

# BLUE BOOK BRIEFING

AUGUST  
2012

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## INDUSTRY INSIGHTS:

### Consumers Are Buried in Choices

- Jack R. Nerad, vice president, executive editorial director and executive market analyst, Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com

One quick glance at our website, KBB.com, will confirm what you undoubtedly already know – today's car-buying consumer is inundated with choices. The number of vehicle types that are currently available to potential buyers would boggle the minds of Messrs. Daimler and Benz, and the number of manufacturers that offer vehicles is equally startling. When one begins to categorize and catalog the various year-make-model combinations available on the market today, the numbers grow exponentially (something we at Kelley Blue Book pride ourselves on doing, as well as any entity in the business). The consumer benefits from her or his wide variety of choices; however, at the same time the sheer number of models available can tax the patience of any shopper who is simply trying to make the best decision.

Consumers are still unquestionably more than willing to navigate this Sargasso Sea of vehicle choices. If not precisely reveling in the fact that in any segment, consumers could be looking at more than a dozen make-models with literally hundreds of variations each. Potential car-buyers are researching their vehicle choices by getting out their virtual GPS (we call it KBB.com) to make sense of it all. A recent Kelley Blue Book Market Intelligence Quick Poll asked the simple question: About how many vehicles do you consider when shopping for a new car? While a very confident six percent of respondents said they only consider one vehicle, the vast majority (the remaining 94 percent) said they consider at least two, and the largest responding segment (52 percent) said four or more. We are here to help consumers arrive at the right vehicle choice.

Yes, we have seen brand consolidation over the past decade. Yes, we have seen an extraordinary number of models go the way of the do-dodo bird, but consumers are still willing and eager to dive into the pool of vehicle options and start swimming around. This can be a daunting and sometimes frustrating task, but the fact is car buyers are well-supported by the availability of information sources to ensure the best possible purchase decision. Epitomized by Kelley Blue Book's industry-leading KBB.com, the wealth of free information accessible to the car

purchaser today is unprecedented. For example, we take it upon ourselves to provide KBB.com Expert Reviews and Ratings of every substantive make-model combination on the market. And, of course, that information is reinforced and supported by a vast array of specification, pricing and value information. We also encourage vehicle owners to weigh in with their thoughts in the form of Consumer Reviews and Ratings, and we're an industry leader in channeling their opinions.

“THE CONSUMER BENEFITS FROM HER OR HIS WIDE VARIETY OF CHOICES; HOWEVER, AT THE SAME TIME THE SHEER NUMBER OF MODELS AVAILABLE CAN TAX THE PATIENCE OF ANY SHOPPER WHO IS SIMPLY TRYING TO MAKE THE BEST DECISION.”

- JACK R. NERAD

Happily, it all works for the consumer, as I had a chance to determine first hand when I became a car-buyer last weekend. After dutifully doing my research on KBB.com and KBB Mobile, my wife and I visited a local dealership, drawn by the availability of new, used and certified pre-owned vehicles that we determined from viewing the KBB.com Cars for Sale section. After a couple of test drives, we settled on the vehicle we wanted to purchase. (Yes, I test drive for a living, but I wanted to experience the actual car we would be buying). Armed with the research I had gained on KBB.com and assisted by the use of KBB Mobile right in the salesperson's office, we and the dealership came to a quick agreement on the price we would pay – before I revealed I worked for Kelley Blue Book. For a purchase of this scale, it was about as painless a process as I could imagine. And just as easily as it happened for my family, I hoped a similar experience was being played out for the good of hundreds of thousands of other car-buying families across the country. Fact is, it works.

## LATEST NEWS STORIES ON KBB.COM:

Check out the very latest news stories by visiting [KBB.com](http://KBB.com) and clicking the the *KBB Top Picks* tab on the home page. The following latest news stories by KBB.com's editorial staff went live on the site or were updated during July 2012.

