Recovery Likely to Continue In Larger Cars, SUVs and Trucks According to July Site Data From AutoTrader.com

ATLANTA, Aug. 12 /PRNewswire/ -- Larger vehicles helped lead the recovery at many auto makers in the last quarter as many new-car buyers continued shifting back to trucks and SUVs in the face of stabilizing gas prices. That trend looks to continue as the in-market car shoppers on AutoTrader.com increasingly looked at trucks, SUVs and larger vehicles while shopping on the site. Twelve of the top 20 most-searched new vehicles on AutoTrader.com in July were trucks or SUVs, with muscle/sports cars and sedans making up the balance of the top 20 new-vehicle list.

The trend was less pronounced on AutoTrader.com's used and certified pre-owned (CPO) lists, with SUVs or trucks nabbing 11 out of 20 spots on AutoTrader.com's list of most-searched used vehicles and SUVs or trucks grabbing nine out of 20 spots on the site's list of most-searched CPO vehicles.

"With smaller and more fuel efficient cars still making our Top 20 used and CPO lists, you're seeing the impact value has on used-car shoppers," said AutoTrader.com President and CEO Chip Perry. "Even with gas prices moderating, the used-car shopper is still researching vehicles with a little more intensity, reviewing every angle to make the best purchase decision – price, cost of ownership, gas mileage and reliability. New-car buyers also want to make sure they make the right choice, but it appears many new-car shoppers and buyers have accepted gas prices in the high twos and low threes per gallon and are considering things like utility and style ahead of gas mileage."

Among new SUVs on the top 20 list in July, the redesigned Jeep Grand Cherokee caught many shoppers' interest, jumping from the No. 63rd most-searched new vehicle in June of 2010 to the No. 9 most-searched new vehicle in July of this year. The Grand Cherokee held the No. 50 most-searched new-vehicle spot in July of 2009.

The redesigned BMW 5-Series also continued to gain interest among new-car shoppers on AutoTrader.com. The luxury sedan held the No. 18 most-searched spot on AutoTrader.com's Top 20 new-car list in July of this year, compared to the No. 24 spot in June of this year and the No. 59 spot in July of 2009. The new Nissan 370Z also made a jump, landing at No. 20 among new cars searched on AutoTrader.com in July, compared to No. 38 in June of 2010 and No. 49 in July of 2009.

Prices Continue to Rise

Month-over-month increases in average asking prices continued to be big news across AutoTrader.com's Top 20 new, used and CPO lists. All but three of the Top 20 most-searched new vehicles on AutoTrader.com saw average asking price increases and all but two vehicles on both the most-searched used and CPO Top 20 lists saw increased average asking prices.

On the new car list, the biggest gainer was the BMW 5-series, which saw average asking price increase by 10.2%, from $55,510 in June to $61,190 in July. In second place in price gains was the new Chevrolet Corvette, which saw an average asking price increase of 9.5%, from $64,166 in June to $70,287 last month.

On the used-car list, the Ford F-250 was a big price winner, with average asking price up just over 10%, from $22,435 in June to $24,694 in July. The used Jeep Wrangler saw a nearly double-digit increase in average asking price, up 9.7% from $18,525 in June to $20,318 in July of this year.

Six of the Top 20 most-searched CPO vehicles on AutoTrader.com saw average asking price increases of between 10% and 16% in July compared to June of this year. They were the Chevrolet Tahoe, the Ford F-150, the Ford Mustang, the Honda Pilot, the Acura MDX and the Chevrolet Suburban.

"Increased average asking prices are a good indication of the confidence manufacturers and dealers are having in the recovery of the auto market," said Perry. "Even though economic recovery has been slow, more people are starting to shop and buy. Couple that trend with scarcity of some popular models in both new and used vehicles and the result is car sellers who are feeling more confident they can get the prices they're asking."

Ford Tops Brand Lists

Ford nabbed the No. 1 spots on AutoTrader.com's list of most-searched new and used brands in July of this year. Ford and Chevy frequently battle for the top spot on AutoTrader.com's top-searched brand lists, with Chevy holding the No. 1 most-searched new-car brand spot in July of 2009 and currently holding the No. 2 spots on both the new and used-car brand lists. Toyota held firm in July at No. 3 on both the most-searched new- and used-vehicle brand lists, positions it also held in July of last year.

"Ford has benefitted on AutoTrader.com from development and delivery of some great new models and execution of some very effective marketing," said Perry. "With a lot of new, quality product coming from other manufacturers, it will be interesting to see how auto makers, their associations and their dealers use traditional and online marketing in the coming months to influence shoppers to consider their vehicles and what those efforts do to our top vehicle and brand lists."

During July, AutoTrader.com's traffic continued its upward trajectory, hitting 15.7 million unique monthly visitors, up 2% from July 2009.

About AutoTrader.com

AutoTrader.com, created in 1997 and headquartered in Atlanta, Ga., is the Internet's leading 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. AutoTrader.com attracts more than 15 million unique monthly visitors who utilize the site to view vehicles for sale, research and compare vehicles, review pricing and specials, and read auto-related content like buying and selling tips, auto maintenance tips and coverage of major auto shows and automotive trends. 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 improve 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 and the private equity firm Providence Equity Partners are also investors. For more information, please visit www.autotrader.com.

