

BRIGHT FUTURE



Mike von Höne, the managing director of Lightstone Auto.

BY ROGER HOUGHTON

“This is more than a name change and signals an aggressive thrust into the market to grow the business,” says the newly-appointed managing director of Lightstone Auto, Mike von Höne, who previously headed up TransUnion Auto Information Services.

He moved to Hall's Technologies and Lightstone Auto in November after a spell of “gardening leave” following his departure from TransUnion, where he was employed for the past 13 years, with the last five as head of Auto Information Services.

Two other TransUnion's executives have also joined Lightstone Auto, being operations director Andre Oelofse and business development director George Palmer. Oelofse now heads up the Lightstone Auto Autostats and Market Segment Analysis division with Palmer heading up the Solutions division.

“Lightstone Auto is a specialised data platform business and our goal is to become the market leader

RGT SMART, the long-time supplier of motor vehicle sales statistics and related products and services to the automotive industry in South Africa, has changed its name to Lightstone Auto as the two brands have amalgamated.

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“Car for Africa” made in Kenya

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to the automotive industry in terms of its information requirements. The union between Halls Technologies' Lightstone and RGT SMART, with its 30 years of experience, ensures we have the internal expertise and true business principles to achieve this objective," explained von Höne. "In future we want to touch every vehicle transaction that occurs in South Africa with one of our solutions."

"...The union between Halls Technologies' Lightstone and RGT SMART, with its 30 years of experience, ensures we have the internal expertise and true business principles to achieve this objective..."

Most of the new Lightstone Auto team is located at an office complex in Southdowns, Midrand, although certain section of the company continue to operate out of offices in Port Elizabeth, where RGT SMART was based.

In terms of its strategic business intent Lightstone Auto aims to be an information management business which is more than decision support. It aims to provide a better solution at the right time and in the correct format which is integrated into the user's workflow process. The support must also assist in making the user look good in the eyes of his or her customer by enhancing the customer's experience.

The ultimate objective is to make Lightstone Auto the SA motor industry's preferred data platform partner of choice whatever vehicle related data is needed and in the format that suits the user.

"The future is electronic and at Lightstone Auto we have a team that is strong in developing technology, mobile solutions and web service delivery, so I am confident in our future," concluded Von Höne.

AutoLive will look at the myriad of offerings from Lightstone Auto in future editions of the publication, but in the mean time here is a listing of major products and services:

Solutions

Analytics, asset valuation, trends and forecasting, analytical consulting and white labelling.

Products for the automotive industry

- **LIVE:** An award-winning mobile App and website that enables users to verify both a vehicle and a person.
<http://www/auto.lightstone.co.za>
- **Autostats:** Primary platform for the delivery of new vehicle statistics including exports from SA.
<http://www.autostats.co.za>
- **AutoMSA (Auto Market Segment Analyser):** The automotive industry standard for rapid strategic analysis that integrates new vehicle sales volumes with detailed and up to date vehicle pricing, segmentation and specifications.
<http://www.automsa.co.za>

- **Smart Mapping System:** Demographic data and map statistics to see a representation of a dealership and its sales, competitor location and competitor sales, vehicle population and demographic data.
<http://smaretmapping.co.za>

...we have a team that is strong in developing technology, mobile solutions and web service delivery...

- **GO:** It has been developed for the new age salesperson to assist in delivering fast, accurate and comparable vehicle information to customers on the dealership floor.
<http://www.gogetsamrt.co.za>
- **Labour Rate Report:** More than 1 000 dealers representing 39 brands have been surveyed and asked to provide their retail, service plan, warranty, reimbursement and maintenance plan labour rates.
<http://labourratereport.co.za>

Products for the insurance industry


LIVE Inspect: This is an App-driven solution assisting short term insurers to perform effective inspections on vehicles. ■

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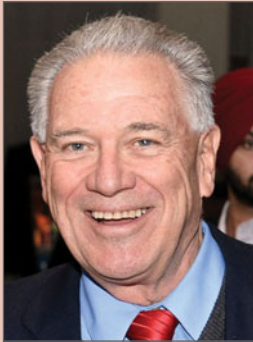
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Editor's Note

One thing about living in today's fast moving world is that change is a constant in our lives and our environment.

You will know from the March edition of *AutoLive* that Stuart Johnston, the founding editor who was responsible for 59 copies of this e-zine, has moved on and will be involved in an exciting project as scriptwriter for the new iMoto-Magic motoring programme to be screened on Soweto TV and 1KZN TV, which are both free-to-air.



Although I have taken over as editor of *AutoLive*, Stuart will continue as a contributor which includes him writing his popular Back Page feature article and providing a picture page of his classic and modern car wanderings. He will also be responsible for evaluating new cars and light commercials on the road for *AutoLive* readers.

Stuart is currently very busy organising his usual interesting display of classic cars at the Rand Show, which takes place at the Johannesburg Expo Centre from April 18–28. There will be plenty of interaction with car owners and enthusiasts and it is sure to be a worthwhile place to visit for all petrolheads and lovers of motoring heritage.

Moving on to the local motor industry scene most of you will be aware of a slowdown in retail sales as the struggling economy and weak rand impact on our lives. The cost pressures are having an effect on the smaller motor companies too as we see them closing ranks and looking for new investors.

Cases in point are Peugeot and Citroen being consolidated into one company, while Suzuki has put all its product lines – cars, motorcycles, ATVs and marine – into one company, Suzuki Auto SA, as its arch rival Honda did several years ago. Then we also had the Super Group taking a majority share in the fledgling GWM brand a couple of months ago. There will probably be more similar developments in the future.

Switching to gripe mode I am disgusted at the number of people who accept invitations to events and then fail to attend. This is not only very bad manners, but also expensive for the organisers. I have seen this lately at the KPMG executive survey presentation, the SA Guild of Motoring Journalists' Motorsportsman of the Year awards function and at the recent NAAMSA Export Forum meeting.

What is scary is that this lack of respect is a growing trend!

Roger Houghton,

Editor

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Peugeot Likely to Return to Car Production in SA

Peugeot cars are likely to be assembled in South Africa again after a break of more than three decades.

Speaking at a media briefing to announce the realignment of the Peugeot and Citroën brands under one chief executive in SA, Francis Harnie said the plan is to assemble the Peugeot 301 in SA for the local market as well as other right-hand drive countries. The 301 is a spacious family sedan that fits between the B and C segments and is aimed at emerging markets where the purchase of new vehicles is critical for success so it will be a true value-for-money offering.

The local 301 range will consist of three models, all with petrol engines – 1.2/1.6-litre manual and 1.6-litre automatic—with a target starting price of about R150 000 at the current exchange rate.

Harnie said he was talking to a number of local assemblers who could get the project off the ground quickly for launch in late 2015 or early 2016. The car could possibly be assembled initially from semi-knocked down kits (SKD) with a switch to completely knocked down (CKD) kits later. Initial volumes could vary between 7 000 and 15 000 units annually, with at least 4 000–5 000 units destined for the local market.