### Videos Posted to KBB.com:

[2013 BMW M6 Review Video](#)  
[2012 Mazda Miata MX-5 Long-Term Review 2](#)  
[2012 VW Passat Diesel Long-Term Review 1](#)

### Written Stories Posted to KBB.com:

[2014 Chevrolet Silverado teased](#)  
[2014 Kia Forte previewed](#)  
[2014 Mazda Mazda6 breaks cover ahead of its debut in Moscow](#)  
[2013 Audi R8 refreshed and revealed](#)  
[2013 Audi TT Coupe will offer S line Competition Package option](#)  
[2013 BMW 328i Sports Wagon update - U.S. details released](#)  
[2013 BMW ActiveHybrid 3 here in September, will start at \\$50,195](#)  
[2013 BMW M3 Coupe Lime Rock Park Edition revealed](#)  
[2013 Chevrolet Camaro 1LE finally gets a full reveal](#)  
[2013 Chevrolet Camaro Dusk Special Edition announced](#)  
[2013 Chevrolet Camaro heading to NASCAR Nationwide Series](#)  
[2013 Ford C-MAX Energi -- 550-mile total range, 20+ miles in EV mode](#)  
[2013 Ford C-MAX Hybrid targets best-in-class 47-mpg city EPA mark](#)  
[2013 Ford F-150 Limited revealed](#)  
[2013 Ford F-150 SVT Raptor -- tougher, techier, more sophisticated](#)  
[2013 Ford Taurus 2-liter EcoBoost first drive](#)  
[2013 Honda Fit EV First Review](#)  
[2013 Hyundai Veloster Turbo First Review: Power without Penalty](#)  
[2013 Kia Carens teased - 2012 Paris Auto Show](#)  
[2013 Lexus ES 350 and ES 300h pricing reflects new emphasis on value](#)  
[2013 Lexus LS 460 F Sport teased](#)  
[2013 Lexus LS460 will add new F Sport model to the lineup](#)  
[2013 Lexus LS Series -- teaser time, take II](#)  
[2013 Mazda MX-5 gets a facelift and feature tweaks](#)  
[2013 McLaren MP4-12C Spider unveiled](#)  
[2013 McLaren MP4-C12 Spider springs into action](#)  
[2013 Mercedes-Benz CLS Shooting Brake revealed -- but not for U.S.](#)  
[2013 Mercedes-Benz GL-Class First Review: Quiet Capability](#)  
[2013 Mitsubishi Outlander Sport production starts in U.S.](#)  
[2013 Scion tC Release Series 8.0 revealed](#)  
[2013 Subaru XV Crosstrek First Review: Fuel-efficient capability](#)  
[2013 Toyota Avalon Hybrid confirmed -- gets 40 mpg EPA combined mark](#)  
[2013 Toyota Sienna drops 4-cylinder engine, adds new features](#)  
[2012 J.D. Power APEAL study: More buyers discovering small is beautiful](#)  
[2012 Jeep Wrangler Freedom Edition rolls into action](#)  
[2012 Mazda MX-5 Miata: A Modern Classic](#)  
[2012 Mini Cooper Roadster: Same Ingredients, Different Recipe](#)

[3-in-1 Review: 2013 Hyundai Elantra Coupe, Elantra GT and Veloster Turbo](#)  
[Audi R8 e-tron sets new EV lap record at the Nurburgring](#)  
[BASF global car color study predicts a return to the "natural" look](#)  
[BMW and Toyota strengthen collaborative vehicle development efforts](#)  
[BMW introducing "on demand" rental service in America](#)  
[Chevrolet launches "Love it or Return it" buyer satisfaction effort](#)  
[Fiat 500L struts its stuff in Euro trim - with espresso maker option](#)  
[Ford Focus 1-liter EcoBoost first drive](#)  
[Ford developing Traffic Jam Assist and Perpendicular Parking aid](#)  
[Ford recalling all 2013 Escapes with 1.6-liter engines for possible fire threat](#)  
[Ford uses a robot named RUTH to help quantify the human touch of quality](#)  
[Freedom Machines: Getting your First Car](#)  
[GM exploring Wi-Fi Direct-based pedestrian detection system](#)  
[Goodyear experimenting with soybean oil to help create longer-lasting tires](#)  
[High-performance BMW M6 Gran Coupe will launch here in 2013](#)  
[Honda confirms new Acura NSX will be built in Marysville, Ohio](#)  
[Honda details new cloud-based HondaLink in-car connectivity system](#)  
[Hyundai Zombie Survival Machine makes grand entry at Comic-Con 2012](#)  
[Jaguar C-X75 Supercar will get 500-horse force-fed four](#)  
[Jaguar F-Type Prototype drops top at Goodwood, XJ e Plug-in Hybrid teased](#)  
[KBB.com study: Lower gas prices have buyers thinking big](#)  
[Ken Block "Gymkhana Five" video is a San Francisco treat](#)  
[Lithium-ion battery costs predicted to plunge by 2020](#)  
[McLaren MP4-12C Spider teased](#)  
[Mercedes-Benz readying inflatable rear shoulder belt](#)  
[Mini's massive road rally finishes cross-country trek](#)  
[Mini Paceman coming to America in 2013](#)  
[Nissan LEAF expands its horizons](#)  
[Nissan Note previews look of next-gen Versa hatchback](#)  
[Pikes Peak Hillclimb postponed due to Colorado wildfires](#)  
[Red Tails Edition Ford Mustang GT to be auctioned for charity at Oshkosh](#)  
[Roadster Rumble 2012: Mazda MX-5 Miata vs. Mini Cooper S Roadster](#)  
[Sergio Pininfarina -- 1926-2012](#)  
[Team Hot Wheels duo set Guinness record for vertical loop stunt](#)  
[Updated Infiniti Emerg-E Prototype takes to the track at Goodwood](#)  
[VMI: Mobile solutions for those with limited mobility](#)  
[Volkswagen completes its buyout of Porsche](#)

