



2009 Wrap-Up

Media Preview February 10-11
First Look for Charity February 11
Public Show February 12-21
www.ChicagoAutoShow.com

**2010
DATES**

Chicago Exceeds Expectations

“There’s a factor used these days called ‘Surprise and Delight’ that figured prominently into the 2009 Chicago Auto Show,” said event Chairman Mark Scarpelli. “When many pundits were preaching the worst possible forecast for the show, we were both surprised and delighted to see our numbers exceeding (up nearly 20 percent through the midpoint) of what we experienced in 2008. We think that the areas that were under our control—a highly visual, motivating, affordable and fun-to-attend show—were executed beautifully. We’re thankful to all of our exhibitors and everyone at McCormick Place for making it yet another memorable year for everyone who made their way downtown during our run.”

“But there’s also an adage about not talking about a no-hitter in the fifth inning,” commented Scarpelli. “And the forces of nature in mid-winter Chicago dealt us a few snowy curve balls in our closing innings that affected our totals. But at the end of the game, we’re still very much of the opinion that our show delivered a winning performance.”

“While we feel that the show was quite successful, the true measure of the success of an auto show is how it transforms the show visitor into a dealership customer,” said Jerry Cizek, general manager of the show and president of the Chicago Automobile Trade Association. “It’s our belief that auto shows are not just about new model introductions and news conferences,

but rather giving a first-rate stage upon which manufacturers can market directly to a public that’s—for lack of better term—impressionable. Our ongoing mission is to turn show visitors into a sales prospect, which benefits the customer, our dealers and our manufacturers. It’s a win-win-win we’re seeking.”



Did the downturned economy have an impact? Of course! It’s having an impact on every aspect of our lives, but show organizers addressed it head-on with new and innovative promotions and attractions designed to help bring more people into McCormick Place. As the biggest show

in North America, Chicago has a lot of room for a lot of show.

“Remember, the second word in an auto show is ‘show,’ so we worked hard to help move the needle as best we could as a producer,” said Cizek. “The manufacturers and dealer line associations certainly assisted, as well, with special ‘auto show bonus cash’ promotions, car giveaways and financing incentives. Let’s hope the show’s wake is strong and our dealers reap the benefits in their businesses.”

“Evidently, we’re not the only ones who feel this way about Chicago’s impact,” continued Cizek. “When other shows had multiple pullouts, Chicago proved to be the show that manufacturers worked hard to stay in, not exit.”

Uniquely Positioned for the Future of Auto Shows

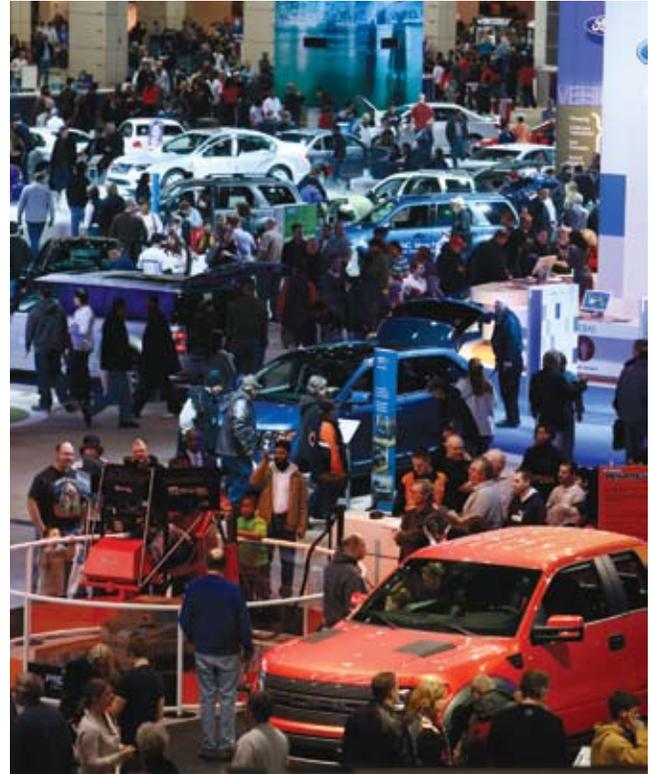
"While the show has barely closed, we never stop looking to the future," says 2010 Chicago Auto Show Chairman John Phelan. "And we're positioned better than any other show for it. We are an OICA-sanctioned event and the only global auto show in North America that has the immediate ability to expand—instantly—to accommodate virtually any request from any manufacturer. We don't need to renovate, expand or upgrade a thing to take care of any exhibitors' needs."

The Chicago show currently uses 1.2 million sq ft (111,500 sq M.) of an available 2.7 million at McCormick Place. The space used is contiguous—all on the same floor—so there's no "upstairs, downstairs, basement, etc." for Chicago exhibitors. When the Chinese, Indian or any other manufacturer decides to display and sell their products in the United States, only Chicago has the immediate ability to give them as much Class A space as they desire on the same level, directly adjoined to every other of the world's major manufacturers. The McCormick Place complex is the envy of every show producer in North America, not only for its size and ability to give exhibitors anything they want, but at a more competitive rate and with a dedicated labor force that's unequalled by any other show.

