

Tech Center Implements New Bike Program for Employees

by Jim Stickford

It can be said that the cutting edge of the automotive industry is created at GM's Tech Center in Warren. So what's the latest development to take place there?

Bicycles.

On Aug. 26, employees at the Tech Center began using bicycles to get around the campus.

"The bicycle program was created in partnership with the company Zagster," said GM spokesperson Sharon Basel.

"They provide the bicycles and the software needed to make the program work. We started the pilot program in late July, and it proved to be such a success that we put the program into effect only a few weeks later."

Dave Tulauskas, director of Sustainability at GM, said he's been a proponent of something like the Tech Center bike program for some time.

"The tipping point to implementing the program," Tulauskas said, "was the fact that so many trends are now influencing the auto industry – things like the sharing economy, climate change and how the millennial generation thinks and behaves."

"We at GM are trying to attract the best possible talent to our

company. We are competing with outfits like Google, and one way to compete is to position GM as a forward-thinking company."

Tulauskas said he and others at GM recognize that they don't always have all the answers. That's why they look to partners like Zagster to help them set up the bike exchange program.

On hand at the Tech Center on the first day of the new program was Timothy Ericson, co-founder and CEO of Zagster. He said the company got its start in 2007 in Philadelphia and is currently based in Boston.

"We got our start in downtown Detroit a couple of years ago with Quicken Loans and DTE Energy," Ericson said. "We're now working with other businesses downtown. But here at the Tech Center, once people sign up and get educated on how the whole process works, I expect that the bikes will see a lot of use."

The system, Ericson said, is pretty simple. All the bikes that are located on the campus are electronically locked. Anyone who needs one to get from one part of the Tech Center campus to another goes to one of seven designated bike pickup/drop-off locations on the campus.

With his or her smartphone,



From left, Dave Tulauskas, John Waechter and Timothy Ericson

the bicyclist then uses the special Zagster app to "sign" up for a bike. An electronic signal is sent to an available bicycle, and the bicyclist then uses the bike to get where he or she needs to go, and signs off when finished.

"Right now, we'll have 50 bikes at the seven locations," Ericson

said. "The Tech Center is a good place for such a program. There are about 11 miles of road within the campus. There is never enough parking in dense urban areas."

"There are employees who will spend 15 or 20 minutes trying to find a parking space near where

they have a meeting at the Tech Center. This should prove to be a real time-saver."

Ericson said that for now, Zagster's program is only for the Tech Center, but GM has other sites around the country where

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Ford employee Karen Hannon on the MKC assembly line

New Lincoln MKC Production Prompts Heavy Investment in Louisville Plant

Ford Motor Company is hiring 300 new employees and making a \$129 million investment in the Louisville Assembly Plant to support production of the new 2015 Lincoln MKC.

Production of Lincoln's newest vehicle began in May. MKC is the second of four new Lincoln vehicles being introduced by 2016, and will go on sale in China, along with the MKZ sedan, when the Lincoln brand debuts there later this year, said Ford spokesperson Kristina Adamski.

"Lincoln MKC is an important part of Lincoln as it attracts a new luxury customer," said Daryl Sykes, Louisville Assembly Plant manager.

"To have the opportunity to build an all-new vehicle – the first small utility ever from Lincoln – is very exciting for the hardworking men and women at Louisville Assembly Plant."

To ensure the highest commitment to quality, the Lincoln Luxury Validation Center, with loca-

tions in each plant, includes inspection team members who take a "white-glove" approach to each vehicle, Adamski said.

At Louisville Assembly Plant, each MKC receives an enhanced inspection at five separate points by a two-person team to ensure fit-and-finish, craftsmanship and functional elements meet premium customer expectations. This attention helps to deliver a vehicle that is as close to perfection as possible so dealers can then provide a true luxury experience in the showroom, Sykes said.

"The all-new 2015 Lincoln MKC is performance-minded, luxuriously crafted and technologically savvy to meet the expectations of luxury buyers who want a more personal car-owning experience," Adamski said.

Small premium utility vehicles make up the fastest-growing luxury segment, with more than 600 percent growth since 2008 and

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GM to Invest \$185M in Spring Hill Plant For New Powertrain and Cadillac SRX Move

General Motors will invest \$185 million to make small gas engines at its Spring Hill, Tenn., manufacturing complex, retaining 390 jobs.

GM also identified the next-generation Cadillac SRX as a future mid-size vehicle to be produced at Spring Hill alongside the Chevy Equinox. Both vehicles ride on the same platform.

An additional \$48.4 million investment is planned for the Bedford, Ind., powertrain castings plant, creating or retaining 45 jobs.

Both investments support GM's new small displacement engine, which is part of a new



Spring Hill Plant employee Brenda Gurrent

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Bosch to Double Size of Technical Center

Bosch is expanding its technical facility in Plymouth Township.

