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South Africa's leading source of news and information on all aspects of the motor industry
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Mercedes-Benz, South Africa's top-selling luxury car brand in 2019, will henceforth only report quarterly sales figures.

DETAILED SALES REPORTING A THING OF THE PAST?

BY ROGER HOUGHTON

Detailed sales reporting by all manufacturers and importers in South Africa has been a way of life for this industry for many decades, with odd exceptions now and again when one or other company stops reporting for a period of time.

These figures have always had great importance as an indicator of economic activity in the country. They are used by financial institutions, economists, and many government departments as an economic barometer.

Institutions such as Treasury and the Reserve Bank use the figures as a guide to consumer and business activity, which can affect interest rates, as well as a measure of capital investment because heavy trucks are considered capital equipment. The automotive industry also has significant implications on foreign exchange in terms of both inflows and outflows.

However, in recent years we have had to deal with several companies limiting reporting, dating back to 2011 when Mercedes-Benz released only aggregate figures in categories. Recently this

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number has grown with Porsche, Lamborghini, Bentley and Haval reporting only aggregate figures, while BMW did not report sales in January this year.

Now a further blow has been dealt to this important economic indicator in South Africa with Mercedes-Benz and BMW deciding to only report sales quarterly in all countries in which they operate. *AutoLive* has reported previously how a growing number of vehicle manufacturers and importers in the United States were only going to report sales each quarter, with this move having been started by General Motors in April 2018.

However, NAAMSA says it will make estimates for BMW and Mercedes-Benz monthly retail sales in South Africa to give a better picture of the industry's overall performance.

A possibility that has been under investigation for some time is making use of the e-Natis data which provides information on actual vehicle registration for compiling sales figures. This will also go a long way to highlighting so-called "ghost" sales by dealers, manufacturers, and importers.

> *BMW and Mercedes-Benz have cited competitive regulations as the reason for the switch to quarterly reporting.*

Up to now most local manufacturers and importers have reported their monthly sales figures in terms of retail, government, rental, and corporate fleet sales, and exports in respect of the destination countries to the Department of Trade and Industry. A third party, Lightstone Auto, compiles the data and it is then made available by the DTI and NAAMSA to the industry for public consumption.

BMW and Mercedes-Benz have cited competitive regulations as the reason for the switch to quarterly reporting. However, the sharing of information among less than five competitors is generally viewed as possibly being problematic, but in South Africa there are currently 55 passenger car brands and 29 commercial vehicle brands in South Africa, offering 1 845 car models and 560 commercials, so this does certainly not look problematic!

Vehicle sales are a significant factor in evaluating the economic health of any country and the data is used extensively by a host of bodies, many of them government departments and agencies and, critically, the industry itself to indicate trends and provide data for forecasting and planning.

Accurate, timely and relevant new vehicle sales and export data is very important for government policy formulation and review, as well as strategic decision-making, including investment decisions, by government institutions, automotive industry stakeholders and by the international and domestic investment community.

> *In South Africa there are currently 55 passenger car brands and 29 commercial vehicle brands in South Africa, offering 1 845 car models and 560 commercials.*

Among the important information which can be gleaned from detailed sales reporting includes:

- Ratio of petrol versus diesel passenger cars and light commercial vehicles.
- Relative sales performance of imported cars and light commercials versus domestically produced vehicles.
- Relative performance of the various sectors within the market to identify opportunities and gaps in the market.
- Giving an accurate breakdown on the number of hybrid and electric vehicles being sold, which is important for future planning.
- Data to inform decision-makers at parts suppliers and the component replacement aftermarket.
- Sales volumes of mass transport vehicles such as minibuses, buses, and other people-carriers which are used for public transport.

However, most importantly, the South African new vehicle market is consumer driven and vehicle buyers require and deserve information on model sales as a way of optimising their purchasing decisions. ■



With BMW also no longer reporting monthly sales figures, NAAMSA will make estimates in order to give a better picture of the industry's overall performance.

MONTHLY SALES STATISTICS

The growing amount of advertising in AutoLive has made it necessary to relocate the four pages of detailed monthly vehicle sales analysis to the website www.autolive.co.za.

CLICK HERE to access

Editor's Note



With a 21-day lockdown in an effort to slow down the spread of Covid-19 in South Africa mere hours away, local business leaders have a responsibility to stand together to keep business moving, protect employment and the economy ticking over.

How decision-makers adapt to the Covid-19 national disaster will determine the knock-on effect to businesses and livelihoods around the entire country. Now is not the time for business and spending to screech to a halt. Admittedly, this is easier said than done, but failing to keep the wheels turning – albeit slowly – could have serious repercussions later.

Our ability to bounce back will be severely affected and by the time the worst of the virus is over, the damage will be done.

We are all in this together and have a responsibility to collaborate with suppliers, customers, employees and peers, to find ways to keep business going, even if it is not how we traditionally would operate

As a nation South Africans are particularly resilient and innovative and now, more than ever before, we need to show what we're made of, steering clear of negative decisions and not reacting out of fear.

Where possible, employees should continue working at home. Most of us have access to data, devices, internet and remote access to work systems, so employees can continue working in isolation if need be. You will do more damage to your business if your employees are unable to work in isolation. Also, stay in touch, using video conferencing and telephony systems.

These are indeed trying times we live in and we have no choice but to do things differently. Find alternative ways to keep your business going and continue the buying cycle as far as possible.

There's no denying that certain sectors will suffer more than others so now is the time for all South Africans to rally together, support each other and keep pressure on Government to come up with economic reforms and stimulus packages to boost and assist businesses during these times.

At *AutoLive* it will be business as usual so you'll hear from us again at the end of April with all the latest news from the automotive and related industries.

Liana Reiners,

Editor
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New Vehicle Sales and Exports Continue to Slide

Sales of new vehicles into the domestic market and built-up vehicle exports to a host of destinations both declined in February and it seems there is not even the glimmer of a light at the end of a long tunnel. Now the situation has worsened considerably as the Coronavirus takes its toll on the economy and vehicle production worldwide.

Reported new vehicle sales and estimates for the non-reporters show a decline of 0.7% year-on-year, sliding to 43 485 units compared to the 43 805 vehicles sold in February 2019. Exports of 30 832 units equated to a fall of 8.4% over the same month a year previously.

Overall, out of the total of 43 485 vehicles retailed an estimated 80.4% went through the dealer channels, while 11.4% went to the rental industry, 4.3% to government and 3.9% to industry corporate fleets.

New car sales were up 7.6% to 29 665 units, with the rental industry taking 16% of new car sales in February. Light commercial vehicles, including bakkies and minibuses, recorded a substantial decline of 17.7% compared to a year previously.

> *Light commercial vehicles, including bakkies and minibuses, recorded a substantial decline of 17.7% compared to a year previously.*

There were slight increases in the sales of medium and heavy truck and bus segments, with mediums gaining 3.8% to 686 units, while the heavy end of the market saw 1 509 units retailed, which was 3.7% higher than in the corresponding month last year.

NAAMSA Says

New vehicle sales continue to mirror the deteriorating economic outlook in the country. The unexpected tax relief for individual taxpayers in the Budget 2020, aimed at not further slowing down the already sluggish economy, was welcomed.

However, the CO_2 emissions tax increase and the lowering of the threshold on passenger cars as well as the increase in the tax on double cab bakkies effectively mean a price increase on vehicles during a sustained period of market decline, especially now also covering smaller vehicles comprising the major portion of sales in the domestic market.

> *Eskom's announcement of a high likelihood of load shedding during the next 18 months contributed to the further deterioration in sentiment regarding business conditions going forward.*

Eskom's announcement of a high likelihood of load shedding during the next 18 months contributed to the further deterioration in sentiment regarding business conditions going forward. This was confirmed by the ABSA Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) tracking expected business conditions in six months' time, which fell to its lowest level since 2009. The impact of the Coronavirus outbreak and potential to affect supply chains and disrupt manufacturing operations around the world are increasing daily and developments are monitored closely.

WesBank Says

Although the sales were down year-on-year, the 0.7% decline in February was far better than the 8.1% drop in January, helped by an extra selling day in February due to 2020 being a leap year. February is traditionally the first realistic picture of the year's outlook as January figures are skewed by

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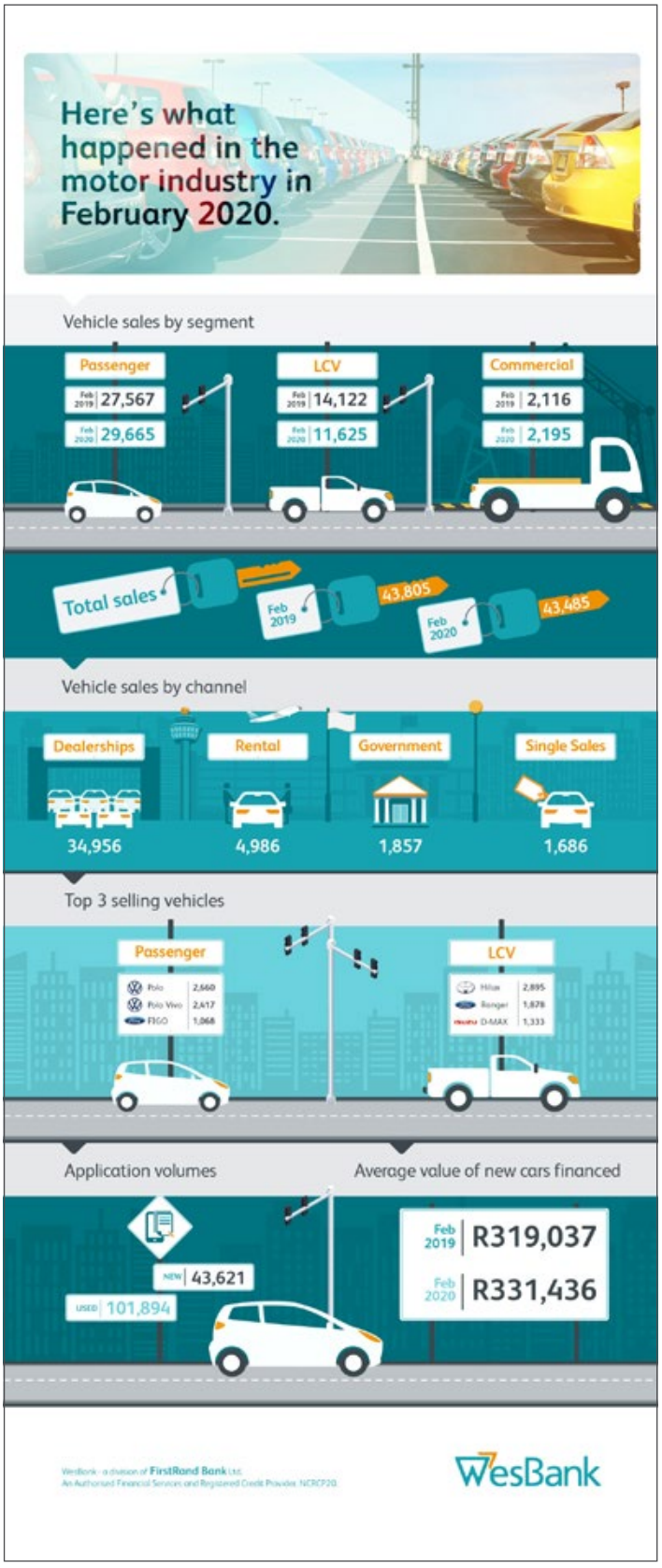
the holiday season, with WesBank predicting a fall of 3.5% in sales in 2020 compared to last year.

