

Kelley Blue Book Celebrates 80 Years of Trust

Rich History Allows Company to Offer More Information, Services

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In 2006, Kelley Blue Book celebrates its 80th anniversary. The company has undergone many growth phases in its 80 years, from being a little book auto industry professionals carried in their back pockets to being the largest, most-visited third party automotive Web site for consumers online at kbb.com with more than 10 million unique visitors per month.

To view the Multimedia News Release, go to:
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When buying a new or used car, most people check to see the New Car Blue Book Value® of the new car they're buying, or the famous Blue Book® value of the used car they're selling or trading in. But how many people know the rich history behind the Blue Book brand?

"For 80 years Kelley Blue Book has been The Trusted Resource® for both consumers and the industry," said Stephen Henson, executive vice president of marketing and consumer business for Kelley Blue Book and kbb.com. "Why? Because we give both buyers and sellers the confidence they need when buying or selling either a new or used vehicle."

The company started back in 1926 when Les Kelley, an astute car dealer in Los Angeles, began creating a list of used vehicles and the amount of money he was willing to pay for them. Soon, other auto dealers and banks trusted his judgment so much as an accurate reflection of current values that they started to request the list for their own use. Kelley recognized that he had a unique business opportunity, and thus the Kelley Blue Book Official Guide® was born. He named the publication Blue Book after the Social Register, because it meant that one would find valuable information inside.

Les Kelley grew his dealership and publication businesses, and soon brought his brother Buster in to help him manage the dealership. The Kelley brothers were known for their innovative sales and marketing strategies and for having the first dealership in the nation to advertise on television. Both the car dealership and the industry publication flourished from the mid-1920s through the 1960s, and in 1962 he got out of the business of selling cars to focus solely on publishing the books.

The 1960s brought a natural evolution to Kelley Blue Book's traditional used-car valuations, as the company began producing a variety of both new and used vehicle information publications. Kelley Blue Book began tracking new car pricing in 1966, when it published the nation's first New Car Price Manual. The company was first to adjust for mileage when reporting used-car values. For the next 30 years, Kelley Blue Book remained solely an industry publication producing many different new and used vehicle value guides for the automotive and finance industries, until it published the first consumer edition of the guide in 1993.

The launch of kbb.com in 1995 was the catalyst for the company's greatest period of growth, catapulting Kelley Blue Book full-force into the consumer segment. At first the site only provided new vehicle pricing to consumers, but shortly thereafter the company offered information on both new and used vehicles free of charge to help both consumers and dealers facilitate their automotive transactions. Now in 2006, Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com is the No. 1 automotive information site on the Web. Kbb.com has been the most-visited automotive Web site for eight years in a row, as reported by J.D. Power and Associates. Research shows that one in every three vehicle buyers visits kbb.com prior to their purchase.

In addition to the massive growth of kbb.com, Kelley Blue Book's dealer products segment continues to create and sell innovative services for dealers. In 2004, Kelley Blue Book acquired CDMdata Inc., which provides products and services that help auto dealers quickly take pictures of vehicles, add detailed descriptions and upload them to the Web for car shoppers to see. Kelley Blue Book also has many other thriving business groups, including marketing research, syndication partnerships, dealer and auto manufacturer advertising on kbb.com and more.

Today, Southern California-based Kelley Blue Book continues to rapidly grow and succeed in both the consumer and industry segments. The company has become an integral part of the car-buying and selling process for both consumers and dealers, helping to facilitate all aspects of the transaction by providing detailed pricing information (including dealer invoice price, MSRP and New Car Blue Book transaction values), in-depth vehicle reviews, safety ratings, expert advice, dealer leads, comparison tools and much more on kbb.com.

For more information about Kelley Blue Book, visit www.kbb.com. For a complete history and timeline of Kelley Blue Book, visit www.kbb.com/history.

About Kelley Blue Book (kbb.com)

Since 1926, Kelley Blue Book, The Trusted Resource®, has provided vehicle buyers and sellers with the new and used vehicle information they need to accomplish their goals with confidence. The company's top-rated Web site, kbb.com, provides the most up-to-date pricing and values, including the New Car Blue Book® Value, which reveals what people actually are paying for new cars. The company also reports vehicle pricing and values via products and services, including software products and the famous Blue Book® Official Guide. Kbb.com is rated the No. 1 automotive information site by Nielsen//NetRatings and the most visited auto site by J.D. Power and Associates eight years in a row. No other medium reaches more in-market vehicle shoppers than kbb.com; nearly one in every three American car buyers performs their research on kbb.com.

Video: <http://www.prnewswire.com/mnr/kelleybluebook/25759>

SOURCE: Kelley Blue Book

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