2009 Ends on a Strong Note as Shoppers Return to New Vehicles

Used and Certified Pre-Owned Sales Show America's Continued Desire for Full-Size Trucks and SUVs

ATLANTA, Jan. 6 /PRNewswire/ -- New car shopping activity on AutoTrader.com saw a significant burst in December compared to December of 2008 and recent previous months, as consumers began looking at more new cars. Most new vehicles on AutoTrader.com's Top 20 list of new cars searched saw double-digit increases in views compared to December 2008, which for many automakers was one of the worst selling months.

Leading the way on AutoTrader.com was the Chevrolet Traverse crossover, which saw a 181% increase in views compared to December 2008. The Toyota Corolla was the top-gaining car on the Top 20 list for the month, with an increase of views of 154% compared to December 2008.

New vehicle prices may also be on the rebound, with average list prices for 14 of the top 20 new cars viewed on the site marking increases compared to December of 2008. The Ford F-150, the Ford Fusion and the Chevy Silverado all saw double digit average price increases over December 2008. Increases in other average list prices were more modest, but are still encouraging.

"December 2009 may be remembered as the month where interest in new cars returned if activity on our site is any indication," said AutoTrader.com President and CEO Chip Perry. "Many consumers are feeling more confident about their jobs and the economy going into the New Year, and those factors, coupled with lots of exciting new models in showrooms, should drive an increasing amount of foot traffic to new car dealers throughout 2010. The typical AutoTrader.com visitor is looking to purchase a vehicle in 30 to 90 days, so new car dealers and auto manufacturers may have something to celebrate in the next quarter or so."

The F-150 and the Honda Accord held the No. 1 and No. 2 spots on the most viewed new car list for December 2009, positions those perennial favorites held in November of 2009 and in December of 2008.

Used Car Demand Falls as Inventories Shrink, Consumers Opt for New

Views for used and Certified Pre-Owned (CPO) vehicles on AutoTrader.com continued to benefit trucks and SUVs, as these larger vehicles remained popular with car shoppers in December 2009. While overall shopping activity for many used and CPO

vehicles was down, this was driven by the reduced inventories, rather than a loss of interest, a fact that was reflected in the increased average asking prices of these trucks and SUVs. For example, while the full-size Chevrolet Suburban SUV saw views decrease 24% in December 2009 compared to December 2008, average asking prices for available vehicles increased almost 19%, from $27,951 in December 2008 to $33,185 this past month.

"Poor sales in 2008 due to high gas prices and the economy - which caused a corresponding pull back of manufacturing new cars - has reduced the number of used and CPO vehicles now available on the market, which in turn has reduced dealer inventories and the amount of shopping activity that we are currently seeing on such vehicles," said Perry. "As new car sales improve and these buyers trade in their now used cars, we should see also see a corresponding improvement in used-car inventories and shopping activity.

CPO inventories took a double hit as the credit crisis caused many manufacturers to pull back or eliminate leasing programs, an important avenue for late model CPO inventory. "Those CPO buyers who weren't scared away from buying by the challenging economy found that in many cases there just wasn't available inventory of CPO vehicles because these leasing programs had dried up," said Perry. "But as credit eases for both consumers and auto manufacturers, we'll see a return to normalcy in the CPO market. Certified vehicles remain an important component of manufacturers' and dealers' sales strategies going forward into the future."

The Ford F-150 captured the No. 1 spot on the top viewed used vehicles list in December 2009, followed by the BMW 3 Series at No. 2, the Chevy Silverado at No. 3 and the Ford Mustang at No. 4. All four models held these same positions in November of 2009 and in December of 2008.

In CPO searches, the BMW 3 Series captured the top spot again, with, in order, the Chevy Silverado, the Honda Accord, the Chevy Tahoe and the Ford F-150 rounding out the top five most viewed CPO vehicles on AutoTrader.com.

Another Increase in Site Traffic

In December 2009, AutoTrader.com logged another traffic increase, marking the 12th consecutive month where monthly site traffic in 2009 beat traffic for the same month in 2008. In December, AutoTrader.com logged 13.05 million unique monthly visitors, up 1 percent compared to December 2008.

"Our site traffic is indicative of the continuing trend in people going to the internet to shop for vehicles," said Perry. "Today, the vast majority of car shoppers are going to the internet to research and compare models, get pricing and specials and see inventory in their area. AutoTrader.com has been a key player in spurring this trend and car dealers who continue to refine their on-line marketing will be the big winners in 2010 and in years to come."