The Peugeot 301 is already selling well in left-hand drive countries in North Africa and Turkey as well as in Eastern Europe. Harnie added that if the 301 proved successful then the equivalent Citroën model, the C-Elysée, could also be made in SA as the two models shared the same platform.

“The announcement of a programme to assemble the Peugeot 301 and possibly the Citroën C-Elysée in SA could lead to us becoming an export base for other right hand drive markets in Africa and possibly in other parts of the world too,” said an upbeat Harnie.

Peugeot cars were made in SA for almost 30 years before a decision to cease production of both Peugeot and Citroën vehicles in SA was taken in the early 1980s. At that time the French duo were being assembled by Sigma Motor Corporation in Silverton. Previously both brands had been assembled at Stanley Motors' plant in Natalspruit.

Now a new Peugeot production line could be on the horizon for South Africa again, which will be a positive indicator for the future of the local motor industry, particularly as it could include an export programme for built up vehicles. ■



The Peugeot 301, already selling well in in North Africa, Turkey and Eastern Europe.

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Small Companies Tighten Bonds

The market pressures in South Africa and rising costs for importers due to the weak rand is taking its toll on some of the smaller motor companies.

The latest developments include Peugeot and Citroen being linked under the Peugeot Citroen SA (PCSA) banner, although the two brands will continue to have independent dealers and support staff. Meanwhile Suzuki has integrated its various product offerings under one company, Suzuki Auto SA.

The realignment at PCSA has resulted in a small number of retrenchments at head office but is aimed to be a cost effective method of ensuring both brands can grow.

New investors are being attracted to the brands to establish dealerships and these new outlets will have larger areas of responsibility to make them more viable and so benefit the investors according to the PCSA managing director, Francis Harnie, who was formerly head of Peugeot SA, but is now responsible for both brands in SA.

One of the important changes is that former Citroën SA general manager for marketing, Grant Bowring, will also take responsibility for the Peugeot brand, with former long-time Peugeot marketing manager Clara Métivier Beukes, moving overseas to take up a position at the global head office in Paris.

Although marketing is headed up by one person there are still separate product and marketing specialists for each brand. Public relations, sales and dealer development will also still run as completely separate brands.

The range rationalisation is starting in SA soon as Peugeot will not bring the new 108 entry level car to SA leaving this segment to Citroën with its C1 at

the time of introduction in September. There will be a steady stream of new models for both the Peugeot and Citroën dealers in the next few years.

Peugeot has just launched the 2008 crossover, while Citroën will introduce its award-winning C4 Picasso MPV in June. The Peugeot 308, which has just been voted Europe's Car of the Year for 2014, will arrive here in January/February, with the unusually styled Citroën Cactus crossover being introduced locally in March/April 2015.

Most of the PCSA commercial vehicle focus will be from the Peugeot dealers, although the Citroën team will continue to build on the foundations laid already in terms of the Relay minibus taxi and Despatch mid-sized people carrier.

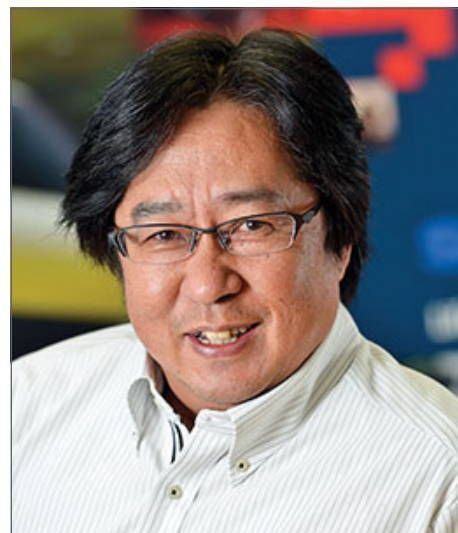
Suzuki is adopting a more focused approach to its multi-faceted product presence in the South African market by integrating all of its divisions into a new, single business entity. All of Suzuki's brand interests in SA are now united, and trade under the auspices of Suzuki Auto South Africa (Pty) Ltd.

Previously, Suzuki's automotive interests were controlled by Suzuki Auto South Africa, while the motorcycle, ATV and marine divisions were controlled separately by Suzuki South Africa (Pty) Ltd.

"We have followed a lengthy process of integration, which has now enabled us to represent all of the Suzuki brands in SA with a more cohesive, coherent and unified structure," says Yukio Sato, managing director of Suzuki Auto SA. "Suzuki offers a compelling product range across various market segments, all sharing the 'Suzuki Way of Life!' brand strategy, and which clearly position the marque as innovative and progressive." ■



Francis Harnie, managing director of Peugeot Citroen SA.



Yukio Sato, MD of Suzuki.

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An advertisement for Castrol Edge motor oil. It features a high-quality photograph of a red Lamborghini sports car, likely an Aventador, driving on a wet, reflective surface. The car is shown from a side profile, moving towards the left. The background is a blurred, dark landscape. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image in a clean, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom right, there is a small white arrow pointing to the right, followed by the text "READ MORE".

Castrol Backs Land Speed Record Bid

The Bloodhound Project, which aims to set a new land speed record in South Africa in 2016, has announced a new partnership with Castrol, one of the world's leading lubricant brands, who will provide high performance lubricants as well as brake and hydraulic fluids for use in the Bloodhound Supersonic Car – the 1 000 mph (1 600km/h) land speed racing car now being constructed in Bristol, UK.

Castrol has always been synonymous with pioneering achievements, passion and performance and has been integral to some of the greatest automotive performances on earth. Castrol has supported the spectacular feats of early pioneers and record breakers on land, water and in the air and that continues with this exciting new partnership with Bloodhound.

Castrol has a notable heritage in land speed record breaking, the original, purest and fastest form of automotive competition. The land speed record has been broken 21 times with Castrol as a partner, from Sir Malcolm Campbell's first record attempt in 1924 (235km/h) to a 30-year history of supporting the Thrust campaigns.

Interestingly the founding of the South African subsidiary of the British company in June 1929 followed Castrol's participation in an unsuccessful land speed record bid by Sir Malcolm Campbell and his Bluebird at Verneukpan. The people who formed the company in SA were those Castrol employees who came out for the record breaking attempt. This involvement in motor sport has remained a major focus of Castrol's marketing strategy to this day.

Thrust successfully raised the Land Speed Record first to 1 019 km/h with Richard Noble's



Castrol, the specialist lubricant manufacturer, is the latest major sponsor to join the Bloodhound team due to make an attempt on the world land speed record at Hakskeenpan in South Africa in 2016. Over the years the world land speed record has been broken 21 times with Castrol as a sponsor.

Thrust 2, and then to 1 228 km/h with Andy Green at the helm of Thrust SSC in 1997. This record still stands today and will be the first target for Bloodhound SSC when it arrives in Hakskeenpan, South Africa in 2015.

The new 135 000 thrust hp racing car will use a variety of state of the art Castrol products during testing and record attempts, including the company's strongest ever engine oil – Castrol EDGE, motorsport formula brake fluid – Castrol React SRF and Castrol hydraulic fluids previously used by NASA.