The economic outlook for the country isn't going to give the market an easy ride. "While consumers were shown some relief in the Budget in income tax terms, increases in toll fees and fuel levies will continue driving the total cost of ownership up, forcing consumers to be increasingly vigilant about their discretionary spend," said Lebogang Gaoaketse, Head of marketing and Communication at WesBank.

"Simply put: if there is an opportunity for consumers to defer vehicle purchases, we expect them to do so."

Consumer price inflation rose to a seven-month high in January off the back of fuel prices that were 15% higher than a year ago. While remaining within the Reserve Bank's 4.5% target range – which it has for 14 months, the longest streak in 14 years – the forecast is for it to average 4.7% this year.

"All of this will continue to put pressure on household budgets and directly impact new vehicle sales as consumers tighten their belts," Gaoaketse commented. "However, the February market performance is a welcome sign of positivity." ■



AutoAfrica News

Vehicle Exports From SA into Rest of Africa Have Slumped 20% YTD

The dream of South Africa being a springboard for built-up vehicles into the rest of Africa continues to fade. So far this year exports have slumped 20% in two months, going down from 3 773 units YTD January and February 2019 to only 2 990 units for the same period this year.

Admittedly some South African manufacturers are also involved in the low volume export of a small number of semi-knocked-down kits for assembly in other countries. However, grey, used vehicles are still the staple diet for most African countries, with the tough economic climates and now the virus threat making the future even bleaker for South African exporters.

Toyota was in its customary YTD leadership position with 980 units shipped – 32% lower than at the same time last year – with Nissan exporting 880 units, compared to 1 122 a year ago. Isuzu was third on 638 (454), while Ford shipped only 178 units (366).

The 10 countries that took 100 or more units were: Kenya, 382; Ghana, 367, Zimbabwe, 296; Libya, 265 (all Nissans); Mozambique, 256; Nigeria 224; Mauritius, 178; Reunion, 158; Zambia, 148; Malawi, 107; and Gabon, 107.

Exports in February were 3% lower at 1 888, compared to 1 947 in the same month last year. Toyota, with 697 units (564 in February 2019), was the leader, followed by Nissan with 531. (In February last year Nissan had been ahead of Toyota with 663 exports into Africa).

The only countries which took more than 100 units in February were: Ghana, 325; Kenya, 202; Nigeria, 185; Libya, 165; Mauritius 151; Zimbabwe, 142; Reunion, 113. ■





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Clever Innovation Leads to Greater Profit

ORANGE OWL (PTY)LTD



Orange Owl has been a leader in bringing new and innovative products to the South African automotive market since 2014. Through the use of multiple channels, it is able to improve dealer bottom line and customer retention, while offering consumers products and services of the highest quality for their vehicles.

Orange Owl is extremely excited about the introduction of two new Crystal Fusion products to the South African market.

Crystal Fusion Ceramic Coating

Crystal Fusion Premium Ceramic Coating has been engineered to protect the painted surfaces of a vehicle against contaminants and prohibit them from attaching to the surface by means of a super hydro-phobic barrier. This barrier effectively keeps the vehicle cleaner for a longer period as it causes water to micro-bead and quickly roll off, along with any dirt, grime and insects. Even acid rain has a hard time sticking to the treated surface.

An added bonus is that the Crystal Fusion Premium Ceramic Coating enhances the gloss depth of the painted surfaces that is often referred to as the so-called wet look. It also helps to resist minor scuffs and abrasions that may typically occur under normal vehicle use.

Crystal Fusion Premium Ceramic Coating can be applied to many surfaces of the vehicle including paint, wheels, mouldings, and plastic which will all benefit equally from the protection. In addition – unlike other ceramic products that take hours to apply, are labour intensive and generally also very expensive – this affordable new product is applied to the vehicle within 45 minutes.

> *An added bonus is that the Crystal Fusion Premium Ceramic Coating also helps to resist minor scuffs and abrasions that may typically occur under normal vehicle use.*



What makes Crystal Fusion Premium Ceramic Coating different?

The protective coating has been formulated with the highest level of concentration of active ingredients for the most durable ceramic product offered in the market. Unlike temporary topical treatments, Crystal Fusion Premium Ceramic Coating bonds to the surface, creating a hard shield which lasts for years. In short, it keeps the vehicle's exterior in a good condition, thereby increasing its resale value.

For dealers there are huge profit opportunities per unit. The ceramic coating is an unregulated product and can be applied in-house in a short time, thus cutting down on labour costs. Crystal Fusion has national representation, which means that no matter we you are based, assistance will always be on hand.

Crystal Fusion Silica Waterless Car Wash

Crystal Fusion Silica Waterless Car Wash is a unique and highly effective waterless car wash product that consists of a special mixture of chemicals that break down and liquefy dirt on contact. What is most important to note, is that this waterless car wash process does not require a bucket of soapy water, nor does it require the unnecessary waste of hundreds of litres of water.

The traditional soap-and-water method of cleaning a vehicle can be very wasteful and even harmful to the environment. The waterless method of cleaning is very quick, easy and much more efficient, while at the same time being safer for the

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environment. There is no dirty water going down the storm drain to pollute our waterways. In fact, the cleaning of the towels is the only dirty job in this process.

The main benefits of using Crystal Fusion's Silica Waterless Car Wash include that it's easy and quick to use, no drying of the vehicle is required, it saves on labour and cleaning materials, vehicles don't need to be moved around so it requires less space and there is no mess left to clean up. Best of all, one bottle goes a long way and will allow you to clean eight or more cars.

Besides cars, the waterless cleaner can also be used on boats and motorcycles. And keeping a bottle of the cleaner handy in your car means you can clean it anywhere, any time. Once a vehicle has been cleaned using this method and product, the surface will be slick and will repel dirt, meaning the car will stay cleaner for longer.

Crystal Fusion Makes Windscreens and Profit Opportunities Clearer Than Ever

Ensuring optimal visibility through and durability of a vehicle's windscreen is literally as easy as 1, 2, 3 with the application of an innovative product called Crystal Fusion.

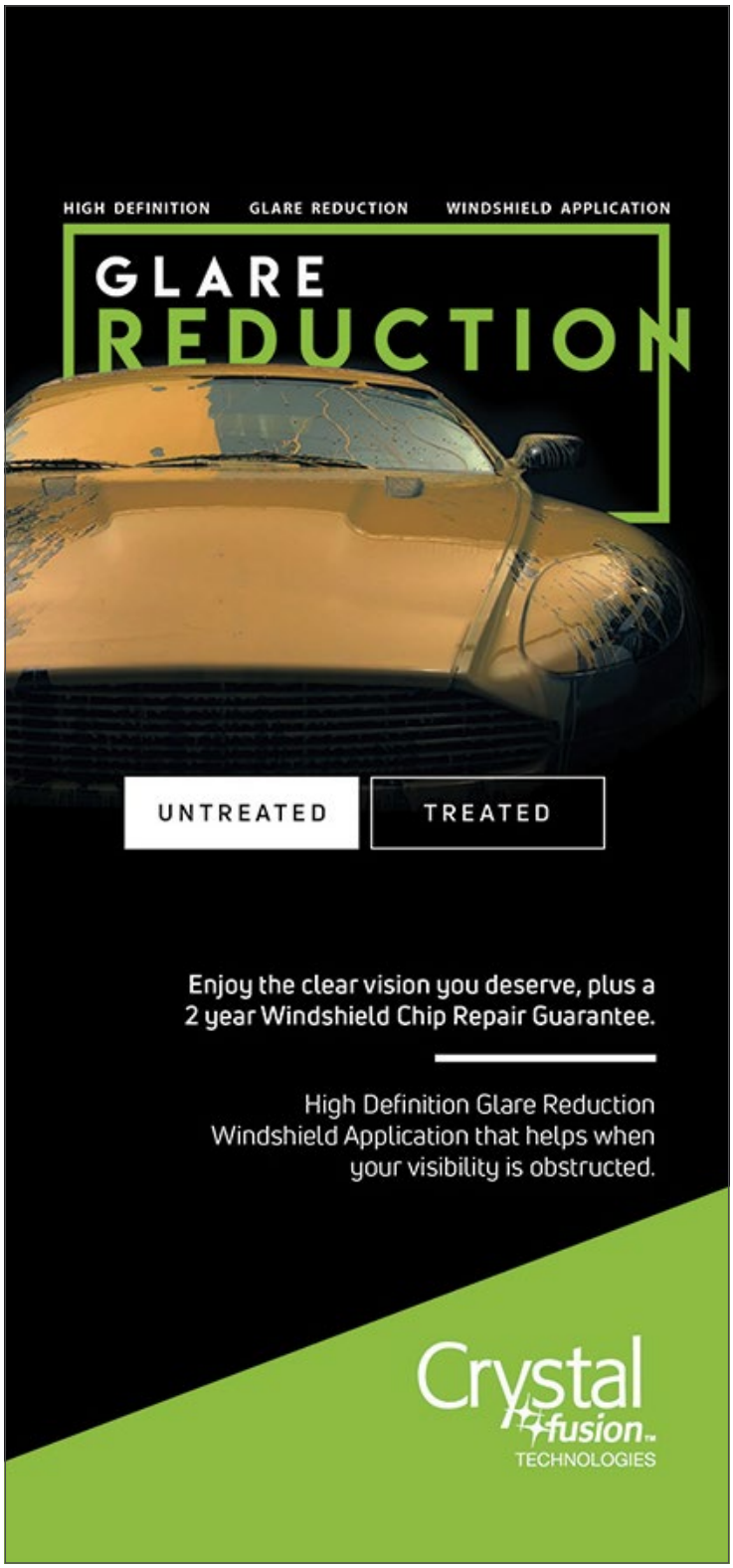
Harnessing the power of hydrophobic technology and taking only 15 minutes to apply, it transforms an ordinary windscreen into one with high-definition properties that not only repels dirt and water but enhances visibility by up to 34%.at night. It also offers a 24-month chip repair to the value R3 000.

The windscreen is one of any vehicle's critical safety items. Apart from keeping the wind out of your face, it improves the structural rigidity of the vehicle and promotes occupant safety. The quality and condition of the windscreen also has a direct impact on visibility.

Great strides have been made in windscreen technology since the early 1900s – lamination being one of the most notable – but the very nature of glass means it is porous, with microscopic hills, peaks and valleys that refract light and collect tiny particles. This irregular plane causes a strong adhesion with water and creates microscopic contact points in the glass, which has a direct impact on visibility.

Made up of several chemicals, Crystal Fusion molecularly fuses with glass to form a hydrophobic barrier that not only enhances visibility in bad weather, but also strengthens the glass surface. As a result, water beads up and rolls away, while small debris simply ricochets off.

Traditional windscreen coatings lose their efficacy over time but Crystal Fusion lasts for the lifetime of the windscreen. Explains Erik van der Walt, general manager of Orange Owl, part of the C2 group of Companies, the company responsible for bringing Crystal Fusion to the South African Market: "At Orange Owl, our philosophy is to bring to market new, unique quality non-insurance products that add real value to our clients. Crystal Fusion fills this mandate as it is not film or wax based so it won't streak, peel or blister. In addition, for Crystal Fusion, our dealer partners offer a free product refresher every six months, which means the windscreen will remain as clear as the day it was first treated."



First launched locally in September 2014, Crystal Fusion is already well established in the USA and Canada. In South Africa and Namibia, it is available at over 350 dealers and has to date been applied to more than 190 000 windscreens.

The main advantages of Crystal Fusion are:

- Improved clarity and visibility;
- Shedding of water;
- Deflection of small debris;
- Easier cleaning off of dirt and ice;
- Reduced night-time glare;
- Protection against acid rain, corrosion and mineral build-up;
- 24-month chip repair warranty.

