KELLEY BLUE BOOK FUELS UP WITH FIRST-EVER NFT TO ANNOUNCE 2022 BEST BUY AWARD WINNERS

NFT to be held for auction to benefit river conservation through American Rivers

IRVINE, Calif., Dec. 14, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- This year, for the first time ever, consumers will see Kelley Blue Book's 95-year automotive knowledge visually come to life. After completing head-to-head testing, evaluation and data analysis of more than 300 2022 model-year vehicles across 18 major categories, today Kelley Blue Book revealed the 2022 Best Buy Award winners – with the coveted trophy for the Best New Model awarded to the 2022 Ford Maverick.

Experience the interactive Multichannel News Release here: https://www.multivu.com/players/English/8957251-kelley-blue-book-2022-best-buy-award-winners/



In honor of the 2022 Best Buy Awards, Kelley Blue Book is giving one lucky consumer an opportunity to own a piece of automotive brand heritage with their own animated non-fungible token (NFT) that brings to life Kelley Blue Book's 95 years of trusted automotive knowledge and showcases the evolution of cars. "Model NFT by KBB.com" will be available for auction on OpenSea from December 16 through December 21, 2021. Consumers can visit @KelleyBlueBook on Twitter for more details.

"Model NFT by KBB.com" visually shows the evolution of cars and how far they've come, also giving a nod to Kelley Blue Book's storied heritage. From a horse and carriage to the 2022 Ford Maverick, Kelley Blue Book has been at the forefront of the automotive industry for more than 95 years. Beginning in 1926 with a physical blue book containing vehicle valuations, to now a plethora of automotive information and data available at consumers' fingertips via KBB.com, Kelley Blue Book continues to evolve into the digital world. Funds will be donated to American Rivers, which protects clean water and rivers across the country, reinforcing Kelley Blue Book's sustainability efforts. Kelley Blue Book commissioned the digital artwork from Bloo Woods, a talented Atlanta-based digital artist who brought Kelley Blue Book's 95-year automotive knowledge visually to life.

"Car buying is a thoughtful process, so we chose to celebrate the 2022 Best Buy Awards by creating an NFT for consumers to see the evolution of the automotive industry as Kelley Blue Book helps them make an informed, thoughtful decision," said Jason Allan, director of editorial for Kelley Blue Book. "With the rise of cultural currency, it is exciting to engage and bring Kelley Blue Book's history to this digital collectibles boom. We understand it can be overwhelming to shop for a new car

when there are hundreds of models available and new nameplates offered each year, let alone in challenging times for the industry and car shoppers alike. Fortunately for consumers, auto manufacturers are making plenty of great new models, even if it does take some patience to wait for the inventory to come in. As *The Trusted Resource®*, our goal is to help consumers understand where they should focus their new-car shopping efforts, as it's more important now than ever before."

Kelley Blue Book's annual Best Buy Awards are determined based on a year-long regimen of expert vehicle evaluation and testing of nearly every new vehicle available in the United States, along with analysis of a broad array of vehicle-related data, including vehicle pricing, 5-Year Cost to Own data – which includes depreciation, insurance, maintenance, financing, fuel, fees and taxes for new cars – along with consumer reviews and ratings and vehicle sales information. To be considered for Kelley Blue Book's highest accolade, Best New Model, the vehicle must be an all-new or redesigned model and offer a strong value proposition to consumers based on pricing, innovation, and available standard technology and safety features.

2022 Kelley Blue Book Best Buy Award Winners

Best New Model: 2022 Ford Maverick
The Ford Maverick's appeal goes far beyond that of people looking for a truck. In fact, its sub-$20,000 starting price, estimated 40 mpg fuel economy, and wide range of tech and safety features will catch the eye of anyone looking for a capable, versatile vehicle that offers terrific value.

Best Compact Car: 2022 Honda Civic
All-new for 2022, the Honda Civic sedan and hatchback fulfill every need -- and most of the wishes -- of today's compact-car buyer. Whether you need a first-class commuter car or a stylish performance hatchback, the Civic delivers for an affordable price at a Honda level of reliability.

Best Midsize Car: 2022 Honda Accord
The inherent strengths of the Accord come from its strong mechanicals, timeless styling, roomy cabin and comfortable ride. Layer on top Honda's reputation for resale and low cost of ownership, and you have a combination that continues to be nearly impossible to beat.

Best Subcompact SUV: 2022 Kia Seltos
The stylish 2022 Kia Seltos has a spacious upscale interior with modern tech, safety, and class-leading cargo room, all at a reasonable price. And for the second year in a row, it is Kelley Blue Book's Subcompact SUV Best Buy.

Best Compact SUV: 2022 Toyota RAV4
With its broad lineup and excellent practicality, not to mention its extensive features, solid construction and good safety suite, the fuel-efficient and durable Toyota RAV4 has earned a Best Buy Award as the top Compact SUV for 2022.

Best 2-Row Midsize SUV: 2022 Hyundai Santa Fe
The secret to the Santa Fe's success? General excellence. In other words, the Santa Fe shines in a broad variety of categories. It drives well, it looks great, it exudes quality and feels more expensive than it is. What's more, this Hyundai has a fantastic warranty, and it extends well beyond just a single model – it's sold in 11 trim levels and with four different powertrains, including an impressive new Plug-in Hybrid (PHEV).