"Ours is not a building in need of anything," said Phelan. "Additionally, the infrastructure of the City of Chicago for any major show is unparalleled. We have almost 69,000 hotel rooms within a 15 minute drive of McCormick Place. Plus other aspects Chicago offers such as restaurants, museums, central location for travel puts us at the top of the list."

"So when manufacturers and media ask how Chicago is positioned for the future," Phelan said, "the answer is, 'Better than any other show. Period.'"

"The raw economics of shows will be a factor and manufacturers will have to make decisions of where to display best. Where can they make an impact to both media and consumers alike," he said. "Because we offer the biggest show with the best



attendance and the undisputed best convention center, Chicago should be an obvious choice. And when you remove the emotional aspect of where shows are produced, it's counter-intuitive to consider anywhere else, frankly."

"Having said that, we would like to see every city have a strong auto show. It's just good for our manufacturers, dealers, customers and the economy overall—and that's what auto shows are for."

Bridgestone Safety Scholars



Ryan Massey, Sarah Wilson, Bridgestone Americas CEO Mark Emkes, Danny Belkin, and Angela Roscioli

At a welcoming reception for automotive media, Bridgestone Americas announced the launch of its third annual Safety Scholars Video Contest as part of its ongoing commitment to automotive safety education.

Targeted to young drivers, Safety Scholars entrants create short auto safety-themed videos. This year, another topic—automotive environmentalism—has been added, extending the message of the Bridgestone's "One Team, One Planet" global environmental initiative.

Visiting automotive media were welcomed by Bridgestone Americas Chairman Mark Emkes, who then introduced the 2008 contest winners who were on hand to present their videos. Danny Belkin, Ryan Massey, Angela Roscioli and Sarah Wilson utilized first-person accounts, dramatic narratives and other creative formats to deliver powerful messages about auto safety.

Grand Concourse Media Stage a Hit in its Debut

In challenging economic times, Chicago Auto Show officials offered a solution to exhibitors to produce their news conferences utilizing a shared-use “Grand Concourse Media Stage.” Five manufacturers and several other groups used the same basic—yet quite complete—news set to conduct their product reveals, award presentations and executive availabilities.

From all accounts, the idea was a hit with those who used the stage, as well as the media who attended the events. Many commented on the convenience and reported how much they appreciated the innovation of the Chicago Auto Show in being sensitive to the expenses of producing news events. Could it have been set up differently? Will there be tweaks and improvements for next year? Of course, as this was our first time with this setup and we were all learning. But we think there’s almost universal agreement that it was a hell of a good start. We always welcome more input—and you all know how to find us.

Comments from the manufacturers:

• *“Overall, this worked very well for us. For the price, I would have felt silly doing our event at the stand. The set-up was good and the crew we worked with were good, too. Access to the event was easy and really couldn’t be in a better location. And it was nice having auto show staff available during our rehearsal to make us feel comfortable with our last-minute requests.”*



• *“There were some bobbles with the sound system during the rehearsal but they were mostly ironed out by the time of our news conference. Still, I was concerned and it made rehearsing a little difficult and we could have been a little crisper during our show. Well done.”*

• *“A few thoughts: First, without the Grand Concourse Media Stage availability we would not have had a press conference in Chicago. Only when the show provided a cost-effective platform were we able to do a press conference. Our budget limitations simply made it impossible without the Grand Concourse Stage.”*

• *“Even if, in the future, we might have a press conference at our booth, knowing that a stage like this would be available would be a big plus in our book for the Chicago Auto Show. The Chicago team makes it one of the easiest shows to work with on a press basis.”*

• *“In the future, more branding into the stage would be great, but I know that you need to make it multipurpose and able to be ready for the next event right away.”*

• *“We’re too happy to report that were it not for your grand concourse stage, Suzuki would*

not have hosted a press conference reveal for our new Equator concept trucks. The overwhelming amount of media hits we garnered was a direct result of the press conference in the common show stand area. We certainly hope that other shows take note. Thank you again!”

• *“I just wanted to thank you again for your support in making our “Share the Love” breakfast come together so well. I think your new conference format will become a model for other shows and, given our tighter budgets, we most likely would not have put together an event had we been required to arrange our own AV, lighting etc.*

And comments from the media:

• *“I think it’s a good idea. It’s so much easier to have the press conference in one place and it saves money. These days, I’d much rather see the manufacturers put money into their operations than impressing me.”*

• *“It was a brilliant and productive idea and not only saved a lot of walking, but generated larger audiences. I hope it’s a regular part of future shows.”*

• *“A very smart thing to do. Along with cutting the cost of the presentations, best part was having enough room so that everyone could find a seat.”*

• *“In the interest of news, auto shows must be careful to stress the importance of legitimate media access to the presentations, rather than reserving the most and best vantage points for corporate big shots.”*

• *“The concept is a very good one. You’ll need to upgrade it i.e. functionality, to let makers dress up and customize their presentations a bit more, for one thing. And you need to have a setup for distributing press kits just as makers normally do at their own display stands. But this is a positive concept.”*

• *“Some tweaking would help—maybe something more visually permanent for a backdrop—would be useful.”*

• *“A little refinement never hurt anyone. Visibility from the photo areas and clear lines of sight for everyone should be a priority.”*

• *“I thought it worked well, although the shuffle with back-to-back press conference was a little awkward.”*

• *“Every auto show should be doing this.”*



(some comments you don’t have to be Fellini to figure out from whom they came, while others—well, if you’re that interested, call us and we’ll share privately, OK?)

