

# BLUE BOOK

# BRIEFING

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Timely commentary from Jack R. Nerad, executive editorial director and executive market analyst, Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com: "Find a Place for American Luxury"

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The latest video and written news stories by the editorial staff of Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com

### NEW-VEHICLE REVIEWS ON KBB.COM:

All-new and updated video and written reviews from the editorial staff of Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com, and links to consumer reviews and ratings on KBB.com

### WHAT'S NEW:

New-Car Transaction Prices Climb Nearly 4 Percent in February 2015, According to Kelley Blue Book

Dale Earnhardt Jr. Drives Fair-Pricing Initiative With #KBBEffort

Marking the Twelfth Straight Month of Growth, New-Car Sales to Climb More Than 8 Percent in February 2015

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## Find a Place for American Luxury

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

If you are of a certain age, you undoubtedly remember Cadillac ruling the roost of all the luxury brands available in the United States. When Mercedes-Benz was peddling diesel-powered taxicabs, BMW was known for its compact sport sedans and Lexus and Infiniti were not even imagined, Cadillac was the brand that Americans chose when they wanted to make a statement. Big, powerful, softly sprung and featuring interior and exterior design that lent a new definition to the term "over the top," Cadillacs of the Fifties, Sixties and Seventies captured the expansive mood of the times.

But times change; new brands emerge, and now Cadillac is faced with finding relevance in the luxury brand universe of the 21st Century. It begs the question: How does Cadillac re-establish itself as a premier luxury brand in the American luxury market?

CADILLAC MIGHT LEAVE ITS LOYAL  
LONG-TIME CUSTOMERS BEHIND  
WHILE FAILING TO ATTRACT NEW  
CUSTOMERS TO TAKE THEIR PLACE...

- JACK R. NERAD

Two logical paths present themselves: one is to re-double the brand's efforts to court American luxury-car buyers, leveraging the American public's familiarity and overall favorable attitudes toward the Cadillac brand. The other path, more difficult but potentially more rewarding, is to move the Cadillac brand into the consciousness of the world's luxury-car buyers, imbuing the vehicles and the ownership experience with qualities that will persuade a significant number of Asians and Europeans to switch allegiance from the European and Japanese luxury brands.

Asked which of these two forks in the road Cadillac was pursuing Cadillac President Johan de Nysschen was unequivocal about the course he and his brand have chosen to take. Moving forward Cadillac's future is build global

relevance, internationally acknowledged excellence and thus to succeed in North America (and China) by having these credentials.

Noting that today's luxury customer typically has significant opportunities to travel and interact in foreign lands, de Nysschen said that it is important that, wherever they are, luxury buyers get the same reassurance that the luxury brand they buy has globally recognized panache.

Currently Cadillac vehicles are highly regarded by American automotive critics, including our expert editorial staff here at Kelley Blue Book, but de Nysschen has endorsed and expanded anew effort to take the Cadillac brand even farther up the global food chain. At next month's New York auto show, the public will get the first glimpse of this product salvo in the form of the all-new Cadillac CT6, which the Cadillac president suggests will be a game-changer in the way the luxury-car-buying public thinks about the brand.

De Nysschen acknowledges that today's Cadillac brand presents a schizophrenic image to the luxury consumer both in the United States and internationally. The future is represented by critical favorites like the CTS and ATS, which tap into a "world car" ethos, while the current XTS, the brand's nominal flagship, is targeted towards satisfying Cadillac's long-term customers, who are more comfortable with luxury in the traditional American idiom. This presents what could be a very vexing problem.

In the quest for globally recognized excellence worthy of the motto "The Standard of the World" Cadillac might leave its loyal long-time customers behind while failing to attract new customers to take their place. In that scenario, a brand can find itself in a no-man's land, but de Nysschen insists the transition to new buyers will be successful, and he believes it is the only course Cadillac can successfully pursue if it hopes to capture the luxury buyer of the future.

"Cadillac has got to be an expressive symbol of arrival," he said. It's got to be regal; it's got to be sovereign, and it's got to be prestigious."