According to Van der Walt, the application price of Crystal Fusion is highly affordable. "The product has already established such a good reputation in the market that the treatment can be financed along with the purchase price of a new or used vehicle. In addition, many insurance companies will cover the application on new windscreens if Crystal Fusion is stipulated as an extra in the insurance contract," he explains.

From a dealer perspective, Crystal Fusion offers excellent profit and upselling opportunities and the six-monthly Crystal Care program promotes customer retention. Full training and product kits are provided to ensure that dealerships can realise the full earning potential of the product.

Visit **www.orangeowl.co.za** to learn more about the qualities of Crystal Fusion's range of products or for more information on becoming a reseller. Alternatively, contact Erik van der Walt on (011) 398 9174 or mail **info@orangeowl.co.za**. ■

Snippets

Volkswagen Teases With Concept Sketch Of New Amarok



Volkswagen showed a design sketch hinting at the striking appearance of the new Amarok bakkie to be launched in 2022 at its recent annual media briefing. This model will be one of the first fruits of the joint venture between Volkswagen and Ford in developing commercial vehicles. Ford Australia is taking the lead in designing and engineering the new product, which will be based on the very successful Ranger platform. Meanwhile it seems the next generation Ford Transit Connect will be based on the next generation VW Caddy. ■

Honda Takes the Agency Route In Australia

Honda is set to rattle the Australian motor dealer environment as it moves to an agency model when it launches "a new way of doing business" on July 1st, according to an in-depth article in GoAuto News Premium, an authoritative Australian e-zine.

It will also mean reducing the size of the network and the number of dealership owners. According to the article it seems the current 105 outlets and 71 owners will drop to something like 60 outlets and 12 owners over a 15-month period. It says a hub-and-spoke model will be used in metro areas to service customers conveniently.

The number of models on offer will also be reduced.

This change in the way Honda does business follows the same move it made in New Zealand in 2000. The trend was followed, in 2018, by Toyota in New Zealand.

The agency model involves the dealer having examples of all models in the showroom and footing the floorplan bill, while factory-owned stock is held in warehouses in each hub, usually operated by an external logistics service provider. There is a national pricing policy with one price and no haggling.

Even though Honda has been a participant in the Australian market for 50 years it believes it is time for a big change in its business model to remain sustainable, particularly in a market that has seen 23 consecutive months of sales decline.

Here in South Africa both BMW and Mercedes-Benz use a version of the agency model and this trend could grow in the future. ■

Deloitte Stages Webinar To Replace Future Of Mobility Conference

The Coronavirus resulted in Deloitte changing its planned physical meeting in Johannesburg this week to a webinar that attracted about 50 participants.

It was all very interesting and informative and will be reported on in detail in the April edition of *AutoLive*.

However, it was disappointing that the involvement of guest speaker Clemens Pizzini of the Munich Technical University talking about the intriguing aCar (Africa Car) – a small bakkie powered by two electric motors – was hampered by a technical glitch and we have to wait for the presentation to be emailed from Germany. All will be revealed next month, but here is a photograph from TU Munich of the bakkie in an African setting to whet the appetite. ■



Astounding Efficiency From Camless Engine

Christian von Koenigsegg, founder of the boutique supercar maker in Sweden that carries his name, has once again astounded the motoring world. This time it is not just another supercar based on a fighter jet, but an innovative, high performance engine that does not make use of camshafts for valve actuation.

The engine is known as the Friendly Giant, because it develops 600 horsepower from a three-cylinder power unit of two-litre capacity. The secret is the variable valve operation by means of electronic actuators that use a measured blast of compressed air against a piston to open the valve(s) when required. The valve is then left to fall shut on its spring by releasing the air or can be locked open using an oil reservoir. Then the oil is released through a small hole, damping the valve closure, and ensuring the valve doesn't hit the seat damagingly hard.

Having a system to open or close a valve individually has long been a dream of engine designers.

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C2GROUP
C2 Investments is a holding company that has expertise in motor and motor-related services business.

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Vehicle Safety Products
Gamification Of Training
Premium Motorcycle Accessories
Verification And Online valuation
Branding And Procurement
Scooter Distributors
GPS For Non-Moving goods
Vehicle Loan Financing

Snippets

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This is currently being done still using a camshaft. Now the new engine does without it.

The new-fangled engine is fitted to the latest Koenigsegg supercar, the Gemera. It combines with three electric motors and battery packs to produce a total of 1 700 hp. In metric terms this equates to 1.27 megawatts which is equal to the electricity power draw of a couple of hundred houses! ■

100 Years of Suzuki

Suzuki is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2020. It was on March 15, 1920 that Suzuki Loom Manufacturing Company was founded by Michio Suzuki. Since then, Suzuki has expanded its business from looms to motorcycles, automobiles, outboard motors and ATV's, always adapting to the trend of the times as well as domestic and global markets.

After changing its name to Suzuki Motor Co. Ltd in 1954, Suzuki launched the Suzulight, the first mass-produced mini vehicle in Japan. The company name was then changed to Suzuki Motor Corporation in 1990 in view of its business expansion and globalisation. The journey of 100 years was never easy, to overcome a number of crises since the foundation, although every member of Suzuki united as one and continued to make the company thrive.

Suzuki has grown to a company with many fans across the globe and even today, its unchanging spirit of manufacturing has been passed on. Marking the beginning of the next century, Director and Chairman, Osamu Suzuki and Director and President, Toshihiro Suzuki shared this message: "All members of Suzuki Motor Corporation take this as an important milestone to reaffirm the founder's philosophy of focusing on customers and strive to deliver products to our customers across the globe. Your kind support is truly the greatest factor that has enabled us to always be close to our customers' daily lives and achieve our commemorative 100th anniversary. We sincerely appreciate your continuous support."

Suzuki Motor Corporation have established a 100th anniversary logo and launched a new web page in commemoration. Visit: **https://globalsuzuki.com/100th/** to see more. ■

Carlos Tavares Voted 2020 World Car Person of the Year



Eighty-six World Car Awards (WCA) jurors from 24 countries collectively, by secret ballot, have voted Carlos Tavares, CEO of PSA Group as recipient of the prestigious 2020 World Car Person of the Year award.

Tavares' many significant accomplishments over the past year made him the jurors' choice over several other hugely impressive auto industry executives, engineers, designers and entrepreneurs from all around the globe.

Among those accomplishments, as CEO of PSA Group, Carlos Tavares has made its brands respected world-class players, returned the company to profitability, and returned Opel to profitability in record time. He also negotiated a merger of PSA and FCA that will create the fourth largest automaker in the world by volume and will better balance the combined entity's global presence, all while masterminding the integration of electrification and mobility and strengthening market development in China and beyond.

Commented Tavares: "It is a great honour to receive this prestigious award which I wish to dedicate to all the employees of the Groupe PSA, to its responsible and demanding social partners and to the supervisory board which guarantees effective governance."

The World Car Person of the Year award is just one of six awards handed out annually by the World Car Awards. The awards were introduced in 2004 to reflect the reality of the global marketplace, as well as to recognise, reward and inspire excellence, leadership and innovation in a rapidly changing automotive industry. ■



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The Road to a Successful Sale

Research has proven that the uptake and retention of training information among staff is questionable. Ongoing training is the only solution and therefore vital to the longevity and success of any business. However, traditional methods of training are becoming ineffective in this fast-paced, technologically evolving modern world we live in.

In addition, it has become increasingly difficult to effectively, constantly and instantly communicate changing information to staff.

This begs the question: how can you get your training to be instantly updated and be available to all your staff at any time, while allowing you to monitor how it is being used and by whom? The solution is simple: you need online training with mobile accessibility.

1Huddle, a mobile-based training platform, has revolutionised training by replacing traditional classrooms and manuals with gamification, applying the elements of game playing and points scoring in up-skilling and training staff.

Three Reasons Why Gamification Increases Engagement and Grabs the People's Attention

In the world of business, most business owners aim to accomplish at least one of the following: get their team motivated and productive, and increase their wellbeing. Gamification, as anyone could have guessed, is an effective way to tick all the boxes, but it's a relatively fresh concept that some may not have heard of yet. So what is it and how can it help you improve the workplace climate?

> *Gamification is an effective way to tick all the boxes.*

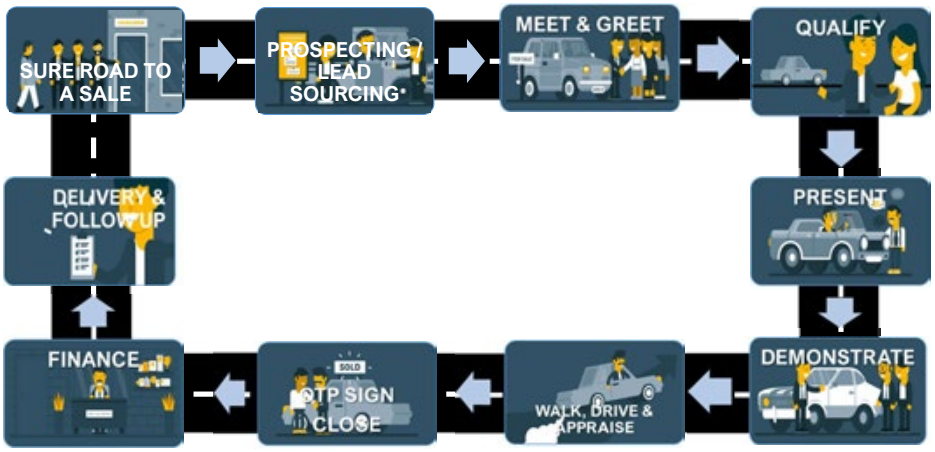
Gamification in a Nutshell

By infusing game-like characteristics into what would otherwise be a dull or boring activity, it's possible to achieve a positive effect on people's willingness to engage in it. Participants can be further motivated by incorporating some form of leader boards, distributing badges for achievements, unlocking rewards, and such.

Since it helps to relieve stress and takes the mundane out of the necessary, many businesses have taken notice and have begun implementing it.

Now that the basics are out of the way, let's examine the three main reasons why gamification is so effective:

1. It gives participants a sense of achievement and progress;
2. Identifying the top performers becomes a breeze;
3. It acts as a new form of credibility system.



Road to a Sale is a process that paves the way in a systematic and most effective way in preparing employees and the dealership in closing deals and most importantly creating value in the customers mind by adopting a personalized touch and feel experience by following the process of Lead sourcing and prospecting, Meet and Greet, Qualifying the Customer, Selecting and Presenting, Test Drive and Demonstrating, Valuation, the Final Close & OTP sign, Finance Application and finally the Delivery and Follow up

> *It is interesting to note that due to the minimal data required to run the App, many employees are logging in and playing after hours.*

Research has proven that games positively impact learning and retention.

1Huddle provides full customer support and provides training on management and monitoring of the system. The latter promotes a better understanding of which training areas require more focus. To this end, material can be changed or updated as required, ensuring that the most current and up-to-date information is communicated to employees immediately.

Feedback from clients confirms that 1Huddle RTS promotes learning through repetition and it is interesting to note that due to the minimal data required to run the App, many employees are logging in and playing after hours. In essence it is achieving the impossible; providing a better and more effective platform of training that sees employees essentially training themselves, while keeping them engaged and ensuring that information is retained.

Conclusion

Gamification is gaining traction both in the corporate world as well as in popular entertainment.

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New Trends and Their Impact on the Motor Body Repair Industry

Massive technological transformation in the world during 2019 has had, and will continue to have, a significant impact on the automotive industry, specifically the motor body repair (MBR) and short term motor insurance sectors.

