



CATA Bulletin

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'04 Chicago Auto Show ready to roll

The automotive industry and the nation's largest auto show are ready to serve as the perfect sales appetite stimulant. With nearly 1,000 cars, trucks, SUVs, concepts and specialty vehicles on display in Chicago's gigantic McCormick Place, consumers will be able to enjoy every morsel of sheet metal eye candy at this year's Chicago Auto Show, Feb. 6-15.

"Many contend that before the economy is able to go from trot to gallop, all the pieces have to be in place," said 2004 auto show Chairman Mike McGrath. "From our perspective, the Chicago Auto Show is one of the puzzle pieces that's crucial to the recovery. Before any customer spends, there must be motivated to do so.

"There's no better way to create demand for product than displaying the industry's latest offerings in the truly remarkable exhibits that fill McCormick Place."

The automotive industry is in a huge roll-out cycle that will treat show-goers to more new products than ever before. Each of the segments of



production, from cars to trucks to SUVs to cross-overs, have new vehicles to peruse side by side.

"From the practical side," said CATA Chairman Casey Wickstrom, "the auto show offers a consumer the very best way to survey all of the brands and styles all in one place. The show visitor can see one brand just a short walk from another, so easy and repeated comparisons can be made.

"And they'll be able to judge the practicality of the industry's offerings and peer into the future, with spectacular concept vehicles that someday might grace their driveways—or their children's!"

Giving Back to the Community

While the auto show is one of the engines of the local and national economy, it also serves to help the community. First Look for Char-

ity, the CATA's annual black-tie preview of the Chicago Auto Show, this year is 6:30-10:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 5. The event, which benefits 16 local organizations, last year raised \$2.2 million.

"Over the 13 years we've produced 'First Look,' we've seen it grow into one of the highlight events on Chicago's social calendar," said Jerry H. Cizek III, CATA president and general manager of the auto show. "For the first time we've considered capping the number of tickets we sell in order to keep the event special for its patrons.

"While McCormick Place can hold a tremendous number of people, the idea of this night is to offer an elegant look at the show—replete with sumptuous hors d'oeuvres, champagne, wine and two very special drawings for spectacular cars."

Through the generosity of two manufacturers, two lucky patrons will be able to leave First Look for Charity with more than the good feeling of helping those in need.

"Lexus and the
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NADA to unveil 'Hire a Hero' plan at convention

Automotive Retailing Today, the National Institute of Automotive Service Excellence, and the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Army have teamed to create "Hire the Heroes," an initiative to place military veterans at the nation's dealerships.

The qualities demonstrated by military personnel are the same qualities every dealer looks for in an employee, and many military positions provide training that is easily transferred to a dealership job.

For example, successfully maintaining and repairing military transport vehicles could translate into a service tech job, and keeping inventory for the military may well qualify a soldier or sailor for a similar position at a dealership. Or, the communications skills of a military instructor might fill the requirements of a showroom sales position.

The "Hire a Hero" initiative was scheduled to be rolled out during the NADA Convention, Jan. 31-Feb. 2 in Las Vegas.

Auto show

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Chicagoland Lexus dealers have offered their elegant SC 430 hardtop convertibles as one of the grand prizes," said Cizek, "and Chicago's Acura dealers and Acura division of Honda have contributed their nimble and gutsy new TL sport-sedan to find its way into yet another patron's family.

"Two prizes worth more than \$100,000 is a nice way to put a cherry on the top of a very fun night!"

Tickets for the black-tie event are \$175 each and are available in advance by calling 630-424-1636 or at Will Call the night of the event.

Special Days

While any visit to the Chicago Auto Show is special, some are of particular note. Tuesday, Feb. 10 will feature programs and a ticket bargain. Women's Day offers a \$5 discount off regular admission for all women, who are invited to visit manufacturer displays where ongoing seminars on purchasing, leasing, servicing or playing in their vehicles will be held.

"While women are directly involved with the vast majority of automotive purchases, some feel that manufacturers are only targeting males," said Chicago Auto Show General Manager Jerry Cizek. "In reality, females are very high on the priority list for any manufacturer who is serious about

selling product—and that's all of them! The seminars held on Women's Day help clear up questions that some are shy about addressing."