## NEW-VEHICLE REVIEWS ON KBB.COM:

The following new-vehicle reviews written by KBB.com's editorial staff went live on the site or were updated during July 2012. To see any new-vehicle review from KBB.com's editorial staff, please visit [KBB.com](http://KBB.com) and click on the *Car Reviews* tab, then select the make and model.

### [2013 Hyundai Elantra](#)

Just two model years after a complete redesign, the Hyundai Elantra continues to impress with its styling, fuel efficiency and bang for the buck. No longer just a scrappy rival biting at the feet of the Toyota Corolla, Honda Civic and Ford Focus, the Elantra has won favor with consumers and critics alike, the latter naming it the 2012 North American Car of the Year. With every sedan model rated at 40 mpg/highway and Hyundai's leading 10-year/100,000-mile powertrain warranty, the Elantra has a lot going for it...

To read the latest Consumer Reviews & Ratings on this vehicle, click [here](#).

### [2012 Acura RL](#)

The 2012 Acura RL's strong points are a sophisticated all-wheel-drive system, a comfortable and quiet interior and a strong V6 engine. Yet, the RL is often lost amid stiff competition from the likes of the BMW 5 and 7 Series, Mercedes-Benz E-Class and even its own not-so-little brother, the Acura TL, which has many of the same features as the RL and costs less. This marks the final year for the long-running RL before its successor, the Acura RLX, arrives in 2013 with even more advanced and innovative technology...

To read the latest Consumer Reviews & Ratings on this vehicle, click [here](#).

### [2012 Aston Martin DBS](#)

You'll have to look closely to see the differences between the 2012 Aston Martin DBS and the Aston Martin DB9, but the most obvious is clearly the nearly \$100,000 price difference on the window sticker. The DBS and DBS Volante's extra cost actually buys less car, which in this case is a good thing. Compared to the DB9, the DBS is 50 pounds lighter but its 6.0-liter engine pumps out more power, rendering a lower 0 to 60 time and faster top speed...

### [2012 Audi R8](#)

The 2012 Audi R8 is indeed a supercar fit for a super hero but, unlike some others in this group of elite vehicles, it's not a compromise to drive. Yes, the R8 has incredible performance, but it also ladles on the luxury. The 2-seat coupe or convertible from the German automaker has a posh interior that is loaded with technology and fitted with leather and Alcantara surfaces...

To read the latest Consumer Reviews & Ratings on this vehicle, click [here](#).

### [2012 BMW 5 Series](#)

Some 35 years ago BMW stretched its brand with the U.S. introduction of the 530i, marking the debut of its first "mid-size" sedan in the U.S. With more room than the iconic 2002 and more sporting than the larger 2500/2800/Bavaria, the 5 Series was arguably the first attempt by a German automaker to craft a modern sport sedan comfortable for four while still entertaining for one. In 2012, BMW grows the 5 Series by shrinking its standard powerplant, going from the traditional in-line six to a twin-turbocharged "TwinPower" 2.0-liter four...