Artificial Intelligence (AI), electrification, virtual/augmented reality, block chain and increasingly connected vehicles are five of the main trends that will alter the repair and insurance industries.

The rate of change in design in vehicles is significant for the MBR sector because of the new electronic, digital components and of course, electrification. "The industry has no choice but to adapt," said Richard Green, national director of the South African Motor Body Repairers Association (SAMBRA). "Unfortunately, in South Africa we don't always have the quick response from an OEM perspective that our colleagues have in Europe in terms of access to product information and training."

In Green's opinion, this time lag is concerning. Many of the electric and hybrid vehicles are currently repaired by the manufacturers or a very limited number of trained MBRs, but in time many will also need to be repaired by MBRs with the necessary skillset. "We urgently need to start developing new learning programs for existing and new entrants into the sector so they can be introduced to this new technology at an early stage," Green remarked.

We live in an ever evolving world. AI is already impacting motor body repairers in the form of photo estimating, for example and we may soon see the introduction of virtual training. Researchers at Tradiebot Industries and Deakin University are, in fact, currently working together to develop the motor body and automotive repair industry's first virtual/augmented reality training and service solution.

This project will be responsible for developing a training system that will redefine the way information, communication and training is delivered for existing repairers and those seeking a career in the industry.

Like many trades, the MBR sector is facing a serious shortfall of skilled talent and an ever-widening skills gap as repair businesses struggle to keep up with the latest OEM repair methods and industry best practice. According to Ben Horan, director of the CADET VR Lab at Deakin University, this type of immersive reality provides an opportunity for those interested in joining the motor body repair industry to overcome some of the skills training challenges in the sector.



Virtual Reality can provide access to training environments which are either difficult to access or don't exist, and Augmented Reality can help provide digital assistance while performing a task. Photo courtesy of Tradiebot Industries/ Bodyshopbusiness.

"Virtual Reality can provide access to training environments which are either difficult to access or don't exist, and Augmented Reality can help provide digital assistance while performing a task," said Horan.

In addition, the company is also researching the use of plastics and carbon fibre to determine if it's possible to supply on-demand 3D printed parts. The company is currently working with MBR repair industry partners to create a more efficient and cost-effective method for manufacturing parts that are unavailable to be bought separate, out of stock or discontinued.

> *Now we are seeing the introduction of graphene, an ultra-light weight and immensely strong material that is capturing world-wide interest.*

And it is not only advances in technology that the sector needs to come to grips with.

Materials like composites, high-strength steel and aluminum are already in use but now we are seeing the introduction of graphene, an ultra-light weight and immensely strong material that is capturing world-wide interest. Graphene is 200 times tougher than steel, incredibly thin and flexible, a superb conductor, and can offer a solid barrier. "As production and processing of graphene has advanced, the automotive industries are eager to establish supplies, integrate graphene into existing processes, and explore new uses of graphene in a multitude of automotive applications including electronics, thermal management and structural uses," Green explained

From an RMI perspective, the organisation's president Jeanne Esterhuizen said that it is working with merSETA and all role players to design a qualification for the repair of hybrid and electric vehicles. "At the RMI we are proactively preparing the industry for repairing vehicles with new technologies," she said.

Unfortunately registering new or revising existing qualifications takes time in South Africa because of the way our system is structured. There is no direct flow of information from OEM to industry and as such it takes time to get everyone on board. "Much progress has already been made. It is not only post school that we need to look at however. Our training needs must be addressed in primary school as well. The good news is codification is already being piloted from grade 4 in a school in the Free State," Esterhuizen explained.

She continued by saying that it is important to close the gap in training and in this regard, commends the Department of Higher Education on their willingness to address this through the implementation of their Centres of Specialisation project, which includes identified TVET colleges and industry partners.

"Insurer representatives also need to be trained on the technology in these different vehicles," said Esterhuizen. "Ultimately we need buy-in from all role players, as historically the insurers have been the missing link." Fortunately this gap has been closed by registering a Vehicle Damage Quantification qualification which includes both the job content of estimation in the MBR environment and insurance assessing in the insurance sector. This qualification will be regulated by a newly registered professional body called the Vehicle Damage Quantifier Governing Body of South Africa. Both Industry and Insurers are represented in the VDQBSA.

The introduction of new technologies is forcing all industry sectors to adapt in order to provide and maintain client service levels. As the complexity of these vehicles increases, motor body repair shops will have to invest time and money in training, obtaining factory certifications and investing in specialized equipment.

According to Green MBR shops will have to decide whether they will continue to rely on the large number of older vehicles on the road or accept the technological changes that are impacting the industry. "Considering the average car on the road is approximately 10 years old, the majority of body shops shouldn't have to worry about having to adapt in the short term. Specialist MBRs who are structured to, and traditionally service, the more technologically sophisticated vehicles will need to adapt faster however," he concluded. ■

Corporate Social Responsibility

Ford Rallies to Bridge Literacy Gap

Earlier this month, several Ford Ranger double cabs, loaded with boxes of books, teaching aids, and other educational materials, set out to visit some of the most remote and disadvantaged primary schools in the Hazyview, Mpumalanga area.

It was Ford Motor Company of Southern Africa's leg of the annual Rally to READ, a flagship programme of the READ Educational Trust, founded in 1998 and spearheaded by now retired McCarthy Motor Holdings CEO and philanthropist, Brand Pretorius.

A living legend in industry circles, Pretorius is widely acknowledged for his invaluable contribution to the growth and sustainability of the local automotive sector since the 1970s. Passionate about helping to change the narrative for those less fortunate, he continues to work tirelessly to ensure that the most vulnerable members of society are not simply left to fall through the cracks.

> *"Education is a fundamental human right. Unfortunately, as we all know, the right to education doesn't necessarily align with the reality of implementing that right." – Brand Pretorius, McCarthy Motor Holdings CEO*

"Education is a fundamental human right, and education in itself is an empowering right," explained Pretorius. "Equal opportunity and universal access to good quality education is one of the most effective tools by which economically and socially marginalised communities can lift themselves out of poverty and participate fully in society. Unfortunately, as we all know, the right to education doesn't necessarily align with the reality of implementing that right."

Here in South Africa, the most recent Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) found that 78 per cent of Grade 4 learners cannot read with comprehension, which inevitably means that many learners drop out of early high school. This is particularly prevalent in rural areas.

To mitigate this, Rally to READ provides support to the most needy of schools in rural areas. Rallies take place in six school districts, across five provinces and schools selected for support are provided with books, and specially constructed box libraries to protect the books, during the initial Rally weekend.

In addition, each of the schools is supported for a period of three years with teacher training and classroom support visits by READ field staff. The box library stock is supplemented each new Rally year with more advanced reading material.

Teachers are also tutored on literacy and language methodologies by dedicated READ trainers.

Simply by equipping teachers with the tools and training they need to create print-rich classrooms and stimulating learning environments for the children, morale amongst teachers dramatically improves. And as the children's reading and writing skills improve, so their confidence grows. Literacy gaps are bridged, and an increasing number of learners are now making their way confidently into high school, and even university.

All it takes for children to significantly improve their reading is daily practice. By reading books that interest them, for just 20 minutes every day, a child will see 1.8 million words in one year, while another child who reads for only one minute a day will see just 8 000 words in that same year. This is why it's so important to not only teach children literacy skills in the classroom, but to ensure they have access to a wide variety of material to read for pleasure, outside of school hours. And this is what the Rally provides. By the end of the three-year Rally cycle, schools will not only have box libraries filled with classroom resources, but also classrooms filled with independent readers.

"We couldn't do what we do without the ongoing support of our loyal sponsors," Pretorius commented. "This year alone, Ford assisted us with an incredibly generous R1-million donation to help us continue our work. But over and above that, we are also very grateful for the logistical support they provide in their fleet of Ranger bakkies, helping us to physically get the books and supplies to the schools, which are often in very difficult to reach locations."

> *By reading books that interest them, for just 20 minutes every day, a child will see 1.8 million words in one year.*

"It is our honour and privilege to support such a worthy cause," said Ockert Berry, VP Operations, Ford Motor Company of Southern Africa. "Our partnership with Rally to READ goes way back to 1999, and it's an association of which we are extremely proud. Being a good corporate citizen has always been a core value of Ford, and our commitment to sustainability is a key part of who we are. We believe that by supporting communities and members of society who can't support themselves, and providing opportunities so that they can better themselves, we will have a profound impact on the future of our country. And education is the foundation we all need for a lifetime of learning and work opportunities.

"This Rally is not just about delivering books," concluded Berry. "It's about delivering hope. Giving these children, their families, their communities, and our country much-needed hope for the future."

To see how you can get involved in supporting this initiative, please visit: **www.rallytoread.co.za**. ■







Corporate Social Responsibility

Cheetahs Benefit from Ford Support



Ford Motor Company of Southern Africa commemorated World Wildlife Day earlier in March through its continued support of the Cheetah Metapopulation Project, which forms part of the Endangered Wildlife Trust's (EWT) Carnivore Conservation Programme. A metapopulation is a group of spatially separated populations of the same species.

The Cheetah Metapopulation Project currently monitors and manages 386 cheetahs across 60 metapopulation reserves in South Africa and Malawi. Through human-mediated gene flow, via the relocation of cheetahs between reserves, the project is committed to ensuring sufficient genetic diversity and demographic integrity of the species.

"We aspire to conserve wild and functional cheetahs, behaving as they normally do, and as they have done for millions of years," explained project co-ordinator Vincent van der Merwe.

Like so much of the world's wildlife, the cheetah population has been all but decimated, and it is now listed as a vulnerable species. In 2016, the wild cheetah population was estimated at just 7 100 globally. The Kruger National Park supports the largest protected population of wild cheetahs worldwide.

Prior to the 2011 launch of the EWT's project, which has been managed by Van der Merwe since inception, 30 per cent of metapopulation reserves held only a single sex of cheetah, and 27 per cent of cheetahs moved off these reserves were being sold to captive facilities.

"Captive breeding or keeping facilities, which often provide recreational activities like 'cub petting' and 'walking with' experiences sold under the banner of conservation, have little to no conservation value," Van der Merwe said. "Because big cats in captivity are not subject to natural evolutionary pressures, it means that there is no survival of the fittest. Everyone survives, even the runts of the litter. And this really doesn't bode well for the genetic fitness of the species.

"Before Ford Wildlife Foundation came on board as a sponsor, we had to rely on the reserves to transport their own cheetahs, which was a huge challenge. Now we can do the translocations ourselves. Since the handover of our Ranger 35 months ago, I've done 107 translocations, and have clocked about 227 000 km," Van der Merwe said.

"It really is such an honour for us to be able to support organisations like EWT and their wildlife conservation efforts, like this incredible Cheetah Metapopulation Project," commented Ford Wildlife Foundation (FWF) manager, Lynda du Plessis.

"FWF was established in 2014, but Ford has been actively involved in conservation efforts in Southern Africa going back 30 years," she added. "We currently have 25 Rangers on loan to partner organisations, for the effective implementation of their projects

To see the Cheetah Metapopulation Project in action, please visit:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyF9NKuQ9Ww ■

VWSA Offers Work Experience to Unemployed Youth

For the second consecutive year, Volkswagen Group South Africa (VWSA) is supporting the national Youth Employment Service (YES) programme by offering work opportunities to 520 unemployed youth.

The YES programme was launched by President Cyril Ramaphosa to enable young people without formal qualifications to gain work experience.



The group, which began its 12-month employment period recently, consists of 141 candidates placed at VWSA, another 194 working for the VWSA dealership network and 185 candidates being taken in by SME host partners.

