn too easily. Of the 29 million vehicles recalled by the company this year, 17.1 million have

been due to ignition switches.

The problem has drawn the attention of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the government's road safety agency. On June 18, the agency opened two investigations into ignition switches in Chrysler minivans and SUVs, and acknowledged that it's looking at the whole industry.

The agency is looking into how long air bags remain active after the switches are moved out of the run position. In many cases, the answer is less than a second.

GM's recalls on June 30 bring this year's total so far to more than 40 million for the U.S. industry, far surpassing the old full-year record of 30.8 million from 2004.

The vehicles recalled June 30 have switches that do conform to GM's specifications. In these cases, the keys can move the ignition out of position because of jarring, bumps from the driver's knee or the weight of a heavy key chain.

The cars recalled will get replacement keys; the small cars recalled in February are getting new ignitions.

GM has announced 54 separate recalls this year.

NHTSA Checking Complaints of Nissan's Delayed Braking Action

By TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) – The U.S. government's road safety agency is investigating complaints that a trim panel can cause unwanted acceleration in Nissan Versa small cars.

The probe covers about 360,000 Nissan Versa and Versa Note subcompacts from the 2012 through 2014 model years.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says in documents posted last week on its website that four drivers have complained that a trim panel near the gas pedal can trap the edge of a driver's shoe. This can stop the driver from releasing the gas pedal quickly and delay braking.

There are no reports of crashes or injuries, although one driver complained of a close call at an intersection on June 9.

As the driver accelerated to make a left turn, a plastic trim panel that covers the center console trapped the driver's shoe and stopped it from moving off the gas pedal, the complaint said.

"I used my right hand to grab my leg and pulled harder, immediately braking hard, then backing my foot off the brake as I squealed and skidded around the corner, almost going over the curb and crashing," the driver wrote.

The driver reported that the edge of the trim piece wasn't secured and trapped the sole of a leather work boot.

Drivers who file complaints are not identified by NHTSA. Two of the four complaints were from drivers of rental cars, the agency said. A fifth complaint was filed in an unidentified foreign country, according to NHTSA.

Investigations can lead to recalls, but so far there are none in this case.

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GM's New Dynamometer Helps in Silencing Brake Noise

Talk about bringing the world to Michigan.

Engineers at General Motors' new brake testing facility in Milford know the differences between moans, squeals, grinds, groans and grunts – annoying noises common to their work.

Now, with a new brake chassis dynamometer, they can simulate braking in weather conditions that range from Alaska to a tropical island.

With the new facility that opened earlier this year, GM vehicles can now make up to 1,900 stops in two-and-a-half days compared with 1,000 stops in two weeks using previous testing methods.

The result is a quiet braking experience that customers associate with a quality vehicle, said Brent Lowe, GM performance engineer for Brake Noise Development.

"If we do our job correctly, the customer won't notice our work," said Lowe. "Watch any movie and you'll hear brake squeal every time a car stops because Hollywood loves to add the brake squeaking sound effect, and nothing bugs me more.

We work to make sure our brakes lead the industry in silence."

The new dynamometer was developed in conjunction with supplier Link Engineering. The state-of-the-art equipment can run 24 hours a day, simulate underbody airflow, and change temperatures and humidity.

"The ability to control and replicate the conditions that our customers' vehicles are driven under is just as important as the ability to control the brake pressure, vehicle speed and direction," Lowe said.

The 14,000-square-foot development facility is located at the GM Proving Ground in Milford.

The test chamber is padded with jagged soundproofing to provide a quiet environment for testing and to spare others the unpleasant noises or vibrations that may arise during a test.

The room can also accommodate vast changes in climate and moisture conditions, and can dramatically alter its temperature within about 15 minutes.

"The concept of a silent brake is actually very complicated," said Lowe. "Braking creates friction and the more friction pres-

ent amounts to more noise.

"Though the sound of brakes squealing is something every driver can easily identify as a nuisance, it is one of the more difficult things to actually remove. We have been very successful at taking on that challenge at GM."

