

# FCA Teaming with Google for Self-Driving Cars?

by Dee-Ann Durbin  
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) – Fiat Chrysler and Google's self-driving car project are in advanced talks to

form a technical partnership.

The talks were confirmed April 28 by a person familiar with the discussions. The person asked not to be named because the discussions are private.

The partnership would be the first to match an automaker with Google's 7-year-old autonomous car project, which is now part of the so-called X lab at Alphabet Inc., Google's parent company.

Details haven't been revealed. But Google has repeatedly said it doesn't intend to make self-driving cars and would prefer to license its technology to carmakers. Google has been testing ver-

sions of self-driving cars on highways since 2009 and on city streets since 2014. It has a fleet of Lexus SUVs specially outfitted

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### GM Explains China Strategy

by Jim Stickford

China has become the largest new-car market in the world and GM has long-term plans to be a part of that market.

Matt Tsien, GM executive vice president and president of GM China, spoke at a special media conference in GM's world headquarters April 28.

He said he expects car sales in China to grow between 3 and 5 percent annually through 2020 and that it is GM's biggest market. Buick sales are especially strong, Tsien said, with recent sales exceeding a million vehicles.

And what's driving GM's sales in China is the SUV, Tsien said. Sales in 2015 were up 144 percent compared with a year earlier. Overall, China accounts for more than a third of GM's total vehicle sales and the company expects to be selling 5 million units or more by the year 2020.



Matt Tsien

GM between the year 2016 and the year 2020 will be offering 60 new or refreshed vehicles in China, Tsien said, and 40 percent of those vehicles will be SUVs and MPVs (multi-purpose vehicles).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

### Fiat Chrysler's Switch from Small Cars to SUVs, Trucks is 'Permanent' – Marchionne

MILAN (AP) – With lower gas prices shifting North American driving preferences toward bigger vehicles, Fiat Chrysler has accelerated its transition away from passenger cars with an impact on its manufacturing footprint across the globe.

Fiat Chrysler Automobiles CEO Sergio Marchionne gave out pieces of the plan to exit the small- and midsize car business in the U.S. and shift factories to hotter-selling SUVs and trucks. They will keep selling muscle cars like the Charger, Challenger and 300 and premium brands like Alfa Romeo.

Marchionne said he told the United Auto Workers union that the plan would create more jobs in the U.S., but where all the jobs will end up isn't clear.

He has said previously that the market shift in the U.S. to trucks

and SUVs is permanent, aided by low gasoline prices, and that FCA would adjust to it.

The North American market, he said, "is relatively healthy in areas where we function well," like Jeep and Ram.

"It has gotten a lot stickier on the passenger car side," he said. "I think the call that we made to exit those businesses as producer in the United States in hindsight was probably one of the best calls we made."

The production changes will bring an increase in North American jobs, but some of the production will be moved to Mexico, Marchionne said.

Some temporary layoffs will take place as plants are retooled from cars to trucks, he told analysts on a conference call. Marchionne called the transition painful but said it



Sergio Marchionne

would be finished by early 2018. Here's what we know about the production plans so far:

- FCA will retool a factory in

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### 2016 Survey Shows Automotive Customers Want Same Technology as in Everyday Life

by Jim Stickford

Advances in different kinds of technology are changing the automobile industry in profound ways. But an important question for manufacturers is, what technology do people want, and, more importantly, what technology are people willing to pay for?

Kristin Kolodge, executive director of Driver Interaction and Human Machine Interface (HMI) at J.D. Power, on April 28 announced the result of J.D. Power's 2016 U.S. Tech Choice study

at the Gem Theatre in Detroit as part of an Automotive Press Association luncheon.

Kolodge said the survey was done online between February and March of this year. J.D. Power looked at the answers given by 7,900 respondents from across the country.

"Retail auto sales last year hit record heights – 14.3 million vehicles," Kolodge said. "Retail sales for this year are shaping up to be around 14.6 million. These sales are being driven by consumers who want more technolo-

gy in their cars. About 36 percent of buyers said they bought a particular vehicle because of the technology it had. Driving experiences are being shaped by how people use technology in other parts of their lives."

Basically, Kolodge said, people want their cars to be like their smartphones – full of technology and easy to use.

And to that end, OEMs have been teaming up with tech companies and are trying to position

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A Rin Tin Tin-like police dog stands ready to attack the Bad Guys.

### 'Cheese It,' Cops are in F-150s

Thanks to Ford, that old police standby of "calling all cars" could be changed to "calling all pickups."

Government and fleet customers – including law enforcement and roadside assistance providers – require the toughest, smartest, most capable vehicles for their work, so Ford is now offering a Special Service Vehicle package for the 2016 F-150 to meet their rigorous needs, said Ford spokesman Sam Schembari.

The F-150 Special Service Vehicle gives fleets a selection of configurations so customers can pick what best suits their needs, Schembari said. Available in XL trim for either F-150 SuperCrew or SuperCab configuration, customers can opt for the package in a 4x4 or 4x2 drivetrain, along with the 5.0-liter V8 or high-torque 3.5-liter EcoBoost engine.

