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2017 Chicago Auto Show getting set to rev its engines

Workers at McCormick Place have begun assembling the special lighting that will hang above the floor of the Chicago Auto Show. The public dates of the show are Feb. 11-20.

The floor will be show-ready Feb. 9, but plenty will be happening even before the ribbon-cutting ceremony on Feb. 11.

Concept & Technology Garage

With advancements in technology, safety features and tightening fuel economy standards, today's automobiles are becoming increasingly complex. The Concept & Technology Garage on Feb. 8 will give automotive media a great opportunity to take a deep dive into the latest concept cars, safety technologies and automotive telematics.

This year the Steel Market Development Institute (SMDI) is the presenting sponsor of the Concept & Technology Garage. SMDI representatives will be available to connect with

media and industry reps and will have promotional material on hand. SMDI also will provide a hospitality area featuring beverages and snacks.

"A natural outgrowth of our traditional concept car drive, the Concept & Technology Garage will give local and national media an opportunity to dig deeper into today's automotive tech," said Dave Sloan, Chicago Auto Show general manager.

"It's easy to report on fuel economy improvements or new safety features, but to actually understand how manufacturers implement new systems, that takes time. This

event will give journalists the opportunity to get a handle on all this new technology."

"What Drives Her"

The Chicago Auto Show has teamed with Female Factor, SEE **TWEETS**, PAGE 4



New Buyer's Guide, but existing form can still be used till next year

There is a new version of the Federal Trade Commission's Used-Car Buyer's Guide effective Jan. 27, but are dealers required to use it beginning on Day 1? The answer is yes and no.

The final FTC rule permits dealers to use their existing stock of Buyer's Guides for up to one year (until Jan. 27, 2018). However, if a manufacturer's warranty is still in effect for a used vehicle and that is disclosed, the following language must follow the "Full/Limited Warranty" disclosure:

"(a) "Manufacturer's Warranty still applies. The manufacturer's original warranty has not expired on the vehicle;" (b) "Manufacturer's Used Vehicle Warranty Applies;" or (c) "Other Used Vehicle Warranty Applies," as applicable, followed by the statement, "Ask the dealer for a copy of the warranty document and an explanation of warranty coverage, exclusions, and repair obligations."

Completion of the revised guide is generally similar to the current guide

and the FTC has provided directions and guidance at www.ftc.gov. The most substantial change is the addition of optional checkboxes for disclosing manufacturer and other used-car warranties, such as "certified" used-car warranties.

When completing the revised Buyers Guide:

A. Dealers should still ensure that the applicable dealer warranty box is checked. Either:

- a. "As-Is" or "Implied Warrant-
- SEE
- BUYER'S GUIDE**
- , PAGE 2

Sedgwick deflects Q4 2016 claims

One hundred and eight CATA dealer members reported a combined 328 unemployment claims during the fourth quarter of 2016 to Sedgwick Claims Management Services, Inc., which has been serving CATA dealers under various names since 1979. The company's efforts saved those dealers a total of \$827,163 in benefit charges by contesting the claims.

By comparison, quarterly claims were as high as 949 in the fourth quarter of 2009. The improving economic situation has dramatically decreased the amount of claims processed and layoffs in the industry.

Sedgwick, Inc. monitors any unemployment claims against its clients and contests all unwarranted claims and charges. The company counts about 235 CATA dealers among its clients.

Claims that can be protested and subsequently denied help minimize an employer's unemployment tax rate. The rate can vary between 0.55 percent and 7.35 percent of each employee's first \$12,960 in earnings.

The 2016 average unemployment tax rate & new employer rate for Illinois employers is 3.4129605 percent, or about \$447 annually per employee (\$460 in 2016). The rate continues to inch down from 2007, as the Illinois economy continues to improve.

"The unemployment tax is really the only controllable tax in business, in that it's experience-driven," said Paul Schardt of Sedgwick. An ex-employee's claim affects the employer's tax rate for three years.

For new enrollees, client fees amount to \$2.85 per employee, per fiscal quarter. For the fee, Sedgwick monitors all unemployment claims; files any appeals; prepares employer witnesses for hearings, as necessary; represents the client at any hearings; verifies the benefit charge statements; and confirms the client's unemployment tax rate.

For more information and information on how to retain Sedgwick's unemployment services, please call Bruce Kijewski at (773) 824-4322 or email him at Bruce.Kijewski@Sedgwick.com.

First Look for Charity to raise millions for 18 area nonprofits

Eighteen Chicago area charities will benefit from more than \$2.5 million expected to be raised by a black-tie gala held in conjunction with the 2017 Chicago Auto Show in February. Now in its 26th year, First Look for Charity is held the evening before the auto show opens to the public.

The coming "First Look" event, on Feb. 10, gives benefactors the chance to see the hundreds of new vehicles on display amid an elegance not present when many more people converge on McCormick Place during the auto show's 10-day consumer run, Feb. 11-20.