Before the new facility, the team had to rely on test driving vehicles at the track and a two-wheel-drive chassis dynamome-

ter that offered far less control over humidity and temperature.

"With our previous methods and equipment, we became really good at finding and mitigating approximately 85 percent of existing brake noises," Lowe said.

"With this new facility, we'll be able to locate and address the remaining 15 percent of brake noise frequencies."



A 2014 Buick Encore's brakes are put to the test.

GM Appoints Ferguson Head Of Public Policy

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luxury brand and sold record volumes in the important China market, said GM spokesperson Greg Martin.

"With the introduction of new products such as the CTS, ATS coupe and Escalade, the brand is positioned for even greater success," Martin said.

"We need Bob's leadership and full focus on rebuilding relationships and instilling confidence in GM's efforts to create a new industry standard for safety," said Barra. "As GM's voice in critical policy issues, Bob will communicate a clear sense of purpose and collaborative spirit."

Ferguson, 54, joined GM in 2010 as vice president for Global Public Policy and served in that position through October 2012. He is credited, Martin said, with helping GM strengthen its position on Capitol Hill, and with its many regulatory agencies, on a wide range of business challenges related to energy, tax, labor, and finance policy.

Ferguson was tapped by then-GM CEO Dan Akerson to head Cadillac's global marketing team. During that time, Cadillac saw nearly 30 percent global growth, highest among all full-line luxury brands, and U.S. growth of 22 percent.

Cadillac's 66 percent growth in the growing China luxury market resulted in record sales of 50,000 units, putting the brand on a path to double sales there in two years.

Prior to joining GM, Ferguson was at the business advisory and strategic communications firm, Public Strategies, where he worked with a diverse and international group of clients as a senior strategist.

Before joining Public Strategies, Ferguson spent more than 10 years as an executive at AT&T, where he served as the president of state legislative and regulatory affairs and also as group president and CEO of SBC's Enterprise Business Services.

Ferguson's replacement at Cadillac will be named later.

Chevy Focuses on Versatility, Value for Equinox Owners

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compact and midsize sedans.

"I call my Chevy Equinox my 'multi-tool' of vehicles," said Gail Haffey of Beverly Hills, Mich.

"It fits my family's needs perfectly, from traveling to our summer cottage to flipping down the seats to hauling cargo and supplies from the garden shop to my daily commute to work.

"Plus, the fuel economy is great, so I get versatility and value in one package."

The Equinox seats five, offers a maximum cargo capacity of 63.7 cubic feet and a maximum towing rating of 3,500 pounds (3.6L V6 models) and an EPA-rated 32 mpg highway (2.4L FWD models).

Both the Equinox and GMC Terrain with available forward collision alert technology received 2014 Top Safety Pick+ ratings from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

GM spokesperson Katie Adams said they were the only midsize SUVs of nine evaluated to earn Good ratings in the Institute's small overlap front crash test.

"For 2015," said Majoros, "Chevrolet brings OnStar 4G LTE capabilities to Equinox and Trax. Combined with standard Chevrolet MyLink, these technologies

accommodate customers' increasingly connected lifestyles with a more reliable connection during road trips, connectivity for up to seven devices, and range of up to 50 feet outside the vehicle."

The Chevrolet Trax small SUV – a customer favorite in the global markets where it's already being sold, arrives in the U.S. early next year, Adams said.

Part of another fast-growing segment, Trax sales have grown from just over 3,000 in 2006 to more than 90,000 last year.

Trax will offer eight different

seating arrangements with 60/40 split rear seats and a fold-flat front passenger seat, as well as more than 48 cubic feet of cargo space and a standard turbocharged engine.

Both Equinox and Trax are available with all-wheel drive.

Sales of small SUVs have evolved along with consumers' changing driving, spending and lifestyle habits.

They've gone from being "second" vehicles in a household to replacing older vehicles.

Once inside the small and com-

pact SUV segments, buyers are extremely loyal, with more than a quarter of them coming from other small and compact SUVs, Adams said.

"We work hard to deliver the versatility and value our customers expect in our Equinox, and have been doing so for eight years since the vehicle launched," said Majoros.

Got News?

