



Weekly Car Dealers Newsletter

January 4, 2010

This information that follows is taken from sources including *The Carconnection*, *Autoweek*, and other industry sources.

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DETROIT -- Auto forecasting firm J.D. Power and Associates on Wednesday said it expected U.S. December vehicle sales to rise to 11.2 million units on an annualized basis, up 9 percent from a year earlier. J.D. Power said it expected December sales of cars and light trucks in the United States to reach 1,029,600 units, up 7 percent from a year earlier before adjusting for the number of sales days in the month. "The market is continuing to improve, with the relative strength of December sales supporting a year-end rally," Gary Dilts, senior vice president at J.D. Power said in a statement. *Source: [Reuters](#)*

[CAR DEALERS WANT TO KEEP BUYERS OF DYING BRANDS](#)

DETROIT -- This Christmas and New Year, the auto industry is worried about the orphans. There are about 3 million of them: Customers who either lost their dealer because of closings in 2009 or whose current car brand is going out of business. And it's pitting carmakers and car dealers against one another as they fight for who'll win that business. "The challenge for us is to grab those customers by the hand and make sure they know where to go," said Susan Docherty, GM's vice president of U.S. sales, in a recent conference call. *Source: [USA TODAY](#)*

FORD PUMPS UP THE 2011 MUSTANG GT

To Ford Mustang fans, 5.0 has a special place in their hearts and Ford has delivered a new car for them to love: the 2011 Mustang GT. The 5.0-liter V8 Mustang GT will deliver 412 hp and 390 lb-ft of torque.

The engine produces 83 hp per liter yet will return 25 mpg on the highway and 17 mpg in the city, according to Ford marketing boss Jim Farley. The 5.0-liter Mustang's main competitors are the Chevrolet Camaro SS, rated at 426 hp, and the Dodge Challenger SRT8, which makes 425 hp. Of course, the top-of-the-line Shelby GT500 and its supercharged V8 remains the pony car horsepower king, rated at 540 hp.



The iconic 5.0-liter badge will again be worn by the Ford Mustang.

ZOOM A picture of The iconic 5.0-liter badge will again be worn by the Ford Mustang.
Ford

What makes the brand-new V8 engine powering the 'Stang so potent is how engineers were able to allow the engine to breathe. All-new heads sit atop an all-new aluminum block with cast-iron cylinder sleeves. The wide distance between the heads allows for the intake ports to sit vertically on top of the engine. The engine features four valves per cylinder and twin independent variable valve timing. Tuned stainless steel tubular exhaust headers eliminate the need for aftermarket headers to let the engine breath better.

Inside the engine are a forged-steel full counterweight crankshaft and four-bolt main bearings and high-performance pistons and forged steel connecting rods. Peak horsepower is reached at 6,500 rpm. Redline is 7,000 rpm.

Use of aluminum and composite materials in the engine lowered the V8's mass to just 430 lbs, some 20 percent lighter than the previous 5.0-liter engine.

The new 5.0-liter Mustangs can be fitted with either the 6R80 six-speed automatic transmission or the MT82 six-speed manual.



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In addition, the Mustang GT is fitted with electric power assist steering and 11.5-inch front and 11.8-inch rear vented disc brakes. Available as an option is a Brembo brake package with 14-inch front rotors and the accompanying bigger calipers from the Shelby GT500 and unique 19-inch wheels fitted with summer tires.

The Mustang GT has new 5.0 fender badges and is available in three new colors: Yellow Blaze Tri-

Coat, Race Red and Ingot Silver. The pony car will make its official debut at the Detroit auto show in January. *Source: Autoweek.com*

THE FIRST EXCEL TIP OF 2010

If you don't like sending out letters and emails to customers from your DMS system with the customer name in all caps - like Dear JOHN DOE, just use the =proper formula in Excel. If your names are in cell A2, then the formula is simple; =proper A2 and your result is John Doe. Copy the formula down and then copy and paste values into the column to remove the formula and you're ready to send out to your printer or mail merge. *Source: Sandi Jerome Computer Consulting*

[OPINION: THE U.S. AUTO MARKET IS RUNNING OUT OF USED CARS](#)

Auto dealers have survived by selling used cars, but inventories are shrinking fast and prices are up. Will consumers resume buying new models?

The day when new car dealers could pose as used car superstores is likely coming to an end. To survive, dealers will be forced to sell more new cars. Because new car sales have fallen from more than 16 million to barely 10 million, the availability of late-model used cars is starting to fall by a similar percentage. Factor in that incentives being offered to the public have shrunk in the past year and we see that the downward pressures on late-model wholesale prices have been reversed. *Source: [BusinessWeek](#)*

[SAAB SAYS BID DEADLINE DROPPED](#)

General Motors has extended a December 31 deadline for bids for its Swedish car brand Saab, which will restart some production lines in January after a shutdown, Saab said (today). GM had given itself to the end of this month to consider bids for loss-making Saab while continuing a process to wind down the company, which has drawn interest from Dutch luxury carmaker

Spyker Cars and others. GM was still in talks with potential bidders but (Saab spokesman Eric Geers) only named Spyker Cars and declined to talk about other parties. Source: [Reuters](#)

CHEVROLET RECALLS 22,000 CORVETTES BECAUSE ROOF COULD FLY OFF

General Motors recently recalled 22,000 Corvettes because the roof might fly off, and what do you think kicked the company into action? Complaints on the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) Web site from owners? Was it the safety agency itself, worried about the complaints? Concerns raised by the Federal Aviation Administration?

Nope. It was the Japanese Ministry of Land Infrastructure and Transport, unhappy about the problem on imported Corvettes, according to a letter from G.M. to the safety agency. That prompted G.M. to examine the problem in the United States and eventually inform the N.H.T.S.A. that it planned a recall.

The recall covers 2005-7 Corvettes and the 2006-7 Z06, all with a body-colored, painted roof. Chevy says the adhesive is not strong enough and may allow the roof panel to pull away from the frame. Chevy



will replace the panel with a new design of a different material.

In part this is a recall of another recall. In 2006, G.M. recalled about 31,000 2005-6 Corvettes because, yes, the roof panel might peel away from the vehicle's frame. Alan Adler, a spokesman for G.M., said the fix was to use a foam adhesive. That foam was then briefly used as vehicles were assembled in Bowling Green, Ky.

Some consumers have complained to the safety agency that the fix did not work. Unfortunately for the unhappy Corvette owners the safety agency never initiated a "recall query" into the adequacy of the fix and whether G.M. needed to try again.

Mr. Adler said G.M. did not know the fix was not adequate until the Japanese government expressed its concern and the automaker reviewed its records and found some consumer complaints. Source: *The New York Times*
