Significant Interest in Full-size Trucks is Another Positive Sign for the Economy

Large year-over-year increases in truck segment shopper activity and prices seen in AutoTrader.com January New Car Insights Report

ATLANTA, Jan. 26, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- Significant interest in full-size trucks is a positive indication that the economy appears to be on the mend, according to the January issue of the New Car Insights Report, brought to you by the AutoTrader.com Trend Engine. In addition to searches for several popular models increasing year-over-year, AutoTrader.com analysts pointed to the significant share of interest increase for the overall segment, as well as year-over-year price increases for many of these popular vehicles as evidence of rebounding interest in full-size trucks. Conversely, interest in compact cars was down significantly during the same time frame.

To view the multimedia assets associated with this release, please click: http://www.multivu.com/mnr/53474-autotrader-com-january-new-car-insights-report-increases-in-truck-segment

(Photo: http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20120126/MM41411)

"Full-size trucks are closely associated with many work-related endeavors, leading us to believe that the strong renewed interest in these vehicles is a leading indicator that green blades of grass are beginning to shoot through the snow in this segment," said Rick Wainschel, vice president of automotive insights at AutoTrader.com. "Toward the end of 2011 and beginning of 2012, there were numerous other positive economic indicators, from higher consumer confidence numbers, a decrease in unemployment and increases in construction-related metrics."

Overall, full-size trucks accounted for nine of the top 20 most viewed vehicles on AutoTrader.com in December. The Ford F-150, which has long been the most-viewed vehicle on the site, again claimed the No. 1 spot. Also appearing in the top 20 were the Chevrolet Silverado 1500 at No. 3, the Dodge Ram 1500 at No. 7, the Ford F-250 at No. 8, the Chevrolet Silverado 2500 at No. 9, the Dodge Ram 2500 at No. 13, the GMC Sierra 1500 at No. 16, the GMC Sierra 2500 at No. 19 and the Ford F-350 at No. 20.

Four of these vehicles were newcomers to the top 20 that were not on this list during the same time last year. New to the top 20 were the Chevrolet Silverado 2500 (up 18 spots), the Dodge Ram 2500 (up 12 spots), the GMC Sierra 2500 (up 28 spots) and the Ford F-350 (up 16 spots).

At the segment level, interest in full-size trucks has seen substantial growth in the short term and long term. Month-over-month, the full-size truck segment increased 1.2 share points, but the most significant changes can be seen when compared to periods one and two years ago. Compared to December 2010, the segment's share of interest increased 5.4 points, and compared to December 2009, the share of interest increased 7.2 points—an impressive turnaround for this important vehicle segment.

The extent of the declining interest in compact cars was very evident when looking at the segment-level information. While it only showed a slight decline of 0.7 share points month-over-month, the compact car segment declined 4.2 share points compared to December 2010 and a full 5.0 share points compared to December 2009.

"During the more uncertain economic times, compact cars enjoyed increased popularity due to their accessible features and prices consumers could afford. However, that interest has shifted to the larger and more expensive vehicles as the economy has continued to recover," Wainschel continued.

Median asking prices for the most-viewed full-size trucks coincided with their popularity, with the majority showing price increases. A few full-size trucks to show notable year-

over-year price increases were the Ford F-150 with the biggest increase of 4.5% from December 2010 to December 2011, the Chevrolet Silverado 1500, up 2.6%, the GMC Sierra 1500 up 2.8% and the GMC Sierra 2500 up 2.6%. One major factor influencing the price of vehicles is demand, so the increased interest in these vehicles is likely a contributing factor to the price hikes.

For more in-depth analysis and graphics, view the multimedia version of this release and full report PDF online.

About AutoTrader.com

Atlanta-based AutoTrader.com, created in 1997, is the Internet's ultimate automotive marketplace and consumer information website. AutoTrader.com aggregates in a single location millions of new cars, used cars and certified pre-owned cars from thousands of auto dealers and private sellers and is a leading online resource for auto dealers, individuals and manufacturers to advertise and market their vehicles to in-market shoppers. The company also provides a robust suite of software tools for dealers and manufacturers to help them manage and market their vehicle inventory and display advertising on the Internet. AutoTrader.com continues to grow key business metrics, including revenue, profitability and site traffic. Today, AutoTrader.com attracts millions of unique monthly visitors who utilize the site to review descriptions, photos and videos of vehicles for sale; research and compare vehicles; review pricing and specials; and read auto-related content like buying and selling tips and editorial coverage of major auto shows and automotive trends. AutoTrader.com operates one other auto marketing brand, AutoTraderClassics.com. AutoTrader.com also owns used vehicle management software company vAuto, Kelley Blue Book (Kbb.com), HomeNet Automotive, a leading provider of online inventory management and merchandising solutions for the automotive retail industry and VinSolutions, a leading provider of end-to-end solution platforms for dealers. AutoTrader.com is a majority-owned subsidiary of Cox Enterprises. Providence Equity Partners is a 25 percent owner of the company and Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers is also an investor. For more information, please visit www.autotrader.com.

SOURCE AutoTrader.com

For further information: Julie Shipp, +1-404-568-7914 (o), +1-404-558-7837 (m), julie.shipp@autotrader.com

---

https://press.autotrader.com/news-releases?item=117135