To read the latest Consumer Reviews & Ratings on this vehicle, click [here](#).

### [2012 Coda Sedan](#)

Selling the American public on the idea that electric cars are a practical, affordable form of transportation is no easy task. Persuading them to purchase that electric vehicle from an unknown car company might be asking the impossible, but Coda Automotive aims to overcome these challenges and attract a respectable number of open-minded early adopters with the new battery-powered 2012 Coda Sedan. An ambitious endeavor indeed, except the 2012 Coda Sedan lacks the quality, efficiency, value and driving characteristics needed to compete with the likes of Ford's venerable Focus Electric...

### [2012 Ferrari 458](#)

Ferrari really nailed it with the 2012 458 Italia and its new drop-top stablemate, the 458 Spider. The mid-engine design allows for a near-perfect 50/50 front-rear balance ratio and the car's 4.5-liter V8 is simply a masterpiece in aluminum and steel. That the 458 can rocket to 60 mph in less than 4 seconds isn't really surprising, but that it can manage that power so precisely in the turns is what truly makes this exotic stand out...

### [2012 Ferrari California](#)

In the stable of classic Ferrari cars both past and present, the California occupies a unique position. With its low-slung stance, wide body and voluptuous sheet metal, the 2012 California is easily identifiable as a Ferrari. Purists, however, may argue it is not one of the more classic designs, with too much flourish in the side sculpting, a big rear end and a grille and headlamp treatment that looks more Maserati than Ferrari...

### [2012 Ferrari FF](#)

Billed as the replacement for the unloved 612 Scaglietti, the 2012 Ferrari FF draws the eye to it in a way the 612 never could. The wagon-like rear end (known as a shooting brake in European parlance) works well with the traditional Ferrari styling themes, stretching the car's lines rearward to a pleasing tail end that doesn't look truncated (think BMW M Coupe)...

### [2012 Hyundai Elantra](#)

The 2012 Hyundai Elantra continues to offer the consumer a tremendous value, combining elegant good looks, a long list of standard equipment and an industry-leading 10-year/100,000-mile powertrain warranty. What's more, unlike a Ford Focus or Chevy Cruze, which can attain a 40-mpg EPA highway rating only with specially-equipped models, every 2012 Hyundai Elantra compact sedan – completely redesigned last year – carries the magical 40-mpg highway figure regardless of trim or transmission choice...

To read the latest Consumer Reviews & Ratings on this vehicle, click [here](#).

### [2012 Hyundai Veloster](#)

In simplest terms the all-new 2012 Hyundai Veloster is a modestly-priced hatchback with an unusual asymmetrical door arrangement, but in Hyundai's eyes, the Veloster is much more. Hyundai views the Veloster as something of a halo car, albeit at the bottom end of the pricing spectrum. That might sound like a lofty view of what is essentially a restyled Elantra, but having driven the 2012 Veloster and seen the public react to it, we think Hyundai might be onto something with all this halo talk...

To read the latest Consumer Reviews & Ratings on this vehicle, click [here](#).

### [2012 Jaguar XK](#)

In a category defined by supreme levels of prestige, opulence or performance, the 2012 Jaguar XK delivers on all counts. Boasting elegant exterior styling and an interior to match, the Jag XK adds an inimitable Britannic dimension to the grand touring segment. The latest addition to the XK lineup represents the pinnacle of Jaguar performance engineering in the limited-edition XKR-S. Available in coupe or convertible form, the XK's wealth of standard equipment coupled with a reasonable starting price fare well against such well-entrenched competitors as the Mercedes Benz SL-Class, BMW 6 Series and Porsche 911...

To read the latest Consumer Reviews & Ratings on this vehicle, click [here](#).

### [2012 Lamborghini Aventador](#)

The all-new 2012 Lamborghini Aventador is what the bull fighter drives to confession. It's a brutally fast, hyper-responsive missile that drips Italian driving passion and style. The Aventador is the ultimate Lamborghini, replacing last year's Murcielago. Constructed largely of aluminum and carbon fiber, the 2-seat, mid-engine, all-wheel-drive, 691-horsepower Aventador will charge to 60 mph in under 2.9 seconds and attain 217 mph terminal velocity, its jet-fighter-like flanks adorned in any of 13 colors, three of them matte finish...