About 10,000 attendees at the charity gala will be treated to hors d'oeuvres; champagne, wine, beer and soft drinks; and special entertainment presented by the automakers in their displays.

Benefactors in attendance also have the chance to win a 2017 Acura TLX and a 2017 Lexus NX. Tickets are \$275 each and can be purchased at www.firstlookforcharity.org. Ticket proceeds can be directed to any or all of the charities.

Buyers Guide

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ties Only" (depending on your state law) or

b. "Dealer Warranty" (along with "Full" or "Limited" as applicable)

B. If another, non-dealer, used-car warranty applies, a dealer may (but is not required to) check the appropriate box for that as well.

The Buyers Guide must be displayed prominently and conspicuously on or in a vehicle when a car is available for sale. This means it must be in plain view and both sides must be visible.

The Guide can be hung from the rear-view mirror inside the car or on a side-view mirror outside the car. It also can be placed under a windshield wiper and attached to a side window. A Guide in a glove compartment, trunk or under the seat is not conspicuous because it is not in plain sight.

Marketplace

Controller 12+ years dealership experience. Extensive knowledge with CDK and Reynolds & Reynolds dealership management software as well as QuickBooks and Peachtree, and many years of multi-site, centralized accounting office experience. Hire/train new employees. Conscientious, dependable, highly organized and energetic.

Anonymous, call CATA at (630) 495-2282 for contact details.

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Review past editions dating to 1998 or search by subject at www.cata.info.

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Trump talks jobs with Detroit's — but not foreign — automakers

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump touted his tax-cutting and regulation-reducing agenda in a Jan. 24 meeting with some of his favorite targets: U.S. automakers.

Trump said his goal is to make the U.S. more appealing for manufacturing investments and will seek to lower corporate taxes and simplify regulations.

“We want regulations, but we want regulations that mean something,” Trump told leaders of the Detroit Three auto companies, General Motors, Ford, and Fiat Chrysler, as a breakfast meeting got underway at the West Wing of the White House.

Following the hour-long meeting, Ford CEO Mark Fields, GM CEO Mary Barra and Fiat Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne told reporters that the meeting was a productive one, with Fields saying Trump “is very focused on policies that will grow investment and jobs here in America ... which is what we talked about.”

“I think as an industry we’re excited about working together with the president and his administration on tax policies, on regulation, and on trade, to really create a renaissance in American manufacturing,” said Fields.

Barra added that she sees “a huge opportunity” for working with the new president to “improve the environment, improve safety and improve job creation.”

While Trump has criticized American car makers for being, in his view, too willing to move operations to other countries, especially Mexico, under the North American Free Trade Agreement, he told them before their meeting that the government will try to make it easier to build plants in the United States.

“I want new plants to be built here for cars sold here!” Trump had tweeted before the meeting.

White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer said later that the president discussed with the automakers “regulatory

reform and modernized safety standards” and is concerned with “how best to streamline” permitting for manufacturing plants in the U.S., believing that “excessive regulations” are at least partly to blame for them being built overseas. Trump signed an executive order directing his administration to support U.S. manufacturing “through expedited reviews of and approvals for proposals” and “reductions in regulatory burdens affecting domestic manufacturing.”

Spicer also said Trump expects to have Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross report on how to improve permitting for new plants once he is confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

Also attending the auto meeting was former Missouri Gov. Matt Blunt, president of the American Automotive Policy Council, a trade organization, as well as Trump senior adviser and son-in-law Jared Kushner, chief strategist Steve Bannon and chief of staff Reince Priebus.

Asked at a press briefing why Trump had automakers in on just his second full workday in the White House, Spicer said, “He thinks that (the industry) is vital to our manufacturing base but he’s going to have a lot of meetings.”

What wasn’t clear was whether the subject of potential tariffs came up. Trump has repeatedly said that he wants to renegotiate NAFTA to keep more jobs in the U.S. instead of seeing automakers and other manufacturers use low-cost labor in Mexico to maintain profits and has threatened large tariffs to do force them to do so if necessary.

Critics and industry analysts say a large border tariff, such as a 35 percent figure Trump has frequently mentioned, would either lead to higher prices on new vehicles, causing sales to drop, and would lead to financial losses for the automakers.

Fields, Barra and Marchionne also did not say if specifics were discussed as to what a renegotiation of NAFTA,

which has been in effect since 1994, would look like or possibly mean to them.

But they singled out Trump’s decision to formally withdraw the U.S. from a multinational Pacific Rim trade deal, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, as being good news for automakers based on their belief that it wasn’t tough enough on Asian countries manipulating their currencies to protect domestic markets.

“We’ve been very vocal both as an industry and as a company and we’ve repeatedly said that the mother of all trade barriers is currency manipulation,” Fields said. “And TPP failed in meaningfully dealing with that. We appreciate the president’s courage to walk away from a bad trade deal.”

The TPP had effectively been dead for months after Republican leaders said they wouldn’t vote on it, though that only really became the case once Trump — who railed against TPP throughout the campaign — became the de facto nominee.