Best 3-Row Midsize SUV: 2022 Kia Telluride
The 2022 Kia Telluride is as good-looking in its sheet metal as it is on paper. Base front-wheel-drive models start under $33,000, and that's for a family-friendly SUV that looks as at home at an expensive country club as it does in a suburban driveway.

Best Full-Size SUV: 2022 Ford Expedition
The Ford Expedition has earned Kelley Blue Book's Best Full-Size SUV Best Buy Award for five years in a row because it's a comfortable, refined, full-size 8-

passenger SUV that offers excellent towing and off-road capability. Significant updates for 2022 make the Expedition even better.

Best Compact Truck: 2022 Ford Maverick
The all-new Ford Maverick uses modern tech to revive a segment that has been sorely missed: that of the capable, fuel-efficient, super-affordable compact truck. The Maverick's sub-$20,000 starting price makes it easy to get into, and its base hybrid engine will save you money every time you fill the tank.

Best Midsize Truck: 2022 Toyota Tacoma
The tough, capable, reliable Toyota Tacoma is a terrific choice if you are looking for a midsize truck for towing and hauling, off-road adventures, or as a pleasant ride around town. A wide range of trim levels and multiple engine and transmission options let you choose the right Tacoma for your needs.

Best Full-Size Truck: 2022 Ford F-150
The Ford F-150 has best-in-class towing and payload capacity, and it is known for smart, intuitive work solutions. The F-150 also is tops when it comes to innovation, with no-compromise hybrid and electric powertrains, as well as the availability of an on-board generator.

Best Minivan: 2022 Toyota Sienna
When it comes to buying a minivan, there are solid choices out there - but for our money, Toyota has the Sienna so dialed in, it's tough to beat. For its interior utility, comfort and functionality, to the standard tech and safety features, to its fuel-miser hybrid powertrain, the Sienna checks off so many boxes and tops our list as the 2022 Minivan Best Buy.

Best Electric Vehicle: 2022 Ford Mustang Mach-E
Driving the 2022 Ford Mustang Mach-E makes you believe in Ford's commitment to an electric future. It offers an engaging balance of great performance, fresh style and modern tech that no other mainstream EV can approach.

Best Plug-in Hybrid Vehicle: 2022 Toyota RAV4 Prime
Combining 302 horsepower, 40-mpg capability, and full-time all-wheel drive makes the 2022 Toyota RAV4 Prime hard to beat. Well-equipped and starting at about $40,000, the RAV4 Prime is a gasoline/electric plug-in hybrid offering 42 miles of pure-EV range and 600 miles of travel with every fill-up.

Best Luxury Car: 2022 Lexus ES
For buyers seeking the experience that only can be had in a sleek executive sedan, no other car can match the Lexus ES with its blend of premium amenities, technology, advanced safety features and overall value. It's been this way for years - this is the fourth year in a row the Lexus ES has been crowned the Kelley Blue Book Luxury Car Best Buy.

Best Subcompact Luxury SUV: 2022 Mercedes-Benz GLA
The 2022 Mercedes-Benz GLA is proof that even the smallest and least-expensive SUV in the German luxury automaker's stable is, well, still a Mercedes-Benz. And by that, we mean it has the features, driving manners, safety and technology that buyers – even buyers on a more limited budget – expect from a Mercedes. Despite a growing cadre of competitors in the subcompact luxury SUV realm, the GLA retains its Best Buy crown for a second year straight.

Best Compact Luxury SUV: 2022 Genesis GV70
The 2022 Genesis GV70 packs a lot of value into a stylish and sporty package, loaded with technology and safety features, plus an excellent warranty. It's no wonder the GV70 has claimed the title of the Best Buy Compact Luxury SUV of 2022.

Best Midsize Luxury SUV: 2022 Genesis GV80
In its repeat performance, Genesis demonstrates that it has set the bar high in the class in terms of design, interior comfort, build quality and performance. From its striking design to its choice of two powertrains, the 2022 Genesis GV80 delivers on many counts, all at a price that has its rivals scratching their collective heads.

For full coverage of the 2022 Kelley Blue Book Best Buy Awards, including full editorial comments about each model, pricing details, videos and more, visit https://www.kbb.com/awards/best-buy-awards/.

To discuss this topic, or any other automotive-related information, with a Kelley Blue Book analyst on-camera via the company's on-site studio, please contact a member of the Public Relations team to schedule an interview.

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About Kelley Blue Book (www.kbb.com)

Founded in 1926, Kelley Blue Book, *The Trusted Resource*®, is the vehicle valuation and information source trusted and relied upon by both consumers and the automotive industry. Each week the company provides market-reflective values on its top-rated website KBB.com, including its famous Blue Book® Trade-In Values and Kelley Blue Book® Price Advisor tool, which provides a range for what consumers can reasonably expect to pay for a vehicle in their area. Car owners looking to sell immediately can also get a redeemable, transaction-ready offer with Kelley Blue Book℠ Instant Cash Offer. 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 is a Cox Automotive brand.

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