Of the 141 that will work for VWSA directly, 123 will be placed at the plant in Uitenhage, 10 candidates at the National Sales Organisation (NSO) in Sandton and another 8 candidates will join the Group Parts Warehouse facility in Centurion.

This is the second year that VWSA is supporting the YES programme, launched by President Cyril Ramaphosa to enable young people without formal qualifications to gain work experience with the aim of improving their chances at long-term quality employment. In partnership with the YES Foundation, Harambee and UNLOCK'D, VWSA offered opportunities to 560 youth in 2019. Six of these candidates were offered permanent positions within VWSA and the dealership network.

"Volkswagen remains committed to economic transformation initiatives, and we believe programmes like the YES initiative have a crucial part to play in alleviating the youth unemployment crisis in our country," said Thomas Schaefer, Volkswagen Group South Africa Chairman and Managing Director. "It is our hope that our involvement in this programme will empower youth to realise their potential and gain quality employment." ■

Major Investment for Bosal Afrika

Bosal Afrika, part of the Bosal Group and a global Tier 1 automotive supplier, has invested about R25 million in the upgrade and relocation of its new OEM manufacturing Emission Control Systems (ECS) plant in Koedoespoort Industrial, Pretoria.

"World-class standards have been implemented in the plant's layout, manufacturing efficiency and operational excellence. It now possesses full in-house capabilities to develop and produce state-of-the-art emission control systems for passenger cars and commercial vehicles," said Bosal Chairman, Karel Bos.

"The new plant will allow Bosal Afrika to more than double its revenue with new business both for hot and cold-end emissions control systems. To achieve this revenue increase, in excess of a further R20 million will be invested in production capacity in the months to come. The hot end business would not only be for the local market but also the export market.

"Bosal Afrika has moved out of the manufacturing, distribution and sales of aftermarket products, tube and tubular products, hydraulic and mechanical jacks, and irrigation and electrical conduit products to name a few," explained Bos. "This change has necessitated the re-evaluation of our South African business and its strategy. We have decided to initially focus on OEM hot and cold-end emission control systems and automotive carrier and protection systems.

"The reorientation resulted in the requirement to invest in the plant, which was made to achieve a paradigm shift in the areas of quality and competitiveness by implementing lean flow manufacturing processes."

> *A further R20 million will be invested in production capacity in the months to come. The hot end business would not only be for the local market but also the export market. – Karel Bos, Bosal Chairman*

Said the Department of Trade and Industry's Deputy Minister Fikile Majola: "Key to improving productivity and enhancing efficiency in the plant is Bosal's commitment to skills development and training, which is critical to any business success. We congratulate Bosal on this investment and are encouraged that they are growing their investments in South Africa and continue to view South Africa as a strategic investment partner."



From left to right: Paul Hiel, Bosal Division Operations Director Lummen – Belgium; Honourable Deputy Minister Fikile Majola; Karel Bos, Chairman Bosal; Belgian Ambassador Didier Vanderhasselt and Elisabeth Bos (daughter).

Renai Mothilal, Executive Director of The National Association for Automotive Component and Allied Manufacturers (NAACAM), of which Bosal Afrika is a member, added: "This is another great example of the SA Automotive Masterplan delivering positive results for the components sector."

Mr Bos said that in 1968 Bosal Afrika was the springboard for the growth of Bosal in Europe, North America, South America and Russia (to name a few regions). Today the company has a revenue of Euro 462 million (R7.6 billion), with over 20 plants worldwide, employing 2 200 people.

"We see growth opportunities because we have some unique advantages compared to our competition. In terms of emission control systems, Bosal is the longest-established company in SA, the market leader, the most vertically integrated manufacturer and the only company with significant R&D capability.

"These unique advantages allow Bosal to localise the production of virtually all emission control systems requirements of the OEMs in South Africa," Bos continued.

"We are now in the planning stage to bring our Automotive Carrier and Protection Systems plant to the same level as the Emission Control Systems plant, which will entail an upgrade of the building and a complete layout change. The entire manufacturing process will be converted to a lean flow manufacturing process as well.

"Over the next two to three years, we will also triple the business by starting to manufacture tow bars for export to Europe and possibly South America. The increase in activity will require a significant investment in production equipment to increase the capacity of the plant so that it can manufacture the necessary volume," he explained.

The growth will also be realised by adding new products such as seat frames, air vessels and aluminium fuel tanks to Bosal's product portfolio globally.

Deputy Minister Majola added: "For our part, we commit to supporting this investment partnership through our redoubled efforts to expand our mechanisms for cooperation. As government, we are constantly strengthening our systems, regulations and procedures to improve our country's standing in global business competitiveness measures. We must make it easy for investors to do business.

"We want a large auto industry in South Africa with an ecosystem of small, medium and large players able to reach the scale of production necessary to make us a serious global player," Majola concluded. ■

Fond Memories of Toyota's Fortuner



BY LIANA REINERS

Back in my days as a mainstream motoring journalist, I was in the privileged position of attending many new vehicle launches and over the past 30 years I have driven more test cars than I care to remember. So I was there when Toyota's evergreen Fortuner was first introduced in 2006 and over the years I got to drive each new and updated model.

I've been a fan of the Fortuner right from the get go and every single one of my encounters with it has been positive. In fact, one of my most memorable experiences as a motoring scribe involved the Fortuner. Sure, it was a few years ago, but everything that impressed me about the Fortuner then holds true to this day.

I'm always up for a road trip. Especially if it comes with the promise of Mozambique's pristine white beaches and rolling waves, along with good company and some fun in the sun. Mix in with that the comfort of a popular and proven vehicle to get you there and you can most definitely count me in.

When I picked the Toyota Fortuner as my ride for our Mozambique trip it was for purely selfish reasons. There were some practical considerations for my decisions too, like the fact that I had to cart along our groceries for four days and that we were three people travelling together. The idea of having lots of cabin space appealed to me, as did the large cargo area in the back. And if I have to be brutally honest, I was keen to see for myself why the Fortuner had become so popular with local buyers.

> *Today the Toyota Fortuner faces off against competitors such as the Ford Everest, Mitsubishi Pajero Sport and the Isuzu mu-X.*

Back in 2013 the Fortuner was, in many respects, a unique product in the South African market. Today it faces off against competitors such as the Ford Everest, Mitsubishi Pajero Sport and the Isuzu mu-X. And while it used to share many styling cues with the Hilux, the latest generation – launched in 2016 – boasts many characteristics that set it apart from its bakkie sibling. The two may still share some hardware, but the Fortuner has definitely traded in its hiking boots for a more smart casual look. It's no less capable than it used to be, though.

While the Fortuner is by no means the most radical looking vehicle out there, its design is simple and elegant enough to appeal to most. And this is probably one of the reasons for its success; the fact that its middle-of-the-road looks offend no-one.

But I digress.

On our ten-hour trip to Ponta Malongane I had plenty of time to discover and inspect all that the interior of the Fortuner had to offer and still does in its current iteration. It has always been hailed as being well specced at its price and it's easy to see why. As with all Toyota models, the instrument layout is instinctive and practical; all controls being within easy reach of the driver. They're also remarkably simple to operate.

continued on next page >

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After what felt like an eternity on the road, we finally reached the Kosi Bay border post between South Africa and Mozambique. With all the formalities taken care of, I was keen to tackle the last few kilometres to our final destination. My excitement quickly turned to dismay though as I caught my first glimpse of the thick sand we would have to traverse before we got there.

Would the Fortuner be able to handle it? The model we were driving was – after all – a 4×2 variant, albeit with rear diff lock. I had visions of us spending the next four days bogged down in the sand, battered by the elements as we slowly succumbed to thirst and hunger.

When we got stuck a few hundred metres further I was convinced that our fate had been sealed and the dead snake I discovered by the side of the "road" did little to allay my fears. Embarrassingly, in my eagerness to get to Ponta Malongane, I had forgotten to deflate the Fortuner's tyres – fatal if you're travelling on thick sand. With the mistake rectified and the diff-lock engaged, we were soon chomping through the fine white powder at a steady pace.

After unpacking it was time for a quick meeting to discuss the sequence of events during our stay. Our intrepid photographer suggested that we leave the Fortuner for last. As one would do with all good things, I thought to myself.

And so it came to be that on the Saturday afternoon – just as I was beginning to think that my only purpose on the trip was to make breakfast and see to it that everyone's coffee mugs stayed full – my Fortuner and I were called to attention. The idea was to take a leisurely drive to Ponta D'Ouro, sampling all that the area has to offer and taking photographs along the way.

We travelled five up in the Fortuner, our poor intern being relegated to one of the foldaway seats that are usually reserved for children or people you want to see suffer.

Incidentally, all versions of the Fortuner are equipped with seven seats, of which the second row of seats can split in a 60/40 configuration and unclip to tumble forward. The third row of seats can slide, split in 50/50 configuration and fold up to the sides in a space-up configuration to further increase the load area.

The main road to Ponta D'Ouro consists mainly of more thick sand and enormous, deep ruts and I was once again impressed by the relative ease with which the Fortuner handled the challenge.

Here I would be amiss if I didn't say something about the Fortuner's engine.

My steed back then had a 2,5-litre D-4D VNT unit doing duty under the bonnet, fitted with an electrically actuated variable nozzle turbo charger, intercooler and direct fuel injection system.



In the current, nine-model Fortuner line-up it has been replaced with a new 2.4 GD-6 powerplant, which offers huge improvements over its predecessor. The four-cylinder turbodiesel boasts an impressive 110 kW and 400 Nm, only 20 Nm shy of the manual 2.8. NVH levels are also greatly improved, as is fuel consumption.

Currently, the 2.4 Fortuner is available in three variants: a 2.4 4×2 manual at just over R500 000, a 2.4 4×2 auto at just under R550 000 and a 2.4 4×4 auto at R573 200.

One would think that there wouldn't be much in the line of traffic between Ponta Malongane and Ponta D'Ouro on a Saturday afternoon. One would be wrong. With everything from trucks to quad bikes approaching us from the front and everybody seemingly following the "not an inch given" credo, I was starting to get slightly nervous again.

> *The Fortuner had – and still has – plenty to offer in the safety department.*

Good thing the Fortuner had – and still has – plenty to offer in the safety department.

All versions feature a driver and passenger airbag, ABS brakes with electronic brake force distribution (EBD), emergency brake assist (BA) and vehicle stability control (VSC). Added to this are full three point seat belts for all passengers, with height adjustment for the front occupants, side impact beams on all doors, energy absorbing clusters in the roof, front section and in the height adjustable steering column and a manual airbag on/off switch for the front passenger.

It was with a huge sigh of relief that I finally parked in front of Fernando's, a well-known hangout in Ponta D'Ouro, photographs in the bag and with a renewed sense of admiration for the Fortuner's abilities. It was time to reward ourselves with a little celebratory drink on a job well done. It



was time for Rhum & Rasberry! And no, that's not a spelling mistake.

For the uninformed, drinking R&R is an institution in Mozambique. Much like natural childbirth, it sounds like a good idea – until you actually try it. It's a vile mixture of local rum and Sparberry that, at first, tastes remarkably similar to cough mixture but does absolutely nothing to improve your health. Quite the opposite, actually.

And so, in very high spirits and much, much later, we headed back to Ponta Malongane, but not before I noticed that my Fortuner was one of at least seven Fortuners that were parked shoulder to shoulder in the street. Clearly it was way ahead of the pack in the SUV popularity stakes, even back then.

My passengers were in no mood for idle chit-chat. Our intern was fast asleep in one of the foldaway seats in the back and I remember thinking that they obviously weren't that cramped and uncomfortable after all. At least the silence gave me some time to ponder my experience with the Fortuner. I certainly couldn't fault it in any department. It was good-looking, it was spacious and comfortable, it was well appointed and it was quite capable of handling any situation trips such as this one could throw at it.