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 millions of new cars, used cars and certified pre-owned cars from thousands of auto dealers and private owners. The site attracts about 15 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	Rank 12/09	Rank 11/09	Rank 12/08	Change from 12/08
		New Cars			
Ford	F-150	1	1	1	60.53%
Honda	Accord	2	2	2	52.15%
Toyota	Camry	3	3	4	82.70%
Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	4	4	3	58.86%
Toyota	Corolla	5	6	11	154.13%
Honda	Civic	6	5	5	63.15%
Dodge	Ram 1500	7	11	6	48.73%
BMW	3-Series	8	16	16	100.49%
Nissan	Altima	9	9	7	37.31%
Chevrolet	Malibu	10	10	14	70.95%
Ford	F-250	11	15	27	105.88%
Toyota	Tacoma	12	14	17	61.21%
Ford	Focus	13	13	23	90.62%
Chevrolet	Camaro	14	7		N/A
Jeep	Wrangler	15	18	9	36.19%
Ford	Fusion	16	12	29	99.58%
Ford	Mustang	17	8	10	35.18%
Volkswagen	Jetta	18	20	28	68.31%
Mazda	Mazda3	19	23	36	104.65%
Chevrolet	Traverse	20	17	70	181.43%
		Used Cars			
Ford	F-150	1	1	1	-7.18%
BMW	3-Series	2	2	2	-8.20%
Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	3	3	3	2.43%
Ford	Mustang	4	4	4	-13.47%

Ford	F-250	5	5	11	25.31%
Dodge	Ram 1500	6	7	5	-12.38%
Honda	Accord	7	6	6	-10.61%
Chevrolet	Tahoe	8	8	8	-2.47%
Chevrolet	Silverado 2500	9	10	17	28.15%
Jeep	Wrangler	10	13	13	1.55%
Honda	Civic	11	9	9	-14.02%
Dodge	Ram 2500	12	12	19	22.20%
Infiniti	G35/G37	13	11	7	-25.70%
Toyota	Tacoma	14	16	15	-0.63%
BMW	5-Series	15	14	12	-10.22%
Jeep	Grand Cherokee	16	17	10	-25.27%
Nissan	Altima	17	15	16	-7.32%
Ford	Explorer	18	18	14	-21.34%
Toyota	Tundra	19	21	23	-2.01%
Ford	F-350	20	23	32	19.66%

MAKE	MODEL	Avg Price - 12/09	Avg Price - 12/08	Change from 12/08
		New Cars		
Ford	F-150	$35,735.62	$31,673.68	12.82%
Honda	Accord	$25,874.89	$26,059.86	-0.71%
Toyota	Camry	$24,379.30	$24,196.44	0.76%
Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	$34,193.69	$30,836.02	10.89%
Toyota	Corolla	$18,164.78	$18,776.40	-3.26%
Honda	Civic	$19,993.30	$20,636.39	-3.12%
Dodge	Ram 1500	$33,724.79	$33,897.99	-0.51%
BMW	3-Series	$50,616.18	$56,447.07	-10.33%
Nissan	Altima	$24,834.22	$24,690.39	0.58%
Chevrolet	Malibu	$24,578.95	$24,353.95	0.92%
Ford	F-250	$45,191.15	$42,333.77	6.75%
Toyota	Tacoma	$26,403.20	$25,341.87	4.19%
Ford	Focus	$18,532.69	$18,049.70	2.68%
Chevrolet	Camaro	$33,841.54		N/A
Jeep	Wrangler	$28,752.00	$27,621.26	4.09%
Ford	Fusion	$25,598.51	$22,712.55	12.71%
Ford	Mustang	$32,321.09	$31,838.09	1.52%
Volkswagen	Jetta	$22,983.19	$22,399.86	2.60%
Mazda	Mazda3	$20,363.96	$18,948.25	7.47%
Chevrolet	Traverse	$35,610.31	$35,463.58	0.41%
		Used Cars		
Ford	F-150	$19,308.71	$15,686.84	23.09%
BMW	3-Series	$25,909.36	$26,440.75	-2.01%
Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	$18,882.59	$15,554.25	21.40%
Ford	Mustang	$16,857.77	$16,087.19	4.79%
Ford	F-250	$23,289.14	$19,735.17	18.01%
Dodge	Ram 1500	$17,619.89	$14,211.91	23.98%
Honda	Accord	$15,663.95	$15,429.18	1.52%
Chevrolet	Tahoe	$24,135.36	$19,430.89	24.21%
Chevrolet	Silverado 2500	$22,732.73	$19,144.04	18.75%

