

December New-Car Sales Close Record-Breaking Year, Up 13 Percent Year-Over-Year, According To Kelley Blue Book

Analysts Project 2016 Sales Could Reach 18 Million; Full-Size Trucks to Report Highest Sales Since 2007

IRVINE, Calif., Dec. 22, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- [New-vehicle sales](#) are expected to increase 13 percent year-over-year to a total of 1.7 million units in December 2015, resulting in an estimated 18 million seasonally adjusted annual rate (SAAR), according to Kelley Blue Book www.kbb.com, the only vehicle valuation and information source trusted and relied upon by both consumers and the automotive industry. December will cap the biggest year of U.S. new-car sales that the industry has ever seen, with total light vehicle sales of roughly 17.5 million, representing a 6.1 percent jump from 2014 totals. The previous high was 17.35 million units in 2000.



"December has become one of the biggest sales months of the year, helped by year-end targets and prominent holiday sales events," said Tim Fleming, analyst for Kelley Blue Book. "As we move into the new year, expect this strength to continue, although at a slower rate than this year. In 2016, Kelley Blue Book forecasts sales in the range of 17.5 million to 18 million units, which would represent another record-breaking year."

There are several factors that could disrupt the new-car sales momentum, including rising interest rates, an increasing supply of off-lease units that could weaken used-car prices, and increasing manufacturer incentive spending that Kelley Blue Book has seen in recent months, which could be representative of a slowdown in natural consumer demand.

Key Highlights for Estimated December 2015 Sales Forecast:

- In December 2015, new light-vehicle sales, including fleet, are expected to hit 1,700,000 units, up 13.1 percent from December 2014 and up 29.3 percent from November 2015.
- The seasonally adjusted annual rate (SAAR) for December 2015 is estimated to be 18 million, up from 16.8 million in December 2014 and down from 18.1 million in November 2015.
- Retail sales are expected to account for 84.3 percent of volume in December 2015, up from 83.4 percent in December 2014.

Best Month on Record Expected for Jeep; Hyundai-Kia Faces Challenges in Market Moving Away from Cars

As was the case for much of 2015, Fiat Chrysler is projected to do well in December, and the Jeep brand in particular, with expected growth of more than 15 percent.

"Fiat Chrysler has become increasingly dependent on Jeep to drive sales growth, and December should be the best month on record for the Jeep brand," said Fleming. "However, combined sales year-to-date of other Fiat Chrysler brands are slightly down in volume."

Hyundai and Kia are anticipated to have one of the largest percentage increases at 18 percent. However, sales this year have been propped up by an increase in fleet units. With a sales mix that heavily favors cars, Hyundai and Kia face challenges in a market that has shifted more toward SUVs and crossovers.

Manufacturer	Sales Volume ¹			Market Share ²		
	Dec-15	Dec-14	YOY %	Dec-15	Dec-14	YOY %
General Motors (Buick, Cadillac, Chevrolet, GMC)	299,000	274,483	8.9%	17.6%	18.3%	-0.7%
Ford Motor Company (Ford, Lincoln)	244,000	219,369	11.2%	14.4%	14.6%	-0.2%
Toyota Motor Company (Lexus, Scion, Toyota)	242,000	215,057	12.5%	14.2%	14.3%	-0.1%
Fiat Chrysler (Chrysler, Dodge, FIAT, Jeep, RAM)	223,000	193,261	15.4%	13.1%	12.9%	0.3%
American Honda (Acura, Honda)	152,000	137,281	10.7%	8.9%	9.1%	-0.2%
Nissan North America (Infiniti, Nissan)	137,000	117,318	16.8%	8.1%	7.8%	0.3%
Hyundai-Kia	130,000	110,094	18.1%	7.6%	7.3%	0.3%
Volkswagen Group (Audi, Volkswagen, Porsche)	58,000	56,571	2.5%	3.4%	3.8%	-0.4%
Total ³	1,700,000	1,503,478	13.1%	-	-	-

¹ Historical data from OEM sales announcements

² Kelley Blue Book Automotive Insights

³ Includes brands not shown

Full-Size Pickup Trucks to Reach Highest Sales Since 2007; Compact SUVs/Crossovers Most Popular Segment in 2015

With national gas prices at their lowest point since 2009, Kelley Blue Book expects full-size pickup trucks to be the top segment in December. This segment also was helped in 2015 by the new Ford F-Series and a surge from the Chevrolet Silverado, and the segment should report the highest sales total since 2007 at nearly 2.2 million units.

Helped by new models like the Chevrolet Trax and Jeep Renegade, as well as low gas prices, the compact SUV and crossover segment is projected to be the No. 2 segment in December, with expected growth of nearly 40 percent. This segment has led industry growth for the past three years, and 2015 will mark its first year as the most popular segment in the industry.

Segment	Sales Volume ¹			Market Share		
	Dec -15	Dec -14	YOY %	Dec -15	Dec -14	YOY %
Full-Size Pickup Truck	241,000	211,240	14.1%	14.2%	14.1%	0.1%
Compact SUV/Crossover	238,000	170,212	39.8%	14.0%	11.3%	2.7%
Mid-Size Car	216,000	199,993	8.0%	12.7%	13.3%	-0.6%
Compact Car	212,000	189,725	11.7%	12.5%	12.6%	-0.1%
Mid-Size SUV/Crossover	199,000	171,131	16.3%	11.7%	11.4%	0.3%
Total ²	1,700,000	1,503,478	13.1%	-	-	-

¹ Kelley Blue Book Automotive Insights

² Includes segments not shown

There are 28 sales days in December 2015, compared to 26 sales days in December 2014. All percentages are based on raw volume, not daily selling rate.

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