In a groundbreaking ceremony last week, Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder joined Robert Bosch president Mike Mansuetti and other Bosch executives to publicly announce the 220,500-square-foot expansion of Bosch's

Plymouth Technical Center.

"Bosch's commitment to expand its presence in Michigan, while also enhancing its research and development work, shows that Michigan truly is a great place to do business," Snyder said.

"Michigan's business climate has improved dramatically, mak-

ing our state a prime location for global companies like Bosch to expand and invest. It is also exciting that Bosch is an advocate for preparing tomorrow's workforce through hands-on tech training. Together, Bosch and Michigan are tapping into our talent potential and building a bright future."

The expansion, which is expected to be completed in November 2015, will nearly double the size of the existing technical center, which opened in 2007.

When complete, the total site, which is located on 75 acres, will have more than 445,000 square feet and capacity for 1,400 people. The expansion will further enable the growth of several key



A rendering of Bosch's planned new facility in Plymouth

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Spider Webs Cause Recall of Suzuki Cars

DETROIT (AP) – Spiders have forced Suzuki to recall more than 19,000 midsize cars.

The automaker says spider webs can clog a fuel vapor vent hose in some 2010 to 2013 Kizashi cars, cutting off air flow. If that happens, it can cause the gas tank to deform, causing cracks, fuel leaks and possible fires.

The recall was prompted by seven reports of the problem. Service centers will replace the vent line with one that has a filter on the end. They'll also replace gas tanks if necessary.

The problem hasn't caused any accidents or injuries in the U.S., Suzuki said in documents posted last week by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Owners will be notified this month. Those with questions can call Suzuki customer service at 800-934-0934.

Warren Flooding Damages Total \$231.5 Million in City

There's a reason cities have rainy day funds.

In a public statement, city officials declared that approximately \$158,000 was spent in overtime for all city employees, mostly from the public works and sanitation departments, to pick up trash from the flooding.

City figures show that the Detroit Arsenal suffered \$10 million in damages. So, as of the end of August, total damage estimates for Warren is approximately \$231.5 million.

Officials estimated that 13.5 million pounds of trash was picked up from curbs in the first two weeks after the flood.

Under-deputy public service director Gus Ghanam said that 60 city employees worked 12 to 15 hours a day six days a week using 30 trucks to pick up the trash left out by Warren residents.

"They really got the job done," Ghanam said.

"During a time of crisis, you find out the character of people, and our city employees showed

GM Presents Customized Versions of Silverado Pickups

Chevrolet Silverado is offering a new Rally Edition for 2015 Silverado 1500 double-cab and crew-cab pickups.

The Rally 2 Edition package for 2015 Silverado LT pickups features a body-colored grille with a black bowtie, 22-inch black alloy wheels, black tubular side steps and black mirror caps and door handles.

Twin black Rally stripes on the hood and tailgate give the Rally Edition a unique appearance, said GM spokesperson Otis McKinley.

Also included will be a trailering package with a hitch and automatic locking rear differential, 10-way power driver seat, dual-zone climate control, remote start, backup camera and rear defroster.

The eight-inch Chevy MyLink radio includes a built-in Wi-Fi hotspot with 4G LTE connectivity. McKinley said the reason for this package is simple.

"We see people do things to customize their trucks all the time," McKinley said. "These new offerings allow our customers to buy trucks designed to their liking without them having to add on a bunch of aftermarket accessories."

The standard engine for Silverado is a 4.3-Liter EcoTec3 V6 with 285 horsepower and 305 lb.-ft. of torque, providing up to 7,200 pounds of towing, based on SAE J2807 Recommended Practices.

Like all EcoTec3 engines, the V6 can seamlessly switch to four-cylinder mode to save fuel under light-load driving, delivering EPA highway estimates of up to 24 mpg.

Also available is a 5.3L Ecotec3 V8. Rated at 355 horsepower, it provides the best fuel economy



The new Chevrolet Rally Edition 1500 double-cab and crew-cab pickup trucks.

of any V8 pickup – up to 23 MPG highway.

"Silverado won more awards in 2014 than any other pickup, including North American Truck of the Year," said John Fitzpatrick, Silverado senior marketing manager.

"The Rally Edition packages will let customers add an aggressive new look to this great all-around performer."

Silverado will also offer two Rally 1 packages for 2015. The package for LT Silverados includes a body-colored grill with a black bowtie, black door handles and mirror caps, stripes and 17-inch aluminum wheels.

Also included is a trailering package with a hitch and locking rear differential, rear defroster and backup camera.

The Rally 1 Edition package for 2015 Silverado LS models includes the body-colored grille with black bowtie, black door handles and mirror caps and two black rally stripes.

Double-cab Rally Editions can be ordered through Chevrolet dealers nationwide starting Sept. 4. Crew cabs will be available for order by the public in early October of this year.

