Kbb.com Names 2009 Top 10 Coolest New Cars Under $18,000

Editors Choose Top Cool, Affordable Rides; Growing Emphasis on Personality, Versatility, Technology

IRVINE, Calif., June 19 /PRNewswire/ -- The 2009 Top 10 Coolest New Cars Under $18,000, www.kbb.com/coolcars2009, were named today by the expert editors from Kelley Blue Book, www.kbb.com, the leading provider of new car and used car information.

The vehicles that made Kelley Blue Book's 2009 list of Top 10 Coolest New Cars Under $18,000 -- typically a gas-sipping and obviously affordable bunch -- are cooler than they have ever been. More fun, more practical and more amenity-laden than ever before, today's entry-level vehicles deliver more than simply affordable and efficient transportation.

This year's list features a growing emphasis on personality, with many of the models featuring designs that may have once seemed outlandish and now are more easily accepted. In addition, versatility and technology are continuing elements in the under-$18,000 segment. Nine of the 10 cars on this year's list are flexible five-door hatchbacks, or available as such, and two of the models are all-wheel-drive, or available as such. The collective options list includes navigation, hard-drive music storage, voice-controlled iPod integration, Bluetooth phone connectivity, push-button start and leather seating - some of which were introduced on high-end luxury cars just a few years ago.

For 2009, three vehicles - Kia Soul, Nissan cube and smart fortwo - are all-new to the 'Coolest Cars' list, and two of this year's repeat winners - Honda Fit and MAZDA3 - have undergone redesigns. The MAZDA3 is the only model that can boast about being named a Coolest New Car Under $18,000 by Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com for six years in a row, which also is every year since the car's inception. A worldly bunch, the 2009 Top 10 Coolest New Cars Under $18,000 list includes vehicles from companies based in the United States, Japan, Korea and Germany.

"Although inflation might suggest otherwise, each year, it seems we have a larger and cooler crop of new vehicles to choose from for our Coolest Under $18,000 list, and this year is no exception; the auto manufacturers have made the low-priced segments the most personality-filled in the industry," said Jack R. Nerad, executive editorial director and executive market analyst for Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com. "In addition to cool, affordable rides that are loaded with technology and amenities, shoppers have more opportunities than ever to choose a car that reflects their individual lifestyle for 2009."

In choosing the latest list of Top 10 Coolest New Cars Under $18,000, the kbb.com editors used the same set of criteria that many consumers use in examining this category: safety, fuel economy, interior size, comfort, technology, the vehicle's fun-to-drive-factor, as well as the decidedly subjective "cool" factor. The editors compiled the list of qualifying vehicles using Kelley Blue Book's New Car Blue Book Values, which reflect real-world transaction prices and provide a

more useful comparison point than Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP). Every vehicle on the list can be purchased for less than $18,000.

Sample Choices from kbb.com's 2009 Top 10 Coolest New Cars Under $18,000 List

2009 Honda Fit

2010 Kia Soul

2010 MAZDA3

2009 Nissan cube

2009 smart fortwo

For the remaining Top 10 Coolest New Cars Under $18,000 choices, including full editorial commentary and reasoning behind each of the editors' picks, visit the Top 10 Coolest New Cars Under $18,000 story in kbb.com's Latest News section at www.kbb.com/coolcars2009.

New-Vehicle Research Tools Available on Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com

- Full expert reviews of new 2009 (and some 2010) model year vehicles, including print and video
- Pricing, specifications and information on optional features
- Resale value information
- Safety data
- Rebates and incentives information
- Side-by-side comparison tool
- Consumer reviews and ratings
- Photos and 360-degree views
- Latest information about alternative-fuel technologies and gas-sipping vehicles at KBB® Green
- Dealer price quote

About Kelley Blue Book (www.kbb.com)

Since 1926, Kelley Blue Book, The Trusted Resource®, has provided vehicle buyers and sellers with the new and used vehicle information they need to accomplish their goals with confidence. The company's top-rated Web site, www.kbb.com, provides the most up-to-date pricing and values, including the New Car Blue Book® Value, which reveals what people actually are paying for new cars. The company also reports vehicle pricing and values via products and services, including software products and the famous Blue Book® Official Guide. According to the C.A. Walker Research Solutions, Inc. - 2008 Spring Automotive Web Site Usefulness Study, kbb.com is the most useful automotive information Web site among new and used vehicle shoppers, and half of online vehicle shoppers visit kbb.com. Kbb.com is a leading provider of new car prices, car

reviews and news, used car blue book values, auto classifieds and car dealer locations. No other medium reaches more in-market vehicle shoppers than kbb.com.

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