

New Cars Show Signs of Sales Strength in August '08

Strong Incentives Begin to Lure Buyers Back to Dealer's Lots

The Toyota Camry and Honda Accord saw a rise in views of 34% and 39% respectively in August 2008 compared to August 2007, enough to give them the first and second place slots as the most-viewed new vehicles on AutoTrader.com according to the just released August 2008 AutoTrader.com TrendEngine report.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20080205/CLTU088LOGO>)

Views for cars on AutoTrader.com generally increased year-over-year from 2007, and despite dropping gas prices, trucks largely continued the downward trend in views begun earlier this year.

The full-size Ford F-150 pick-up was one of the few trucks to show signs of improvement, with an uptick of 18.45% in views as consumers searched for deals. Ford is currently offering sizable incentives on remaining 2008 F-150 inventory in preparation for the September launch of an all-new 2009 model.

Compact crossovers -- car-based vehicles designed to offer a higher driving position without the drawbacks of truck-based vehicles -- had seen their sales suffering alongside traditional SUVs during this past June and July. August saw the beginning of a rebound for these vehicles, as was evidenced by the 7.12% year-over-year increase in views for the Honda CR-V and the 19.36% year-over-year increase in views for the Toyota RAV4.

"Though much has been made of the rise of small cars, the biggest beneficiaries of rising gas prices have been midsize sedans and compact crossovers, the latter having served to replace the traditional family station wagon and larger SUVs," said AutoTrader.com President and CEO Chip Perry. "As manufacturers reallocate resources away from full-size pick-ups and traditional SUVs, our market demand data suggests they would be wise to pay the most attention to these vehicles which make up the heart of the market."

Among smaller cars, two larger gainers were the Toyota Corolla and Ford Focus, both of which continued to enjoy the success of recent redesigns. The Corolla improved its position on the most-viewed list from 12th in August 2007 to 7th this year, with views up 43%, while the Focus moved from 32nd to 19th, as views increased 63% in August 2008 compared to August 2007.

"Today's compact cars offer significantly more in terms of value, features and, most importantly, space, than what consumers traditionally think of when they consider 'small' cars," said Perry. "The most popular vehicles in this segment, such as the Civic, Corolla and Focus, offer an ideal mix of room and comfort for not only single people, but even small families."

The new Chevy Malibu continues to also generate dramatic interest. In August '08, views of the Malibu were up 279% compared to views in August '07, following on a 293% surge in views of the Malibu in July '08 compared to July '07. This car continues to benefit from strong marketing and consumer interest.

Truck Resale Values Continue to Plummet

The used car market continued to show overall softness, especially in terms of pick-up trucks and SUVs. While the asking prices among cars in the top 20 most-viewed used vehicles were generally flat, or in the case of the small cars such as the Honda Civic and Toyota Corolla, up slightly, truck asking prices recorded double-digit year-over-year declines. The asking price for used Ford F-150s took the largest hit, recording a drop of 17.56%, or \$3,479 on average. The once-popular Chevrolet Tahoe was also not immune, with asking prices for used versions of the full-size SUV dropping 17.26%, or

\$4,104 on average.

"For buyers who need a pick-up or SUV, whether for work or for personal use, this is definitely a great time to buy," added Perry. "Manufacturers are offering strong incentives on new trucks, while records of inventories for used models allow consumers the chance to score a truly great deal."

A "view" on AutoTrader.com is the display of the details page of a specific automobile, which includes information, photographs and contact information for that vehicle, and is thus a stronger indication of consumer interest in that model than searching broadly for information on that make and model.

AutoTrader.com is the ultimate automotive marketplace with over 3.5 million vehicle listings. Using research gathered by studying the shopping habits of over 14 million unique monthly visitors to the site, most of whom are in-market shoppers looking to complete a vehicle purchase within the next 90 days, AutoTrader.com regularly compiles this data to offer insight into current and emerging sales trends in the automobile industry through its monthly TrendEngine report.

About AutoTrader.com

AutoTrader.com, created in 1997 and headquartered in Atlanta, Ga., is the Internet's leading auto classifieds marketplace and consumer information website.

AutoTrader.com aggregates in a single location more than 3.5 million new, used and certified pre-owned vehicle listings from 40,000 dealers and 250,000 private owners and the site attracts more than 14 million unique monthly visitors. Through innovative merchandising functionality such as multiple photos, videos, detailed descriptions and comprehensive research and compare tools, AutoTrader.com unites new and used car buyers and sellers online to improving the way people research, locate and advertise vehicles. AutoTrader.com is a majority-owned subsidiary of Cox Enterprises. The venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers is also an investor. For more information, please visit www.autotrader.com.