Warren Church Helps Flood Victims

The Warren Woods Baptist Church at 12 Mile and Bunert is seeking volunteers to help with residential cleanup of basements that were flooded last month.

Warren city council member Kelly Colegio said that the church was able to count on assistance from Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Organization, which sent about 100 volunteers from across the country to help clean up after the flood.

"They have 'mud-out' units

which go to residential homes," Colegio said. "They are trained to clean and sanitize homes with equipment they brought."

Colegio said the church also needs donations of supplies such as contractor bags, rubber gloves and laundry detergent.

"They do the work for free," Colegio said. "It's amazing."

To learn more about donating, Colegio said to call Jim Ellsworth of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief at 734-645-9928.

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Tech Center Begins New Bike Program for Employees

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such a program could prove useful. If the Tech Center program takes off, he wouldn't be surprised to see it picked up elsewhere.

For John Waechter, an engineering group manager, the bike program is just what the doctor ordered.

"This gives us so much personal freedom," Waechter said. "Let's face it, the campus is spread out. I have meetings in other buildings on the opposite side of the campus from the VEC building where my offices are all the time. Before, my choices were to either drive my car or walk."

That often resulted in Waechter spending 10 minutes looking for a parking space. He could walk to the other building, but that might take 15 minutes. That would result in a half-hour of his working day just getting to and from meetings.

"Or I could take a shuttle," Waechter said. "Unless the shuttle came just as I got to the pick-up site, that usually means spending 10 or 15 minutes just standing around and waiting. But with a bike, I can get to another building in five minutes. It is such a time-saver."

Waechter said he also likes the fact that the Zagster bikes have a wire basket in front that can carry his laptop computer. He is worried that one day he might have to stop suddenly and his laptop might pop out of the basket, which is why he suggested that they have some sort of bungee cord that could be used to strap in items like a laptop.

"We are required to have our own helmets," Waechter said. "Which I don't mind because in my civilian life I am a bicyclist, so I have a helmet."

"These rules mean that we don't have to strap on a sweaty helmet that someone else has



Bicycles sit and wait for employees who'd rather ride than walk.

used, and I am for that. If I use the bike system as much as I think I will, I'll just buy another helmet, so I'll have one for the office and one for my home."

If nothing else, Waechter said, the bikes will help a lot of engineers who spend a lot of time behind their desks get more exercise, and that's never a bad thing.

Warren Symphony Orchestra Changes Name, Not Its Tune

Warren Symphony Society recently announced that, after 41 consecutive years of serving the community, the name of the Warren Symphony Orchestra has been changed to the Motor City Symphony Orchestra.

Due to the fact that the WSO has been performing a wide range of music that includes chamber, jazz, popular, and standard symphonic repertoire for years in various locations in the southeast Michigan region, the Board of Directors conducted a comprehensive study over the past four years.

The result was that the orchestra was actually a regional and not a local group, said orchestra president Jeff Cutter.

"The Warren Symphony has been a professional orchestra

under the direction of Music Director and Conductor, Gregory Cunningham," Cutter said.

"His engaging performances and approach to programming have moved our orchestra beyond that of the typical community orchestra."

"Therefore, Motor City Symphony Orchestra more appropriately reflects the geographical reach and stature of this fine orchestra."

He said the orchestra is recognized throughout Michigan and nationwide as a growing, high-quality, premier organization

"The name, 'Motor City Symphony Orchestra' more appropriately reflects our regional location and maintains our stature as a symphony orchestra," Cutter said.

Drivers Needed To Deliver Meals For Emergencies

Volunteers are being sought to deliver emergency food boxes to homebound seniors.

The need became evident after the recent floods left some seniors without normal delivery of meals. Flooding caused a two-day cancellation of the program after the heavy Aug. 11 rains made some streets impassable.

Macomb County Community Services Agency's (MCCSA) Office of Senior Services now needs 100 volunteer drivers to deliver the emergency food boxes. Boxes will be distributed Sept. 13 to all of the roughly 1,500 Meals on Wheels recipients in Macomb County.

Boxes contain shelf-stable meals for use when severe weather prevents normal delivery, said county spokesperson Kristen Ledford.

Volunteers will pick up the boxes between 9 and 11 a.m. at the Macomb County warehouse, located on Vic Wertz Drive (near Hall Road and Groesbeck Highway). Each route will take about two hours to complete and volunteers must use their personal vehicles.

"Many of our residents were hit hard by the floods," said Macomb County executive Mark A. Hackel.

"These meals are so important to a lot of our seniors who rely on programs like Meals on Wheels."

For more information, contact MCCSA's Office of Senior Services at 586-469-5228 or sign up online at www.macombgov.org/seniorservices/mowvolunteer.htm.

City to Collect House Waste

The Macomb County Health Department and the city of Warren are conducting a household hazardous waste collection from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 6, at the Warren Recycling Center located at 25601 Flanders.