### [2012 Lamborghini Gallardo](#)

Like cannoli, Lamborghini Gallardos come in a lot of flavors and cheeses. The Gallardo is by far the best-selling Lamborghini series, available as a mid-engine coupe and Spyder (convertible) with rear-drive (RWD) or all-wheel drive (AWD). Decoding the Gallardo engine nomenclature, the LP550 gets a 542-horsepower V10, LP560 upgrades tuning to a 552-horsepower V10, and the LP570 tops out with a 562-horsepower version of the V10...

### [2012 Lexus LFA](#)

Lexus has long made its stake on comfortable, quiet cars that emphasize a plush ride over warp-speed acceleration. The 2012 Lexus LFA is different. Over a decade in the making, the LFA is the halo of Lexus' F performance line, a lightweight supercar meant to take on the world's best, Ferraris and Lamborghinis among them. This 2-passenger, rear-wheel-drive coupe is powered by a small but mighty V10 engine that revs to 9,000 rpm and propels the car to 60 mph in just 3.6 seconds...

### [2012 Lotus Evora](#)

British automaker Lotus has long been known for sports cars that rely on compact, lightweight chassis and small-but-powerful engines vs. the larger platforms and big, fuel-thirsty engines found in many rivals. But these qualities that make Lotus vehicles nimble on racetracks and twisty roads also result in cramped interiors and stiff rides. With the Evora, Lotus has created a larger car that addresses these issues by offering extra room and more comfort, yet retains its flingable nature...

To read the latest Consumer Reviews & Ratings on this vehicle, click [here](#).

### [2012 McLaren MP4-12C](#)

For decades McLaren cars have proved their mettle on racetracks, and now they are taking on cars such as Ferraris and Lamborghinis in a totally different setting: the showroom. While the U.K. company made a barely-street-legal car in the past – the highly acclaimed F1 – the all-new MP4-12C establishes McLaren as a legitimate player in the elite world of road-ready supercars...

### [2012 Mercedes Benz SLS AMG](#)

Of the hundreds of cars produced for 2012, only a handful truly stand out as collectables the moment they leave the showroom floor. The 2012 Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG Coupe and Roadster are two such cars, infusing styling, technology and heritage to create a mobile work of art destined for a place in automotive history...

To read the latest Consumer Reviews & Ratings on this vehicle, click [here](#).

### [2012 Nissan Murano](#)

As it was when introduced in 2003, the 2012 Nissan Murano SUV remains a step ahead of the competition. Where many manufacturers are just now trumpeting the efficiency of a continuously variable transmission (CVT), the Murano has always been equipped with the technology. And, where other small SUVs are moving away from the boxy and bland design, the Murano has always been a sleek and stylish trendsetter...

To read the latest Consumer Reviews & Ratings on this vehicle, click [here](#).

### [2012 Nissan Versa](#)

The Nissan Versa is the Toyota Camry of the subcompact segment: Boring but a best seller. Of course, boring cars are only boring to those looking to make a fashion statement or generate an adrenaline rush with their transportation – a minority group. To its many happy buyers, the Versa is the roomiest, most comfortable new car available in the neighborhood of \$15,000...

To read the latest Consumer Reviews & Ratings on this vehicle, click [here](#).

### [2012 Rolls Royce Ghost](#)

Don't let the 2012 Rolls-Royce Ghost's "bargain" starting price of roughly \$250,000 fool you: It is still a Rolls-Royce through and through – and then some. In fact, when it was introduced in 2010, the Ghost boasted the most powerful engine ever put into a Rolls-Royce automobile, and some of the most sophisticated technology as well. The 4- or 5-passenger sedan is still massive, but is more manageable around town than the larger Rolls-Royce Phantom models...

To read the latest Consumer Reviews & Ratings on this vehicle, click [here](#).

### [2012 Suzuki Equator](#)

Over the years, the Suzuki Equator has gone up in price but not so much in popularity. While the truck is a spiritual twin to the Nissan Frontier, the Suzuki name badge and the lack of widespread recognition of the company even having automotive products have not done the Equator any favors. Although this may be the case, the 2012 Suzuki Equator is still an aesthetically altered Frontier, which makes it decent competition for others in its class, including the Chevrolet Colorado and Toyota Tacoma...