I didn't even mind that the following morning we would have to tackle the 700-odd kilometres back home and that the trip would probably take most of the day to complete. I didn't care. I was in the Fortuner! ■

New Model

Suzuki Introduces SA's Cheapest New Small Car

BY BRENDON STANIFORTH

Over the past few years, Suzuki has been somewhat of a success story in SA. To break into a competitive market is exceptionally difficult, as many manufacturers will know. And even if there is any noteworthy initial sales success, it doesn't mean that it will stay that way indefinitely.

Suzuki returned to South Africa in 2008 with two models, the Swift and SX4. Both enjoyed reasonable success and Suzuki sold 2 819 cars in total in 2008. In January 2020 alone an exceptional 1 632 cars were sold, not far behind 2008's annual total. That puts Suzuki securely in seventh place in South Africa, behind manufacturers like Toyota, Volkswagen and Ford – but ahead of the likes of Mercedes-Benz, Kia, Haval, Mazda and Isuzu.

> *In January 2020 alone an exceptional 1 632 cars were sold, not far behind 2008's annual total. That puts Suzuki securely in seventh place in South Africa.*

Suzuki's bread and butter, by a large margin, is the Suzuki Swift. Well over 800 units were sold in January of this year. I predict similar success for its new baby – the S-Presso.

The local media launch and ride and drive was scheduled for mid-March, but Covid-19 put a spoke in that wheel. The launch did, however, happen by means of a live broadcast on Suzuki's YouTube channel.

In January I was fortunate enough to test the S-Presso in India and to say that I came away impressed is an understatement. That's even before I knew that locally it would come with a price tag of only R134 900.

The S-Presso shares the HEARTECT platform with the more luxurious Baleno and cute Ignis. That's a good starting point. The S-Presso makes use of Suzuki's K10B naturally aspirated 1.0 3-cylinder petrol engine. The engine offers 50 kW and 90 Nm of peak torque. That may sound meagre, but the S-Presso only weighs 726 kg.

The S-Presso is a small city SUV in every sense of the word. It has 180 mm of ground clearance and very clever proportions. There were many tall guys on the trip to India and when four travelled together in this little tyke there was still ample legroom to be comfortable. It's magic.

In India traffic is chaotic and nobody really obeys any traffic laws. Most just do as they please, albeit at much lower speeds than what we're used to. We asked our hosts if we could do more 'South African' speeds and after twisting their rubber arms we were allowed to do 110 km/h at one stage. That, for India, is like the guy that recently did 309 km/h in his Audi in Midrand. It's mad. Nonetheless, stability on the S-Presso is impressive.

It truly is an innovative and capable package and if your budget is tight or you're simply looking for a small runabout, the S-Presso is a great option. Its very competitive price tag includes the first year's insurance, a 2-year/30 000 km service plan and a 5-year warranty. So for the first year of ownership your only expense on the car will be your repayment of approximately R1 800 per month, plus your fuel. That's it.

> *The S-Presso's very competitive price tag includes the first year's insurance, a 2-year/30 000 km service plan and a 5-year warranty.*

We will get our hands on a local S-Presso soon and see how it handles the daily routine and compare it against its local competitors then but in my opinion Suzuki won't be able to import them fast enough. I honestly can't think of a better first car. Well done Suzuki. ■

Suzuki S-Presso at a Glance

There are three models in the S-Presso range. The entry-level GL's standard equipment includes front electric windows, PDC, aircon, ABS with EBD, two airbags and central locking. The GL+ derivative gets a touchscreen infotainment system with reverse camera, Android Auto and Apple CarPlay, Bluetooth and USB to the list. The top-of-the-range S-Edition gets the GL+ spec plus a comprehensive visual upgrade package with scuff plates and protective cladding. ■



We Drive

Peugeot 108 – A Worthy Small-car Contender



BY STUART JOHNSTON

The Peugeot 108 represents Peugeot Citroën South Africa's intent to opt for serious market share in our new-car market. In line with this thinking, the 108 was launched here in just the one derivative, the 1.0 Active Manual, at a price of R184 900.

AutoLive had the 108 on test a few weeks ago, and welcomed the chance to get to grips with the little car on familiar territory, after a brief sampling of the 108 at its launch in the Magaliesburg area a few months back.

The styling is clean cut and no nonsense, and the 108, unsurprisingly , is a good-looking little car. Being an entry-level car it comes with steel wheels and hubcaps, but Peugeot is a master at alloy wheel design and this extends to an ability to make plastic hubcaps look very much like alloy wheels. Those fitted to the new 108's 14-inch steel rims are thus stylish and solid-looking, although we have to admit that a set of alloys would probably lift the 108 just a tad.

Inside the 108 is no-nonsense with checked cloth upholstery and an instrument cluster ahead of the driver that contains a 170 km/h speedometer, no rev counter, but – importantly – a fuel consumption read-out function.

Peugeot claim a rather optimistic fuel consumption figure of 4,3 litres/100 km and, no we didn't achieve this. But we managed 5,6 litres/100 km, which is still very good. There are electric windows up front, but rather strangely, the rear windows only open partially via pull-push catches.

Driving the little car in daily commutes, one notices a few things. Firstly, the gearing on the car is too tall, and this makes pulling away a bit of a chore as you need to wind the revs up on the little 1,0-litre triple-cylinder engine. The maximum power quoted is 53 kW, with 93 Nm of torque, and these figures are quite competitive for its class. But for some reason Peugeot then went for tall gearing and until you learn to wind the engine up you can quite often stall it as you try to ease away from a stop street or traffic light.

> *I managed to get an indicated speed of over 105 km/h in second gear. Most cars in this capacity-league would do well to achieve 85 or 90!*

In case you think I'm being picky here, I managed to get an indicated speed of over 105 km/h in second gear. Most cars in this capacity-league would do well to achieve 85 or 90! This gives some indication of how tall the gear ratios are. Okay, winding the car hard to the rev-limiter in each of the lower gears is fun, and you can achieve this in third. But you'd battle to hit the rev-limiter in fourth, let alone fifth (top) gear.

There is only one reason for such tall gearing, and that is to achieve the largely theoretical consumption figures in controlled tests in Europe that usually prove to be wildly optimistic for all manufacturers. Cars of this size that are thus much more driveable in day-to-day motoring due to their short gearing are the new Hyundai Atos and the (somewhat larger) Suzuki Swift. Both of these affordable cars make use of well-matched shorter gear ratios to get things moving where you really need it.

That said, the 108 has a smart modern interior, reasonable build quality, that all-important infotainment screen with Navigation and audio functionality via cell-phone connectivity, and handling that is generally pleasing.

The boot is rated at 196 litres, which is a little on the tight side. But excellent safety features are six airbags, ABS braking and electronic stability control. The electronic cornering aids are not normally available in this entry class of car, and most cheap cars have two air airbags rather than six!

The Peugeot 108 is a worthy contender in the entry-car market. Its price of R184 900 includes a five-year/100 000 km service plan, to go with the warranty of the same distance and time period.

However, I would have liked to see the Peugeot 108 priced at between R10 000 to R20 000 lower, to enable Peugeot to make a serious impact in this important segment of our market. ■

We Drive

"Riding The Bulls" – Driving Two of Lamborghini's Finest

BY ROGER HOUGHTON

The Lamborghini trade name has benefitted from an aura of wonderment around it ever since Ferruccio Lamborghini, an Italian industrialist who built his fortune making tractors from 1948, decided to turn his attention to building top-line luxury sports cars to challenge the might of Ferrari in 1963.

Lamborghini Automobili did not disappoint in terms of styling and technical complexity when it launched its first car, the 350 GTV, a sleek two-seater sports car with a bespoke V12 engine. This was followed by the iconic Miura – a schoolmate of mine, Frans Kirsten, who was the son of the SA ambassador to the then-Rhodesia, owned an early example – and a series of further showstoppers.

Most of the car models were named after famous fighting bulls in line with Ferruccio's interest in his star sign, Taurus the Bull!

However, troubles in the tractor-making business caused the founder to not only sell the sports car company, but to retire from the business world to his vineyard.

During the short-term ownerships that followed Ferruccio's retirement the Lamborghini brand even launched an "off-road truck", the V12-powered LM002 which evidently found favour with Arab sheiks. It was on sale from 1986–1993 and 328 were produced.

The famed Lamborghini name was even affixed to a motorcycle in 1984. It was powered by a 1 000cc Kawasaki engine and used a Lamborghini-designed frame. Only 24 were built by a French specialist company,

The sports car business had three owners in the period 1973–1998 before it was bought by the Volkswagen Group and placed in the Audi stable. This was a recipe for success and the brand has thrived over the past two decades, crowned by a leap in sales volume with the introduction of the brand's first SUV, the Urus, last year.

Although many have admired the dramatic design cues and advanced engineering, of the various Lamborghini iterations there are relatively few people who have had the opportunity of getting behind the steering wheel of these powerful works of Italian automotive art.



I must say I was very chuffed when Christo Kruger, the livewire PR manager of Lamborghini (as well as Porsche and Bentley!), offered me the opportunity to drive two of the latest models in the glorious Western Cape. I was paired with my old mate, Roger McCleery, for the much-anticipated driving experience. We did not set the tarmac alight, but rather relished the experience of driving the fighting bulls and made sure we handed the cars back in the pristine condition in which we had received them.

The fact that the combined value of the two cars, which were fitted with loads of extras, was in the region of R11-million, certainly played a big role in the way we approached our drive! (The price of the Urus starts at R3 495 000 and the Huracan EVO pricing begins at R5 500 000).

Nevertheless, it was certainly a day to savour and cherish.

Our first drive was in the Urus, a model which we had seen in the metal and heard all the news about it when we attended the new model unveiling in Cape Town last year. But driving it was an unforgettable experience when one considers that this is a sports utility vehicle or SUV which requires some practical attributes such as four doors, four seats and reasonable luggage space.

Using the excellent Porsche Cayenne platform as a starting point the Lamborghini stylists and designers have managed to meet all the necessary practical objectives while mixing in a hefty dose of supercar performance in line with the revered fighting bull attributes.

The ride, with its complex, adaptive air suspension, was comfortable considering the car's amazing roadholding prowess, while the performance from the new, four-litre twin turbocharged V8 engine was real "kick in the pants" stuff!

This is the first turbocharged engine to be fitted to a Lamborghini and it was well-matched to the silky 8-speed autobox driving all four wheels as we hustled through the twists and turns, hills and dales of the beautiful route from central Cape Town to Coffee on the Rocks at Gansbaai via the Franschhoek Pass.



The silky-smooth engine pumps out a hefty 650 horsepower (480 kW) of power and 850 N.m of torque, which ensured acceleration from 0-100km/h in 3.6 sec. and barrelled along to a top speed of 305 km/h!

The two Rogers had the dramatically styled Huracan EVO for the return drive to the Lamborghini showroom on the Foreshore via the switchback Houwhoek Pass. This is another beast altogether and obviously requires plenty of driving skill and significant cockpit time to really enjoy the car's phenomenal performance.

The stunning performance comes from a 5.2-litre normally aspirated V10 engine that delivers 640 hp (470 kW) of power and 600 Nm. of torque driving all four wheels through a seven-speed twin-plate clutch system that gives a real "kick in the back" as it gears down and rockets you into the distance when you put your foot down on the rather stiff accelerator pedal. It can do the 0-100 sprint in 2.9 sec and sill run on to a top end of 325 km/h. This is the stuff of legends.