That, he insists, is the road to new relevance in the luxury class.

## 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.com 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 February 2015.

### Video Posted to KBB.com:

[Video Review: 2015 Mercedes-Benz GLA-Class](#)

[Video Review: 2015 Ram 1500](#)

[Video Review: 2015 Subaru WRX](#)

[Video Review: Honda UNI-CUB](#)

[Video Review: Polaris Slingshot](#)

[Segment Starting Point - Midsize Sedans](#)

[Segment Starting Point - Midsize Luxury Cars](#)

[Segment Starting Point - Compact SUVs](#)

[Segment Starting Point - Midsize SUVs](#)

[Segment Starting Point - Pickup Trucks](#)

[In Memoriam 2015](#)

### Written Stories Posted to KBB.com:

#### Highlights:

[KBB.com Awards and 10 Best Lists](#)

[10 Coolest Cars Under \\$25,000](#)

[Our 10 Favorite New-for-2015 Cars](#)

[10 Most Fuel-Efficient Cars Under \\$25,000](#)

[10 Best All-Wheel-Drive Vehicles Under \\$25,000](#)

[10 Most Affordable Cars of 2015](#)

[10 Best Sedans Under \\$25,000](#)

[10 Best SUVs Under \\$25,000](#)

[10 Best Car Deals of the Month - March](#)

[Minivan Buyer's Guide](#)

#### Vehicle Coverage:

[2015 Aston Martin Rapide S Quick Take](#)

[2015 Aston Martin V12 Vantage S Roadster Quick Take](#)

[2015 BMW 228i Convertible Quick Take](#)

[2015 Chevrolet Cruze Diesel Quick Take](#)

[2015 Hyundai Genesis 3.8 Sedan Quick Take](#)

[2015 Mercedes-Benz C300 Sedan Quick Take: C-Class brims with class](#)

[2015 Volkswagen Golf R DSG Quick Take](#)

[2015 Volkswagen e-Golf Quick Take: The perfect Millennial-mobile](#)

[2015 BMW X6 M First Review: Bavarian Attack Dog](#)

[2016 Jaguar F-Type First Review: Manual, AWD added](#)

#### Editors' Page:

[Editors' Page: 2015 Chevrolet Malibu](#)

[Editors' Page: 2015 Nissan Sentra](#)

[Editors' Page: 2015 Porsche Cayenne](#)

#### Latest News:

[2017 Mercedes-Maybach Pullman set for Geneva launch](#)

[2016 Acura RDX adds power, performance, panache](#)

[2016 Aston Martin Vantage GT3: Race ready, street legal](#)

[2016 Audi R8 V10 and V10 Plus set to stun](#)

[2016 BMW Alpina B6 Xdrive Gran Coupe bows](#)

[2016 BMW Alpina B6 xDrive Gran Coupe hits 600 hp](#)

[2016 Cadillac CT6 teased for New York](#)

[2016 Chevrolet Equinox refresh nets new look, more features](#)

[2016 Chevrolet Malibu promises more style and space, less weight](#)

[2016 Chevrolet Malibu testing tease](#)

[2016 Chevrolet Spark teased for New York](#)

[2016 Ford Police Interceptor Utility adds cool tech](#)

[2016 Honda Civic Type R set for European launch](#)

[2016 Honda Pilot makes Chicago debut](#)

[2016 Hyundai Elantra GT freshened](#)

[2016 Hyundai Tucson previewed at Geneva](#)

[2016 Hyundai Veloster adds a Rally Edition](#)

[2016 Kia Rio facelift bows](#)

[2016 Koenigsegg Regera: Plug-in supercar boasts nearly 1,500 horsepower](#)

[2016 Lotus Evora 400 U.S. bound](#)

[2016 Mazda Miata Concept showcases accessories](#)

[2016 McLaren 675LT stretches the performance envelope](#)

[2016 Mercedes-Benz GLC-Class spied](#)

[2016 Mercedes-Benz Metris Vans revealed, on sale in October](#)

[2016 Mini Cooper Countryman Park Lane edition unveiled](#)