Law enforcement and fleet work can get messy, Schembari said, so trucks equipped with the package replace carpeting with easy-to-clean vinyl flooring. The

rear seat is swapped out for a vinyl bench for quick cleanup.

A high-output 240-amp alternator replaces the stock unit to accommodate for extended idle times. Standard 40/20/40 seats are replaced with 40/blank/40 seats, with the center section deleted to create more space for customization.

"Many officers need the extra space F-150 Special Service Vehicle offers," said Stephen Tyler, Ford police marketing manager. "They can load the cargo box with equipment and still fit five people inside. Its utility is unmatched."

Law enforcement makes up a large portion of Special Service Vehicle purchases, Tyler said, so Ford added F-150 to satisfy a complete range of police needs.

"We offer a whole family of police vehicles," said Arie Groenewald, Ford chief program engineer for police vehicles. "Our lineup aims to fulfill the unique

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Panel discusses customers' preferences in automotive technology at press luncheon.

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## Ford F-150 Now a Police Truck, Too

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

needs of law enforcement officers, and our F-150 Special Service Vehicle is an extension of that offering. This vehicle definitely lives up to its Built Ford Tough reputation."

The following Ford vehicles are available for law enforcement use:

- F-150 Special Service Vehicle;
- Expedition Special Service Vehicle;
- Special Service Police Sedan;
- Transit Prisoner Transport Vehicle;
- Police Interceptor Sedan;
- Police Interceptor Utility.

## Buick, Cadillac Brands Push Sales in China

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Cadillac, as a brand, will be making big moves in China, Tsien said. They will be offering 10 new and refreshed models in the near future.

GM and its partner SAIC through SAIC GMAC will also be strong in the value-added service marketplace, Tsien said. A full 30 percent of GM customers used SAIC GMAC financing in 2015. That number is expected to rise to 40 percent by the year 2020.

General Motors isn't ignoring green technology in China either, Tsien said.

The company will be introducing more than 10 new energy vehicles or NEVs in the next five years.

The Cadillac ATS-L being introduced to the Chinese market will have OnStar 4G LTE technology and GM expects that all Cadillac, Chevrolet and Buick products sold in China to be fully connected by the year 2020.

Additionally, Tsien said, General Motors is working on putting together a vehicle-sharing pilot program with Shanghai Jiao Tong University.

"The Chinese automotive industry will continue to grow," Tsien said, "and we'll continue to grow as fast with it."

When asked about March's relatively weak sales, Tsien noted that they were down 0.6 percent compared with the same time a year earlier and attributed those numbers to a lot of changeover in product.

Tsien said that the April numbers weren't in yet, but he said he expects April to shape up to be a "pretty good month" sales-wise.

Patrick Morrissey, director of Corporate Communications at GM said that both Cadillac and Buick brands are showing strong growth, which is good for GM because they are more profitable brands.

And GM has just opened up an assembly plant in China that will be making the Cadillac XT5 and the CT6 for the local market.

# GM Betting Big on Bay City and Spring Hill Facilities

General Motors will invest \$118 million at its Bay City Powertrain facility, creating 29 jobs and retaining 67 more.

GM is also investing \$788.7 million for an all-new, high-efficiency engine program, as well as projects to modernize the vehicle programs at its Spring Hill (Tenn.) manufacturing plant, creating 792 jobs and retaining 16 more.

Bay City Powertrain produces engine components that are used in Chevrolet, Buick, GMC and Cadillac vehicles.

The plant opened in 1892 as National Cycle Manufacturing Company and produced a new bicycle to replace old high-wheeled types.

In 1916, William Durant and Louis Chevrolet bought the plant and it was added to the General Motors portfolio in 1918. With this investment, GM has invested or will invest \$249.4 million in Bay City Powertrain since 2010, said GM spokesman Tom Wickham.

Since 2010, GM has announced investments of more than \$2 billion for the Spring Hill operations. This includes a \$148 million investment announced in February to repurpose flexible machining and assembly equipment to build V8 engines.

"This investment will help GM and our workforce continue to put the customer at the center of everything we do, providing them with powertrain solutions to meet their changing needs," said Arvin Jones, GM North America manufacturing manager. "The April 27 announcement reinforces our absolute faith in this facility, and our strong commitment to this community and the state of Tennessee."

According to Cindy Estrada, vice president and director of the UAW General Motors Department, this investment helps secure a bright future for its workforce.

"UAW members at Spring Hill and Bay City have well-earned reputations for quality work and craftsmanship," said Estrada.



Employees at work in GM's Bay City Powertrain facility

"Since the 2015 collective bargaining agreement, GM has invested more than \$1.7 billion and UAW-GM members, their families and their communities will all benefit for years to come."

Construction will begin in May and will last several years, Wickham said.

"Spring Hill and its employees have earned a reputation for pro-

ducing award-winning engines," said UAW Local 1853 Chairman Mike Herron. "GM recognizes this and we're thankful they are investing further in the future of this facility and this community."