As an extension of the charitable aspects of the expo, organizers will again feature The Chicago Auto Show Food Drive, which benefits the Chicago Christian Industrial League and their programs to feed the hungry. The drive will be held Wednesday through Friday, Feb. 11-13.

Patrons who bring three cans of food to the auto show will receive a \$5 discount off regular admission. Food drives tend to center around holiday seasons, but the problem goes on year-round. It's the belief of the CATA's Board of Directors that we can help those in need with this program by offering this weekday discount to show patrons.

Through a special arrangement with Jewel Food Stores, an in-store coupon will be given to those who purchase three cans of Jewel-brand canned goods and bring them to the show. The coupon will be good for a \$5 discount off full admission price during the Feb. 11-13 food drive.

Online Ticket Sales

Three years ago, the Chicago Auto Show experimented with online ticket sales via the Internet. The program has grown to the point where show organizers have increased the number of scanners for those who have purchased their tickets in the comfort of their home.

Those who wish to take advantage of the Web site sales can simply log on to www.drivechicago.com and click on the ticket icon. A credit card, computer and home printer will deliver a bar-coded ticket to the hands of the purchaser in the blink of an eye.

The Chicago Auto Show will be open to the public Feb. 6-15. Hours are 10 a.m.-10 p.m. daily, except Feb. 15 when the show closes at 8 p.m. Box offices will sell tickets up to one hour prior to closing every day. Admission is \$10 for adults; \$5 for pre-teens or free when accompanied by a paying parent; \$5 for senior citizens.

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Board members welcome any questions, concerns and comments from their fellow CATA members!

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Listings of items for sale are subject to the approval of the CATA. Candidates for employment must submit a full résumé to the Editor.

Review past editions at <http://cata.drivechicago.com/>

Jerry H. Cizek III President, Publisher
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GM takes top in Polk's overall loyalty category for 4th straight year

BMW of North America, DaimlerChrysler, Ford Motor Co., General Motors, Subaru of America and Volkswagen of America took loyalty honors for the 2003 model year, which ended Sept. 30, 2003, in January's announcement of the eighth annual Polk Automotive Loyalty Awards.

Overall make and model level loyalty rates increased by about one percentage point in 2003, while manufacturer loyalty increased by a half-percentage point, Polk reported. R. L. Polk & Co. tracks consumer loyalty among owners of new vehicles

"In a time of intense competition within the automotive industry, manufacturers are doing a good job of retaining their current customer base, which significantly contributes to their bottom line," said Stephen R. Polk, president and CEO of R. L. Polk & Co.

General Motors won in the Overall Manufacturer loyalty category for the fourth consecutive year. Ford Division won in the Overall Make loyalty category for the eighth straight year. In addition, four of Ford

Polk Automotive Loyalty Award winners 2003 model year

Category	Winner	Loyalty %	Avg. Loyalty % for category
Overall Awards			
Manufacturer Loyalty	General Motors*	67.2	54.6
Make Loyalty	Ford Division*	56.6	44.5
Vehicle Segment Awards			
Small Car	Ford Focus*	24.0	14.8
Midsize Car	Mercury Sable	29.4	19.6
Large Car	Mercury Grand Marquis	39.8	29.1
Luxury Car	Lincoln Town Car	41.1	19.6
Prestige Luxury Car	BMW 7 Series	31.4	24.1
Sports Car	Volkswagen GTI	16.5	9.7
Prestige Sports Car	Dodge Viper	31.5	16.8
Minivan	Chrysler Town & Country*	26.2	16.0
Compact Pickup Truck	Ford Ranger*	22.0	16.8
Full-size Pickup Truck	Ford F-Series*	37.4	34.9
Compact SUV	Subaru Forester	24.5	15.6
Midsize SUV	Mercury Mountaineer*	28.9	17.6
Full-size SUV	Ford Expedition	29.0	21.7
Prestige SUV	Lincoln Navigator	34.5	21.8

*also 2002 winner

Division's models won in the segment-level categories and five vehicles from Ford's sister divisions, Mercury and Lincoln, also won segment-level awards.

"Ford Motor Co. was very successful in 2003 in terms of retaining its customers, and this success is reflected in Ford winning multiple loyalty awards," Polk said. "New vehicle designs and improvements for the Expedition, Grand Marquis, Town Car and Navigator, as well as solid incentives on all winning Ford Motor Company vehicles helped secure this strong presence."