[2016 Mitsubishi i-MiEV to start at \\$23,845 and offer new Navi Package](#)

[2016 Morgan Aero 8 returns with a new look and better performance](#)

[2016 Opel Karl: Slick subcompact previews 2016 Chevy Spark](#)

[2016 Porsche 911 GT3 RS -- 493 hp and a seriously bad attitude](#)

[2016 Range Rover Evoque refresh revealed](#)

[2016 Range Rover Evoque teased](#)

[2016 Toyota Avalon gets a fresh face, adds new features](#)

[2016 Volvo XC90 First Review: Promise delivered](#)

[2015 Bentley Continental GT lineup freshened](#)

[2015 Chevrolet Colorado Z71 Trail Boss unveiled](#)

[2015 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 Custom matches style with value](#)

[2015 Dodge Challenger R/T Shaker returns with 485-hp](#)

[2015 Geneva Auto Show: Parade of power players](#)

[2015 Lamborghini Aventador LP 750-4 Superveroce debuts](#)

[2015 Mercedes-AMG GT3 races into Geneva](#)

## LATEST NEWS STORIES CONTINUED:

[2015 Mercedes-Benz 550 SL Mille Miglia 417 bows](#)

[2015 Mercedes-Benz CLA Shooting Brake -- a wagon we still want](#)

[2015 Ram Laramie Limited celebrates style and refinement](#)

[2015 Volkswagen e-Golf Limited Edition price sliced](#)

[2015 Volkswagen Passat 1.8T Limited Edition offers value](#)

[2015 Volkswagen Sportwagen priced](#)

[Aston Martin DBX Concept surprises at Geneva](#)

[Aston Martin Vulcan: 800-hp track-day thriller](#)

[Audi: More plug-ins and an EV crossover by 2018](#)

[Audi Prologue Avant Concept Geneva bound](#)

[Audi Prologue Avant Concept showcases practical panache](#)

[Audi Q7 e-tron Quattro a go for the U.S. -- arrival time uncertain](#)

[Bentley EXP 10 Speed 6 Concept may be showroom bound](#)

[BMW testing new injection tech for future M cars](#)

[EV Resale: Short circuiting the electric dream?](#)

[Goodyear shows concept tires that shape shift and generate electricity](#)

[Hellcat Horrors: Dealers take deposits, deliveries delayed](#)

[Infiniti QX30 Concept foretells the future](#)

[Infiniti QX30 Concept revealed](#)

[Italdesign GEA Concept: Autonomous living room on wheels](#)

[Kia Sportspace Concept readied for Geneva](#)

[Kia Sportspace Concept: New look, new thinking](#)

[Kia Trail'ster Concept: Soul AWD hybrid ready to roll](#)

[Lexus LF-SA Concept teased for Geneva](#)

[Lexus LF-SA Concept: Ultra-bold city car of tomorrow](#)

[Maybach name, flute holders return in new Mercedes-Maybach S-Class](#)

[McLaren P1 GTR: On track for greatness](#)

[Mitsubishi Rally: Sales grow, new products coming](#)

[Mitsubishi XR-PHEV II Concept previews a new model](#)

[nanoFlowcell Quant F and Quantino Concepts are EVs with a twist](#)

[Nissan 370Z Nismo Roadster is ready to rock](#)

[Nissan Sway Concept: Stylish subcompact strikes](#)

[Pininfarina Ferrari Sergio production model bows](#)

[Porsche 4-door models offer rear seat entertainment](#)

[Range Rover Evoque Convertible coming in 2016](#)

[Refreshed Toyota Auris previews 2016 Scion iM](#)

[Rinspeed Budii Concept: Who's your buddy?](#)

[Rolls Royce Serenity Concept: Ultimate Silk Road grand tourer](#)

[Rolls-Royce Succumbs to SUVs](#)

[The Challenge for Cadillac](#)

[Touring Superleggera Berlinetta Lusso -- Ferrari F12 in a retro-chic wrapper](#)

[Volkswagen Sport Coupe Concept GTE - an exercise in future think](#)

[Volkswagen Sport Coupe Concept GTE previewed for Geneva](#)

[This Week in Car Buying: Rising transaction prices; Crossover conundrum; Wells Fargo caps subprime car loans](#)

[This Week in Car Buying: High times for high end cars; dearly departed models; GM production trimmed again](#)

[This Week in Car Buying: Chicago show; Cadillac's conundrum; Fuel prices on the march](#)

## **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 February 2015. To see any new-vehicle reviews 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.