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Hackel Says 'Yes' Vote Important to Gain Lost Revenue

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tant services like police, fire, schools, ambulances, roads, jails and libraries.

"Second, a 'yes' vote on Proposal 1 supports local small businesses and manufacturers by reforming the uncompetitive personal property tax," Hackel said.

He joins an increasing number of state businesses, and governments supporting Proposal 1.

AARP Michigan recently endorsed the proposal because it helps ensure that Michigan communities can continue offering important services to seniors, including senior centers, health

programs, assisted living facilities, public transportation, police and fire protection and more.

The proposal guarantees replacement of 100 percent of estimated revenue lost for local services due to the elimination of the tax on personal property.

"We are very pleased to receive Mark Hackel's endorsement for Proposal 1 and appreciate his strong leadership in Macomb County," said Howard Edelson, campaign manager for Michigan Citizens for Strong and Safe Communities.



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Taking a Road Trip? Throw Away the Maps

GM says it's making it a lot harder for people to get lost.

The days in which paper maps, disposable cameras and a stockpile of car toys once were essential for any family road trip are becoming a thing of the past.

Today, according to a 2014 Expedia.com report, only 22 percent of Americans still use printed maps, relying instead on technology for directions, entertainment and more.

The 2015 Buick LaCrosse, with built-in OnStar 4G LTE, said GM spokesman Stefan Cross, is leading the way in this evolution of the family road trip, providing advancements in connectivity and passenger comfort.

OnStar 4G LTE, said Cross, allows passengers to connect up to seven mobile devices, such as tablets, laptops and smartphones, to the vehicle's built-in Wi-Fi hotspot.

"It works inside and around the vehicle, so everyone can stay connected at their favorite road trip stops," Cross said.

With the LaCrosse's 4G LTE connection, families can plan their route from the road and upload photos and videos from the car.

OnStar's 4G LTE and Wi-Fi hardware are standard on the new LaCrosse.

"Road trips today are greatly changed from the ones we took with our families 20, 10 or even five years ago," said John McFar-

land, director, Global Connected Customer.

"Navigation alone makes choosing stops much easier, and now, with built-in connectivity, travelers have an abundance of information and entertainment at their fingertips."

According to Strategy Analytics, 74 percent of tablets sold this year will be Wi-Fi only. Additionally, as many as 91 percent of all tablets used in North America, including those enabled for cellular connections, will be used as Wi-Fi only.

"Technology really has changed the way we travel today," said David Lorenz, marketing manager, Pure Michigan.

"Travelers are looking for easy access to information and they don't necessarily just want that in advance of travel.

"Applications like OnStar and other technologies allow people to make quick, last-minute



2015 Buick LaCrosse with OnStar 4G LTE

changes to their itinerary."

The LaCrosse also makes road trips more comfortable for travelers, said Cross.

With ample legroom in the front and rear seats and dual-zone climate controls, travelers can keep their area of the vehicle personalized to fit their needs, Cross said.

The Buick LaCrosse provides a full safety suite, he said, including eight standard air bags and available features such as forward collision alert, lane departure warning, lane change alert,

side blind zone alert, rear cross-traffic alert, following distance indicator, high-intensity discharge – or HID – headlamps with articulating headlamps, fog lamps, head-up display, collision preparation (with collision mitigation braking), full-speed-range adaptive cruise control and the safety alert seat.

OnStar's 4G LTE will be available on the LaCrosse, Buick Verano, Regal, and Encore for the 2015 model year and will be available on all Buick products for the 2016 model year.

GM, Ford China Sales Up; Local Brands Fall

By KELVIN CHAN
AP Business Writer

HONG KONG (AP) – Car sales in China cooled in June, with domestic brands falling further behind their foreign rivals in the world's biggest auto market, an industry group said last week.

Passenger vehicle sales rose 11.5 percent last month over a

year earlier to 1.56 million vehicles, down from May's 13.9 percent growth, the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers said.

From January to June, passenger vehicle sales are up 11.2 percent to 9.63 million.