MAMA/Chicago Auto Show Breakfast



Hyundai's John Krafcik

In his keynote address at the Midwest Automotive Media Association/Chicago Auto Show breakfast, John Krafcik, president and COO of Hyundai Motor America, offered a hard look at the industry and suggested that now was not the time for evolution, but rather for revolution.

In the wake of his company's ongoing sales success story and Genesis winning the North American Car of the Year, Krafcik said: "It's time to take notice. The world has changed and right now is our time to change." He further charged automotive executives to take responsibility for the industry's shortcomings by creating higher-quality vehicles, voluntary restraint of executive compensation and improved safety features. Krafcik also said that manufacturers need to respond to environmental and public needs by developing innovations in fuel economy.

"It is abundantly clear that improved fuel economy makes sense for our industry and for our economy," said Krafcik.

He discussed the current economic situation and how it has impacted the automobile industry. According to Krafcik, there should be no question of whether this is a time of recession or depression. He issued a call-to-action plan aimed at automotive executives in an attempt to fix the current negative perceptions that surround the auto industry.

He noted that Hyundai already has plans to take steps toward better fuel economy and to achieve a fleet average of 35 miles per gallon by 2015, and future plans include gas-electric hybrids and high-mileage additions of a few of their current models.

In answering follow-up questions, Krafcik touched on some of Hyundai's future plans, including the brand's first hybrid vehicle (due in 2010) that will be based on the Sonata and use Lithium Polymer batteries. He also defended the rear-wheel drive platform used for the Genesis and boasted that at 30 mpg, the vehicle had the best fuel economy of any RWD currently on the market.

Economic Club of Chicago Luncheon

Invoking the spirit and sometimes twisted wisdom of Yogi Berra, Chrysler Vice Chairman and President Jim Press told a special luncheon meeting of the Economic Club of Chicago that, "The future just ain't what it used to be."

He said that it applied to everyone, "Regardless of whether you're a trader or publisher from Chicago or a car salesman from Detroit. So, now the trick is to move forward from merely 'intellectualizing' that concept to truly accepting it."

"I can tell you we have accepted the fact that there really is a harsh new reality in the auto industry," said Press. "Our world has changed dramatically. It began in the second half of last year when we saw fuel prices spike, consumer confidence fall, and credit markets freeze. It was literally an automotive nightmare."

Offering his company's take on future action, Press said: "Everyone in the auto industry is being forced to rethink everything. The good news is that this is also the opportunity to fix a lot of things that should have been fixed a long time ago. We now have this moment in time, with the world watching, to make the right long-term decisions for our company and industry."

"And our obligation in exchange for this opportunity is to commit 100 percent of our efforts to deliver to the American people the quality and fuel efficient automobiles they deserve at

attractive prices," he said. "We are confident we have the right plan and we will see Chrysler, again, be a symbol of American innovation and craftsmanship. We will restore Chrysler to once again be a great American icon."

He enforced the need to partner with the government in preserving American jobs and expanding the availability of fuel efficient cars. The reliance on foreign oil needs to decrease and gas emission regulations must be set in place. America also

needs to be cautious not to trade reliance on foreign oil for foreign batteries.

Press said we stand at a great moment of opportunity.

"Our industry and this country are at a crossroads," he stated. "But we should look at this as the historic opportunity it really is. Hope and change may be national slogans—popularized by Chicago's most famous citizen—but they are particularly meaningful to the auto industry.

"At Chrysler, we feel we have a special bond with America and the American taxpayers. We now have a responsibility to deliver on their investment by building a viable company and producing high quality desirable products that serve society. I can assure you that we're going to give everything we have to hold up our end of the bargain—and to make our contribution to get our country and national economy back on track, and preserve our American way of life.



Chrysler's Jim Press

Best of Show

We asked and the public responded. Auto show-goers voted on their favorite vehicles in the 2009 Chicago Auto Show's fourth annual Best of Show voting. Five categories were provided: Best All-New Production Vehicle, Best Concept Vehicle, Best "Green" Vehicle, Best Exhibit, and Vehicle I'd Most Like to have in my Driveway.

For the category "Best All-New Production Vehicle," the Ford Taurus SHO captured the spotlight. Nearly one-third of voters chose the Taurus SHO. The BMW Z4 finished second with 20 percent of the votes.



Capturing 39 percent of the votes, the eye-catching world into Chevrolet Corvette StingRay was voted "Best Concept Car of the 2009 Chicago Auto Show." The innovative and rakish Lincoln C finished in second place behind the 'Vette with 20 percent of the votes.

Everyone's going "green" these days, so the show created a category for "Best 'Green' Car." The Ford Fusion won the category competition with 31 percent of the votes. Ford proudly states that the Fusion Hybrid is the most fuel-efficient midsize car in America. The Toyota Prius and Chevrolet Silverado Hybrid tied in second place with 14 percent of the votes.

In a classic "Blue Oval vs. Bow Tie" duel, Ford emerged the victor with the title for "Best Exhibit," wresting it away from last year's winner, Chevrolet. The Ford exhibit garnered

30 percent of the votes with Chevrolet a scant three points back. Ford stepped up its game this year by adding several interactive exhibits including an off-road driving simulator, truck alley, slot-car racing and music-mix stations.