### **New Vehicle Reviews:**

#### **[2016 Ford Explorer](#)**

The Ford Explorer gets new technology, refreshed styling, and numerous other refinements that should prompt a close look by SUV buyers.

#### **[2016 Mazda CX-5](#)**

Amid a sea of compact SUVs, the Mazda CX-5 stands apart from rivals like the Honda CR-V and Toyota RAV4 with its sporty manners.

#### **[2016 Mazda Mazda6](#)**

As the resident athlete of midsize sedans, the 2016 Mazda Mazda6 has spry handling, stylish looks and great fuel economy, too.

#### **[2016 Mitsubishi i-MiEV](#)**

The i-MiEV is the least-expensive electric car available and easily fits into parking spots that other compact cars would have to forgo.

#### **[2016 Volvo XC90](#)**

A feature-rich, 7-seat SUV, the Volvo XC90 offers style, comfort and all-wheel drive with conventional or plug-in hybrid power.

#### **[2015 Chrysler 300](#)**

The Chrysler 300 is a modern interpretation of large, rear-wheel-drive sedans of yore that offers power, comfort and value.

#### **[2015 Infiniti Q60](#)**

Sharp handling, self-healing paint and elegant good looks are just a few examples of why the Infiniti Q60 coupe and convertible can run with the best in class.

#### **[2015 Jeep Renegade](#)**

The new Jeep Renegade is a tantalizing way to access the iconic brand, thanks to its small-but-cool design, value and off-road ability.

#### **[2015 Land Rover Discovery Sport](#)**

The Discovery Sport compact SUV is equal parts color-outside-the-lines off-road adventurer and elegant, capable on-roader.

#### **[2015 Land Rover Range Rover](#)**

At home climbing boulders or cruising Beverly Hills, the Range Rover has a superb combination of off-road ability and on-road comfort.

#### **[2015 Lincoln MKS](#)**

The Lincoln MKS flagship rolls along unchanged, offering a roomy interior and distinctive styling for a surprisingly reasonable price.

#### **[2015 Mini Cooper Convertible](#)**

The Cooper Convertible hasn't changed since last year. That means it's fun to drive, looks cool and doesn't cost too much.

#### **[2015 Mini Cooper Countryman](#)**

The Cooper Countryman is the burliest vehicle in the Mini lineup, with 5-passenger seating and available all-wheel drive adding to its appeal.

#### **[2015 Mini Cooper](#)**

The Mini Cooper Hardtop is a great pick for a premium-feeling car that's fun to drive, looks cool and offers a zillion different customization options.

## NEW-VEHICLE REVIEWS CONTINUED:

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### [2015 Nissan Rogue Select](#)

Simple and practical, the Nissan Rogue Select appeals with its \$21,000 starting price.

### [2015 Ram ProMaster City](#)

The ProMaster City brings best-in-class power, cargo volume and payload to the class, as well as a smooth 9-speed transmission and good road manners.

### [2015 Ram ProMaster Van](#)

The ProMaster Van goes head-to-head with full-size vans from Ford and Chevy, with front-wheel drive and available diesel power.

### [2015 Tesla Model S](#)

The Tesla Model S brings numerous running changes, as is typical for Tesla, plus a brand new all-wheel-drive performance model.

### [2015 Toyota Prius Plug-in Hybrid](#)

The Prius Plug-in is similar to the standard model, but boasts the ability to travel several miles on electricity alone.

### [2015 Volkswagen Touareg](#)

The Volkswagen Touareg splits the difference between mainstream and luxury with an enjoyable driving experience, a roomy interior, and surprisingly good off-road capability.

