

Ford, Chevy Lead kbb.com Share of Market Interest as Toyota, Honda Decline

PRNewswire
IRVINE, Calif.

Recent kbb.com Site Traffic Data Reveals Upward-Climbing, Downward-Declining Brands

IRVINE, Calif., June 23 /PRNewswire/ -- Kelley Blue Book, www.kbb.com, the leading provider of [new car](#) and [used car](#) information, today announces the results of the latest analysis by Kelley Blue Book Market Intelligence of recent kbb.com Web traffic patterns, including the top five upward-climbing and downward-declining brands in share of market interest for May 2009 when compared to May 2008.

Top Five Upward Climbers	Top Five Downward Decliners
1. Ford	1. Toyota
2. Chevrolet	2. Honda
3. Volkswagen	3. Saturn
4. Dodge	4. MINI
5. Kia	5. smart

In May 2009, as other domestic manufacturers dealt with issues of bankruptcy and dealer closings, Ford traffic saw the largest year-over-year share of market interest increase of any brand compared with May 2008. A leading contributor to Ford's climb was the Fusion, which saw a 120 percent increase in year-over-year interest from May 2008 to May 2009, likely due to the introduction and heavy promotion of Ford's 2010 Fusion and Fusion Hybrid models.

Brands affected by the negative economic news actually saw increases in share of market interest in May 2009 compared with the prior year. The second-highest upward climber of year-over-year share of market interest on kbb.com was Chevrolet. Despite the GM bankruptcy and dealer closings, Chevrolet's share of market interest surged ahead in May 2009, based largely on strong consumer interest in the new 2010 Camaro as well as the Traverse and Equinox crossovers. Other May 2009 share-of-market-interest climbers include Dodge, likely spurred by buyers looking for the deal of a lifetime after Chrysler declared bankruptcy.

One exception to the domestic surge is Saturn, whose decline is largely attributable to General Motors' decision to sell the brand as part of its massive government-assisted reorganization process. This sent a signal to consumers that the Saturn brand might cease to exist, which eroded its market share. GM subsequently has announced that Saturn Corporation will be acquired by the Penske Automotive Group, an announcement that may help to reestablish its interest levels in the future.

Other brands that fared well were spurred by new-vehicle introductions with heavy support. Kia saw a jump due to the increased popularity of its all-new Soul, while Volkswagen also saw increased kbb.com traffic share in May 2009 compared to the previous year, due to the CC and Routan, both of which have been heavily advertised.

Likely reasoning behind May share declines in Toyota, Honda, MINI and smart was their uncommonly high interest in May 2008. At that time with a rapid run-up in fuel prices, consumers took a decided turn toward more fuel-efficient vehicles, boosting the share of audience for all four small-car and primarily sedan-oriented brands. Now, with fuel prices down from their peaks of nearly \$5-a-gallon last

year, the shares of all four brands are at more 'typical' levels.

"Despite the majority of domestic manufacturers recently declaring bankruptcy, three of the top five 'upward climbers' in terms of share of market interest on kbb.com over the past year are domestics, and Ford undoubtedly took the top spot because it managed to avoid bankruptcy altogether," said Jack R. Nerad, executive editorial director and executive market analyst for Kelley Blue Book and kbb.com. "Because gas prices have returned to more normalized levels when compared to last year, the domestics have benefitted even further with their increases in share of market interest as people research fuel-efficient brands like Toyota and Honda less."

The information contained in this press release is from Kelley Blue Book Market Watch Web site traffic data from kbb.com from May 2008 - May 2009.

About Kelley Blue Book (www.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, www.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. According to the C.A. Walker Research Solutions, Inc. - 2008 Spring Automotive Web Site Usefulness Study, kbb.com is the most useful automotive information Web site among new and used vehicle shoppers, and half of online vehicle shoppers visit kbb.com. Kbb.com is a leading provider of [new car prices](#), [car reviews](#) and [news](#), [used car blue book values](#), [auto classifieds](#) and [car dealer locations](#). No other medium reaches more in-market vehicle shoppers than kbb.com.

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