Should concept cars be built? Evidently so, as the StingRay finished first for more than one category by also capturing first place for the coveted category "Vehicle I'd Most Like to have in my Driveway." The slick silver streak concept siezed 12 percent of the votes—a remarkable percentage when every brand and model in the show was fair game for selection. The restyled 2010 Ford Mustang finished in close second place with seven percent of the votes.

From nearly 13,000 votes from show attendees, winners were chosen for the five categories.

Best All-New Production Vehicle

Ford Taurus SHO
(with 27 percent of the votes)

Best Concept Vehicle

Chevrolet Corvette StingRay
(with 39 percent of the votes)

Best "Green" Vehicle

Ford Fusion Hybrid
(with 31 percent of the votes)

Best Exhibit

Ford (with 30 percent of the votes)

Vehicle I'd Most Like to have in my Driveway

Chevrolet Corvette StingRay
(with 12 percent of the votes)



Ford F150 Harley Davidson; SHO Taurus; Transit Connect

Ford Motor Company featured three new vehicles in Chicago, including the newly remodeled F150 Harley Davidson™ pickup, the production Transit Connect that had made its North American concept debut in Chicago a year earlier, and the 2010 Ford Taurus SHO.

The F150 Harley Davidson™ was introduced by Derrick Kuzak, Ford group vice president of global product development.

“The Harley F-150 delivers a new standard of ‘custom cool,’” said Kuzak. “It combines the smooth handling and legendary durability of America’s best-selling truck with the authentic styling of Harley-Davidson, the industry leader in motorcycles.”

This marks the 14th Harley-Davidson™ edition of an F-Series truck in a line of special models dating to 2000. It is aimed to appeal to customers who appreciate quality and unique details only this kind of collaboration can bring.

“Our successful co-branding—unmatched in the industry—offers customers true specialized truck luxury,” said Kuzak. “Just like with our other associations, we’ve linked with an industry leader to offer the best of the best.”



*Derrick Kuzak, Group vice president
global product development*



Kimberly Mitchell of Ladera Ranch, Calif., was one of five small business owners to win a Ford Transit Connect. Her business, Boo Boo Busters, babyproofs homes to keep children safe.

He then introduced the production version Transit Connect, created to address the need for a smaller and more efficient work truck that would encompass the same cargo capacity as a large truck, while still nimble enough to move around a city. According to Kuzak, the Transit Connect is beneficial for small business owners due to the vehicle’s large cargo capacity.

Five lucky small-business owners were presented with a customized Transit Connect van as grand-prize winners in the company’s “Connect with Connect” contest. The five winners in attendance were chosen from among nearly 1,000 small-business owners around the country who entered the contest. They answered questions on how they would use the new vehicle to improve their day-to-day operations and explained the short-comings, if any, of their current vehicles.

Built in Chicago, one of America’s favorite “sleeper” performance cars will return to the Ford lineup and was introduced in its home town. Powered by a 365 hp Super High Output (SHO) EcoBoost twin turbocharged V-6 engine, the Taurus SHO joins Ford’s growing lineup of performance vehicles for the 2010 model year, building on the legacy of the original, which earned a spot on the Car and Driver “10 Best” list four years running.

“The new Taurus SHO delivers on the authentic sleeper sedan formula but adds all-new luxury-appointments, convenience features and technologies to an unsurpassed balance of power and fuel economy,” said Mark Fields, Ford’s president of The Americas. “This new sport derivative answers enthusiasts’ calls for a premium Ford flagship sedan with even more attitude.”



Chevy Surprises with a StingRay Concept

In a time when pulling a surprise rabbit out of a hat to a group of automotive journalists is getting tougher and tougher, but GM executed the mission flawlessly when they unexpectedly unveiled the Corvette StingRay concept in Chicago.

As the spotlight was turned on the Bow Tie, Chevrolet Division General Manager Ed Peper talked about an exciting overview of new products on the way from his division, and then gave a brief background of the successful relationship between Chevy and Paramount Studios.

"A few years ago we were presented with a unique marketing opportunity," said Peper. "As you know, 'Transformers' was a major hit worldwide, breaking box office records in several countries and becoming one of the top 20 grossing films of all time. What you might not know is that after the movie, awareness for Camaro, one of the vehicle stars of the show, jumped 97 percent.

"The movie and subsequent DVD sales helped us identify over a half-million people who are interested in buying a Camaro. And when the Bumblebee Camaro made its appearance here at the Chicago Show last year, it was voted the "Most Favorite Vehicle. So today I'm happy to announce that we're building on the success of the first movie with special Chevrolet vehicle appearances in the second 'Transformers' movie."

After a clip from the upcoming film that included a number of other Chevy vehicles, GM Vice President of Design Ed Welburn took to the stage to continue the saga.

"This last car is the actual styling mock-up that the producers saw when they came looking for vehicles to use in the new movie," said Welburn. "Of course, there was a working movie version built, but since no one outside of GM and the movie studio has ever seen the car before, I wanted to bring a version without all the wear and tear and scars of an action movie."

And with that, a new superstar—the Chevrolet StingRay Concept—was revealed.

"This vision concept is part of the free exploration of future products that I encourage our creative and talented design teams to develop," the design boss said. "The Corvette has an amazing design lineage and this StingRay concept pays homage to the 1959 StingRay Racer and 1963 Corvette StingRay Split-Window Coupe."