Auto sales growth in China has been steadily easing since 2009, when it peaked at more than 40

percent. Analysts expect sales this year to expand 8 to 10 percent.

Total vehicle sales, including buses and trucks, increased 5.2 percent to 1.85 million in June. That's down from an 8.5 percent growth in May.

Domestic brands continued to struggle, with their share of the overall market falling 3.5 percentage points to 37.7 percent, according to the official Xinhua news agency.

Chinese brands are losing out as drivers increasingly favor models sold by their bigger, richer global rivals.

"China is a good market if you're just considering the sales and yield," said Zhang Xin, an analyst at Guotai Jun'an Securities in Beijing.

He said the figures were better than expected given that June is traditionally a slow month for auto sales. "But the local brands don't do a good job. It's hard for them to get rid of the impression in the short term of being cheap and low quality."

Earlier, General Motors Co. said sales of GM-branded vehicles produced with its Chinese joint venture partners rose 9.2 percent to 257,798.

Ford Motor Co. said sales in the first half of the year jumped 35 percent to 407,474 as June sales rose 17 percent.

Johan de Nysschen Named President Of Cadillac Brand

General Motors last week appointed Johan de Nysschen as president of the company's Cadillac brand. de Nysschen will be responsible for all aspects of Cadillac globally including sales, pricing and network development, strategic brand development and marketing and product portfolio planning, including critical input for product engineering and design.

de Nysschen, 54, joins the GM executive leadership team as an executive vice president of the company beginning Sept. 1 and reports to GM President Dan Ammann.

"Johan brings to our company vast experience in the development and proper execution of luxury automotive brands," said Ammann. "With over 20 years in this exact space, especially in the development of the Audi brand, his track record proves he is the perfect executive to lead Cadillac for the long term."

de Nysschen is eager to join the GM team, said Cadillac spokesperson Pat Morrissey.

"I have for some time now been impressed by how the new General Motors has been transformed into a formidable force in the industry," de Nysschen said. "The combination of strong corporate leadership and exceptional engineering resources presents the perfect combination to restore Cadillac to its place among global premium brands."

"The recognition of the brand is immense, and the progress on the fundamental product front is widely acclaimed. I am delighted at the opportunity to join the GM executive team to lead the Cadillac business, and I look forward to working with my Cadillac colleagues and our global retail partners."

Cadillac is the fastest-growing luxury brand worldwide, with sales improving approximately 30 percent globally in 2013, Morrissey said, and an aggressive cadence of new models recently introduced and in cue. Some highlights include:

- CTS – 2014 *Motor Trend* Car of the Year;
- Next-generation 2015 Escalade arriving in showrooms;
- The summer's launch of its 2015 ATS coupe, based on the success of ATS sedan, the 2013 North American Car of the Year;
- Approximately 60 percent of Cadillac buyers are new to the brand.

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OSU Students Win GM's EcoCAR 2 Competition

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

paint job had to look professional.

Ohio State's team, Emerling said, decided to have their Malibu powered by E-85 ethanol fuel. And they added an electrical system to power the motor.

That meant having a lot of batteries and having a lot of batteries meant adding weight.

And that's where Johnson Controls proved very useful, Emerling said.

He contacted the company and asked them for help with the seats.

Johnson Controls spokesperson Mary Kay Dodero said, "One way to improve mileage is to remove weight.

"After the engines, seats are one of the heaviest things in a car. So students worked with our people to reduce the weight of the seats.

"Our engineers said they had a good time working with the students and enjoyed being a part of the contest."

Thanks to modern communications technology, Johnson Controls engineers were able to stay in touch with the students, Dodero said.

Key features of the Johnson Controls seats, which were designed specifically for Ohio State's EcoCAR 2, include:

- recyclable polyester fabric;
- eco-thread stitching;
- eco-adhesive lamination;
- natural dyes to create a customized printed design;
- lightweight, soy-based foam;
- bio-plastic side and back panels;
- a tablet-accessory attachment that easily connects portable consumer electronic de-

vices to the back of the front-seat headrests for viewing by rear-seat passengers.