Car and truck production is among the reasons Trump is pushing changes to U.S. trade policy, claiming other nations are taking advantage of “bad deals” that cost American jobs, even though there is widespread evidence that many auto jobs and other manufacturing jobs over the decades have been lost to productivity gains and technological advancements.

Renegotiating NAFTA could be tricky, though many experts believe an update is due. If talks stray into suggestions about protective tariffs such as Trump has suggested, however, it could make for difficult negotiations.

Free trade has been a hallmark of Republican politics for decades, and some GOP lawmakers have criticized Trump’s approach. They said it would lead to less trade abroad and higher prices abroad, and, in the case of the spiked TPP, will give China too big a say in Asian economies.

Auto show

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Women in Automotive Conference and She Buys Cars to co-host its first networking reception, luncheon and award ceremony on Feb. 8.

Bridget Brennan, author of “Why She Buys” and CEO of Female Factor, a Chicago-based consulting and training firm, will moderate the event that will honor and celebrate women with integral roles in the automotive industry.

“Women are the engine of the consumer economy, and they are critically important to the automotive industry as both consumers and workforce talent,” Brennan said.

During the “What Drives Her” event, attendees will hear insights from Brennan’s international best-seller book such as the need for marketers and salespeople to understand women’s beliefs, values and sensitivities.

According to She Buys Cars Co-founder Scotty Reiss: “Women fall in love with the needs that they have and they search to have those needs filled. They look for economy, they look for comfort, for their second row and third row passengers. They look for charging capabilities for devices in the second and third row. You don’t see that advertised on Sunday football.”

“What Drives Her” will be Feb. 8 at McCormick Place, immediately prior to the Concept & Technology Garage. The Chicago Auto Show will stream the event via Facebook Live.

FCA’S Gilles to open Media Preview

The show’s Media Preview will open Feb. 9 with the Midwest Automotive Media Association breakfast. MAMA will present the Family Vehicle of the Year award and introduce keynote speaker Ralph Gilles, head of design, FCA - Global.

“It’s an honor to have someone of Ralph’s caliber to open the nation’s largest auto show,” said Mike McGrath, 2017 Chicago Auto Show chairman. “FCA has long supported the Chicago Auto Show with executive addresses, important product introductions, indoor test tracks and the largest display it produces worldwide.”

GM’s Ammann to keynote ECC luncheon

General Motors President Dan Ammann will be the keynote speaker at the Economic Club of Chicago Luncheon during the Media Preview of this year’s Chicago Auto Show. The luncheon will be Feb. 9.

“From electric propulsion to innovative connected technologies, General Motors is an industry leader,” said Dave Sloan, Chicago Auto Show general manager. “As such, Dan is perfectly positioned to discuss how the auto industry moves forward over the next decade.”

The ECC Luncheon at the Chicago Auto Show is a cornerstone event of the Chicago Auto Show Media Preview. Past speakers include Bill Ford, Jim Press, Henrik Fisker, Ralph Gilles, Jonathan Browning, José Muñoz and Yoshi Inaba. Last year, Lex Kerssemakers, senior vice president, The Americas Region and president and CEO Volvo Cars of North America, was the guest speaker ECC Luncheon.

Indoor test tracks

Next month’s show will feature two additional indoor test tracks, swelling the total number of indoor riding opportunities for attendees to five. Returning are Camp Jeep, FCA multi-brand track and Toyota’s RAV4 & Highlander Experience. New for 2017 is a Ram proving ground and Mercedes-Benz’ “Iron Schöckl.”

Named after the Schöckl, a mountain in Austria, the Iron Schöckl challenges the Mercedes-Benz G-Class by forcing it to undertake a 45-degree incline. Then, at the top, the G-Class enters a movable platform, teeters to point downward and undertakes a 45-degree descent.

Ram’s proving ground boasts six stations designed to highlight the pickup’s capabilities. They include an active level station, construction culverts, torque pull, towing demonstration, mountain climb and high-wedge turn.

“With two additional test track opportunities, we think more than 80,000 attendees will take rides on the show floor this year,” said McGrath, the show chairman. “Our indoor test tracks combine with our outdoor test drive opportunities to create a show experience unlike any other in the nation.” Test tracks have been a Chicago Auto Show staple for 12 years. Back in 2005, Jeep built its first indoor test track at the Chicago Auto Show, and the brand has returned every year since.

Special days during the show’s 10 public days this year include:

Women’s Day, Wednesday, Feb. 15

Women admitted for \$7. Manufacturers present special women-oriented programs on the purchase and lease of cars and maintenance.

Chicago Auto Show Food Drive, Feb. 15-17

Show patrons who bring three cans of food will receive a coupon for a \$7 adult admission. All food will be donated to A Safe Haven Foundation.

Telemundo Hispanic Heritage Day, Feb, 17

Since 2007, Telemundo has partnered with the Chicago Auto Show to present special events including autograph signings to music performances.. more info

Family Day, Monday, Feb. 20

Family-friendly events with fun games, prizes and entertainment.