Prior to the conference, the Bumblebee Camaro was transformed into the "autobot" (shown on the front page of this Show Wrapup) that will be used for the movie. Towering almost 17 feet above the Chicago Auto Show floor, it was a major attraction for show-goers. Auto show attendees even had the chance to get their pictures taken in front of the transformed Bumblebee Camaro and can obtain their photo after leaving the show by visiting a Web site.



Hyundai R-Spec Genesis Coupe

Hyundai upped the performance ante in Chicago by introducing an R-Spec version of the all-new 2010 Genesis Coupe, designed to appeal to true enthusiasts who want a low starting price and the ability to tune their car to their own specifications.

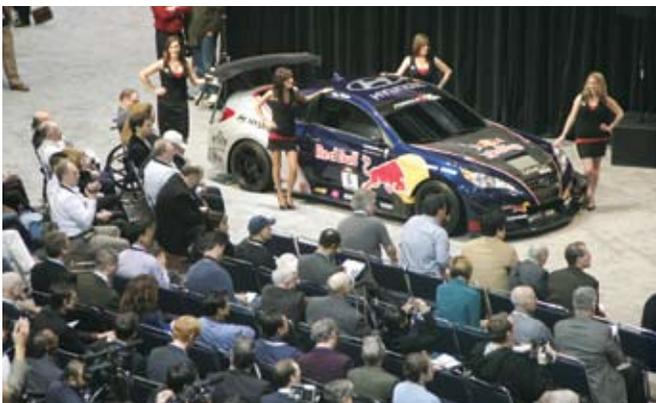
"When the colors of your new turbocharged rear-wheel-drive sport coupe are named after international racing circuits, you'd better have the performance and confidence to back it up," said John Krafcik, president and CEO, Hyundai Motor America.

With enthusiasts eagerly awaiting the upcoming launch of the 2010 Genesis Coupe, Hyundai is further adding to the excitement by teaming with Rhys Millen Racing and Red Bull Energy Drink to campaign in the high-energy sport of drift racing this year. In Chicago,

Hyundai unveiled its motorsports program in the U.S. with the help of drift champion Rhys Millen, who will fabricate and race a 550-horsepower Genesis Coupe in the Pikes Peak International Hill Climb, the Formula Drift Professional Drifting Championship and at select Redline Time Attack series events.

"Today's announcement puts the Genesis Coupe into three great motorsports series," said Krafcik. "We like to refer to the Genesis Coupe as the sinister sibling to the North American Car of the Year, the Genesis sedan and we look forward to Rhys harnessing every ounce of energy in the Coupe as he campaigns it."

The Genesis Coupe R-Spec will be priced at \$23,750, \$3,000 less than the 2.0T Track model, leaving tuners with extra cash for their own choice of aftermarket performance upgrades.



Dodge Ram 2500 and Chassis Cabs



During the Chicago media preview, Dodge further enhanced its commercial vehicle presence with the introduction of a "new crew" of commercial-grade work trucks: the new 2010 Dodge Ram 3500, 4500 and 5500 Chassis Cabs.

"This is the continuation of the reinvention of our Dodge Ram lineup," said Frank Klegon, Chrysler vice president of product development. "Over the past five years, Dodge has gained market share in the heavy-duty pickup segment, and to stay on that track, Dodge keeps innovating. Our new 2010 Dodge Ram 2500 and 3500 pickups will continue to build on our momentum."

"Our new 2010 Dodge Ram 2500 and 3500 pickups continue to build on Dodge Ram's leadership in the Heavy-Duty pickup segment," added Scott Kunselman, vice president of Chrysler's Jeep/Truck Product Team. "Our Ram Heavy-Duty pickups reinforce Dodge Ram's bold and powerful reputation and provide improved capability in critical areas of the segment."

Offering more room, comfort and storage capability, the new 2010 Dodge Ram 3500, 4500 and 5500 Chassis Cabs feature an all-new crew cab. Crew cabs currently account for approximately 20 percent of the Class 3-5 market. The new Crew Cab adds six inches of legroom

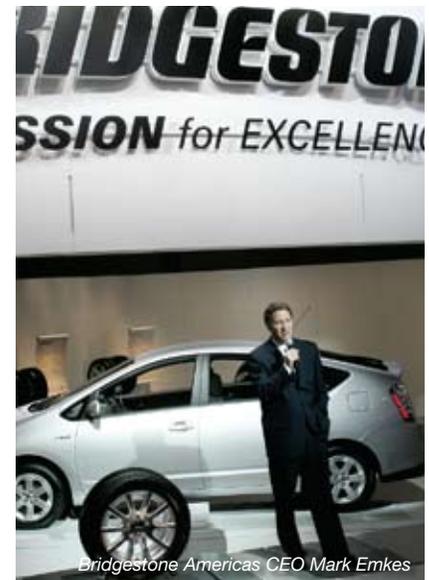
compared to the Quad cab it replaces. Easy entry and exit is assured with full-access rear doors that open 85 degrees.

Bridgestone Ecopia EP100

Bridgestone Americas, Inc. revealed its latest environmentally-friendly tires in conjunction with a new safety initiative. The new environmentally-friendly tire is the Ecopia EP100, that enjoys longer tread life than a conventional tire because of its low-rolling resistance. This feature enables the consumer to save money on fuel while lowering CO2 emissions.