The collection, although for all residents, is targeted to those who have been affected by the flood that may have hazardous waste from garages or basements, said county spokesperson Steve Lichota.

Macomb County residents are invited to drop off unwanted, unused or flood-damaged household chemicals, pesticides and herbicides. Automotive products (motor oil, oil filters, gasoline, battery acid and fluids); garden products (pesticides, poisons, sprays and dusts); and household products (oven cleaners, pool chemicals, photo chemicals, fluorescent tubes, compact fluorescent lamps, oil-based paint and solvents) will be accepted. Unwanted, non-narcotic medications will also be accepted. To protect personal information, residents should remove unwanted pills from bottles and combine in a separate, nondescript container such as a Ziploc bag. Do not bring in pill bottles.

The following materials will not be accepted: narcotic medications, batteries, smoke detectors, explosives or ammunition. Label all materials or keep them in their original containers (except medications). Do not mix

chemicals or transport leaking containers. For additional information and directions to the collection location, contact the hazardous waste hotline at 586-466-7923 or visit the website at macombgov.org/publichealth.

Want to Learn Sign Language?

Sign language instructor Lois Sprengnether Keel, beginning on Tuesday, Sept. 30 at 6:30 p.m., will offer classes in signing at the Warren Public Library's Civic Center branch.

Warren librarian Kathleen Fabia said the class will be taught on a monthly basis and that American Sign Language is the third most used language in the United States. She said all ages are welcome but children must be accompanied by an adult and must be able to cooperate in a classroom-style environment.

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GM to Hire 1,000 at New Arizona IT Center

General Motors has added to its roster of Information Technology Innovation Centers with the Aug. 22 grand opening of a facility in the Phoenix area.

The center, which will enable GM to insource the company's innovation capabilities and tap into a pool of new and experienced IT talent, joins innovation centers already operating in Warren, Mich.; Austin, Texas, and Roswell, Ga.

Randy Mott, GM's senior vice president, Global Information Technology & chief information officer, was joined at the ribbon-cutting ceremony and grand opening by more than 20 local and national elected officials.

Among them were Chandler Mayor Jay Tibshraeny, U.S. Reps. Matt Salmon and Kyrsten Sinema, Arizona House of Representatives President Andy Biggs and

Speaker of the House Andy Tobin. Approximately 500 facility employees also attended the event.

GM's IT innovation centers are part of a companywide transformation to improve performance, reduce the cost of ongoing operations and increase its delivery of innovation, said GM spokesperson Juli Huston-Rough.

GM announced Chandler as the site of the company's fourth IT Innovation Center in March 2013, and construction on the 170,000-square-foot center was completed in June this year.

"We have made significant progress transforming GM IT over the past 20 months," Mott said. "The success of the Chandler Innovation Center is yet another important proof point that illustrates our progress."

GM expects to hire 1,000 em-

ployees at the Chandler Innovation Center over the next five years. Approximately 500 employees are employed at the facility, about 25 percent of whom are recent college graduates.

"The official opening of the IT Innovation Center in Chandler and the creation of about 1,000 high-paying, skilled jobs is great news for the local economy," said Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer.

"This event speaks volumes about the business-friendly environment we have created in Arizona, including our high-tech talent and competitive cost of operating."

"I could not be prouder of our state and what this announcement means for the future of Arizona's economy."

Said Tibshraeny: "GM is exactly the type of technology employer we need in Chandler and in



GM's new Arizona IT innovation center opened Aug. 22.

our state. The GM Innovation Center is a perfect complement to Chandler's Price Corridor, and

further the city's reputation as a regional hub for innovators and world-class IT professionals."

GM VP Mott Talks About New IT Centers, Their Employees

General Motors' fourth Information Technology innovation center held its grand opening last week in Chandler, Ariz.

GM Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer Randy Mott discussed the ongoing makeover of the company's IT operations and the 9,000 salaried employees globally insourced as part of the transformation.

Q. What has GM learned through opening four innovation centers over the last two years?

A. It is all about attracting the best talent, whether it is recent college graduates or experienced professionals. Locating the four innovation centers strategically near top universities and places where the top talent works has given us a pool of the best of the best from which to draw. Recognizing that people don't always

want to move for that next job gives us an advantage because we are bringing that next job to them. GM chose the innovation center locations by looking at IT talent-rich areas that also offer a strong community, attractive cost of living, an appealing business environment and high-tech industry presence.

Q. What were the challenges you faced during the development, building, staffing and now opening of the facility?

A. The facility in Chandler is the only one of the four innovation centers built from the ground up; the other centers in Warren, Mich.; Austin, Texas; and Roswell, Ga., are located in existing facilities. What surprised us is the overwhelming interest from students and experienced IT professionals to join the team. The pace of our hiring put us at

capacity limits in the temporary location in Arizona while the permanent facility was being finished. We were worried about outgrowing the temporary facility too soon and losing our hiring momentum. We needed to bring in all the new talent possible to support the important work happening within the business while balancing space constraints against hiring opportunities.