Paul Waterman, Global Chief Executive of Castrol said, "We are delighted to support the Bloodhound project. At Castrol, we have a proud

history of fuelling pioneers and this partnership gives us the chance to showcase how our high performance products set new standards and push boundaries."

Bloodhound Project Director Richard Noble said "We are delighted that Castrol has joined the team. Their brand is synonymous with racing at the highest levels and, of course, with many pioneering achievements in Land Speed Racing – I am happy to continue a 30 years relationship with Castrol having worked with them on both Thrust 2 & Thrust SSC projects. They are a great brand and will not only work with us on the technical side; they will help us share this Engineering Adventure with a global audience. ■

Green Aircon is Revolutionary

BY ROGER HOUGHTON

The installation of a revolutionary indirect evaporative air conditioning system is one of the major features of Ford's first green dealership in SA. Action Ford in Krugersdorp, a very progressive operation, is setting the pace by committing R8-million to green aspects of its impressive new facility.

Climate Wizard is a product of Seeley International, a family-owned Australian business, and it is key to the huge savings in energy costs that Action Ford will make when all its green projects come on stream.

The system is 2.6 times more efficient than conventional refrigerated air conditioning which equates to electricity savings of between 75-80%. Climate Wizard uses natural air flow, water and a fan system for cooling while gas heaters can be

integrated into the system in winter to achieve heating.

Action Ford dealer principal Hartogh Streicher, says it will take six years to repay the cost of the dealership's green technology projects, which will include a roof covered in solar panels to provide electricity for the whole dealership.

The initial investment in green technology is R4-million and this will double with additional energy-saving projects, including the solar panels, which will be imported from Germany and are very expensive as Krugersdorp is located in the Gauteng hail belt.

The Action Ford dealership, which cost R35-million, was commissioned a year ago as one of Ford's first Greenfield sites in that it is designed from the ground up to comply with Ford's global guidelines which includes the incorporation of energy-efficient LED lighting in conjunction with



Action Ford in Krugersdorp, Ford's first green dealership in South Africa.

large windows that let in lots of natural light.

Ford SA's president and CEO, Jeff Nemeth, who attended the media event, said more eco-friendly dealerships are being built at Ballito, George and Woodmead. Nemeth said this environmental focus was one of Ford's global business pillars which is to make a "better world".

More information on Climate Wizard can be obtained from Hennie Verster, the Africa sales manager, at hverster@seeleyinternational.com and telephone 011-452-0394. ■



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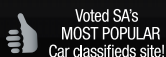


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Mahindra Celebrates 10 Years of Success in South Africa

Mahindra is celebrating its 10th year in South Africa during 2014. For a new brand in a country with a plethora of global brands, it is certainly a heartening success story. From small beginnings in 2004 with two products – the Bolero pick-up and seven-seater Scorpio SUV – and four dealers, there are now more than 25 000 Mahindra vehicles on Southern African roads.

The company made a conscious decision from the outset to establish a subsidiary in South Africa instead of following the easier route of appointing an importer or distributor. This was due to the long term aspirations of the Mahindra Group to become an increasingly significant player on the African continent rather than looking for short term profitability.

Commenting on this milestone, Dr. Pawan Goenka, the Mumbai-based chairman of Mahindra SA, said: "We are particularly proud of our achievements at Mahindra South Africa which truly epitomise the Mahindra Group's Rise philosophy of Alternative Thinking, Driving Positive Change and Accepting No Limits. This approach has helped make us one of the fastest growing automotive brands in the country.

He added, "I am confident that we will continue to grow strongly in the future backed by our diverse range of products that offer accessible technology and excellent value to our local customers."

Mahindra SA has earned a good reputation for itself by offering added value to customers, which is positive for its brand image. In fact, a recent survey conducted by the company has revealed that Mahindra owners rate their vehicles very highly and have a high propensity to buy another Mahindra.

Since 2012, Mahindra SA has also been responsible for the sales, marketing and servicing of SsangYong products in SA following the takeover of the South Korean vehicle manufacturer by the Mahindra Group. Annual sales have risen each year as more and more buyers select a model from the growing Mahindra and SsangYong model ranges for their toughness, durability and low running costs; it is a choice that makes good economic sense, particularly in these times of growing financial pressure.

Last year, sales in SA exceeded 4 000 Mahindra and SsangYong vehicles, which was an improvement of 4% on the 2012 figure.

The Mahindra SA product range has grown to 10 models over the years, made up of the Mahindra Bolero and Genio pick-ups, Scorpio pick-up and SUV, Quanto SUV, XUV500 SUV, Xylo MPV, Ssangyong Actyon Sport, Korando and Rexton W.

Only recently Mahindra SA was honoured at an international Mahindra conference as being among the five best distributors outside India, with

its special strength being the strong bonds the company has with its dealers.

Mahindra SA's CEO Ashok Thakur explained that Mahindra had been aware from the outset of the demands that the African continent makes on vehicles and had undertaken rigorous local testing before launching new models. This was the case initially when the Bolero and Scorpio SUV underwent three years of evaluation in SA before the launch of Mahindra SA in 2004 and it continues to be the norm to test new vehicles thoroughly in SA before introduction.

The Mahindra SA dealer network has grown exponentially since 2004 and there are now 57 outlets providing excellent coverage countrywide. Many of these dealerships are multi-franchise operations, which make them viable, while most sell both Mahindra and SsangYong vehicles.

After-sales support to both dealers and customers is critical to the Mahindra SA growth strategy. Recent examples are the opening of a dedicated technical and management training centre in Centurion and a new, state-of-the-art, paperless, parts distribution centre in Jet Park to ensure consistent parts supply to the dealer network.

Mahindra, a diverse Indian group, started manufacturing vehicles (initially the Willys Jeep) in 1945 but was largely focused on India for many decades. Now, however, it has global ambitions and is expanding operations rapidly with Mahindra products now exported to more than 100 countries. Growth in Africa is very much part of the group's future strategy.

Mahindra's new Rise global marketing and brand building strategy has been adopted quickly in SA, aided by a strong television advertising campaign which includes a TV commercial that was conceptualised and produced by local talent, using SA infrastructure and is being screened in global markets. In addition, a TV commercial for the XUV500 was shot and produced in SA for screening in Mahindra's home market of India.

"We are fully committed to building on our strong foundations in South Africa established over the past 10 years and our main objective will be to continue to provide reliable vehicles which have low running costs to the motoring public of this country," concluded Mahindra SA CEO, Ashok Thakur. "Our efforts are strengthened by proven products backed up by an enthusiastic dealer network offering outstanding sales and after-sales support." ■



The CEO of Mahindra SA, Ashok Thakur (centre), receives an award for his company's achievement for being a Star performer among Mahindra's global distributors from the executive director of the Mahindra Group and president of its automotive and farming equipment sectors (AFS), Dr Pawan Goenka. Others in the photograph are the group's chief communications and ethics officer, Ruzbeh Irani (left), the chief executive of the automotive sector and international operations for AFS, Pravin Shah (fourth from left), and Mahindra SA's product and sales manager, Johannes Greyling.