Wickham said the Tennessee Valley Authority worked with government and company representatives in helping secure this investment announcement.

## GM Names Taylor to Compliance Office

General Motors Co. has appointed Jeffrey A. Taylor as deputy general counsel and chief compliance officer, effective immediately.

He will report to Craig Glidden, executive vice president and general counsel, said GM spokesman Klaus-Peter Martin.

In his new role, Taylor will have overall responsibility for GM's ethics and compliance program, and he will support GM's business operations and leadership team in driving business success through an organizational culture committed to integrity, ethical conduct, workplace and vehicle safety and compliance with the law and company policies.

Taylor will also oversee strategy, communications and training concerning GM's code of conduct - "Winning with Integrity" -

which governs the ethical and legal obligations of GM's Board, executives, and more than 75,000 employees around the world.

As chief compliance officer, Taylor will lead a global team of attorneys and compliance professionals responsible for assessing and mitigating risk, devising and implementing compliance training and assessment, assuring the effectiveness of the compliance program, and conducting and overseeing internal and external investigations, Martin said.

"Jeff is a highly accomplished attorney who has managed extremely complex legal issues," said Glidden. "His appointment reflects GM's commitment to the highest levels of global ethics and the strict compliance with the law and internal policies."

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"TVA understands the importance of reliable, affordable electricity to General Motors and the entire automotive industry.

"We are proud to be a partner in this announcement, which will lead to more jobs and investment in the region's economy," TVA President and CEO Bill Johnson said.

Spring Hill Manufacturing opened in 1990 and produced Saturn vehicles until March 2007. It produced the Chevrolet Traverse from September 2008 until November 2009, and the Chevrolet Equinox from September 2012 until October 2015.

Currently, the site operations consist of a flexible vehicle assembly plant - producing the Cadillac XT5 and the GMC Acadia - an engine plant making 4-cylinder engines, a stamping plant, a body shop, a paint shop and two polymer injection molding operations.

Engines and stampings are supplied to various GM assembly plants globally. The complex will begin building small-block V8 engines by the end of 2016.



Jeffrey A. Taylor

ber last year as deputy general counsel for Federal Oversight, Taylor was vice president and general counsel of Tewksbury, Mass.-based Raytheon Integrated Defense Systems.

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2017 Pacificas leave Auburn Hills to go to local showrooms.

## Pacificas Head to Dealerships

The new 2017 Chrysler Pacifica is coming here to Michigan.

Hundreds of Michigan-area dealers gathered at The Palace of Auburn Hills to drive away more than 200 of the new 2017 Chrysler Pacifica minivans and bring them back to their dealerships in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky on April 27.

This is the largest-ever "drive-away" hosted by Fiat Chrysler, said company spokeswoman Angela Bianchi.

"The Chrysler Pacifica is the new benchmark in minivan style, design, safety, efficiency, entertainment and functionality," said Timothy Kuniskis, head of Passenger Car Brands, FCA - North America. "Now, customers can experience the Pacifica at their local dealership and see why we believe it's the perfect vehicle for the modern family."

The Pacifica is built on a new platform providing class-leading ride, handling, and noise, vibration and harshness (NVH), Kuniskis said. With nearly 40 new minivan firsts, the Pacifica sets the standard for the ultimate family vehicle.

More than 100 standard and available safety and security features, including 360-degree Surround View camera, ParkSense Parallel/Perpendicular Park As-

ist, Adaptive Cruise Control with Stop and Hold and Forward Collision Warning-Plus, are available, Kuniskis said.

The Pacifica is the most technologically equipped of its kind with available all-new Uconnect Theater rear seat entertainment, 8.4-inch touchscreen display and premium audio systems, Kuniskis said.

A full array of comfort and convenience technologies are available with the Pacifica, including Stow 'n Vac integrated vacuum, tri-pane panoramic sunroof, hands-free sliding doors and liftgate and redesigned Stow 'n Go seating with Stow 'n Go Assist and Easy Tilt.

Chrysler created the first minivan more than 30 years ago, Bianchi said. Since then, more than 14 million minivans have been sold and more than 6 million are currently on the road today.

The Windsor Assembly Plant began production of the 2017 Chrysler Pacifica on Feb. 29. Michigan-area dealers are among the first to receive the highly anticipated Pacifica, Bianchi said.

The Pacifica is available in five trim levels and starts at \$28,595 U.S. Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price, plus \$995 destination.

## Preh Acquisition Finalized

The acquisition of TechniSat Automotive by the automotive supplier Preh of Novi, a member of the Joyson Group - announced at the beginning of February - has now taken effect following approval by the relevant trade authorities, said Preh spokesman Barrett Kalellis.

The Chinese Ningbo Joyson Electronic Corp. and its German subsidiary Preh Holding GmbH, respectively, hold 50 percent of the new company, said Kalellis, which will now operate as "Preh Car Connect GmbH."

The new Preh Car Connect

GmbH will form the Joyson organizational division, "Automotive Electronics and Automation," under Preh Holding, together with Preh GmbH, Kalellis said.