Q. How has recruitment and staffing gone thus far?

A. In Chandler, our newest center, we expect to hire 1,000 employees over the next two years, so we are right on track. About a quarter of the first 500 employees working at the center are recent college graduates. The majority have come from Arizona State, University of Arizona, Brigham Young University and Northern Arizona University.

Four of five IT majors at higher education institutions across the states are within a three-hour drive of a GM IT innovation center.

Combined, the four centers have access to more than 7,000 students at more than 150 colleges and universities majoring in information technology-related fields. GM is targeting recruitment efforts at up to a dozen key universities within each geographic region.

Q. What has been the biggest surprise for you throughout the overall IT transformation process?

A. With all the national coverage suggesting a high-tech employee skills shortage, we have experienced the opposite. It's been a pleasant surprise how easy it has been to find, recruit and retain highly talented infor-



Randy Mott

mation technologists to work for General Motors.

Q. The innovation centers were a cornerstone of your plan to remake IT at GM. How is the rest of the insourcing of IT work going?

A. In terms of accomplishing our original objectives set out in 2012, we are at nearly 75 percent of our overall hiring goals across all four innovation centers. When we look at our transformation objectives and initiatives – doubling the speed of project delivery, tripling innovation, building enterprise data centers, creating an enterprise data warehouse – we're more than halfway there.

Camaro Club To Donate \$10,000 to MS

The Eastern Michigan Camaro Club will present the National Multiple Sclerosis Society's Michigan Chapter with a check for \$10,000.

The donation will be presented Sept. 13 in Wixom at the Lingenfelter Cars & Coffee gathering that starts at 8 a.m.


The Camaro Club raised the money in July during its annual Camaro Superfest, which is the largest, longest-running, all-Camaro event in the United States, said Lingenfelter spokesperson Chris Morrisroe.

"Each year, the Camaro Club members choose a nonprofit organization to be the beneficiary of the proceeds from our annual Superfest," said Randy Martin, Eastern Michigan Camaro Club president.

"This year, we're thrilled to have exceeded our \$6,000 goal and will be donating \$10,000 to the MS Society – Michigan Chapter. The work that they do is so important as a cure is sought for this debilitating disease."

In addition to the check presentation ceremony, the morning event will feature several vintage and new Camaros, as well as vehicles on display by the public. As always at these gatherings, complimentary coffee and pastries will be served by Tim Hortons Cafe and Bake Shop.

The check presentation ceremony begins at 9 a.m.



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Spring Hill Readies for New Powertrain and Cadillac SRX

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ecotec engine family that will be used by five GM brands in 27 models by the 2017 model year, powering many of the company's high-volume small car and compact-crossover vehicles, said GM spokesperson Kevin Nadrowski.

Spring Hill is among six manufacturing locations around the globe that will produce the new engine.

The new Ecotec portfolio includes 11 engines with three- and four-cylinder variants ranging from 1.0L to 1.5L – including turbocharged versions – and power ratings ranging from 75 horsepower to 165 horsepower, and torque ranging from 70 lb.-ft. to 184 lb.-ft.

“The new Ecotec engine family represents the most advanced and efficient small displacement gasoline engines in GM's history,” said Arvin Jones, GM North America manufacturing manager.

“It was a good business decision to produce this powertrain in Bedford and Spring Hill. Both teams have strong performance records, especially in quality.”

GM Spring Hill currently manufactures the award-winning Ecotec 2.0L turbocharged direct injection 4-cylinder engine, the Ecotec 2.4L direct injection 4-cylinder engine and Ecotec 2.5L direct injection engine, which powers the 2014 Chevrolet Malibu and the 2014 Chevrolet Impala.

Bedford currently produces transmission casings, converter housings and small gas engine blocks.

“This is an all-around good news story for our members in Spring Hill and Bedford,” said UAW Vice President Cindy Estrada, who leads the union's GM Department.

“We worked with GM to create this success story through the collective bargaining process. We are pleased with the opportunity to continue to work with the Spring Hill and Bedford leadership to build world-class quality products, which will include the new Ecotec engine program, and are looking forward to the next-generation Cadillac SRX being returned to the USA (from Mexico).”

The naming of the Cadillac SRX program follows GM's previously announced \$350 million investment in Spring Hill for two future mid-size vehicles expected to create or retain approximately 1,800 jobs, said Nadrowski.

“We want to congratulate GM on this important investment in its future in Spring Hill and Middle Tennessee,” Gov. Bill Haslam said.

“Today's announcement speaks volumes around the country and world about our state's business-friendly climate and strengths in automotive manufacturing, bringing us another step closer to our goal of making Tennessee the No. 1 location in the Southeast for high-quality jobs.”