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Amazing Success Story

Spanjaard Targets Increased Exports for Growth

The international Spanjaard group of companies, with its head office in Wynberg, Johannesburg, sees expanding its export base as the key to future growth.

BY ROGER HOUGHTON

Spanjaard, long-standing developer, manufacturer and distributor of specialised lubricants and allied chemical products in SA, has representation in many parts of the world. Their extensive range boasts 150 different products covering car care, automotive, industrial, marine and mining.

The major focus is on building the business in African countries, although it sees enormous potential in growing sales volumes and increasing market coverage in the key Far Eastern markets.

It was for this reason that Spanjaard again chose to exhibit at one of Asia's largest trade shows for the automotive aftermarket in terms of accessories, car care products, tuning and automotive electronics. This annual show, which was held for the 18th time between February 20–23 this year and goes under the name CIAACE, was staged in Beijing, China and once again it was a huge success.

"...we worked with our key distributors to find and appoint sub-distributors to increase our footprint in this huge country,"

Records were broken at the four-day event in terms of the number of exhibitors (approximately 7 000), visitors (over 300 000) and exhibition space (over 250 000m²). The show was staged at the most impressive China International Exhibition Centre; Spanjaard participated as an exhibitor for the fourth time.

"This year our visit to Beijing proved most beneficial, as we worked with our key distributors to find and appoint sub-distributors to increase our footprint in this huge country," explained Graham Cort, Spanjaard director in charge of exports.

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Spanjaard Limited, with Head Office in Sandton, South Africa, exhibited at the annual CIAACE (China International Expo for Auto Electronics, Accessories, Tuning & Car Care Products) exhibition in Beijing in February 2014, for the fourth time, making it an important event on the Spanjaard calendar. Much interest was shown by potential new customers from major cities and provinces throughout China.



Spanjaard's extensive range boasts 150 different Specialised Lubricant and Allied Chemical Products. Spanjaard Director, Mr Graham Cort explains some of the features and benefits of Spanjaard's BRAKE CLEANER and EXHAUST & MANIFOLD COATING, products which created specific interest.

◀ continued from previous page



Over the years the Spanjaard brand has gained popularity in China, proving that high quality products are definitely sought after in this extremely competitive market.

“The rate at which this show is growing is phenomenal. We promoted a select group of automotive products aimed at the major Chinese markets, covering fuel additives, engine and radiator flushes, transmission and engine oil additives and supplements, as well as our popular Brake Cleaner, and Exhaust and Manifold Coating.

“Our distributors in China are well positioned to expand the Spanjaard brand in the auto outlets, spare parts and car accessory shops”. During the show contacts were made with potential sub-distributors, which Cort says was most encouraging.

The Spanjaard group of companies was



A hive of activity filled the meeting tables. The Company was well represented by senior Management from Head office, Asia Pacific Regional office, as well as from the team in China, to ensure that both existing and potentially new customers were in good hands.

founded in Johannesburg by Robert Spanjaard in 1960, and listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange in 1987.

The Group maintains its own research and development facility where product formulations are constantly under review to ensure they remain world class. The manufacturing plant has been ISO

certified since 1992, the last ranking ISO 9001 was renewed in March 2013.

According to Graham Cort, the company has made progress both here in South Africa and internationally. “We believe we have the recipe for growth with a wide range of quality products, a motivated production team and a focussed sales team.” ■

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Kieran Rennie is the person responsible for advertising in *AutoLive*. Kieran joined our band of petrolheads last year and his pleasant but focussed personality, as well as his attention to detail, make him the ideal member of our front-line *AutoLive* squad.

Kieran has been involved in the motor industry for almost as long as he can remember, his father having been a dealer principal at an East Rand Mazda dealership some years ago.

Kieran also cut his teeth as a car salesman during his career, but most of his working life he has been involved in the music and entertainment business. While making music he also found time to build his own Lotus 7-based sports car.

“Getting involved in *AutoLive* is like a return to my roots,” says

Kieran, who also does some writing for this publication on an occasional basis, having already covered a number of local launches.

You can mail Kieran Rennie at autoads@kieranrennie.co.za, or call him on 083 225 9609.

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Stuart Drives The New Models

Mercedes-Benz GLA – Sound Family Values

BY STUART JOHNSTON

Mercedes-Benz is targeting young adventurous families with its new GLA cross-over-cum-small SUV. That came to light at the launch a few weeks ago as its TV ad campaign was previewed on a few occasions to a massive SA media contingent at an idyllic Eastern Cape venue, with waves lapping softly a few metres away from a castle-like structure where the stylish new Merc was driven onto a softly-lit patio.

It has become apparent in recent months that the other members of Merc's new "A-Class" have struck a chord with a very young audience. Just this week at the Rand Easter Show I was chatting to a car enthusiast and his son of 10-years-old butted in to proclaim that his all-time favourite car was the CLA 45 AMG.

The writer has been critical of the CLA's ride in general, but happily in the new GLA the suspension's composure remains excellent over challenging road conditions. Our route through back roads leading inland from the Knysna region supplied more than its share of bumps, camber changes and mid-corner ripples, and yet the GLA lapped it all up with no sign of being jarred off course or feeding

in undulations through the seats into the spinal regions of the occupants.

What's more, the steering remains light at initial speeds but very communicative out on the back-roads and highways at speed, which is what you want in a family-orientated car. The body shape is very efficient, both from an ergonomic and a dynamic point of view. For instance, it is substantially shorter in overall length than the CLA sedan, and yet it shares exactly the same wheelbase. Of course it is built on the same platform as the A-Class hatch and the CLA sedan, but sharing a common platform these days doesn't preclude manufacturers from toying with the wheelbase. In this case Merc didn't deem it necessary to add more length between the wheels to achieve excellent rear passenger legroom, making it a proper five-seater.

The boot space isn't bad either, displacing just over 420 litres before resorting to folding down the rear backrest, or a portion thereof, for more loadability. For its first attempt at a smallish cross-over, the GLA covers all the functional bases very well, including electric tailgate operation and a loading sill so low it practically isn't there. This it achieves while still enjoying extreme body rigidity, which is a major contributing factor in giving the GLA such a secure, solid feel out there on the road.

Also pertinent to that body functionality is its aerodynamic ability. Mercedes claims a CD (drag co-efficient) of 0,29 which is yet another best-in-class figure for this car. It is not easy to achieve a CD as low as this with what is essentially a hatch back shape, but Merc has done it.

Right now engine choice is limited to two versions of a 2,2-litre four-cylinder diesel engine, the model designations being 200 CDI (which sells for R420 000 before options are added) and the 220 CDI. This comes in 4Matic all-wheel-drive form at a base price of R489 000. In short order Merc will also be introducing 200 and 250 petrol versions of the car. The 200 petrol will sell for R398 000 and the 250 4Matic petrol will sell for a rather stiff R558 900.