Over the course of three years, the Ohio State team consistently met incremental goals that strengthened their position against the other university teams, said EcoCAR 2 spokesperson Kimberly DeClark.

"Their series-parallel plug-in hybrid Malibu excelled at GM's Proving Ground in Milford in June, where it was put through a series of strenuous technical and safety tests similar to those used for real-world production vehicles," DeClark said.

"The EcoCAR 2 competition has been an incredible journey and learning experience for everyone at Ohio State, and that's what really matters – winning the top spot is just a bonus," said Ohio State student Katherine Bovee.

"We are all excited to take everything we have learned into the workplace after graduation."

The team's unique design achieved 50 miles per gallon of gas equivalent, while using 315 Watt-hours per mile of electricity, DeClark said.

The vehicle impressed the judges with stellar numbers and even lessened the amount of criteria emissions by half, compared with the base vehicle.

"Ohio State met and exceeded the EcoCAR 2 goals at every point in the competition," said Dr. Michael Knotek, deputy undersecretary for Science and Energy, U.S. Department of Energy.

"Their innovative work has contributed significantly to the future of energy-efficient technology in the automotive industry, and we wish all members of the team the best."

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2014-15 Manchester United players show off the year's soccer shirt, which has the Chevrolet logo.

Chevy Kicks Off Manchester Soccer Deal

Chevrolet will offer six exclusive ticket packages for charity auction, including a once-in-a-lifetime "Ultimate Manchester United Fan Experience."

The "ultimate" package is for the highly anticipated match against Real Madrid at the University of Michigan's stadium in Ann Arbor as part of the Guinness International Champions Cup.

Soccer fans can place bids now through July 22 for a chance to win one of six ticket packages that include four tickets to the match, hospitality, pre-game access and more. Complete auction details are available at charitybuzz.com/manchesterunited.

Proceeds from the auction hosted at charitybuzz.com will benefit United Way for Southeastern Michigan.

As the official shirt sponsor of Manchester United, the team will wear Chevrolet-branded shirts during the Aug. 2 match that also feature a commemorative United Way badge. Each auction winner will receive one of the game-worn shirts from the team's new kit, which debuted earlier this week.

"Like the athletes who give their all on the field and the lifelong fans who go the distance to support them, Chevrolet wants to connect everyone with the spirit that makes soccer the world's favorite sport," said General Motors president Dan Ammann, chair for the 2014-15 United Way for Southeastern Michigan Workplace Campaign.

"From backyards to the 'Big House,' Chevrolet is proud to support our local communities and United Way."

The auction extends GM's and the GM Foundation's ongoing support of United Way and its mission to improve communities and individual lives by focusing on education, financial stability and such basic needs as food and shelter, said GM spokesperson Cristi Vazquez.

In 2010, the GM Foundation pledged its largest grant ever — \$27.1 million to United Way for Southeastern Michigan to establish a "Network of Excellence" in seven Detroit-area high schools.

The grant is also helping to advance early childhood education in the area. Over the last two years, GM employees and re-

tirees have contributed more than \$11 million through the company's United Way campaign, and have donated more than 7,200 hours of volunteer service at the Network of Excellence schools since 2011.

"United Way for Southeastern Michigan is honored to partner with Chevrolet for the Manchester United auction packages — these are two of the most storied and beloved brands in the world," said Michael J. Brennan, president & CEO, United Way for Southeastern Michigan.

"With the same spirit that soccer fans unite to support their team, we are committed to uniting the community in support of making Greater Detroit one of the best places to live and work. We are deeply grateful to GM for their partnership and for this exciting opportunity to move our mission forward."

The Manchester United ticket packages available for auction:

- Ultimate Package — Four VIP tickets to the Aug. 2 Manchester United vs. Real Madrid game, pre-game pitchside walk, game-worn shirt (signed), meet-and-greet with Manchester United players, on-field mascot escorting player on field (7-13-year-old), attend open training session, four tickets to a match at Old Trafford Stadium.

- VIP Package — four VIP tickets to the Manchester United vs. Real Madrid match, pre-game pitchside walk, game-worn shirt, four tickets to a match at Old Trafford Stadium.