The acquisition strengthens the Preh Group, Kalellis said, making it a global system supplier for central operating functions and the networking of vehicles. Together, the Preh companies achieve a sales volume of more than one billion euros and have competencies in the fields of human machine interface-Systems (HMI), car infotainment, connectivity and telematics.

## Fiat Chrysler's Switch from Small Cars to SUVs, Trucks is 'Permanent' - Marchionne

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Sterling Heights, north of Detroit, so it can make a new Ram pickup truck that will come out early in 2018. The plant, with 3,000 production workers, now makes the Chrysler 200, a slow-selling mid-size car that is among the segments that FCA plans to exit.

• A factory in Warren, also north of Detroit, that now makes the Ram pickup will be retooled to make the Jeep Wagoneer or Grand Wagoneer, an SUV that's larger than the Jeep Grand Cherokee. The plant with 4,000 production workers, would keep making the Ram until Sterling Heights begins making the new truck.

• Production of the aging Jeep Compass and Patriot compact SUVs would move to Toluca, Mexico, when a new version comes out. Those are now made at a 4,000-worker factory in Belvidere, Ill. The Illinois plant also makes the Dodge Dart compact car, a market that FCA also wants to exit, so its future may be in peril.

Last year's contract with the UAW promised new vehicles for Sterling Heights and Belvidere facilities.

• FCA is talking with other manufacturers to make small and midsize cars, but Chief Financial Officer Richard Palmer said he couldn't discuss the talks.

• FCA will continue to make larger rear-wheel-drive muscle and luxury cars and should be able to grow in that area, Marchionne said. But it's possible, he said, when the plans are finished that "the true passenger car side will represent the lesser portion of our portfolio than it does today."

• That doesn't include Alfa Romeo, which is being built in Italy for export under plans to shift Italian production to higher-margin premium models.

"I am not concerned about the competitiveness of the U.S. market as it applies to Alfa," Marchionne said, adding he also was reassured by Alfa's marketability in China after a recent visit.

FCA also announced April 26 that it would invest \$74.7 million at its Trenton engine plant so it can build a future four-cylinder engine. The move doesn't create new jobs but retains 245. The company gets a \$770,000 state tax break.

The CEO also complained about the lack of clarity in the European regulations as automakers deal with greater scrutiny in the wake of the VW diesel admissions scandal. Marchionne said he agrees with Germany's transport minister that regulations aren't clear and some automakers interpret them differently than others.

"I think we have done our best

to meet those standards over time," he said.

North America was the clear driver of first-quarter FCA earnings.

The Italian-American carmaker reported a net profit of 478 million euros (\$539 million) in the first quarter, up from 27 million in the same period last year, a figure that had been adjusted to exclude the recently spun-off Ferrari division.

Net revenues rose 3 percent to 26.5 billion euros.

Fiat Chrysler said its North America adjusted earnings before interest and taxes doubled to 1.2 billion euros on higher revenues, lower advertising spending and lower recall campaign costs.

Sales of Jeep, Ram trucks and minivans led an 8 percent boost in regional sales to 634,000 vehicles.

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## Chrysler, Google In Talks Over Joining Forces

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

with autonomous software as well as a pod-like prototype vehicle it designed.

"We want to partner to bring self-driving to all the vehicles in the world," Google co-founder and Alphabet President Sergey Brin told media at a self-driving car event last spring.

Last fall, Google hired John Krafcik, an auto industry veteran and former executive at Ford Motor Co. and Hyundai Motor Co., to be the CEO of its self-driving car project.

Google said April 28 that the company doesn't comment on speculation.

Fiat Chrysler - which has lagged bigger, richer rivals like Volkswagen AG and General Motors Co. in the development of self-driving cars - might welcome the chance to test Google's technology. The Italian-American automaker also has manufacturing expertise and factories that Google lacks.

Fiat Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne has been vocal about seeking a partner to share the cost of research and development. But other automakers, including GM, have so far rebuffed him. A tie-up with Google would help his company leapfrog competitors in the race to develop self-driving cars.

Google has set a goal of having self-driving cars in the public's hands by 2020.

Earlier this year at the Detroit auto show, Marchionne said, "Consolidation, in my view, is unavoidable, especially if you lend any credence at all to all this noise and buzz that has been created about the fact that we're really not into the car business anymore we're all transportation companies who are interested in connectivity and autonomous driving."

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## Ford Recalling Models for Safety Issues

Ford issued several recalls on April 27.

Among the vehicles being recalled are 202,000 2011-2012 Ford F-150, and 2012 Ford Expedition, Ford Mustang and Lincoln Navigator vehicles for a potential issue with the output speed sensor on the vehicle's transmission lead frame, said Ford spokesman John Cangany.

Under certain conditions, the transmission controls could force a temporary downshift into first gear. Depending on the speed of the vehicle at the time of the downshift, the driver could experience an abrupt speed reduction that could cause the rear tires to slide or lock up. This condition could result in loss of vehicle control, increasing the risk of a crash.