Many new leaders

Unlike previous model years, in 2003 there were just five repeat winners from 2002 within the segment level categories. New ve-

hicle winners emerged within all segments except the Small Car, Minivan, Compact Pickup, Full-Size Pickup, and Midsize SUV categories. Across the new segment level winners, four had won prior to 2002, including the Mercury Grand Marquis, Lincoln Town Car, BMW 7 Series, and the Subaru Forester.

"Strong players in each of these categories have re-emerged at the top of the rankings," said Polk's Mel-

issa Mullen-Travers. "Once a model ranks highest, ongoing efforts must be made to remain at the top of the list, like pricing strategies and product enhancements, to name a few."

To reflect the new-car marketplace expansion, two new segment categories were added to Polk's awards for 2003: Prestige Sports Car and Prestige SUV. Within the Prestige Sports Car segment, Dodge Viper

owners displayed the highest model loyalty rate. The Viper was completely redesigned for 2003, offering customers improved features and an updated look.

Polk research shows consistent improvement in loyalty rates following an existing model's redesign. The Lincoln Navigator captured the Prestige SUV category. The Navigator also had a redesign for the 2003 model year, as well as numerous financial incentives.

Bulletin on hiatus

The CATA Bulletin will take a one-issue break on Feb. 16, in deference to the 2004 Chicago Auto Show. The next edition is March 1.



Franchised New Car Dealers in the 8-county CATA area as of 1 January 2004

Car Line	Chicago only Ill.	Rest of Cook Cnty. Ill.	Lake Cnty. Ill.	DuPage Cnty. Ill.	McHenry Cnty. Ill.	Kane Cnty. Ill.	Will Cnty. Ill.	Lake Cnty. Ind.	Porter Cnty. Ind.	Total [prior] 7/1/2003	Total [present] 1/1/2004
Acura	0	4	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	9	9
Aston Martin	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Audi	1	3	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	8	8
Avanti	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Bentley	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
BMW	1	4	1	3	1	0	0	1	0	11	11
Buick	5	13	5	6	4	1	3	1	2	41	40
Cadillac	1	9	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	20	20
Chevrolet	7	23	7	9	5	5	7	6	2	71	71
Chrysler	7	14	6	4	4	3	3	5	2	48	48
Dodge	5	14	6	4	3	3	3	5	2	45	45
Ferrari	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Ford	8	20	7	9	4	4	6	5	2	65	65
GMC	1	11	3	4	3	1	2	1	2	29	28
Honda	4	10	3	2	1	2	1	2	0	25	25
Hummer	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	5	5
Hyundai	2	8	3	3	1	0	1	1	0	18	19
Infiniti	1	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
Isuzu	0	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	14	13
Jaguar	1	3	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	8	8
Jeep	7	14	4	3	3	3	3	4	2	43	42
Kia	2	7	3	4	1	0	1	2	0	20	20
Lamborghini	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Land Rover	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
Lexus	1	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	8	8
Lincoln	2	12	5	5	1	1	2	2	1	32	31
Lotus	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Maserati	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Mazda	1	7	4	2	1	1	1	0	1	18	18
Mercedes Benz	1	6	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	10	11
Mercury	2	12	6	5	2	1	3	2	2	36	35
Mini	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Mitsubishi	1	6	1	3	1	0	1	2	0	13	15
Nissan	3	12	3	3	1	2	2	2	1	29	29
Oldsmobile	0	7	1	1	3	2	4	0	2	29	20
Panoz	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Pontiac	4	14	4	4	3	2	2	4	2	39	39
Porsche	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
Rolls-Royce	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Saab	1	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	7	7
Saturn	1	6	3	2	0	2	1	1	0	15	16
Subaru	1	6	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	15	14
Suzuki	0	5	2	3	1	0	1	1	0	10	13
Toyota	4	12	2	4	1	1	1	2	1	28	28
Volkswagen	2	9	3	2	1	1	1	1	0	20	20
Volvo	1	4	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	10	10
# of Car lines	80	306	106	116	49	38	52	58	33	830	838
# of Outlets	53	210	62	85	25	26	27	40	13	542	541

NOTE: The difference between car line and outlet figures is the result of outlets that handle more than one car line. The measurements show that, over the past six months, the number of car lines sold increased slightly and the number of outlets is steady.