For me I really enjoyed the 200 CDI which is a pure front-wheel-drive car, and we returned about 6,8 litres/100 km which is excellent for reasonably quick but responsible driving out in the country. I don't think the 4Matic will add much in the way of any off-road ability, as the ground clearance on the car is low at around 130 mm. But of course, all-wheel-drive in bad weather conditions or on farm roads is a huge safety factor.

The cars are covered by Mercedes six-year/100 000 km Premium Drive maintenance scheme and warranty. ■



Mercedes-Benz GLA, available initially in diesel form only.



Stuart Drives The New Models

Sandero is Full of Surprises

BY STUART JOHNSTON.

Renault's new Sandero, launched here this past month, is one of the good-news econo-orientated launches this year. Not only does the latest Sandero look much more chic than the first-gen car we had here until recently, but it also performs very well.

This is thanks to its latest-tech 900 cc turbo-petrol three-cylinder motor, which is very well suited to the car. Thanks to the Sandero's weight of under the 1 000 kg mark, this acclaimed little engine seems, if anything, more lively in its Sandero application than it does in the Clio. And the sales figures have shown that the motor is a winner in its Clio habitat, as that car is selling at the rate of 500 a month or more, depending on when Renault can garner enough stock from France. So



Sandero has clean-cut good looks with a stylish Renault nose-clip

all this bodes well for the entry-level Renault to make a very big splash in an increasingly larger sales pond.

The Sandero, of course, is known as a Dacia in other markets (including the UK) and built in Romania. But its fit and finish aren't bad, with some nice materials used in certain areas in the cabin, although there are a few rather brittle bits of plastic here and there. Handling is safe and predictable without being super-satisfying in the way, that, say, that of a Polo Vivo or a Ford Figo still manages to be. But it's nevertheless a well-specced car for its price.

You get front **and side airbags**, ABS and EBD, ESP and hill-start-assist. The base Expression comes in at an impressive R133 900 with the Dynamique selling for R141 500. The Renault comes with a rather modest two year 30 000 km service plan (but that's not bad, considering the asking price) and a more impressive five-year/150 000 km warranty. ■

Peugeot 2008 Strong on Comfort, Utility, Modest on Mechanical Spec

BY STUART JOHNSTON

Peugeot's new 2008 typifies the latest trend on cross-over cars towards space, comfort and non-frivolous hi-tech, while keeping mechanical specifications modest to save costs.

Thus the new 2008 is endowed with a 1,6-litre four-cylinder motor that produces a middling 88 kW, and is only equipped with a five-speed gearbox. That should keep overall consumption in town down to the 8,5 litres/100 level. The 350 litre boot is reasonable if not excellent for a car of this shape.

At launch around a month ago, some journalists complained about the lack of a sixth gear. And yet, tooling down the N2 freeway on the east coast, it occurred to me that unlike in many largish-bodied, modestly-powered cross-over type vehicles, you aren't constantly gearing back from sixth to fifth and even fourth for the up-hills. This is because

with a five-speed you can pitch the top ratio for maximum torque at a typical national speed limit throughout the world of around 120 to 130 km/h.

Also helping the 2008 maintain momentum out on the highway, and more pertinently perhaps in the city, is the fact that for a car with plenty of



Peugeot 2008 in natural habitat.

interior space its overall mass (in base spec) at 1 089 kg is very light. Torque is a reasonable 160 Nm at 4 250 rpm.

Peugeot are proud of their small diameter steering wheel and minimalist instrument pod arrangement. I found, as I did on the 208 hatch, that the instruments are difficult to read unless you lower the steering wheel to almost lap height. Not so cool in my book, although the small steering wheel does make it fun pitching the 2008 into corners and it handles well.

The price of R269 900 is very competitive, right in there with the likes of Nissan's Juke which has made such a splash in this category, and the Peugeot spec includes, importantly, a touch-screen SAT-NAV, six airbags, ESP and EBD. And a maintenance plan of three years/60 000 km, and a three year/100 000 km warranty.

This is a classy-looking car with good fit and finish and good handling dynamics. ■

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New Models

Quantum range grows

Toyota has further increased its range of Quantum vans and minibuses with its latest updates to exterior and interior appearance. The big news is the addition of a Crew Cab.

The Quantum is now available in three body styles (panel van, crew cab and bus), three wheelbases (standard, long and super long), three roof heights (low, medium and high) and two body widths – narrow and wide. It also comes with a choice of engines—the 2.7-liter VVTi gasoline or the super-efficient 2.5 turbo-diesel.



The Toyota Quantum Crew Cab.

Chery J3 upgraded

The spacious Chery J3 hatchback, which was introduced locally in November 2012, has been given a number of important improvements and upgrades that make this Italian-designed B-segment car even more competitive in its segment of the market. Changes include a more powerful engine and a host of additional standard comfort and convenience features.



The Chery J3 hatchback.

The 1.6-litre petrol ACTECO engine which powers the Chery J3 now has variable valve timing (VVT), which increases peak power output to 93kW at 6 150r/min from 87kW, with torque climbing to 160N.m at 3 900r/min from 147N.m.

New Ford Focus here in 2015

The new Focus, which launches in South Africa in the first quarter of early next year, delivers a more

sophisticated look both inside and out as well incorporating a number of new technologies.

In addition to a host of styling and technology advances, the new Focus will offer the remarkably efficient, fun-to-drive 1.0-litre EcoBoost engine – International Engine of the Year, for 2012 and 2013 – for the first time in the Focus range in South Africa. A 1.5l EcoBoost engine will also be a part of the line-up, which means that the range of EcoBoost engines on the new Focus will be expanded to three: 1.0l, 1.5l and 2.0l.

Meanwhile the Ford Focus remains the world's bestselling vehicle nameplate according to just-released Polk global new vehicle registration data for 2013. Registrations of the Focus were up 8.1% with 1097 618 cars sold worldwide in 2013 compared to 1 014 965 in 2012.



The new Ford Focus arrives here in 2015.

Accent hatch joins Hyundai range

An attractive Accent hatchback with a comprehensive specification that is claimed to offer real value has been added to the local Hyundai passenger car range. The addition of this five-door Accent has also filled a spot in Hyundai's range that has long been reserved for it.

Powered by a 1,6 litre petrol engine there are two derivatives—the 1.6 Fluid manual, with a six-speed manual gearbox, and the 1.6 Fluid with a four-speed automatic.



The new Hyundai Accent hatchback.

Second GWM sedan arrives in SA

Previewed at last year's Johannesburg International Motor Show (JIMS), GWM's new C30 compact sedan

is now available in South Africa. This B-segment contender will compete against such vehicles as the recently released Nissan Almera, in addition to stalwarts like the Honda Ballade, Hyundai Accent and Volkswagen Vivo sedan.



The GWM C30 sedan.

The C30 is the second GWM sedan to reach South Africa, following the recent introduction of the C-segment C50. It is one of the most popular sedan models in China, regularly selling 10 000 units or more per month in its domestic market.

Mitsubishi Outlander restyled

A restyled and very well equipped Mitsubishi Outlander SUV has arrived in South Africa.