TOP 10 NEW VEHICLE BRANDS SEARCHED		
MAKE	Rank 7/10	Rank 7/09
Ford	1	2
Chevy	2	1
Toyota	3	3
Dodge	4	6
Nissan	5	5
BMW	6	8
GMC	7	13
Jeep	8	12
Honda	9	4
Hyundai	10	7

TOP 10 USED VEHICLE BRANDS SEARCHED		
MAKE	Rank 7/10	Rank 7/09
Ford	1	1
Chevrolet	2	2
Toyota	3	3
Dodge	4	4
BMW	5	5
Nissan	6	6
Honda	7	7
Mercedes-Benz	8	8
Jeep	9	9
GMC	10	11

NEW CARS							
MAKE	MODEL	VDP Rank 7/10	VDP Rank 6/10	VDP Rank 7/09	Avg. Price 7/10	Avg. Price 7/09	% Change
Ford	Mustang	1	1	3	33,317	34,215	-2.62%
Chevrolet	Camaro	2	2	1	34,099	36,505	-6.59%
Ford	F-150	3	6	2	37,352	34,649	7.80%
Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	4	8	6	33,751	31,413	7.44%
Ford	F-250	5	12	20	45,884	43,790	4.78%
BMW	3 Series	6	7	4	47,393	46,609	1.68%
Jeep	Wrangler	7	10	14	29,564	28,589	3.41%
Chevrolet	Corvette	8	13	24	70,287	64,166	9.54%
Jeep	Grand Cherokee	9	63	50	37,293	34,083	9.42%
Dodge	Ram 1500	10	18	11	34,686	34,655	0.09%
Chevrolet	Silverado 2500	11	23	41	40,208	39,118	2.79%
Dodge	Challenger	12	16	31	33,722	38,256	-11.85%
GMC	Sierra 1500	13	15	27	36,008	34,022	5.84%
Ford	F-350	14	21	54	49,317	47,528	3.76%
Chevrolet	Equinox	15	17	18	27,895	26,897	3.71%
Hyundai	Sonata	16	25	26	23,360	22,191	5.27%
Chevrolet	Tahoe	17	19	39	50,628	48,842	3.66%
BMW	5-Series	18	24	59	61,190	55,510	10.23%
Dodge	Ram 2500	19	28	57	46,523	43,440	7.10%
Nissan	350/370Z	20	38	49	39,138	36,542	7.10%

USED CARS

MAKE	MODEL	VDP Rank 7/10	VDP Rank 6/10	VDP Rank 7/09	Avg. Price 7/10	Avg. Price 7/09	% Change
Ford	F-150	1	1	1	20,366	19,242	5.84%
BMW	3-Series	2	2	2	25,597	25,453	0.57%
Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	3	3	3	19,732	18,274	7.98%
Ford	Mustang	4	4	4	18,364	18,132	1.28%
Ford	F-250	5	5	7	24,694	22,435	10.07%
Honda	Accord	6	6	5	15,766	15,199	3.73%
Jeep	Wrangler	7	7	9	20,318	18,525	9.68%
Dodge	Ram 1500	8	8	8	18,371	17,124	7.28%
Honda	Civic	9	9	6	13,580	13,382	1.48%
Chevrolet	Tahoe	10	10	10	25,424	23,601	7.72%
Infiniti	G35/37	11	11	11	23,145	22,333	3.64%
Chevrolet	Silverado 2500	12	12	13	23,006	21,483	7.09%
Dodge	Ram 2500	13	14	18	25,106	23,073	8.81%
Toyota	Tacoma	14	13	15	19,057	18,645	2.21%
Nissan	Altima	15	15	12	15,007	14,181	5.82%
Jeep	Grand Cherokee	16	17	17	16,388	15,369	6.63%
BMW	5-Series	17	16	16	30,755	31,382	-2.00%
Toyota	Tundra	18	19	22	22,469	21,836	2.90%
Audi	A4	19	18	14	21,307	20,116	5.92%
Toyota	Camry	20	20	21	15,191	15,811	-3.92%

CERTIFIED PRE-OWNED							
MAKE	MODEL	VDP Rank 7/10	VDP Rank 6/10	VDP Rank 7/09	Avg. Price 7/10	Avg. Price 7/09	% Change
BMW	3-Series	1	1	1	30,504	29,944	1.87%
Honda	Accord	2	2	2	18,174	17,565	3.74%
Chevy	Silverado 1500	3	3	3	24,233	22,312	8.61%
Toyota	Tundra	4	4	5	25,567	24,130	5.96%
Chevrolet	Tahoe	5	6	4	33,633	30,373	10.73%
Ford	F-150	6	5	7	25,266	22,283	10.70%
Toyota	Camry	7	7	10	17,352	18,472	-6.06%
Honda	Civic	8	8	8	16,074	16,302	-1.40%
Audi	A4	9	9	6	26,550	24,578	8.02%
Toyota	Tacoma	10	10	11	22,284	21,708	2.65%
BMW	5-Series	11	11	9	37,442	36,313	3.11%
Acura	TL	12	13	12	25,970	25,401	2.24%
Volkswagen	Jetta	13	14	18	16,205	15,202	6.60%
Ford	Mustang	14	12	14	21,602	19,579	10.33%
Toyota	Highlander	15	16	13	24,791	23,059	7.51%
Honda	Pilot	16	15	16	24,838	22,136	12.21%
Toyota	4Runner	17	17	15	24,850	23,640	5.12%

Acura	MDX	18	20	17	32,540	28,193	15.42%
Chevrolet	Suburban	19	18	20	36,112	32,092	12.53%
Chevrolet	Corvette	20	22	19	40,529	40,016	1.28%

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