The EP100 is the first Ecopia aftermarket product for North America and is primarily targeted for fuel-efficient vehicles such as the Toyota Prius, as well as electric and hybrid vehicles.

Bridgestone is also attempting to improve safe driving practices of all drivers, primarily targeting youth. The company has developed successful new and creative safety programs in the past. This year the company is launching its new safety initiative "Think Before You Drive." This new program is an online safety initiative that gives site visitors the opportunity to take a road safety quiz for chances to win prizes, view tire and driving safety lessons, play safety-related games, read fun facts and watch the winning videos of a past initiative, the Safety Scholars program.

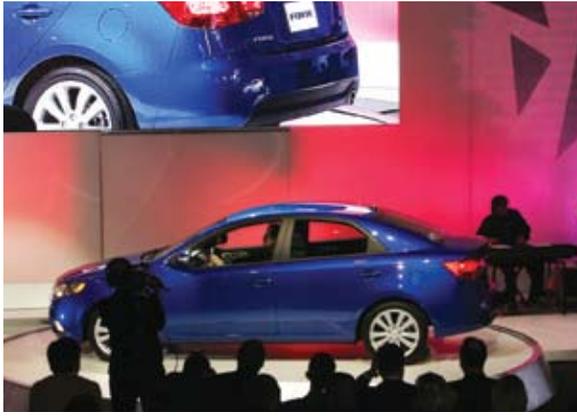


Bridgestone Americas CEO Mark Emkes



GMC Wins Pet Safety Award

GMC Executive Director of Advertising and Promotion Cheryl Catton (left) was joined by Bark Buckle UP Pet Safety Expert Christina Selter (right) and Boomer in the back of a GMC Acadia in Chicago. The GMC Acadia was the recipient of the 2009 Pet Safe Vehicle of Choice award as voted on by first responders, safety experts and pet industry leaders.



Kia Forte

Kia Motors America used the Chicago show to introduce the all-new 2010 Kia Forte compact sedan. Forte blends Kia's exciting new design direction under the tutelage of Peter Schreyer, Kia Motors' chief design officer, with a multitude of standard features. The 2010 Kia Forte will go on sale in North America in late spring or early summer of 2009.

"Kia Motors' product line is rapidly evolving and the Forte compact sedan is another head turner," said B.M. Ahn, group president and CEO, Kia Motors America and Kia Motor Manufacturing Georgia. "The Forte is an aggressively stylish blend of comfort and practicality—and with a host of standard features it provides the great quality and value that consumers have come to expect from Kia vehicles."

Tom Loveless, Kia Motors North America vice president of sales, emphasized Kia's goal for its customers to "Save more. Worry less," referencing current rough economic times. He discussed Kia's economic responsibility owing to a target of manufacturing more than half of the vehicles it makes in the U.S. by 2013. Additionally, during this time of transition, Kia will continue to expand the company in an effort to stimulate more than 9,000 jobs by 2010.

Suzuki Equator

Suzuki emphasized its commitment to product by reinforcing the release of the Equator line of pick-up trucks that first made their debut at last year's Chicago show.

"With the arrival of the all-new Equator, we were presented with a tremendous opportunity to extend the awareness of our adventurous brand spirit to a new group of vehicle enthusiasts," said Gene Brown, vice president of marketing, PR and product planning, American Suzuki Automotive Operations. "The three custom trucks Suzuki we're unveiling in Chicago allow us a similar opportunity to creatively extend our relationship with the editorial teams that help us communicate that very message."

"Despite their reputation, trucks and SUVs still account for 51 percent of the U.S. auto market," said Brown.

The three unveiled truck models were constructed by automotive magazines including "Off-Road and Truckin'" and "4-Wheel & Off-Road." The "Street Shark," "Project Two-Face" and "Ultimate Off-Road Equator" all built from the basic "4x4 of the Year" formula to engage the truck customizing market.



Acura Reveals V6 TSX

Reporters scrum with Acura's Jeff Conrad after its news event in Chicago.



Acura used the Chicago show's media preview to reveal its new V-6 model for the TSX sports sedan line-up. The Acura TSX sedan provides buyers and enthusiasts more power than previous sedans by adding to the great model. In the new model, one can find leading edge technology in the optional "tech pack" as well as improved acceleration and handling. The new 280 hp V-6 also adds an even sportier look and feel to the already sporty nature of the popular TSX sedan.

"I tip my hat, too, to the Chicago Auto Show for coming up with a solution to help keep expenses reasonable for manufacturers to hold press conferences during this difficult economic time," said Jeff Conrad, Acura vice president of sales.

During this economic downtime, Acura plans to review every product in their line-up in order to learn, adjust and improve every aspect of their vehicles in order to position itself for when the market recovers. Conrad said this is the first shot in a barrage of Acura product news that will see major improvements and enhancements this year to almost every sedan and SUV in the Acura lineup.

"The current economy has certainly thrown us and every other automotive manufacturer a curve," he concluded. "But at Acura we will use this opportunity to learn, to adjust, to evolve, to improve, and when the market regains its footing—and it will—we will be a stronger, more vital company than ever before."

“MotorWeek” Awards

“For more than a decade, the Chicago show has provided the stage for presentation of the MotorWeek Drivers’ Choice Awards,” said John Davis, veteran host and executive producer of “MotorWeek.” The categories span 14 different categories, including “Best of the Year,” “Best Small Car,” “Best Minivan,” and “Best Dream Machine,” and others.