- Executive Package — four VIP tickets to the Aug. 2 Manchester United vs. Real Madrid game, pre-game pitchside walk, game-worn shirt (signed) meet-and-greet with Manchester United players.

- Fred the Red Package — four VIP tickets to the Aug. 2 Manchester United vs. Real Madrid game, pre-game pitchside walk, game-worn shirt, on-field mascot escorting player on field (7-13-year-old).

- Super Fan Package — four VIP tickets to the Aug. 2 Manchester United vs. Real Madrid match, pre-game pitchside walk, game-worn shirt.

- Red Devil Package — four tickets to the Aug. 2 Manchester United vs. Real Madrid match, pre-game pitchside walk, game-

worn shirt, attend open training session.

The Aug. 2 match is just part of Chevrolet's summer promotions associated with Manchester United.

Chevrolet and Manchester United fans debuted the football club's 2014-15 season shirt on July 9. Fans were invited to upload photos of themselves wearing a digital version of the new shirt at www.chevroletfc.com, and share it via their social channels, said Vazquez.

The idea, she said, is to put fans at the center of the brand's debut on the shirt via a unique digital experience and is part of Chevrolet's "What Do You #Play-For?" global campaign to bring football fans closer to the sport.

"Manchester United has more than 659 million supporters around the world, and we want them to know that we march side by side with them," said Tim Mahoney, chief marketing officer, Global Chevrolet.

"We wanted to celebrate this new shirt with Manchester United supporters in an historic way because they deserve to be part of this important moment in club history."

To celebrate the kickoff of its seven-year Manchester United shirt sponsorship, Chevrolet last week released an enhanced version of its video at www.chevroletfc.com that pays homage to the history of iconic Manchester United shirts, dating to the club's inception in 1878.

Ford Predicts Better Times for Europe

DEARBORN, Mich. (AP) — Ford says it remains on track to make a profit in Europe next year despite the fragile economy.

Ford hasn't earned a pretax profit in Europe since 2010, and it lost \$1.6 billion in the region last year. Ford Europe President Stephen Odell said last week that three plant closures and more than a dozen new products are helping reverse that.

Ford's sales are up 6.6 percent in Europe this year, outpacing the industry. Commercial vehicle sales rose 21 percent in June after Ford launched new vans, and Odell said Europe's first 500 Mustang sports cars sold out in 30 seconds.

Ford Donates \$1M to New African American Museum

Ford Motor Company has donated \$1 million to the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

The donation from Ford Motor Company Fund, the company's philanthropic arm, will support the museum's capital campaign, said Fund spokesperson Todd Nissen.

It will also go toward funding key programs when the museum — the only national site devoted exclusively to documenting African American life, art, history and culture — opens on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., in 2016.

"Since Henry Ford's groundbreaking \$5 a day wage in 1913, which paid people equally regardless of race, Ford has invested in programs that empower and celebrate the African American community," said Jim Vella, president, Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services.

"Ford is proud to work with the Smithsonian on this museum that will recognize the tremendous contributions of African Americans to our country and our world."

Ford and the Smithsonian Institution jointly made the announcement on the Fourth of July at the 20th anniversary of the ESSENCE Festival in New Orleans.

Ford's relationship with the Smithsonian dates back 40 years, Nissen said, with the company donating more than \$11.5 million to support exhibits and programs that provide educational opportunities for families:

- Ford Fund supported the Smithsonian Freedom's Sisters, which celebrated 20 African American women who fought for equality for all Americans and

traveled to 12 cities from 2007 to 2012.

- In 2013, Ford Fund worked with the Smithsonian American History Museum to expand its Spark!Lab to three museums across the country. Designed to look and feel like an inventor's workshop, these spaces challenge children to create, experiment and invent in interactive innovation workshops.

- Ford Fund currently supports the museum's American Sabor exhibit that explores the influence of Latino musicians in America and is traveling to 13 cities through 2015.

- Ford Fund also is investing in conservation research for the giant panda at the National Zoo, including the popular Panda Cam, which allows visitors from around the world to view the newest panda cub online.