Ford is aware of three reports of accidents and no injuries related to this condition.

Ford is also issuing a safety recall for approximately 81,000 2014-2015 Ford Explorer and Ford Police Interceptor Utility vehicles to replace rear suspension toe links. In certain vehicles, it is possible that the left and right rear suspension toe links could fracture due to poor weld quality. This condition could result in rear suspension noise, difficulty steering or loss of steering control, increasing the risk of a crash.

Ford is aware of one accident and one injury related to this issue, Cangany said.

Dealers will replace the left and right rear suspension toe links and align the rear suspension at no cost to the customer.

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## Ford Investing Heavily in Michigan, Ohio

Ford Motor Company is investing \$1.6 billion to upgrade two of its manufacturing facilities in Michigan and Ohio, and creating or retaining 650 hourly jobs in the United States, said Ford spokeswoman Kelli Felker.

The \$1.4 billion investment in Livonia Transmission Plant and \$200 million investment in Ohio Assembly Plant are part of the \$9 billion commitment the company made in the 2015 UAW-Ford collective bargaining agreement to continue investing in its U.S. plants.

Ford has invested \$12 billion in its U.S. plants and created a total of nearly 28,000 U.S. jobs in the past five years.

"We are proud that Ford employs more hourly workers and builds more vehicles in the United States than any other automaker," said Joe Hinrichs, Ford president, The Americas. "We are committed to manufacturing in the United States, as we have been for more than 100 years."

Ford's latest investment creates or retains 500 hourly jobs in Michigan at Livonia Transmission Plant to build a new 10-speed transmission to be first introduced in the all-new F-150 Raptor and certain F-150 models, Felker said. The investment and 150 hourly jobs at Ohio Assembly Plant, located in Avon Lake, will be used to build Super Duty chassis cabs. Both F-Series trucks are part of Ford's tough-



Employees work in Ford's Livonia transmission facility.

est, smartest, most capable truck lineup ever, said Felker.

Ford has committed to 2,800 U.S. jobs in the past five months. And, the company has committed to 8,500 hourly jobs in the U.S. during the next four years in communities across Michigan, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, New York and Ohio.

"I am thrilled that through our collective bargaining with Ford we were able to secure a substantial investment for the communities of Southeast Michigan and Northeast Ohio," said Jimmy Settles, UAW vice president, National Ford Department.

"The men and women of both Livonia Transmission and Ohio Assembly have shown a great

commitment to manufacturing quality products, and we look forward to their continued success."

Livonia Transmission Plant employs more than 1,550 people, building a six-speed transmission used in a number of products, including Mustang, F-150, Transit and Expedition. Production begins in June for the new 10-speed transmission.

Ohio Assembly Plant employs more than 1,650 people. It began building F-350, F-450 and F-550 Super Duty chassis cab configurations earlier this year. The plant also produces Ford F-650 and F-750, insourced from Mexico last year, as well as Ford E-Series cut-away vans and stripped chassis.

## Trucks, SUVs Lead Way to Ford's Strong Sales, Income

DEARBORN, Mich. (AP) – Ford Motor Co.'s net income more than doubled to \$2.5 billion in the first quarter on strong sales of trucks and SUVs worldwide.

The company's pretax profit of \$3.8 billion was an all-time record for any quarter. Pretax profits more than doubled in North America and Asia. Europe recorded its best quarter since 2008.

"Essentially, everything has improved," Chief Financial Officer Bob Shanks said. Ford expects to meet or exceed last year's record pretax profit of \$10.8 billion.

Worldwide sales rose 10 percent to 1.7 million in the first quarter. Demand for SUVs, trucks and commercial vans was insatiable in North America, China and Europe, offsetting a 29 percent decline in sales in Brazil and weaker sales in the Middle East and Africa. Ford's SUV sales jumped 38 percent in China during the first quarter. In Europe, sales of Ford's EcoSport small SUV rose 50 percent.

In North America, Ford reaped the benefits of its newly redesigned F-150 pickup truck. The company struggled in the first quarter of 2015 because it was still ramping up production of the F-150, which has long been the best-selling vehicle in the U.S.

This year, with normal inventory at dealerships, U.S. F-Series sales rose 5 percent. U.S. sales of the Ford Explorer SUV rose 39 percent in the first quarter, while sales of the Transit commercial van jumped 46 percent.

Ford's results trounced Wall Street's forecasts. The Dearborn,

Michigan-based automaker earned 61 cents per share in the January-March period, up from 29 cents a year ago. Excluding one-time items, like buyout payments for North American workers, Ford earned 68 cents per share. Analysts polled by FactSet forecast earnings of 47 cents per share.

Ford's revenue rose 11 percent to \$37.7 billion. Analysts had forecast revenue of \$35.59 billion.

Shareholders reacted, in part, to CEO Mark Fields' confirmation that Ford is working on an electric vehicle with a 200-mile range that could match rivals from GM and Tesla Motors. Fields didn't say when the company might release such a vehicle, but said Ford will be competitive.