Davis addressed attending media with an overview of the legendary TV show. 2009 year marks the 29th season of the show with new technology and benefits including podcasts, HD broadcasts and syndication on the Spanish television network “V-me” in the immediate future.

Featured in Chicago was the coveted MotorWeek “Driver’s Choice Award,” presented to the Volkswagen Jetta TDI Clean Diesel.

Volkswagen America Chief Operating Officer Mark Barnes received the “Best of the Year” award. He described the vehicle as eco-friendly, fun and roomy.



Anniversary MX5 Miata

This year marks the Mazda MX5 Miata’s 20th Anniversary and the newest iteration was introduced where it all started—in Chicago. According to Jim O’Sullivan, Mazda North America operations president and chief operating officer, the Mazda Miata was not expected to last when it was first introduced to the market. Today, Mazda has sold more than 900,000 MX5 Miatas, earning the vehicle a place in the “Guinness Book of World Records” as the most popular sports car ever built.

O’Sullivan said, “Everything we do has the soul of a sports car.” If the two-seat roadster Miata isn’t desired by some, the rest of our model line-up has multiple options for those who still want that “race car feeling.”

The new Miata has a refreshed exterior look with new front and rear facias. The interior has also been updated along with the engine, resulting in better fuel efficiency. The Mazda Miata exhibit on the show floor featured not only the newest MX5, but a retrospective array of 14 different iterations of the storied and popular sports car.

Subaru Shares the Love

Subaru opened Day Two of the Chicago media preview by highlighting details from their “Share the Love” event, an idea inspired by “caring” bumper stickers. The program is based on the love that owners have for their Subaru vehicles. Tim Mahoney, Subaru senior vice president and chief marketing officer, explained that the company introduced the concept when the economy hit an all-time low.

“We used the strategy that you can love a new car and used that to show how great our brand truly is,” said Mahoney. “Even though automotive industry sales declined, Subaru sales continued to rise. Due to Subaru’s efforts, the company was the only full-line manufacturer to post a sales increase in 2008.

“While the industry zagged, we kind of zigged,” said Mahoney.

Extending the automaker’s, “Love. It’s What Makes a Subaru, a Subaru” campaign, the program raised an astonishing \$4.6 million for charities during its duration. In Chicago, five groups were presented checks from the program: Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Habitat for Humanity International, Meals on Wheels Association of America, the National Wildlife Federation and The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.



“Engaging the Blogosphere” Conference

In an industry that's changing, it's not only product that's in flux, but the way in which the industry is promoted, marketed and reported upon that's changing, as well. For the first time (outside of a phone conversation or over a “tall frosty one”) the Chicago Auto Show gave media, PR reps and manufacturers a chance to put a more formal face on the challenges of new media by producing its “Engaging the Blogosphere” conference.

Gene Cameron and Chance Parker of J.D. Power offered background data on car buyers' love of shopping for their cars on the Net, saying that, “91 percent of buyers say they go to research vehicles” prior to purchase. Additionally, they said that more than 60 percent of dealers have engaged online quotes and information for customers.

They offered their positions on how dealers and the industry are changing their business models and practices to accommodate this ever-growing group, especially in how the industry is trying

to figure out how to measure the effectiveness of blogs—both professional and hobbyist. Data they had compiled during the run-up for the Chevy Volt was used as an example of how blogs and social media have become meaningful part of the exposure a vehicle gets.

Following the presentation, the changing face of media coverage was discussed—and at several points in great spirit—in a panel format. Conference panelists included Chevrolet Communications Director Terry Rhadigan; AutoWeek Editor/Associate Publisher Dutch Mandel; AutoBlog.com Editor-in-Chief John Neff; and KickingTires Editor David Thomas. All were kept in line—and lively—by the masterful moderation of Jason Vines.

Two breakout sessions followed. The first conducted by GolinHarris public relations social media expert Rick Wion, who discussed social media trends and effective communication strategies. The second group was directed by Google Automotive Industry Sales and Operations Manager Seth Barron, who discussed potential online revenue streams best characterized as, “How does someone make a buck at this?”

The conversations held in both breakout sessions demonstrated the need for further discussion about blogging and social media, and the necessity for both traditional and new media to peacefully coexist. From all quarters, what we've heard on the phones and read online, it's apparent that the time allotted in Chicago might have been a bit short to accommodate the topic fully—but was very well received. Sounds like a reprise next February might be in order!

IntelliChoice.com BOVY Awards

IntelliChoice.com announced the winners of its annual “Best Overall Value of the Year” awards for 2009 cars, trucks, crossovers and SUVs at the nation's most influential consumer auto show.

“The BOVY Awards are an essential guide at a time when most consumers are carefully watching their wallets,” said James Bell, editor of IntelliChoice.com. “A vehicle's Cost of Ownership has gone from ‘nice to know’ to ‘need to know’ when comparing possible purchases.”

Bell also noted the strong presence of hybrids on the 2009 BOVY list, with hybrids winning eight out of 30 segments.

“Even more hybrids and alternative-fuel vehicles are coming online in 2009, including trucks and SUVs,” said Bell. “Hybrids have consistently offered excellent value along with their inherent fuel savings, so we are not surprised to find more on our list. It is also significant to note that the first ‘Clean Tech’ diesel, the Jetta TDI SportWagen, has joined this illustrious roster.”