The arrival of the 7-seater Outlander SUV continues the value-for-money approach adopted by the new distributors of Mitsubishi vehicles in South Africa. Imperial was awarded the licence to distribute Mitsubishi vehicles in SA in July 2011 which marked the introduction of many new models in the country including their best-selling ASX compact SUV and the single cab Triton bakkie.



The new-look Mitsubishi Outlander.

The first in the range of Outlanders to be launched in South Africa will be the luxurious GLS Exceed model. The vehicle is powered by a 2.4-litre, four-cylinder petrol engine developing 123kW of power and 222N.m of torque. The Outlander uses a continuously variable transmission (CVT) to transfer the power from the engine to the wheels. The power extends to a multi-select four-wheel drive (4WD) system. ■

Working Wheels

Hino Joins Pinkdrive's Fight Against Breast Cancer

A specially-equipped Hino 500-Series 1 626 chassis cab fitted with a box body has joined the fleet of vehicles operated by the PinkDrive charitable organisation for its fight against breast cancer in South Africa. The box body is fitted out with very specialised equipment for carrying out mammographic screening and is valued at approximately R10-million.

"This is our second mobile mammography unit while we also have a truck-mounted educational unit that traverse the country along with three educational cars," explained the founder and director of PinkDrive, Noelene Kotschan,

"The mobile mammography units travel to semi-urban and urban areas with the objective of enabling various disadvantaged communities access to education, physical examination and how to do breast self-examination in the fight against cancer. We have already provided over 5 000 free mammograms, done over 54 000 clinical breast examinations, educated over 79 000 people and

distributed over 90 000 items of educational material," added Ms Kotschan.

"This is our second mobile mammography unit while we also have a truck-mounted educational unit that traverse the country along with three educational cars,"

The fact that BIDVest is a major sponsor of this project resulted in the group's McCarthy automotive retailer being called on to supply the vehicle. In the end it was Hino Selby that undertook the project, which included lengthening a long-wheelbase 1626 chassis cab and coordinating the construction and fitment of the box body by Elite with MWS supplying specialised components. The expensive medical equipment is fitted in three portioned areas in the air conditioned body.



The PinkDrive organisation has taken over this Hino-based mobile mammography unit to use in its fight against breast cancer. The handover took place in Johannesburg recently.

The Hino tows a big generating set so that the unit is self-sufficient.

The handover of the Hino-based unit took place in Johannesburg recently and the high profile PinkDrive and its projects occupy in the eyes of the government was evidenced by the attendance at the function of First Lady Tobeka Madiba-Zuma, Deputy Minister of Health Dr Gwen Ramokgopa and Deputy Minister of Women, Children and People with Disabilities, Ms Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu and the MEC of Health for Gauteng, Hope Papo. ■

UD Trucks' Dealers Shine

UD Trucks Southern Africa recently announced its dealer network's top achievers, at a time when the company is preparing for a ground-breaking era over the next five years.

"The UD Trucks management team and I are extremely excited about the future of the brand in this country, as we are currently planning the introduction of game-changing new range of products and services to customers," said Jacques Carelse, managing director of UD Trucks Southern Africa. "For this reason, we are also constantly looking for innovative ways in which we can go the extra mile to support our customers in a smart and modern way, and our dealers are on the forefront of this drive."

Finalists and winners for 2013 were announced in 23 categories, ranging from administration to aftermarket, sales and financial services. The most coveted awards were, of course, the Dealer of the Year accolades.



UD Trucks' Large Dealer of the Year winners – from left to right; Jacques Carelse, managing director of UD Trucks Southern Africa, Les Greene (BB Truck & Tractor), Leonard Herman (McCarthy Commercial Vehicles Boksburg) and Torbjörn Christensson, president of the Volvo Group SA.

The winner of the 2013 Medium Dealer of the Year Award was Produkta Trucks of Nelspruit. For the first time in its history, the company presented the Large Dealer of the Year award to two dealers, namely BB Truck and Tractor of

Polokwane and McCarthy Commercial Vehicles Boksburg.

UD Trucks is constantly developing, strengthening and training its already comprehensive regional dealer network which now numbers 64. ■



Snippets

SPIDER PROBLEM

Spiders are proving a big problem for Mazda as their webs force the Japanese manufacturer to recall thousands of Mazda6 sedans in the US. What happens is that the Yellow Sac spiders like the smell of petrol and weave a web that blocks a fuel vent which can reduce venting and create a low pressure in the fuel tank which can crack, leak fuel and cause a fire.

Mazda is now recalling 42 000 Mazda6 sedans from the 2010 to 2012 model years in the US

Mazda is now recalling 42 000 Mazda6 sedans from the 2010 to 2012 model years in the US, with no recalls outside North America. Three years ago Mazda was forced to recall 65 000 of these cars from model years 2009 to 2010 for the same reason. Evidently the problem only occurs in cars made at the plant in Flat Rock, Michigan, where Mazda once produced cars in conjunction with Ford. ■

FLAT MARKET EXPECTED

Dealers in SA do not expect sales in the new vehicle market to grow in the next three to six months according to the latest WesBank Vehicle Sales Confidence Indicator. Reporting on the latest indicators in Engineering News Irma Venter writes that the slowdown in new vehicle sales will benefit used vehicle sales as buyers look to pre-owned models for better value for money. ■



Peugeot is returning to Dakar Rally in 2015 with this 2008-based car.

PEUGEOT GOING BACK TO DAKAR

Although Peugeot is involved in major restructuring of its business it is now backing down in terms of publicity. Following its record-breaking run up the famous Pike's Peak hill climb in the US last year it is now returning to the Dakar Rally in 2015. Sneak previews of the car, which is based on the 2008 cross-over, are being released with no information yet on the mechanicals. Carlos Sainz and Cyril Despres will lead the attack for Team Total Peugeot, with extensive backing from Red Bull. ■

SOCCER SPONSORSHIP

Nissan is to replace Ford as the automotive sponsor of the very popular Champions League soccer

tournament in Europe. The Japanese company has signed a four-year deal which is the biggest sponsorship in the company's history. This is part of a strategy by Nissan to overtake Toyota as the best-selling Asian brand in Europe. ■

FORTUNE RANKINGS

Fortune, the highly-respected US business magazine, has released two ranking lists recently which feature motor companies and their leaders.

BMW remains the most reputable motor company in the world as ranked by its peers; 692 companies in 30 countries were surveyed. It remains in 14th position in the 50 All-Stars list, which is headed by Amazon.com, Google and Berkshire Hathaway. Toyota is next best of the motor companies, moving up from 29th last year to 25th. The only other motor company in the top 50 is Volkswagen at 36, which is three places below its 2013 ranking.

BMW has overtaken Toyota as the leader in the Motor Vehicle Industry Stars rankings. Volkswagen retained its third place in this survey. Other rankings with the 2013 position in parentheses are: 4, General Motors (6), 5, Daimler (5), 6, Honda (4), 7, Hyundai (9) and 8, Ford (7).

The other survey went about the world's 50 greatest leaders and here too the motor industry had three representatives. Alan Mulally, CEO of Ford, was ranked third behind: Pope Francis and Angela Merkel, the chancellor of Germany. Mulally was lauded for saving Ford without resorting to bankruptcy or bailouts.