"Our approach, very simply, is we want to make sure that we're either among the leaders or in a leadership position," Fields told media and analysts on a conference call.

Sales of higher-profit SUVs and trucks helped lift Ford's operating margin to a record 9.8 percent. Fields said 60 percent of vehicles sold in Europe during the quarter were from the highest trim levels. Customers added to Ford's bottom line by opting for luxuries like heated seats.

Ford reported a record operating margin of 12.9 percent in North America, but that will likely decline as the year progresses. Ford takes a hit each summer when it shuts down its plants for vacation and maintenance, and it's also facing the expensive launch of its Super Duty pickups this fall. Ford expects its North American margin to end the year at 9.5 percent or higher.

## Chrysler Engine Plant Getting Upgrade

Fiat Chrysler will invest \$74.7 million in its Trenton Engine Complex to retrofit the north plant to produce the next generation four-cylinder engine, retaining 245 jobs.

The new engine will be assembled on the flexible production line that was installed in 2012, said Fiat Chrysler spokeswoman Jodi Tinson. The Auburn Hills-designed engine will begin production in the third quarter of 2017.

The engine will provide increased power, while improving fuel economy and reducing CO2 emissions. More detailed information about the engine's specific application will be announced at a later date, Tinson said.

"This investment in our flexible production line at Trenton North will allow us to quickly ramp up North American production of this new fuel-efficient engine," said Brian Harlow, vice president – Manufacturing, FCA North America.

When production of the new four-cylinder engine begins next year, it will replace the 3.6-liter Pentastar V6, which is currently assembled on the flex line at Trenton North. Pentastar engine production will continue at Trenton South, Mack Avenue Engine and Saltillo South (Mexico). The Trenton Engine Complex employs more than 1,500 people.

Since 2009, Fiat Chrysler has announced investments of more than \$2 billion in Michigan and added nearly 15,600 new jobs, bringing total employment in the state to 35,314 (including 21,621 hourly) people, Tinson said.

The Trenton Engine Complex comprises two facilities, a north plant and a south plant. The Trenton North Engine Plant began production in 1952 and was idled in May 2011 after producing more than 38 million engines. It reopened in late 2011 and added a flexible production line in 2012, Tinson said.

The Trenton South Engine Plant opened in 2008 and began production of the award-winning 3.6-liter Pentastar V6 in 2009. Trenton South was awarded a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold Green Building System certification for meeting the highest environmental standards.



A Trenton South Engine Plant hi-lo driver unloads Pentastar V6 engines.

At the time of its designation in 2009, Tinson said, Trenton was one of only four auto manufacturing facilities to receive a LEED rating of any kind and the only engine manufacturing facility in the world to achieve the honor.

In April 2014, the Trenton Engine Complex achieved the

Bronze award level in World Class Manufacturing (WCM) after demonstrating clear know-how and competence in the manufacturing methodology, Tinson said. WCM is a methodology that focuses on eliminating waste, increasing productivity, and improving quality and safety.

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## Roger Penske Has Role in 100th Indy 500

Detroit racing icon Roger Penske is going to be doing something only a few others have done – drive the pace car at the Indianapolis 500.

Penske, owner of racing's champion Team Penske, will be driving the 2017 Camaro SS 50th Anniversary Edition at the 100th running of the Indianapolis 500 at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway this year.

It's the ninth time Camaro has served as the pace car and the 27th time for Chevrolet, dating back to 1948.

"Chevrolet and the Indianapolis 500 have a long, storied history and it's an honor to mark the respective milestones of the Indy 500 race and the Camaro simultaneously," said Mark Reuss, executive vice president of Global Product Development and Global Purchasing and Supply Chain.

"It's also a privilege to have Roger Penske perform the driving duties, as his team has helped Chevrolet earn four consecutive IndyCar manufacturer titles since 2012."

Four identically prepared pace cars will support the race, all with exclusive Abalone White exteriors featuring "100th Running of the Indianapolis 500" graphics on the doors and the iconic Indianapolis Motor Speedway wing-and-wheel logo on the quarter panels. They also incorporate the exterior cues and graphics that are unique to the Camaro 50th Anniversary package that goes on sale this summer.

With 455 horsepower on tap, the Camaro SS pace cars require no performance modifications to lead the racing field.

"Chevrolet and Roger Penske are inextricably linked to the heritage of the Indianapolis 500," said J. Douglas Boles, president of Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

"When he leads the pack on



Roger Penske stands with the 2017 Camaro pace car he'll be driving.

May 29 behind the wheel of the Camaro SS, he will drive the race into its next 100 years and strengthen the bond Chevrolet and Indianapolis forged a century ago."

For 2016, Chevrolet Indy drivers will be looking to build on last year's results of the "Greatest Spectacle in Racing," when the top four finishers were Chevy-powered, led by race-winner and Team Penske driver Juan Pablo Montoya. It was his second Indy 500 victory and the 16th for Team Penske.

No other racing team has recorded more wins at the Brickyard than Team Penske, and it started with driver Mark Donohue's victory in 1972.