1 Million OnStar Subscribers – Use Remote at Same Time



One in a million

When OnStar launched its mobile application in 2010, it was the auto industry's first smartphone application that would give owners a remote connection to their vehicles and control of certain vehicle functions.

Last week, OnStar RemoteLink passed the 1 million active users milestone, said GM spokesperson Stefan Cross.

OnStar RemoteLink allows drivers to access vehicle diagnostic information – like tire pressure and oil level – and provides the remote ability to lock and unlock the doors and start the vehicle.

The app has been downloaded more than 2.5 million times, but this is the first time more than 1 million OnStar subscribers have been active on the app at the same time, Cross said.

“Over the past few years, RemoteLink has become one of the more popular OnStar service offerings,” said Terry Inch, OnStar's chief operating officer.

“Customers see the value in having a remote connection to their vehicle, which comes in handy during the summer and winter months, or when planning a trip.”

Remote start is the most popular feature of the app, receiving

38 percent of overall app requests, Inch said. This is followed closely by the diagnostic feature: *Get Vehicle Info*, which receives 35 percent of all requests.

The navigation feature of the app – the ability to send directions from the phone directly to the vehicle – has also gained popularity over the past year.

RemoteLink, now available for all four major smartphone platforms (iOS, Android, BlackBerry and Windows), is most commonly used on iOS devices, making up almost two-thirds of the app's downloads, Cross said.

Males are the most common users of the app, accounting for nearly 64 percent of the app's population.

The latest update to the RemoteLink app includes a new service called *Vehicle Locate*, which allows drivers to view where their car is located on a map.

This feature is available for Directions & Connections subscribers in the U.S.

In addition, owners of a vehicle equipped with OnStar 4G LTE are able to manage their in-vehicle Wi-Fi hotspot from the mobile app.

“RemoteLink provides us another avenue to enhance our customers' overall vehicle ownership experience,” said Inch. “Customers who have an OnStar 4G LTE-equipped vehicle can now use the app to view and edit their hotspot name and password, or turn the hotspot on and off.”

As part of the OnStar Basic Plan, the app's Remote Key Fob services – remote start, lock, unlock and activate horn and lights – now come standard for five years on all new, properly equipped GM vehicles, said Cross.

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Equinox ‘Should See Third Straight Year Of Sales Above 200,000’ – Chevy’s Majoros

Greg Stahl, president of Bob Johnson Chevrolet in Rochester, N.Y., has a pleasant problem. He cannot keep the Equinox compact SUV in stock.

While this could be true for any hot new car or truck, the Equinox is in its fifth year of production.

With sales rising every year since introduction in 2009 as a 2010 model, the Equinox joins those rare vehicles that report sustained sales month after month and year after year, said GM spokesperson Katie Adams.

“What gives a vehicle staying power is trust,” said Jessica Caldwell, an analyst with the car-shopping website Edmunds.com. “Vehicles that are top sellers despite their age are nameplates that car shoppers can trust to have good quality, durability and reliability. They aren’t designed with the latest fad in mind – they are vehicles that are tested over time and have proven to be good products.”

More than 25,300 customers took delivery of a new Equinox in July, a 37 percent surge in year-over-year sales that is helping fuel a fifth straight year of record sales, Adams said.

GM’s sales figures showed that in 2009 the company sold 86,148 Equinoxes. In 2010, that figure was 149,979, 193,274 in 2011, 218,621 in 2012 and 238,192 in 2013.

“Equinox is one of the rare vehicles that has increased its sales every year since its current generation was introduced,” said Steve Majoros, Chevrolet marketing director.

“It is a market-tested and proven product, and recommendations from enthusiastic customers form the backbone of the Equinox’s strength. We think 2014 should see the third straight year of sales above 200,000.”

Many customers, Majoros said, are coming back for seconds – 27 percent, or nearly three in 10 – have traded in their first Equinox for a second.

Tom and Susan Wortman of Raton, N.M., were in that group, recently trading their 2010 Equinox for a 2014 model. Their 31-year-old son and 34-year-old daughter each purchased one of the small SUVs after driving their parents’ Equinox.

“We started it,” Susan Wortman said. “They enjoy the vehicle as much as we do.”

Reception of the current-generation Equinox was immediate and strong, with sales increasing by 74 percent 2009 to 2010. And, of the 238,192 sales last year, 84 percent of them were to individual buyers, Majoros said.

The popularity of Equinox has led GM to some creative manufacturing approaches to keep up with demand, Adams said.

In addition to the crossover’s assembly home in Ingersoll, Ontario, GM is running a shuttle system, taking Equinox bodies to Oshawa, Ontario, for paint and final production.

Beyond the innovative shuttle program, GM also reopened its assembly plant in Spring Hill, Tenn., to support the additional market demand for more Equinoxes.

And that was just to meet the overwhelming retail demand. Daily rental customers were offered the similarly sized Chevrolet Captiva for their fleets, keeping retail customers at the front of the Equinox line.