This year, IntelliChoice.com identified thirty-five winning models by segment and class, with eight overall category winners, including one tie. The overall category winners were:

Best Car Value Under \$24,000 - Toyota Prius

Best Car Value Over \$24,000 - MINI Cooper Convertible

Best Crossover/SUV Value Under \$28,000 - Mercury Mariner Hybrid and Ford Escape Hybrid (tie)

Best Crossover/SUV Value Over \$28,000 - Lexus RX

Best Truck Value Under \$26,000 - Toyota Tacoma 2WD

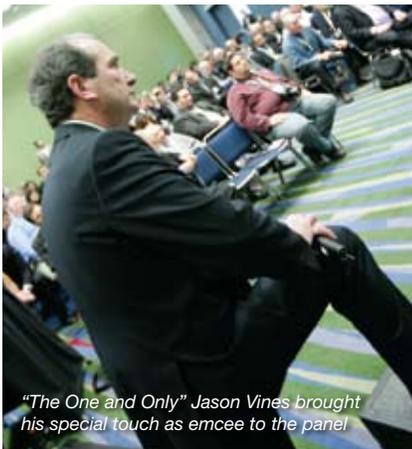
Best Truck Value Over \$26,000 - GMC Sierra Crew Cab Hybrid

Best Van Value Under \$26,000 - Honda Odyssey

Best Van Value Over \$26,000 - Chevrolet Express 1500



Panelists Dutch Mandel (from left), Terry Rhadigan, John Neff and David Thomas



“The One and Only” Jason Vines brought his special touch as emcee to the panel

First Look Raises \$1.8 million

Like everyone else, Chicagoans are feeling the economy's sluggishness. Still, they dug deep for the Chicago Auto Show's benevolent event, First Look for Charity, and raised more than \$1.8 million for 18 participating nonprofits. And two attendees left with the keys to new vehicles.

More than 7,000 people attended this year's First Look for Charity, helping to generate \$1,856,025. The event was held the evening before the annual auto show opened its 10-day public run.



"First Look for Charity is a great instrument for the area's new-car dealers to show the positive impact they have on their community," said Mark Scarpelli, chairman of this year's auto show. "All the benefiting charities are involved locally, so the money that's raised in Chicago stays in Chicago."

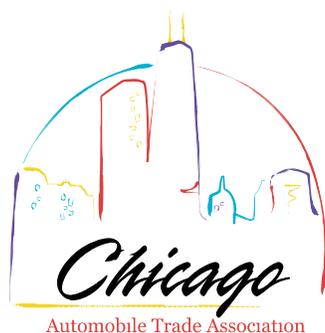
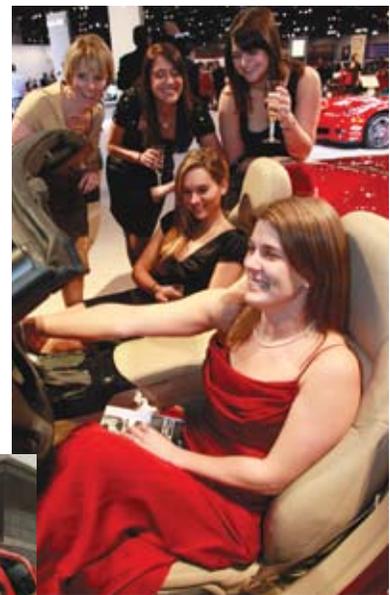
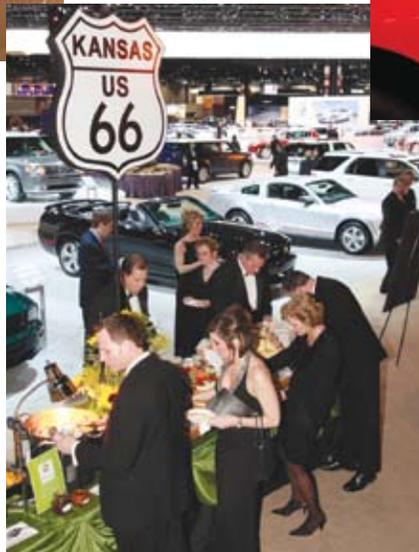
A highlight of the evening this year was the drawing for two grand prize vehicles: a



2009 Kia Borrego and a 2010 Chevrolet Camaro. This year's event awarded the Borrego to John Almy, 23, of Long Grove; and 27-year-old Bosun Kim likely will be the first on her Des Plaines block with the new Camaro.

Both winners cited their new cars as the first prizes they've ever won. Proceeds of Almy's ticket benefited The Cradle Foundation, and the Ray Graham Association for People with Disabilities reaped the proceeds from Kim's ticket. In all, 18 charities profited from the event.

Other organizations participating in the 2009 First Look for Charity included



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Advocate Hope Children's Hospital, Autism Speaks, Boys and Girls Clubs of Chicago, Campagna Academy, Cancer Health Alliance of Metropolitan Chicago, and Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Also, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet; Children's Memorial Hospital, Clearbrook, Evans Scholars Foundation, and Franciscan Community Benefit Services.

And, Misericordia, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago, Spina Bifida Association of Illinois, and St. Coletta's of Illinois Foundation.