Jeep	Wrangler	$19,316.77	$16,220.68	19.09%
Honda	Civic	$13,515.42	$14,114.65	-4.25%
Dodge	Ram 2500	$24,169.95	$20,270.38	19.24%
Infiniti	G35/G37	$22,366.69	$20,618.89	8.48%
Toyota	Tacoma	$19,207.12	$17,406.99	10.34%
BMW	5-Series	$30,656.17	$30,298.16	1.18%
Jeep	Grand Cherokee	$16,108.55	$13,946.60	15.50%
Nissan	Altima	$14,159.99	$14,098.32	0.44%
Ford	Explorer	$15,529.27	$13,637.04	13.88%
Toyota	Tundra	$22,240.37	$18,246.13	21.89%
Ford	F-350	$24,895.98	$21,337.08	16.68%

MAKE	MODEL	Rank 12/09	Rank 11/09	Rank 12/08	Change from 12/08
	Certified Pre-Owned				
BMW	3-Series	1	1	1	-12.68%
Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	2	3	2	-11.06%
Honda	Accord	3	2	3	-10.05%
Chevrolet	Tahoe	4	4	5	-2.91%
Ford	F-150	5	7	4	-19.44%
BMW	5-Series	6	8	6	-14.02%
Toyota	Tundra	7	5	8	-2.95%
Toyota	Camry	8	6	11	-4.83%
Toyota	Tacoma	9	10	9	-12.26%
Honda	Civic	10	9	7	-25.79%
Audi	A4	11	11	10	-20.80%
Acura	TL	12	12	19	-6.72%
Mercedes-Benz	E-Class	13	13	12	-26.81%
Toyota	Highlander	14	14	20	-11.56%
GMC	Sierra	15	17	25	-0.18%
Toyota	4Runner	16	21	26	-2.42%
Chevrolet	Suburban	17	22	17	-24.57%
Ford	Mustang	18	15	18	-23.42%
Mercedes-Benz	C-Class	19	19	16	-26.07%
GMC	Yukon	20	23	23	-9.67%

MAKE	MODEL	Avg Price - 12/09	Avg Price - 12/08	Change from 12/08
	Certified Pre-Owned			
BMW	3-Series	$32,117.83	$32,006.75	0.35%

Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	$23,188.30	$18,791.18	23.40%
Honda	Accord	$18,398.57	$17,887.83	2.86%
Chevrolet	Tahoe	$31,270.04	$26,024.32	20.16%
Ford	F-150	$23,680.43	$19,609.23	20.76%
BMW	5-Series	$37,456.97	$36,222.01	3.41%
Toyota	Tundra	$24,927.51	$20,944.27	19.02%
Toyota	Camry	$18,385.22	$18,506.26	-0.65%
Toyota	Tacoma	$22,217.07	$20,214.45	9.91%
Honda	Civic	$16,424.46	$16,789.00	-2.17%
Audi	A4	$26,463.83	$25,187.14	5.07%
Acura	TL	$27,036.47	$24,623.73	9.80%
Mercedes-Benz	E-Class	$38,486.26	$34,059.18	13.00%
Toyota	Highlander	$24,066.88	$21,733.18	10.74%
GMC	Sierra	$24,250.43	$19,422.23	24.86%
Toyota	4Runner	$24,446.34	$21,220.51	15.20%
Chevrolet	Suburban	$33,185.64	$27,951.46	18.73%
Ford	Mustang	$20,005.82	$18,119.20	10.41%
Mercedes-Benz	C-Class	$28,880.08	$25,866.05	11.65%
GMC	Yukon	$33,343.31	$27,178.03	22.68%

TOP-VIEWED BRANDS	Rank 12/09	Rank 12/08
Ford	1	2
Chevrolet	2	1
Toyota	3	3
Honda	4	4
Nissan	5	6
Dodge	6	5
BMW	7	9
GMC	8	7
Hyundai	9	11
Mercedes-Benz	10	10

SOURCE: AutoTrader.com

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