Equinox seats five, offers all-wheel drive and comes standard with an Ecotec 2.4L engine EPA-estimated at 32 mpg on highway. That’s better than Honda CR-V (31 mpg) and Toyota RAV4 (31 mpg), and the Ford Escape with either the 2.5L (31 mpg) or 2.0L (30 mpg) engines, said Adams.

Equinox also offers a 301-hp direct-injected V6 that enables a 3,500-pound trailering rating. Neither the CR-V, RAV4 nor Escape offer a V6.

The Equinox, Majoros said, is affordable, too: The starting

price for the 2014 Equinox LS model is \$25,315.

New connectivity features for 2015 enhance Equinox’s position as the right vehicle for those with active lifestyles, said Adams, including available On-Star with 4G LTE offering a built-in Wi-Fi hotspot, which provides a mobile hub for drivers and passengers to stay connected. The hotspot is on whenever the car is on and comes with a three-month/three-gigabyte data trial, whichever comes first.

Advanced safety features, including forward collision alert and lane departure warning, are available and contribute to a comprehensive passenger protection system, said Adams.

The Equinox with available forward collision alert technology received a 2014 Top Safety Pick+ rating from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. It was the only midsize SUV of nine evaluated to earn a “Good” rating in the Institute’s small overlap front crash test.

Chevrolet supports Equinox owners with two years/24,000 miles – whichever comes first – of scheduled maintenance, covering four oil changes, tire rotation and 27-point inspection.

Stahl, the dealer whose store led the nation in Equinox sales in July with 98 units sold, said the small SUV resonates with value-conscious customers.

“There are a lot a features for the money,” he said. “It’s efficient and it’s also a great-looking vehicle. I can’t wait for the next shipment.”



GM reopened its Spring Hill, Tenn., plant to meet booming Equinox sales.

Auto Suppliers’ Revenue Built from Inside

Interior suppliers are leading the way among automotive segments with a median revenue growth of four percent, according to PwC’s recent North American Automotive Supplier Supply Chain study, said PwC spokesperon Amy Gnadinger.

The majority of suppliers performed better on effectiveness (revenue) than they did on efficiency (cost). Interior suppliers showed the greatest strides in effectiveness, while body suppliers (ranked tops in the 2012 study) slightly retracted in performance. Exterior suppliers improved in effectiveness but not in efficiency. Powertrain, chassis and electrical component supplier effectiveness declined.

“Automotive suppliers who view and manage their supply chain as a strategic asset have achieved higher financial performance as well,” said Rajiv Jetli, principal, PwC US Automotive consulting practice.

“We’ve observed a direct correlation between supply chain performance and financial performance for many automotive suppliers. Integrating performance improvement discipline is

key to gaining a competitive edge.”

The Interior suppliers segment continues its strong performance in working capital management, said Jetli, as evidenced by strong performance in current year and year-over-year (YoY) improvement in inventory turns, days payable outstanding (DPO), and cash-to-cash performance.

That said, below-average days of sales outstanding (DSO) performance indicates an opportunity still exists to further improve cash-to-cash efficiency, said Jetli, adding, “at the same time, strong revenue growth and above-average gross margin improvement indicate that fundamentals are going up.”

Body suppliers placed second, Jetli said, pointing out that they appear to be performing very well in both supply chain effectiveness and efficiency, having scored first in three effectiveness measures and three efficiency measures. Given that body suppliers rank first in operating cash flows, DSO, YoY DSO improvements, raw material stability, inventory turns and cash-to-cash, it appears that working capital

was a heavy focus from 2012 to 2013, Jetli said. Under-performing gross profit margins, revenue growth, and COGS growth relative to revenue growth suggests that more efficiency and effectiveness opportunities remain, he said.

Chassis suppliers came in third. They rank fourth in effectiveness and third in efficiency, with middle-of-the-road performance in all measures, Jetli said.

Low gross margins and cost of goods sold (COGS) growth relative to revenues suggest opportunities in cost reductions and efficiency gains and/or pricing pressures from original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), said Jetli.

Lagging performance in DSO, average DPO improvements, and inventory under-performance indicates that the chassis suppliers segment requires greater focus on cash-to-cash and working capital performance, Jetli said.

Exterior suppliers ranked fourth. Top performance in revenue growth indicates that OEMs are placing a strong demand for innovation and differentiation on exterior suppliers, he said.

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2014 Chevy Impala Makes KBB Top Ten For ‘Comfort and Under \$30K’ List

If a comfortable ride is your thing, KBB.com says the 2014 Impala is your top choice under \$30,000.

Kelley Blue Book, through its Web site KBB.com, released a list of what its editors consider the 10 most comfortable vehicles that cost less than \$30,000 on Aug. 18.