### [2014 Ferrari FF](#)

Ferrari's 2014 FF is an exotic sports coupe offering the performance expected from a Ferrari with the added benefit of all-wheel drive.

### [2014 Ferrari F12berlinetta](#)

Ferrari's stunning F12berlinetta of 2014 melds power and beauty into what can arguably be called the most desirable supercar ever built.

### [2014 Lamborghini Gallardo](#)

Lamborghini has hit supercar pay dirt with the 2014 Gallardo, a menacing-looking exotic readily available to a growing following.

## New-Car Transaction Prices Climb Nearly 4 Percent in February 2015, According to Kelley Blue Book

**Utility Vehicles Help Drive Overall Industry Average Up; Hyundai-Kia Reports Greatest Year-Over-Year Gain**

IRVINE, Calif., March 3, 2015 -- The analysts at Kelley Blue Book [www.kbb.com](http://www.kbb.com), the only vehicle valuation and information source trusted and relied upon by both consumers and the automotive industry, today report the estimated average transaction price (ATP) for light vehicles in the United States was \$33,299 in February 2015. New-car prices have increased by \$1,145 (up 3.6 percent) from February 2014, while dropping \$208 (down 0.6 percent) from last month... [MORE](#)

## Dale Earnhardt Jr. Drives Fair-Pricing Initiative With #KBBEffekt

**Kelley Blue Book Movement to Empower Car Buyers Features Fresh Video Content Starring NASCAR Fan Favorite, Sweepstakes and Fold of Honor QuickTrip 500 Race Weekend Promotions**

IRVINE, Calif., Feb. 26, 2015 -- With the 2015 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series revving up, the winner's circle just got better with the introduction of the #KBBEffekt initiative, thanks to Kelley Blue Book [www.kbb.com](http://www.kbb.com), the only vehicle valuation and information source trusted and relied upon by both consumers and the automotive industry.

#KBBEffekt, a new initiative from Kelley Blue Book featuring NASCAR driver Dale Earnhardt Jr., reinforces the company's goal to empower shoppers to be in control of their car-buying experience... [MORE](#)

## Marking the Twelfth Straight Month of Growth, New-Car Sales to Climb More Than 8 Percent in February 2015

**Toyota Motor Company to Report Largest Gains; Pickup Trucks Continue Strong Run Despite Rising Gas Prices**

IRVINE, Calif., Feb. 25, 2015 -- New-vehicle sales are expected to increase 8 percent year-over-year to a total of 1.29 million units in February 2015, resulting in an estimated 16.6 million seasonally adjusted annual rate (SAAR), according to Kelley Blue Book [www.kbb.com](http://www.kbb.com), the only vehicle valuation and information source trusted and relied upon by both consumers and the automotive industry... [MORE](#)

## Kelley Blue Book Names 15 Best Family Cars of 2015

**KBB.com Editors Expand Considered Vehicle Categories, Partner with Families to Put Models to Real-Life Test**

IRVINE, Calif., Feb. 19, 2015 -- Determining the best family car depends largely on what kind of family you have. For example, if you and yours are the outdoorsy types, an SUV may be the best way to go. Urbanites might benefit from a minivan or sedan. Those in between, well, that's what crossover SUVs are for. The market has responded to these different circumstances with a plethora of shapes and styles to suit virtually any need. Helping ease the struggle to find the best new cars tailored for families of all sizes, the editors of Kelley Blue Book [www.kbb.com](http://www.kbb.com), the only vehicle valuation and information source trusted and relied upon by both consumers and the automotive industry, have named their recommended list of the 15 Best Family Cars of 2015... [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 automotive industry. Each week the company provides the most market-reflective values in the industry on its top-rated website KBB.com, including its famous Blue Book® Trade-In Values and Fair Purchase Price, which reports what others are paying for new and used 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, and governmental agencies. Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com ranked highest in its category for brand equity by the 2014 Harris Poll EquiTrend® study and has been named Online Auto Shopping Brand of the Year for three consecutive years. Kelley Blue Book Co., Inc. is a Cox Automotive company.