While enjoying the experience and the music emanating from the huge exhaust pipes we were both careful not to risk any damage, especially when we had to ensure the nose of the car was lifted hydraulically when approaching a speed bump.

We were obviously relieved to arrive back at the showroom with no damage to the low-slung projectile, while we will look back with pride and pleasure at having had the opportunity of driving not one but two Lamborghinis over a long and testing driving route and not just a "spin around the block!" ■

Ctrack Continues to Innovate in Providing Transport Solutions

BY ROGER HOUGHTON

Ctrack by Inseego is not only a global leader in vehicle tracking, fleet management and insurance telematics solutions but also a very active innovator as it keeps probing new frontiers. This was very evident after attending a media briefing by Ctrack executives in Boksburg recently.

What is particularly uplifting for South Africans is the fact that Ctrack develops many of its own solutions and it is certainly not short on novel innovation!

Fuel Usage Monitoring

Three new solutions were launched at this event with the Fuel Solution being the one that attracted most interest, as this is an area of a transport operator's business where huge amounts of money can literally "go missing"! This latest Ctrack system is a critical development as fuel costs amount to between 40% and 60% of a fleet's total operating cost these days.

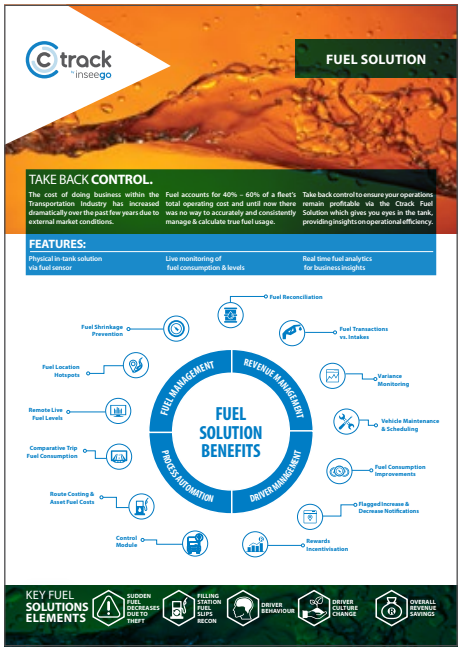
Over the years there have been a host of so-called solutions to the problem of "fuel shrinkage" but none seem to have been as well thought out and developed as Ctrack's new solution to this long-running scourge of the transport industry. What Ctrack has come up with is a probe that is placed in each fuel tank and then calibrated very carefully before fitting it with a security seal.

This system accurately measures all increases and decreases of fuel in the tank – even as little as five litres – with live monitoring of both fuel consumption and tank levels available to the fleet controller. The system is able to ensure the correct amount of fuel is put in the tank against the cost of the transaction.

On-the-Road Fleet Management Solution

Ctrack has also introduced a claimed "best-in-class" On the Road (OTR) driver fleet management solution. It uses the Garmin Fleet 790 device as the hardware with proprietary Ctrack management software, which provides even more features than the previous-generation system, thereby improving the productivity of transport fleets.

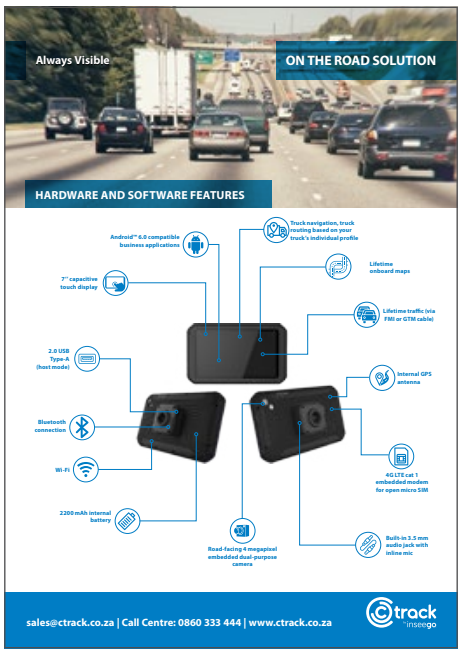
It boasts a 7-inch multi-touch screen display with embedded 4G modem and open-SIM cellular connectivity. This Android device is fully customisable and has "always-on" internet connectivity, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, and near-field communication



ability. On-board maps are provided, with lifetime updates at no extra cost.

The OTR system records driving events when the vehicle is in motion, with the ability to store up to 72 hours of data.

This latest OTR solution provides a virtual driver ID which identifies the driver and monitors driving behaviour. Only the identified person may drive the truck. When used in conjunction with Ctrack's NX35 hardware the system can facilitate two-way hands-free voice



communication with the driver. Text messages can also be exchanged.

It is possible to create custom forms on the device, such as pre-trip inspection sheets and the driver is able to take photographs of vehicle damage as well as details of fuel fill-ups. This data can be uploaded to the Cloud for later analysis by the fleet operator.

Updated Ctrack Iris Video and Telematics Monitoring

The third upgraded solution launched recently is an updated Ctrack Iris video monitoring and telematics system, which is a further aid for operators in controlling their vehicles and improving productivity.

By monitoring crew activities, it is possible to improve and enforce company processes and procedures and reduce theft, pilferage, and stock damage. Furthermore, the video solution from Ctrack can improve vehicle route optimisation, increase load frequency, and hasten turnaround times.

Ctrack Iris is a high-quality, customisable video monitoring solution ideal for rental vehicles, light deliveries, fleet vehicles, heavy commercials, general machinery, and busses, and now features a newly developed dashcam.

Apart from a dual view (front and cab-facing) camera solution with infra-red night vision, the new three channel dash cam includes ADAS (Advanced Driver Assist System).

ADAS includes a range of electronic systems that assist the driver. While most road accidents occur due to human error, the automated system which is provided by ADAS is proven to reduce road fatalities by minimising these errors.

Fatigue monitoring can be added to the Ctrack dash cam as an optional extra. This will require a third camera to be fitted to the dashcam specifically targeting the facial features of the driver and his or her behaviour, such as smoking or looking down at a cell phone.

ADAS alerts drivers to other cars or imminent danger and has a lane departure warning system. Video footage can be recorded in eight quality settings and real-time video streaming can be viewed on mobile devices giving fleet managers and operators increased control over their asset.

Ctrack Iris is a sustainable, long-term video tracking solution of the highest order and another valuable product to keep your assets "Always Visible" in line with the Ctrack slogan. ■

Gas as an Alternative Energy Option for Motorists

Gas has been used for generations to run stoves, furnaces, water heaters and other appliances and with a vast supply of global resource and a 25% proven reduction in greenhouse gases compared with even the cleanest petrol engines, it makes sense for motorist to consider converting to gas.

You're probably wondering where the catch is. But according to Attie Serfontein, national director: Automotive Remanufacturers' Association (ARA) – the amalgamation of three RMI sister associations ERA, SADFIA and ACRA – there are actually very few technological barriers to overcome.

> *Autogas conversions are relatively simple to effect. The payback time on autogas conversions is modest, depending almost entirely on mileage.*

Gas conversions is a technology ARA has sourced information on and pursued over time, given the critical importance to stay current in new technologies. "And," said Serfontein, "autogas is a great alternative energy option for the immediate future."

Autogas conversions are relatively simple to effect and the skills set is ready and available in the country's auto workshops. In addition, the payback time on conversions is modest, depending almost entirely on mileage.

Serfontein described autogas as the conversion of a vehicle's running fuel – whether it be petrol or diesel – to Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). It is simple to effect because the addition of a gas tank does not eliminate the current fuel in use and doesn't entail any alteration in the engine's performance.

"LPG runs cleaner than carbon-emissions fuel and is 40% to 50% cheaper than petroleum. In addition, the world's reserves of LPG and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) exceed those of oil," Serfontein explained.

"The vehicle's conversion is relatively simple, particularly petrol, as opposed to diesel vehicles. The conversion results in a car that runs on both petrol and autogas (LPG). Everything else about the vehicle remains the same, with an additional separate fuelling system with its own tank, piping, ECU and injectors.

The good news for motorists is that South Africa already has the necessary skills set in terms of work readiness to perform such a conversion.

"The foundational skill-set is in place and a training course would suffice to empower a typical skilled worker to perform the conversion. A new qualification – the Engine and Fuels Systems Management Mechanic – has been developed and registered to facilitate this," said Serfontein, adding that a number of ARA members are already prepared for the technology, while others are undergoing the transition.

According to Frank Mac Nicol, chairperson of ARA, the fact that LPG is a much cleaner fuel means there is less wear and tear and therefore engine life is prolonged.

The benefits of replacing conventional fuel with gas include:

- A saving of up to 50% in the case of petrol and almost 30% for diesel;
- A reduction of carbon dioxide emissions and nitrogen oxides;
- Lower particle emissions;
- Perfect engine combustion with no fuel residues left after each ignition;
- Longer life expectancy of the engine as a result of the purity of the fuel;



Attie Serfontein, national director: Automotive Remanufacturers' Association (ARA).

- A reduction in servicing costs;
- A doubling of the autonomy of the vehicle as a result of having two fuel types;
- In-cabin fuel management.

"Current research by gas conversion engineering company, Ergon Equipment, estimates that conversion of state vehicles would immediately produce savings of over 60% – a higher figure than in the private sector due to the factor that gas cannot be stolen, unlike petrol. It further estimates a break-even time period for a conversion at six to 12 months, depending on daily mileage," Mac Nicol explained.

While there is still some distrust of gas on safety grounds in South Africa, Mac Nicol insisted that driving on LPG is safe. "It is stored in a strong steel tank with a number of safety valves. It is less likely to catch fire than other fuels," he concluded. ■



Working Wheels

Engen Stays Ahead of the Game

Engen has taken another step towards reducing its carbon footprint and meeting the needs of its current and future customers by adding 17 new Euro 5 vehicles to its bulk transport fleet. The 17 technologically-advanced Volvo vehicles, as well as 14 new semi-trailers vehicles, were officially handed over at the company's Johannesburg Terminal at Langlaagte earlier this month.

Engen is passionate about the safety of its Bulk Truck Operators and other road users, which is why continual investment is made in our road transport fleet," explained Adnan Adams, General Manager: Supply Chain.

"While the new vehicles enable us to deliver superior customer service to our retail and commercial network, and by extension to keep South African motorists and industry moving, it is exciting to see our business evolving and meeting the environmental challenges we are faced with," Adams added.

The new vehicles will play a part in ensuring Engen maintains a responsible Health, Safety and Environmental (HSE) presence as they come fitted with advanced engine technology which helps reduce emissions.

According to Sharveen Maharaj, Engen's Head: Logistics and Distribution, ensuring the safety of the company's drivers and reducing road related incidents is top of mind and a key focus.

> *"The new vehicles enable us to deliver superior customer service to our retail and commercial network, and by extension keep South African motorists and industry moving." – Adnan Adams, General Manager: Supply Chain*

"Advanced technology such as road sign recognition software is able to detect overtaking restrictions, road type and speed limits," said Maharaj. "Distractions are therefore minimised with easily-viewable information displays, which increases the driver's ability to perform efficiently, safely and comfortably."

Engen currently operates 35 vehicles that meet Euro 5 standards, all with reduced emissions technology. The 17 new Volvo vehicles offer I-shift automated mechanical 12-speed gearboxes, an electronic fail safe overfill system, and product retainer sensors, as well as brake interlocks to prevent the vehicle from driving away whilst still attached to loading hoses.

"These new vehicles will ensure that we deliver safely, on time and in full and will thus ensure that our customers receive the best possible service, with our increased fleet utilisation, and faster loading and offloading times," concluded Adams. ■



Leon Nel from Volvo with Engen GM Supply Chain, Adnan Adams and Sharveen Maharaj, Head of logistics and distribution.