“New-car buyers don’t necessarily have to shop a luxury brand to get an extremely comfortable car,” said Jack Nerad, executive editorial director and executive marketing analyst for KBB.com.

“Today’s mainstream money can buy some of the quietest cabins on the road, along with many of the comfort-oriented features that debuted upmarket just a few years ago.

“To aid shoppers in choosing a comfortable new car that won’t break the bank, the editors at Kelley Blue Book www.kbb.com . . . have named this year’s 10 Most Comfortable Cars Under \$30,000.

“For many car shoppers, comfort is among the top factors in

their choice of a new vehicle, especially with so many Americans spending countless hours commuting.”

Though the Impala has adapted to evolving technologies and consumer trends through the years, the 10th-generation Impala has remained true to its roots in offering generous cabin spaciousness and a comfortable ride, said GM spokesperson Chad Lyons.

Entry-luxury vehicles like the 2014 Volvo S60, 2014 Toyota Avalon and 2014 Chrysler 300 also made the list, which was selected by the consumer website’s editors, but the Impala came out on top, Lyons said.

“Totally redesigned for 2014, our number one pick on this list

– the Chevrolet Impala – proves that the big, comfortable, affordable American sedan is alive and well, and now it is stylish and modern, too,” said Nerad.

The 2014 Impala’s comfort and refinement are rooted in a stronger body structure, enabling a quieter passenger environment and a greater overall feeling of quality, said Lyons.

Making the Impala’s cabin quiet was a top priority for engineers, who implemented technologies like triple-sealed doors, available active-noise canceling technology and acoustic foam baffles, Lyons said.

He said a Detroit rock band, the Gentlemen Mutineers, even used the vehicle as a recording studio to prove its cabin’s quiet-



Even a rock band can record in the Impala’s interior, say GM officials.

ness.

The stiffer architecture also enabled engineers to tune the ride and handling more precisely, for a greater feeling of control and comfort, said Lyons.

The new Impala also has a

roomier, airier ambience, he said, adding that thin A-pillars and a low instrument panel enhance outward visibility, while the car’s six-window “greenhouse” surrounds passengers with natural light.

GM Tech Center Set to Host JDRF Walk Sept. 28

The annual JDRF Walk to Cure Diabetes will take place 8:30-11:30 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 28, at the GM Tech Center in Warren.

Timothy Herbert Financial Group will co-sponsor the event with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

“Joining the movement to find a cure for this disease has always been a cause close to my heart,” said Tim Herbert, founder of the financial group.

Herbert said he spent 16 years working at General Motors before he opened his own financial company specializing in GM and automotive retirement planning.

He said that throughout his entire career, he knew he wanted to join the fight to find a cure for diabetes. He said his younger brother John is one of the 366 million people suffering from juvenile diabetes and he has been battling this disease for years.

Herbert saw firsthand what his brother has to cope with every day to survive, including testing his blood sugar six or more times a day.

“I have chosen to walk for this amazing cause not only to support my brother, but to support the millions of children and adults affected by this disease,” Herbert said. “Last year, the team raised over \$4,700 for the foundation.

“In the U.S. alone, a new case of diabetes is diagnosed every 30 seconds, meaning more than 1.9 million people are diagnosed each year.

“Since its founding in 1970, JDRF has awarded more than \$1.6 billion to diabetes research, significantly advancing the care of people with this disease.

“I’m grateful that my brother has a chance for a longer survival, but he doesn’t consider the job complete until a cure has been found. Each and every person living with this disease deserves a life free from diabetes. I can only hope that by raising funds for this lifesaving foundation, they can move one step closer to finding a cure.”

The Walk to Cure Diabetes is JDRF’s largest national fundraising event to help raise funds to accelerate progress toward the most promising opportunities to cure, treat and prevent Type 1 Diabetes.

More than 80 percent of JDRF’s expenditures support research and research-related education.

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All prices & payments include GM rebates. Pictures may not represent actual vehicle. Prices subject to change per GM incentives. Prices and payments are inclusive of active GM Employee Discount (unless otherwise stated). Leases are 36 months, 10,000 miles per year w/ approved \$1k credit w/ \$999 due at signing, (unless otherwise noted). Verano, Lacrosse, Encore, Terrain, Acadia, Yukon XL, and Sierra leases are 24 month terms. Prices & payments are plus tax, title, and plate fees with acquisition fee up front. Refundable security deposit required on certain vehicles – to be determined by lender. GM Employee discount to everyone valid on certain models. Must qualify for Onstar or In-car Safety System. \$3500 trade-in is valid on 2004 or newer vehicles with under 115k miles in drivable condition, no branded titles, see sales person for details. Below GM Pricing sale only eligible on 2014 model year vehicles, certain models excluded. **Certain restrictions may apply, see dealer for complete details. Expiration Date – 8/31/2014. Due to advertising deadlines, prices subject to change.

Now looking for experienced salespeople to join our team!