"We are so pleased that the Ford Motor Company Fund has chosen to join hundreds of donors from across the country to build a groundswell of support for the National Museum of African American History and Culture — we recognize this as a vote of confidence," said Lonnie G. Bunch III, founding director of the museum.

"It is a genuine honor to have the company join us in our commitment to bring to the nation's capital a truly innovative cultural resource — one capable of telling a richer and fuller story of the development of this country."

"We also applaud the Ford Motor Company for having a long history of contributing to the growth of African American communities for families who migrated to Detroit from the rural South," Bunch added.

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Council to Focus on Key Connected Car Issues

A Connected Car Council has been formed and its inaugural members named.

Automotive technology expert and co-founder of the Connected Car Conference (C3) Doug Newcomb last week announced the formation of the council, which comprises thought leaders “on the cutting edge of the connected car space” from the automotive and technology industries, as well as experts on public policy and communications, said Newcomb.

The Connected Car Council will “serve the purpose of converting the complexities of the connected car dialogue into action for various stakeholders,” said council spokesperson Michelle Suzuki.

The council will also guide development of the content and programming for future Connected Car Council events.

Initially, the council will focus on five key issues facing the connected car:

- Driver Distraction
- Big Data Collection
- The Networked Car
- Infotainment Platforms
- Privacy and Security

The council will establish positions and provide guidance on these issues to its members to help create actionable solutions

Preh Wins Award For Innovative Technology

Preh, an automotive supplier with its North American headquarters in Novi, has won first place for “Innovative HMI Technology” in the first CAR HMI Awards 2014.

The award was presented in a recent ceremony in Berlin attended by a large gathering of HMI professionals from the vehicle manufacturing and system supplier industries.

HMI (human machine interface) is the connection between man and machine, where maximum convenience and minimum distraction issues play a central role in the design of operational concepts.

Other first-place winners included NVIDIA Corporation, and Scania Group/Volkswagen Research for “HMI Design Innovation.”

Individual projects were judged on a point system with regard to level of innovation, complexity, achievement and maturity of the HMI project, said Preh spokesperson Barrett Kalellis.

Preh Advanced Development director Dr. Matthias Lust received the trophy and official certificate at the gala dinner reception. In addition, the winner received a monetary prize which Preh donated to a charity, Kalellis said.

“We are pleased that our center console concept was chosen by an independent jury of experts as the first-place winner,” Lust said. “For our advanced development team, this award is recognition and motivation at the same time, while it also demonstrates the vast range of technologies in our company.”

“More and more, Smartphones and tablets are influencing the HMI concepts of future vehicle generations. This award also shows that we at Preh have addressed the right issues in our product development, and that ease of operation, as well as driving safety, are not incompatible.” Overall, Kalellis said, the five-member jury praised the center console’s combination of different input systems, which improve driving safety.

In particular, the judges pointed to the ease of access to functions with triple feedback – tactile, visual and audible.

for the various parties, who include automakers, technology suppliers, policymakers, media and others. This is important within the rapidly evolving connected car space, Suzuki said.

The work of the Council will be curated by Newcomb, who has nearly three decades of experience as an automotive and technology journalist to guide stakeholders from multiple industries through the complex world of the connected car, Suzuki said. “The Connected Car Council will not only help guide the content and direction of C3 events, but also provide expert information, research and opinion that cuts through the clutter and provides clarity to this fast-paced and crucial part of the automotive and technology industry,” said Newcomb.

Members of the council:

- Gloria Bergquist, vice president, Public Affairs, Auto Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers;
- Derek Kuhn, VP, Sales and Marketing, QNX Software Systems;
- Andreas Mai, director, Smart Connected Vehicles, Cisco;
- Chris Barker, senior vice president, Business Development, Waggener Edstrom;
- Niall Berkery, executive director, Business Development, Telenav;
- Joel Hoffmann, automotive strategist, Intel;
- John Absmeier, director, Delphi Labs @ Silicon Valley and Global Automated Driving Business Development;
- Danny Shapiro, senior director of Automotive, NVIDIA;
- John Suh, managing director, Hyundai Ventures.

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