

# March New-Car Sales To Hit Highest Monthly Total Since August 2007 According To Kelley Blue Book

## Volkswagen, Honda Expected to Lead in Automaker Gains; Trucks Continue to Lead Segment Sales

IRVINE, Calif., March 26, 2013 [PRNewswire/](#) -- [New-car sales](#) will remain steady at a 15.2 million seasonally adjusted annual rate (SAAR) in March. This marks a 3.2 percent increase from last year, according to Kelley Blue Book [www.kbb.com](http://www.kbb.com), the leading provider of new and used car information. However, after adjusting for selling days in March, sales are set to improve by more than 7 percent. Although the percentage improvements are slightly slower than the first two months of the year, the expected 1,450,000 unit total is set to be the highest monthly sales total since August 2007.

(Logo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20121108/LA08161LOGO>)

"Sales will be boosted by record low interest rates and a slowly improving job market, which recently saw the unemployment rate and new unemployment claims fall to five-year lows," said Alec Gutierrez, senior market analyst of automotive insights for Kelley Blue Book. "In addition, with attractive financing and ample inventory to choose from, many people receiving tax refunds will use their returns toward a down payment on a new vehicle this month."

At the manufacturer level, Kelley Blue Book expects year-over-year gains in March to be modest, due in part to one fewer selling day this year. However, [Volkswagen](#) and [Honda](#) will lead the way with expected gains of 9.6 and 8.7 percent, respectively. While leading in terms of year-over-year improvement, this contrasts with the double-digit growth Volkswagen posted throughout 2012. Honda's sales will be led by its all-new Accord, which is up 51 percent from last year through the first two months. The [new Accord](#) has been flying off showroom floors since its arrival and is poised to challenge the [Toyota Camry](#) for the top spot in the ultra-competitive mid-size segment.

### Volkswagen and Honda to Lead Gains in March

Manufacturer	Sales Volume <sup>1</sup>			Market Share <sup>2</sup>		
	Mar-13	Mar-12	YOY %	Mar-13	Mar-12	YOY %
General Motors	246,000	231,052	6.5%	17.0%	16.4%	0.5%
Ford Motor Company	233,000	222,884	4.5%	16.1%	15.9%	0.2%
Toyota Motor Company	209,000	203,282	2.8%	14.4%	14.5%	-0.1%
Chrysler Group	169,000	163,381	3.4%	11.7%	11.6%	0.0%
American Honda	138,000	126,999	8.7%	9.5%	9.0%	0.5%
Nissan North America	130,500	136,317	-4.3%	9.0%	9.7%	-0.7%
Hyundai-Kia	119,500	127,233	-6.1%	8.2%	9.1%	-0.8%
Volkswagen	53,000	48,379	9.6%	3.7%	3.4%	0.2%
<b>Total<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>1,450,000</b>	<b>1,404,623</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

<sup>1</sup>Historical data pulled from OEM sales announcements

<sup>2</sup>Kelley Blue Book Automotive Insights

<sup>3</sup>Includes brands not shown

### Trucks Expected to Lead Segment Gains Once Again

With attractive incentives still widely available, Kelley Blue Book anticipates sales of full-size pickup trucks to improve 14.9 percent year-over-year in March; the best among all segments.

"Although incentives have helped boost truck sales in recent months, a steady climb in housing starts will continue to support the truck market even if incentive spending declines," said Gutierrez. "Incentives aren't expected to come down anytime soon, especially with a more than 90-day supply of Ford F-Series, Chevrolet Silverado and Ram 1500 pickups available for sale nationwide. With supply still ample and incentives plentiful, consumers looking for a new pickup truck should not hesitate to pull the trigger."

While truck sales are expected to lead industry sales gains, mid-size cars remain at the top of most shoppers' minds. The Honda Accord, Toyota Camry and Ford Fusion were among the highest researched vehicles on KBB.com in March 2013, with mid-size sedans accounting for 13.6 percent of overall new-car shopper activity on the site. With so many attractive vehicle options, recently refreshed for the 2013 model year, Kelley Blue Book anticipates mid-size cars to continue to lead the industry with 18.4 percent market share.

### Truck Sales Continue to Drive Industry Growth

Segment	Sales Volume <sup>1</sup>			Market Share <sup>2</sup>		
	Mar-13	Mar-12	YOY %	Mar-13	Mar-12	YOY %
Mid-Size Car	267,000	269,716	-1.0%	18.4%	19.2%	-0.8%
Compact Car	219,000	216,479	1.2%	15.1%	15.4%	-0.3%
Compact Crossover	172,500	159,068	8.4%	11.9%	11.3%	0.6%
Full-Size Pickup Truck	170,000	147,905	14.9%	11.7%	10.5%	1.2%
Subcompact Car	64,000	68,612	-6.7%	4.4%	4.9%	-0.5%
<b>Total<sup>3</sup></b>	1,450,000	1,404,623	3.2%	-	-	-

<sup>1</sup> Historical data pulled from OEM sales announcements

<sup>2</sup> Kelley Blue Book Automotive Insights

<sup>3</sup> Includes brands not shown

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