To read the latest Consumer Reviews & Ratings on this vehicle, click [here](#).



## Kelley Blue Book Launches First National Consumer Advertising Campaign

**Company Reveals First Official Redesign of Iconic Logo as Part of Inaugural Consumer Marketing Campaign**

IRVINE, Calif., July 30, 2012 - Today, for the first time in the company's 86-year history, Kelley Blue Book launches a national television advertising campaign in an effort to leverage the brand's strength and recognition as a vehicle valuation pioneer and leader for [new-car shopping and research](#). Following the introduction of radio ads that began airing in early 2012, Kelley Blue Book now expands its inaugural consumer marketing campaign to include national television advertising, while also unveiling the first official modernization of its widely recognized and trusted seal logo.

To view the full release and multi-media assets associated with this announcement, please click here [HERE](#).

## New-Car Sales Hold Steady at 14 Million Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate, According to Kelley Blue Book Analysts

**Pent-Up Demand, Affordable Pricing Continue to Drive Vehicle Sales in Slowing Economy**

IRVINE, Calif., July 26, 2012 - New-vehicle sales are projected to hit 14 million seasonally adjusted annual rate (SAAR) in July 2012, consistent with the 14.3 million average pace maintained through the first half of the year, according to Kelley Blue Book, [www.kbb.com](http://www.kbb.com), the leading provider of new car and used car information.

The daily selling rate is projected to top 48,300 light-vehicle sales per day, which is better than last month's 47,500 sales per day and nearly 19 percent above the July 2011 pace, when sales were still suppressed by inventory shortages... [MORE](#)

## Hybrid and Electric Car Sales Surge 164 Percent in June

IRVINE, Calif., July 18, 2012 -With gas prices declining, sales of [hybrid](#) and [electric cars](#) have remained surprisingly resilient. In fact, sales of dedicated hybrid and alternative-energy vehicles surged more than 164 percent in June, according to Kelley Blue Book's [Blue Book Market Report for July 2012](#). With gas prices expected to continue their descent, hybrid and electric vehicle sales could slow; however, today it appears as though the sales decline will be relatively mild... [MORE](#)

## All-New 2013 Vehicle Model Names and Faces Arriving Now

IRVINE, Calif., July 16, 2012 - While it only is halfway through 2012, the time already has come to start ringing in the [2013 new vehicle model year](#). Auto manufacturers are offering all-new nameplates as well as complete redesigns to some of the most popular new cars available, and many of these vehicles are for sale on dealership lots today.

New-car shoppers can check out some of the new names and faces of vehicles 'Arriving Now: The 2013 Model Year' from the editors of Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com, providing details about 18 all-new 2013 model-year vehicles arriving in showrooms... [MORE](#)

## 10 Best New Sedans Under \$25,000 in 2012

IRVINE, Calif., July 10, 2012 - The popular sedan segment for new cars is becoming more crowded with each passing year, and it can be difficult for shoppers to discern the best model for their needs. While auto manufacturers continue to one-up each other with more [feature-laden new sedans](#) than ever before, ultimately it is the American consumer who wins with a plethora of new models from which to choose. However, how can [new-car shoppers](#) know which of the many affordable sedan options is right for them?... [MORE](#)

### About Kelley Blue Book ([www.kbb.com](http://www.kbb.com))

Founded in 1926, Kelley Blue Book, The Trusted Resource®, is the only vehicle valuation and information source trusted and relied upon by both consumers and the industry. Each week the company provides the most market-reflective values in the industry on its top-rated website [www.kbb.com](http://www.kbb.com), including its famous Blue Book® Trade-In and Suggested Retail Values and Fair Purchase Price, which reports what others are paying for new cars this week. The company also provides vehicle pricing and values through various products and services available to car dealers, auto manufacturers, finance and insurance companies as well as governmental agencies. KBB.com provides consumer pricing and information on cars for sale, minivans, pickup trucks, sedan, hybrids, electric cars, and SUVs. Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com ranked highest in its category for brand equity and was named Online Auto Shopping Brand of the Year by the 2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend® study. Kelley Blue Book Co. Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of AutoTrader.com.