kbb.com Study: Domestic Trucks Remain Cornerstone of Strength; Import Truck Consideration Declines

Ford Claims Top Spot in Consideration, Overtaking Chevrolet

IRVINE, Calif., Aug. 12 /PRNewswire/ -- Kelley Blue Book, www.kbb.com, the leading provider of new car and used car information, today announces the results of the second-quarter 2009 Brand Watch study by Kelley Blue Book Market Intelligence, detailing consumers' perceptions of truck brands and factors of importance when new-truck shopping. The study found that in the past year, domestic truck consideration has increased or held steady, while import truck consideration has decreased.

Currently, Ford is the most-considered truck brand at 58 percent, Chevrolet is second with 51 percent consideration, Dodge ranks third at 37 percent and GMC is fourth at 33 percent. Ford consideration is up significantly in the current results, increasing 12 points from the previous year and overtaking Chevrolet as the most-considered truck brand. Chevrolet and GMC consideration has remained constant in the second-quarter of 2009 when compared to the previous year.

"Even with the troubles experienced by the automotive industry in the past year, trucks remain a center of power for the domestic manufacturers. With a recent round of impressive redesigns and creative marketing to support their new launches, the latest Brand Watch study from Kelley Blue Book Market Intelligence shows that consumers still appreciate trucks from American companies," said Rick Wainschel, senior vice president, market intelligence and brand strategy for Kelley Blue Book and kbb.com. "While import manufacturers tend to dominate perception - and frequently sales - in the small-car genre, the foundation underneath the domestic manufacturers does not show signs of cracking."

In contrast to the strength demonstrated by Ford, GM brands and Dodge, Toyota truck consideration fell from 34 percent to 31 percent, Nissan truck consideration fell from 17 percent to 13 percent, and Honda truck consideration fell from seven percent to four percent in second quarter 2009 compared to the previous year. Toyota was the third-most-considered brand in second-quarter 2008, and now is the fifth-most considered brand in second-quarter 2009.

Additionally, new-truck shoppers indicate an increased importance in more 'traditional' truck factors in the last year, with durability/reliability, ruggedness/toughness, towing/hauling capacity, driving performance and driving comfort ranking among the top. While still a primary consideration at 55 percent, fuel efficiency has decreased in importance among new-truck shoppers. The decrease is in-part due to more stable gas prices compared to the spike of 2008, when survey respondents citing fuel efficiency as an important factor in truck purchase decisions was a full 10 points higher at 65 percent.

When looking at how individual truck brands fared on important decision factors, Ford takes the most No. 1 spots, including ruggedness/toughness, towing/hauling capacity, exterior styling, interior design/layout, versatility/flexibility, safety and cool factor/vehicle image. Chevrolet ranks first on fuel efficiency, driving comfort, economical factors and seating capacity. GMC ranks first in durability/reliability, driving performance, family friendliness and available options.

This Kelley Blue Book Market Intelligence Brand Watch study was fielded to 3,164 in-market car shoppers on Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com from April - June, 2009. For Brand Watch sales inquiries on any vehicle segment or brand, please contact Kelly Kim, director of marketing research services for Kelley Blue Book and kbb.com, at 949-268-2756 or kkim@kbb.com.

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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