Castrol Runs Case Study with Maxi Bus

Independent bus transport service provider, Maxi Bus, extended the engine oil drain interval on a number of buses in its fleet by up to 5 000 km per vehicle, with the introduction of a specialised long drain engine oil.

Five Iveco Eurorider buses were selected for an oil drain interval extension project to test the performance of Castrol Vecton Long Drain 10W-40 E7 full synthetic engine oil in these vehicles, and also to demonstrate improved oil oxidation control, reduce sludge build-up and extend the timeframe of the engine oil drain interval from the current 10 000 km to 15 000 km.

Maxi Bus owns a fleet of 80 Iveco and MAN buses and became aware of a high soot and sludge build-up in the engines of some of its Iveco Eurorider E280 buses. This was as a result of oil oxidation during the internal combustion process. When engine oil becomes unstable, it decomposes in the presence of oxygen at high temperatures. The oxidation process is accelerated, resulting in serious effects on the premium performance of the vehicle's oil and engine maintenance.

Castrol approached Maxi Bus to run a series of tests on its Iveco range to evaluate the performance of its long drain engine oil products. As Maxi Bus was looking to improve the oil drain intervals on its vehicles to enhance performance and become more cost efficient, the fleet company agreed to the project on five of its Iveco Euro-rider buses.

"Our objective with this project was to prove to the management of Maxi Bus that they had made the best decision by coming to Castrol and making use of our superior Vecton products to improve the performance of their vehicle engines," explained Charles Moyo, Indirect Channel Manager SA, Castrol.

"By agreeing to run the tests on five of their buses, we were confident that we would be able to save on longer oil drain intervals, while ensuring that the vehicles operated more efficiently and cost-effectively."

The five buses were drained of their existing oil, and samples of the used oil were collected for testing. The vehicles were then topped up with Castrol Vecton 15W-40, and driven for 5 000 km each with this oil in order to flush and remove any internal contaminants. A further oil drain followed, before the switch to Vecton Long Drain 10W-40 E7 was made.

The vehicles' engines continued operating with the test oil for four to eight months, with each bus covering a distance of between 9 000 km and 15 000 km. During this period, up to four oil samples were drained from the five buses' engines for testing.

Following the period of testing, the buses increased their engine oil drain interval by 50%, using the Castrol Vecton Long Drain 10W-40 E7 engine oil. This improvement translates into an annual saving of 720 man-hours, 3 600 litres of engine oil, and almost R1-million in improved productivity.

"Modern buses use newer technologies to make as much as 30 per cent higher torque, but that brings with it higher engine temperatures and pressures. This punishes the oil, pushing it closer to breakdown and reducing its useful lifespan," said Moyo.

"The Maxi Bus project results provided tangible proof that Castrol Vecton Long Drain and its unique System Pro Technology is an advanced technology that is able to adapt to higher temperatures and pressure in the engine under extreme conditions. Its extra performance reserves fight oil breakdown by controlling oxidation, reducing deposits, neutralising harmful acids and adapting to higher temperatures to maintain viscosity for a longer useful oil life," Moyo concluded, adding that a reduced carbon footprint is a reflection of efficient fleet management, and the saving of thousands of litres of oil annually for Maxi Bus clearly shows Vecton's environmental and increased productivity benefits. ■

Hyundai Harnesses the Sun

A handful of media representatives were recently invited to Hyundai Automotive South Africa's Parts Distribution Centre (PDC) in Germiston to learn more about the solar energy system that has been installed at the facility. It was also revealed how this system reduces the PDC's carbon footprint and its dependency on municipal power, and thus also minimises exposure to load shedding.

The solar photovoltaic (PV) project, installed at a cost of just over R3 million, generates electricity for the PDC, which handles more than 450 shipping containers of car parts per year and keeps stock worth R100 million in its warehouse.

"A smooth operation at the Parts Distribution Centre is paramount to maintain and improve our on-time parts delivery ratio of 92 per cent to our dealer network, which we are very proud of. The installation of the solar photovoltaic energy system, which generates and stores electrical power in a bank of batteries, plays a big role to keep to our target," enthused Samuel Matlhola, parts operations director at Hyundai Automotive South Africa.

According to Matlhola, who is the initiator of the solar energy project, one of the many benefits of the system is the fact that it will yield favourable tons of carbon savings per annum, which will reduce the carbon footprint of the PDC. "There are other benefits too, such as a saving in electricity costs, which we will really benefit from in five or six years' time when the cost of the investment has been fully recovered."

Matlhola foresees that the estimated six-year term for the investment to be recovered can be reduced by a year once the PDC is licensed to feed back excess solar energy generated during the sunshine days into the municipal grid. This will also yield additional savings of carbon emissions.

"However, the primary reason for installing this system is that it is the right thing to do, from a sustainability and environmental point of view. We really feel good about it," said Matlhola.

The large roof area of the PDC warehouse was the perfect place to install the solar panels, which deliver power in direct current to an inverter, where it is transformed to alternating current for use in the centre.

The system was installed by AGE Technologies, which is part of the JSE-listed company 4Sight Holdings. Michael Powell, operations and business development director of AGE Technologies, explained that the solar system with its battery bank works well to offset the grid maximum demand tariff charges during peak times.

While the sun is still rising or it is still dark in winter, the battery bank will provide power until about 8 am, after which the solar power takes over and the batteries will also be charged. Late afternoon when the sun sets and during peak time in the evening, from 6 to 8 pm, the battery bank will again deliver power.



The large roof area of Hyundai's Parts Distribution Centre warehouse was the perfect place to install the solar panels.

During the off-peak time at night, when power from the grid is at its cheapest rate, the batteries will be charged from the grid to provide power the following morning when peak time starts and electricity from the grid becomes expensive.

"If one considers that 58 litres of diesel burnt per hour at the centre to generate electricity during load shedding would deliver 150 kg of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, the benefits of the solar system to the environment is substantial," said Powell.

He estimates that the financial saving in the first year of operation will be about R450 000, escalating every year to yield an accumulated saving of R6 million plus after 15 years.

According to Niall Lynch, CEO of Hyundai Automotive SA, the project at the Parts Distribution Centre will serve as a pilot study for possible wider implementation in the Hyundai network and at Hyundai dealerships in South Africa.

"We are very proud of what Samuel, his team at the Parts Distribution Centre and AGE Technologies have implemented. The installation of the solar power system indicates that Hyundai really gives practical meaning to one of its core values, which is environmentally sustainable and responsible business practices," Lynch concluded. ■



The solar photovoltaic energy system generates and stores electrical power in a bank of batteries.



The solar energy system was installed by AGE Technologies, which is part of the JSE-listed company 4Sight Holdings.

Dyed-in-the-Wool Motorcyclist Mark Broady Scores First Win in DJ Classic Rally

BY ROGER HOUGHTON

Mark Broady (43), a mechanical engineer living in Randburg, surprised many experienced motorcycle rallyists when he won the 50th commemorative Durban-Johannesburg (DJ) regularity trial for classic motorcycles on March 14. He accumulated an error of only 146 seconds at the time check points on the 596 km route (241 km on Day 1 and 355 km on day 2).

This was only Mark's third DJ Run, having finished 40th in 2018 and 6th last year. The 1935 Velocette MAC he rode is the same motorcycle on which his father, Barry, had been running a close second in the inaugural commemorative DJ Rally in 1970 when a timing gear stripped and he had to retire about 20 km from the finish at City Deep in Johannesburg.

Father Barry Broady was also well known for winning the inaugural Roof of Africa in 1969 and following up with another win in 1970, both times riding a Honda. His son, Mark, is now restoring the Honda he rode in 1970.

This annual DJ Run celebrated the 50th anniversary of the staging of the first of these rallies that commemorated the original, annual Durban-Johannesburg road race for motorcycles which took place between the two cities from 1913 until 1936. Authorities then banned this type of motor sport event due to safety concerns.

The 2020 DJ Run, which started from the Heidelberg Museum on Friday, March 13th and finished at the Shongweni Equestrian Centre the following day, attracted an entry of 106 riders, with nine non-starters and 73 finishers. The finishing rate was still impressive considering the "youngest" competing motorcycle was 84 years old and the oldest was the centenarian ABC Sopwith of Peter Gillespie.

Second overall this year was Ralph Pitchford on a 1936 BSA Blue Star with an error of 173 seconds. Pitchford, an experienced off-road racer and Dakar competitor, won the DJ in 2016. Third place was filled by Keegan Ward (32).

The Binder family trio of father, Trevor, and his famous road racing sons, Brad and Darryn, all qualified as finishers. Darryn (23) fared best, placing 43rd on a 1928 BMW R52, and collecting the award for the youngest rider to finish the event. His brother, former Moto3 world champion and now a KTM rider in MotoGP, Brad, finished 54th on a 1935 Sunbeam. Trevor came 44th on his 1925 Indian Scout.

Samantha Anderson, who rode a 1918 Harley Davidson, which was the oldest motorcycle entered in the event, had to retire near the finish with a lack of spark for the 1 000 cc V-twin engine.

The results on the DJ Run are calculated on arrival times at various checkpoints on the route as the riders try to stick as closely as possible to the set speeds, with them being able to choose to run in one of three speed groups: 50, 60 or 70 km/h. The arrival times at check points were logged electronically by an instrument carried by the rider and downloaded at the end of each day. The rider with the lowest time penalty was the winner.

The annual, international DJ Run is run under the auspices of the Vintage and Veteran Club of South Africa (VVC), and organised by a committee with members from several local classic motorcycle clubs under the leadership of Clerk of the Course Larina MacGregor.

Results

Overall results: 1, Mark Broady (1935 Velocette MAC), 146 penalty points; 2, Ralph Pitchford (1933 BSA Blue Star), 173; 3, Keegan Ward (1936 Norton Model 18), 188; 4, Gavin Walton (1936 AJS 9), 206; 5, Kevin Walton (1931 BSA Sloper), 219; 6, Martin Davis (1930 Sunbeam 9), 228; 7, Allan Cunningham (1936 Velocette MSS), 237; 8, JC van Rooyen (1936 Ariel NH 350), 255; 9, Adrian and Gerald Hollis (1935 Sunbeam Lion sidecar combination), 257); 10, Mike Ward (1936 Velocette MSS), 259.

Awards: Best performance by a woman rider – Bev Jacobs (1935 Triumph 21); Best performance by a first time rider – Kevin Kohler (1934 Triumph 350); Lowest score on Day 1 – Gavin Walton (1936 AJS 9); Lowest score on Day 2 – Mark Broady (1935 Velocette MAC); Oldest motorcycle to complete the course – 1920 ABC Sopwith ridden by Peter Gillespie; Oldest rider to complete the course – Neville Smith (1936 Ariel Red Hunter) who is 84; Youngest ride to complete the course – Darryl Binder (1928 BMW R52) who is 23; Most DJ Runs completed – Kevin Robertson (28 out of 30). ■



Brad Binder concentrating on trying to keep to time on the 2020 DJ Run (Photo by Ian Groat).



Samantha Anderson rode the oldest motorcycle on the 2020 DJ Run, a 1918 Harley Davidson. Unfortunately, it failed to the finish due to a lack of spark in the engine, close to the final control in Hillcrest.



A tale of two Marks. Mark Broady (left), winner of the 2020 DJ Run, seen with Mark Palmer, who rode the 1936 Royal Enfield that his father, Geoff, rode to victory in the inaugural commemorative DJ Run regularity trial in 1970. Broady is holding the miniature of the valuable Schlesinger Vase which was given to Geoff Palmer as winner of the 1970 event.