Penske and Donohue established their relationship six years earlier, when Penske transitioned from driver to team owner. They quickly found success in SCCA's Trans-Am Series, with Donohue piloting an early Camaro Z/28 racecar, winning three of 12 races in 1967 and 10 of 13 in 1968.

Penske tackled the Indy 500 for the first time in 1969, while still campaigning a Camaro in Trans-Am. Donohue was his driver for both series. Later racers driving for Penske included Mario Andretti, Al Unser and Rick Mears, with Mears winning four Indianapolis 500 races and helping solidify Team Penske as an Indy powerhouse in the 1980s.

That legacy advances this year, as Roger Penske seeks his

17th Indy 500 title as a team owner.

The 50th Anniversary Edition honors the distinctive looks and performance that have always set the Camaro apart, said GM spokesman Randy Fox. It's offered on 2LT and 2SS coupe and convertible models, all with Nightfall Gray Metallic exteriors featuring a 50th Anniversary stripe package and badges – and a black top on convertibles.

The specially prepared Abalone White pace cars differ in exterior color, but share the Anniversary Edition package's stripes and other content features, including:

- Specific 20-inch 50th Anniversary wheels;
- Unique grille with satin chrome accents;
- Body-color front splitter;
- Orange brake calipers (front only on LT);
- Unique black leather interior with suede inserts and orange accent stitching;
- Distinct 50th Anniversary treatments on instrument panel, seatbacks, steering wheel and illuminated sill plates;
- 2LT includes RS Appearance Package.

The Camaro 2LT comes standard with a 2.0L Turbo engine rated at 275 hp. A 335-hp 3.6L V6 is available. The Camaro 2SS features the LT1 6.2L V8, which offers 455 hp. Each engine is available with a six-speed manual or eight-speed automatic transmission.

## Ford F-150 Uses Recycled Materials for Green Ride

Being tough and being green aren't polar opposites. Just look at Ford's F-150 truck.

The most recent version is also the greenest F-150 – thanks to advanced materials like high-strength, military-grade aluminum alloy and EcoBoost engine technology, said Ford spokesman Mike Levine.

Ford recycles as much as 20 million pounds of aluminum stamping scrap per month using the closed-loop system at Dearborn Stamping Plant, which provides parts to build F-150 at Ford's Dearborn Truck and Kansas City Assembly plants, Levine said.

Opting for aluminum over steel in new automobile construction, Levine said, is the best way to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions, according to Oak Ridge National Lab.

Recycled aluminum avoids 95 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions associated with primary aluminum production, Levine said.

It uses significantly less energy and water – another reason Ford F-150 leads the full-size truck pack in terms of lifetime carbon footprint, according to Automotive Science Group.

Weight savings from aluminum alloy helps F-150 reduce its lifetime emissions compared with

the previous steel-body version, Levine said.

Between 30 percent and 40 percent of a typical aluminum coil is turned into scrap as a part of the stamping process, Levine said.

This scrap aluminum is recycled into new metal for the truck using the closed-loop system, Levine said.

When equipped with the available 2.7-liter EcoBoost with standard Auto Start-Stop technology, F-150 4x2 has best-in-class EPA-estimated gasoline fuel economy ratings of 19 mpg city, 26 mpg highway and 22 mpg combined, Levine said.

And being green doesn't mean stinting on safety elements that go into a pickup truck, Levine said.

The F-150 SuperCrew and SuperCab with available collision warning are the only pickup trucks in their class to earn a Top Safety Pick from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, Levine said.

The F-150 also is the only full-size, light-duty truck to earn the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's highest rating, a five-star overall vehicle score and five-star rating for driver and passenger for all crash test modes and cab configurations – SuperCrew, SuperCab and Regular Cab, Levine said.

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# J.D. Power Survey: Customers Want Everyday Technology

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

themselves as transportation providers.

Another thing driving the addition of technology to vehicles is the government, Kolodge said. She pointed out that last March the U.S. government was able to broker an agreement where all the OEMs agreed to add automatic stop technology in their vehicles by the year 2022.

"But it is the consumer who will decide which technologies win in the marketplace," Kolodge said. "And it will be the technology that brings the best value to consumers that is the ultimate winner."

Kolodge said the J.D. Power study took into account that Gen Y (defined as being born between the early 1980s and the year 2000) will be next couple of years the largest generation out there and it's still growing. They will be setting the pace when it comes to tech adoption.

Kolodge said the study showed some interesting results. One was that different generations feel differently about it. The youngest don't even hesitate trusting tech, while the Baby Boomers are a harder sell.

brake system fail and cause a crash? Can the computer system be crashed?"

There is great worry among consumers that somehow the computer systems in today's vehicles may be hacked by an outside party. OEMs will have to work hard to convince the public that these systems are safe, Kolodge said.

After giving her presentation, Kolodge sat on a panel consisting of experts from automotive suppliers and they further discussed the issues brought up by the survey.