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Snippets

Carlos Ghosn, CEO of the Renault/Nissan Alliance, was ranked 23rd for his efforts in turning around a giant, old industrial corporation (Nissan), which few leaders have ever done.

Anand Mahindra, the chairman of the Indian-based multinational Mahindra Group, is in 40th position for his aggressive expansion of his group which includes acquisitions in the automotive industry, computer services and in aeronautics while being one of India's most sought after employers and accompany that remains well regarded in Indian society for its policy of integrity in a "notoriously corrupt environment." ■

VW MADE IN THAILAND?

It seems the Volkswagen Group is contemplating manufacturing vehicles in Thailand in its bid to unseat Toyota as the world's leading motor company. According to a report in Business Day VW is rumoured to want to participate in a Thai government programme to offer tax exemptions to motor companies investing more than R2.2-billion in local manufacture. Japanese vehicles currently hold an 88% share of the Thai market. Toyota has

been building vehicles in South East Asia since the 1960's. ■

GOLF TURNS 40

The Volkswagen Golf is celebrating its 40th birthday this year and has been in SA for 36 of those years. To date more than 30 million Golfs have been made and sold worldwide, including 705 000 (CitiGolf included) in SA. Golf 1 rolled off the assembly line in Wolfsburg on March 29 1974 and went into production in Uitenhage in 1978.

Golf is the successor to the legendary Beetle with its air-cooled rear-mounted engine. More than 21.5-million Beetles were sold, so it was a tough act

for Golf to follow, especially as it used a transverse, front-mounted water-cooled engine driving the front wheels.

The fact that it could change Beetle buyers' preferences – as well as attracting millions of new customers – is a great tribute to Golf, which continues to set the benchmark in many areas of automotive technology. ■

RECALLS BOOMING

The world's motor manufacturers are obviously bumming far more cautious in terms of possible safety defects and the threat of very expensive fines and litigation as the number of recalls is booming.

Toyota, which has been worst hit, has just announced that a further 6.2-million vehicles are being recalled, including some in SA. General Motors is in big trouble in the US and its new chief executive, Mary Barra has had to apologise to Congress for the long time lag in recalling cars with a possible faulty ignition switch. So far 2.6-million cars are being recalled. BMW is another company involved in recalls internationally and locally, with the current focus being on six-cylinder models. ■



The new Golf with previous models.

automechanika

– Update

Automechanika Johannesburg 2015

The organisers of the 2015 edition of Automechanika Johannesburg are well advanced with arrangements for Sub-Saharan Africa's most important automotive aftermarket event. It will take place at the Expo Centre, Nasrec, from May 6–9.

This will be the fourth occasion that this world-rated trade fair will be staged in Johannesburg and it is proving to be an increasingly important gateway for exhibitors to expand their business footprint into Africa.

Last year's business-to-business show attracted 643 exhibitors from 23 countries, with the majority coming from outside Africa. The number of trade visitors who came to Expo Centre over the four days totalled 12 400.

The show will again be arranged in seven groupings: Parts & Components, Electronics & Systems,

Accessories and Tuning, Repair & Maintenance, IT & Management, Service Stations & Car Wash, Safari and Off-road Vehicles, Utility Vehicles and Trailers.

In addition there will be several fringe programmes: Truck Competence, Automechanika Academy, Innovation Awards and the Green Directory.

For more information go to:

- www.automechanikasa.co.za
- trade@automechanikasa.co.za

More information: Philip Otto 011 494 4287 and Robert Kaiser 011 494 5003

Next up: Automechanika Dubai on June 3–5

Automechanika Dubai which attracted 24 141

trade visitors and buyers last year and featured 1 481 exhibitors, enjoys a reputation for being an unmatched business networking and facilitating platform for the region.

A wide range of international brands have made their regional debut at Automechanika Dubai over the years and the exhibition has witnessed deals and tie-ups as well as the beginnings of many a lucrative partnership.

The 2014 edition will feature the popular Automechanika Academy – a series of seminars and workshops given by leading experts and prominent industry figures. These seminars will focus on key issues that affect the automotive aftermarket in the region.

More information:

www.automechanikadubai.com ■



People

Moosa at RMI

Valli Moosa, who served as a minister in the SA cabinet from 1994-2004, has been appointed to the board of the RMI. Moosa was the Minister of Constitutional Development in his first spell in parliament and was Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism in his second five-year spell.

He has been appointed to a host of boards and taken up a number of executive and non-executive positions in a wide range of companies and organisations since his move to the private sector in 2004.

Moosa was very supportive of the motor industry in an interview with *Automobil* magazine, particularly the manufacturing sector that made components and vehicles. He said it was essential that the SA motor industry did not go the way of its counterpart in Australia. He also said the motor dealers, aftermarket companies and related service providers did not get the recognition they deserve as creators of employment and the generators of substantial amounts of money for the country and its people. ■



Former minister Valli Moosa has now been appointed to the board of the RMI.

Major Restructuring at Hino SA

There has been a major restructuring in the senior management of Hino South Africa in line with Toyota Motor Corporation's global policy of staff rotation among its senior management.

"Casper Kruger, who has been the Hino SA Vice-President for the past five years and was instrumental in rolling out the change in name from Toyota SA Trucks to Hino SA, has relinquished his position at Hino SA and returned to Toyota SA," explained the Toyota SA Senior Vice President-Sales and Marketing, Calvyn Hamman.

"Concurrent with the name change was the establishment by Casper and his team of a dedicated Hino dealer network. Casper has returned to Toyota SA Motors as Vice President-Vehicle Sales and Dealer Development for passenger vehicles and light commercials," added Hamman.

Ernest Trautmann has taken over the position of Vice President of Hino SA from April 1. He was previously General Manager-Sales and Dealer Network at Toyota SA.

Trautmann, who joined Toyota SA in 1988 as a marketing and management consultant in the Training Department, has built up a very impressive and extensive track record in many aspects of the motor industry including eight years with the Toyota and Lexus distributor in the United Arab Emirates. In all he has spent 26 years working with Toyota product, of which 18 years have been with Toyota SA.

Although Trautmann will have overall responsibility for the Hino operation in South Africa his focus will be on strategic and future planning.



Handing over the reins at Hino SA. Dr Casper Kruger (left), who was Vice President of Hino SA for the past five years, has moved back to Toyota SA as Vice President – Vehicle Sales and Dealer Network, with Ernie Trautmann (centre) taking over as Hino Vice President, while Pieter Klerck (right) joins him at Hino SA as General Manager.

Pieter Klerck, formerly Senior Manager for Advertising at Toyota SA, is now General Manager-Sales and Dealer Network at Hino SA. His new position will include parts, service and customer relations thus making him, in effect, the operational head for Hino SA.

Klerck's link with Toyota stretches back many years. Before joining Toyota SA in 2006 he worked at two advertising agencies where he was actively involved on the Toyota account.