MAKE	MODEL	Change		Change		Change	
		Rank	Rank	from	Avg Price -	Avg Price -	from
		August 2008	August 2007	August 2007	August 2008	August 2007	August 2007
Toyota	Camry	1	4	34.39%	\$23,985.78	\$24,648.68	-2.69%
Honda	Accord	2	5	38.72%	\$25,630.94	\$25,459.41	0.67%
Honda	Civic	3	6	26.48%	\$20,077.57	\$19,869.57	1.05%
Nissan	Altima	4	2	-0.30%	\$24,246.63	\$23,526.41	3.06%
Chevrolet	Silverado	5	1	-17.70%	\$30,222.90	\$30,187.83	0.12%
Ford	F-150	6	7	18.45%	\$30,623.82	\$30,650.54	-0.09%
Toyota	Corolla	7	12	43.36%	\$18,544.57	\$17,178.70	7.95%
Ford	Mustang	8	3	-12.04%	\$30,917.86	\$29,099.31	6.25%
Toyota	Tacoma	9	17	38.79%	\$26,023.29	\$25,396.74	2.47%
Chevrolet	Malibu	10	97	278.60%	\$24,469.78	\$19,923.39	22.82%
Dodge	Challenger	11	N/A	N/A	\$46,468.12	N/A	N/A
Mazda	MAZDA3	12	11	2.50%	\$19,024.49	\$19,422.16	-2.05%
Honda	CR-V	13	14	7.12%	\$24,912.78	\$24,962.30	-0.20%
Dodge	Ram	14	9	-8.42%	\$31,279.85	\$31,890.62	-1.92%
Chevrolet	Cobalt	15	16	9.34%	\$16,700.31	\$15,971.25	4.56%
Chevrolet	Impala	16	29	60.95%	\$24,825.95	\$23,740.25	4.57%
Toyota	Tundra	17	10	-8.05%	\$33,689.37	\$34,323.28	-1.85%
Jeep	Wrangler	18	8	-27.63%	\$27,791.58	\$26,185.32	6.13%
Ford	Focus	19	32	63.11%	\$17,232.23	\$16,813.94	2.49%
Toyota	RAV4	20	20	19.36%	\$25,933.71	\$25,511.64	1.65%

Used Cars

Ford	F-150	1	1	-26.61%	\$16,332.10	\$19,811.57	-17.56%
Ford	Mustang	2	2	-24.85%	\$17,337.50	\$18,644.31	-7.01%
Honda	Civic	3	3	-16.22%	\$15,024.67	\$14,336.68	4.80%
Honda	Accord	4	4	-16.17%	\$16,770.98	\$16,760.00	0.07%
Chevrolet	Silverado	5	5	-25.54%	\$16,638.51	\$19,742.21	-15.72%
Nissan	Altima	6	7	-12.03%	\$15,185.80	\$15,281.63	-0.63%
Infiniti	G35	7	8	-16.99%	\$22,189.55	\$24,655.11	-10.00%
Dodge	Ram	8	9	-24.99%	\$14,769.65	\$17,819.92	-17.12%
Volkswagen	Jetta	9	16	-16.54%	\$14,296.42	\$14,471.95	-1.21%
Toyota	Camry	10	14	-20.41%	\$17,102.63	\$16,795.87	1.83%
Jeep	Wrangler	11	15	-21.04%	\$17,432.59	\$18,485.51	-5.70%
Audi	A4	12	18	-12.05%	\$21,718.69	\$22,544.89	-3.66%
Toyota	Tacoma	13	10	-28.28%	\$18,856.59	\$19,534.66	-3.47%
Jeep	Grand Cherokee	14	11	-30.54%	\$14,687.01	\$17,250.62	-14.86%
Ford	F-250	15	6	-41.76%	\$21,545.66	\$24,950.53	-13.65%
Chevrolet	Tahoe	16	12	-30.45%	\$19,676.76	\$23,781.19	-17.26%
Ford	Explorer	17	13	-30.98%	\$13,621.25	\$16,339.12	-16.63%
Toyota	Corolla	18	23	-9.41%	\$14,790.66	\$14,076.20	5.08%
Chevrolet	Impala	19	22	-16.30%	\$14,188.10	\$14,724.85	-3.65%
Chevrolet	Corvette	20	21	-22.13%	\$37,869.91	\$39,976.54	-5.27%

Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20080205/CLTU088LOGO>

AP Archive: <http://photoarchive.ap.org/>

PRN Photo Desk, photodesk@prnewswire.com

SOURCE: AutoTrader.com

CONTACT: Media: Brian Gluckman of AutoTrader.com, +1-404-568-7914 (ph),
or +1-404-580-4020 (cell), brian.gluckman@autotrader.com

Web site: <http://www.autotrader.com/>

<https://press.autotrader.com/news-releases?item=66622>