The other panelists were Jason Johnson, director of User Experience Design for Harmon; Chris Van Dan Elzen, Global Product director for Magna Electronics; and Amine Taleb, manager of Advanced Projects - Comfort and Driving Assistance Systems for Valeo.

Panelists discussed how manufacturers can make the user experience of this automotive tech better. Johnson said the auto industry could learn a lot from the consumer electronics industry and how they've worked to make tablets and smartphones better and easier to use.

Van Dan Elzen was asked about autonomous driving and getting the numbers up from, say 97 percent perfect, to 100 percent. He said the technology will have to evolve and then there will have to be a revolution for that final 3 percent.

"We don't know what we don't know," Van Dan Elzen said. "But what I wonder about is if we reduce fatalities, around 30,000 a year, by 97 percent, is the media going to say that deaths were reduced by 97 percent or will they say that autonomous cars kill that 3 percent?"

**"But it is the consumer who will decide which technologies win in the marketplace."**

*- Kristin Kolodge  
J.D. Power*

And, Kolodge said, while people want more tech, the cost of this tech affects whether they would actually adopt it.

But, Kolodge said, once you start quoting prices, the kinds of tech people say they would definitely or probably would adopt changes. So for an additional \$60 in cost, 51 percent of respondents said they would adopt an economy navigation systems. For \$60, 50 percent of respondents said they would probably adopt a simple wireless connection system.

"These numbers show that there's price sensitivity," Kolodge said. "Take night vision, for example. Pre-price, about 70 percent said they'd probably adopt. Post-price introduction, that number fell to 16 percent."

So what kind of tech OEMs can sell depends on the generation they're dealing with and the cost of the technology. When price comes into play, people gravitate toward safety technology as opposed to other kinds.

"One universal concern, no matter what age group we're talking about, is the safety of the system," Kolodge said. "Would the system crash literally and figuratively? Can the automatic

Taleb said that the question is that different companies have different views about autonomous technology. Google, on the one hand, believes totally in the autonomous car. OEMs tend to see autonomous technology as something to meet consumer demands.

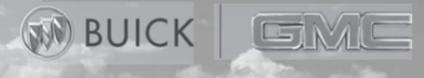
"The message we hear is about safety," Taleb said. "We need to make sure that we can provide the right solution that consumers actually want and that drivers have confidence in."

The discussion ended on the question of liability. Who's liable for autonomous car crashes?

"I am not a lawyer," said Van Dan Elzen. "But it seems to me that we will have to accept a transfer of responsibility in the case of a totally autonomous car. We will be relying on the vehicle provider, not the driver, for a safe drive."

The question of who will ultimately be responsible for a vehicle - the OEM or the supplier who created the system - Kolodge said, is an important question that will, in part, drive the adoption of technology and one that is going to be heavily discussed in the years to come.

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## GM to Temporarily Idle Four Plants Due to Earthquake

We truly live in a worldwide, connected automotive marketplace.

The effects of the recent earthquake that slammed Japan have affected manufacturing operations as far as Ohio and Ontario, Canada.

GM spokeswoman Joanne Krell said that as GM continues to assess the potential impact on its supply chain from the recent earthquakes in Japan, it is taking active steps to mitigate a parts supply issue and is adjusting production schedules at four of its North American assembly facilities.

"The region has been affected severely enough that we had to make a business decision to shut down operations in some plants in North America for about two weeks," Krell said.

The manufacturing operations at the following GM North America assembly facilities are currently expected to be down for two weeks beginning April 25: Spring Hill, Tenn.; Oshawa Flex Assembly, Canada; Lordstown, Ohio; and Fairfax, Kan.

"This temporary adjustment is not expected to have any material impact on GM's full-year production plans in North America," Krell said.

"In addition, the company does not expect a material impact to its second quarter or full-year financial results for GM North America."

Fiat Chrysler spokeswoman Kaileen Connelly said her company is continuing to monitor the situation in Japan. As of April 26, FCA had made no decisions regarding production schedules.

## NHTSA: Honda Meets Obligations In \$70M Case

DETROIT (AP) - The U.S. government has closed an investigation into Honda's failure to report deaths and injuries, saying that the company has met all of its obligations.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said in documents posted on its website April 25 that Honda paid a \$70 million fine and took steps needed to make sure similar failures don't happen again.

The government fined Honda in December of 2014 in what then was the largest civil penalty levied against an automaker.

The company admitted in a consent order that it didn't report 1,729 complaints that its vehicles caused deaths and injuries, and that it didn't report warranty claims.

A small number of the deaths and injuries were related to air bag inflators made by Takata Corp.

The Japanese automaker acknowledged in November of 2014 that it failed to make legally required reports during an 11-year period beginning in 2003.

The company admitted it learned of the omissions in 2011 but waited three years to take action.

Honda also failed to report certain warranty claims and claims under customer satisfaction campaigns throughout the same period, federal officials said.

Honda agreed to pay the fines under a consent order it signed with the traffic safety administration on Dec. 29, 2014.

Federal law requires automakers to submit death and injury complaints to regulators as part of an "early warning" system for identifying potential safety defects that can lead to a recall.