"We believe that splitting responsibilities at Hino in this manner will be beneficial in that it will ensure there are two people to share the load which will result in even better service for the dealers and their customers," added Hamman. ■

New Corporate Communication Head for Toyota SA

Mary Willemse has been appointed Senior Manager – Corporate Communication at Toyota South Africa Motors. She takes over from Leo Kok who has resigned from the company to study for a doctorate in crisis communication at the University of Pretoria.



Mary Willemse.

Mary has focussed on the full spectrum of communication during her working career, which followed a period studying journalism at the Pretoria Technikon (now the Tshwane University of Technology).

Mary's first position was with Caxton as a reporter on the Boksburg Advertiser from where she progressed to becoming news editor and later editor of the Germiston City News. This part of her career was followed by a move from newspapers into politics as the spokesperson and communications officer for the Wits Technikon (now the University of Johannesburg).

Mary's move into the motor industry came in April 2004 – a decade ago – when she joined Toyota SA as publications manager, which was followed by a move upwards to Communications Manager. Her most recent position was Senior Manager-Sponsorship and Promotions from 2010 to 2014, so she is very well versed in the corporate culture of Toyota and its operational processes, so is well prepared for her new assignment. ■

South African Vehicle Sales Figures at the End of March 2014

TOP 5 PASSENGER CAR MARKET BY TYPE FOR MARCH 2014					
SEGMENT	TYPE	2014	SHARE	2013	SHARE
ENTRY CARS	VW POLO Vivo Hatch/Sedan	2 553	6.9%	2 939	7.8%
	TOYOTA Etios	2 364	6.4%	1 736	4.6%
	HYUNDAI i10	1 273	3.5%	993	2.6%
	FORD Figo	1 203	3.3%	1 109	2.9%
	CHEV Spark	545	1.5%	400	1.1%
ENTRY CARS TOTAL		9 737	26.5%	9 472	25.2%
SUB-SMALL	VW Polo	1 858	5.1%	2 162	5.7%
	HYUNDAI i20	1 333	3.6%	922	2.5%
	FORD Fiesta	695	1.9%	784	2.1%
	KIA Rio	530	1.4%	598	1.6%
	RENAULT Clio IV	496	1.3%	0	0.0%
SUB-SMALL TOTAL		7 084	19.3%	6 943	18.5%
SMALL	TOYOTA Corolla	1 206	3.3%	1 003	2.7%
	VW Golf 7	812	2.2%	405	1.1%
	BMW 1-Series	449	1.2%	484	1.3%
	NISSAN Almera	419	1.1%	0	0.0%
	FORD Focus	348	0.9%	464	1.2%
SMALL TOTAL		6 973	19.0%	6 276	16.7%
MEDIUM	BMW 3-Series	1 048	2.8%	1 401	3.7%
	MERCEDES C-Class	891	2.4%	1 415	3.8%
	AUDI A4	527	1.4%	522	1.4%
	LEXUS ES	81	0.2%	0	0.0%
	LEXUS IS	42	0.1%	10	0.0%
MEDIUM TOTAL		2 738	7.4%	3 658	9.7%
LARGE	MERCEDES E-Class	223	0.6%	123	0.3%
	JAGUAR XF	172	0.5%	194	0.5%
	BMW 4-Series	94	0.3%	0	0.0%
	BMW 5-Series	88	0.2%	161	0.4%
	AUDI A6	47	0.1%	58	0.2%
LARGE TOTAL		783	2.1%	775	2.1%
LUXURY	MERCEDES S-Class	39	0.1%	8	0.0%
	BMW 6-Series	27	0.1%	45	0.1%
	MERCEDES CLS	16	0.0%	17	0.0%
	BMW 7-Series	15	0.0%	27	0.1%
	PORSCHE Panamera	14	0.0%	12	0.0%
LUXURY TOTAL		125	0.3%	146	0.4%

TOP 5 PASSENGER CAR MARKET BY TYPE FOR MARCH 2014					
SEGMENT	TYPE	2014	SHARE	2013	SHARE
MPV	TOYOTA Avanza	374	1.0%	417	1.1%
	MERCEDES B-Class	129	0.4%	149	0.4%
	HYUNDAI H1	55	0.1%	264	0.7%
	NISSAN NV200	50	0.1%	0	0.0%
	VW T5 Kombi	39	0.1%	44	0.1%
MPV TOTAL		881	2.4%	1 228	3.3%
SUV	TOYOTA Fortuner	872	2.4%	993	2.6%
	RENAULT Duster	495	1.3%	0	0.0%
	KIA Sportage	367	1.0%	224	0.6%
	TOYOTA RAV	342	0.9%	13	0.0%
	FORD Kuga	341	0.9%	286	0.8%
	SUV TOTAL		6 229	16.9%	6 234
SPORT AND EXOTICS	TOYOTA 86	38	0.1%	71	0.2%
	JAGUAR F-Type	35	0.1%	0	0.0%
	MERCEDES SLK	29	0.1%	37	0.1%
	AUDI TT	12	0.0%	11	0.0%
	BMW Z4	7	0.0%	13	0.0%
SPORT AND EXOTICS TOTAL		156	0.4%	322	0.9%
CROSSOVER	NISSAN Juke	305	0.8%	769	2.0%
	FORD EcoSport	289	0.8%	0	0.0%
	JEEP Compass	227	0.6%	239	0.6%
	NISSAN Qashqai	207	0.6%	402	1.1%
	AUDI Q3	192	0.5%	165	0.4%
	CROSSOVER TOTAL		2 079	5.7%	2 555
GRAND TOTAL		36 785		37 609	

Figures courtesy of SA Department of Trade and Industry and and Lightstone Auto



The new Toyota Corolla made a stellar entrance to the market with 1 206 sales in its first month.

TOP 5 PASSENGER MANUFACTURER RETAIL SALES FOR MARCH 2014					
MANUFACTURER	TYPE	2014	SHARE	2013	SHARE
VOLKSWAGEN SA	VW POLO Vivo Hatch/Sedan	2 553	6.9%	2 939	7.8%
	VW Polo	1 858	5.1%	2 162	5.7%
	VW Golf 7	812	2.2%	405	1.1%
	AUDI A4	527	1.4%	522	1.4%
	VW Tiguan	335	0.9%	324	0.9%
VOLKSWAGEN GROUP SA TOTAL		8 136	22.1%	8 561	22.8%
TOYOTA	TOYOTA Etios	2 364	6.4%	1 736	4.6%
	TOYOTA Corolla	1 206	3.3%	1 003	2.7%
	TOYOTA Fortuner	872	2.4%	993	2.6%
	TOYOTA Avanza	374	1.0%	417	1.1%
	TOYOTA RAV	342	0.9%	13	0.0%
TOYOTA TOTAL		6 208	16.9%	5 160	13.7%
AMH	HYUNDAI i20	1 333	3.6%	922	2.5%
	HYUNDAI i10	1 273	3.5%	993	2.6%
	KIA Rio	530	1.4%	598	1.6%
	KIA Sportage	367	1.0%	224	0.6%
	HYUNDAI Accent	299	0.8%	504	1.3%
AMH TOTAL		4 786	13.0%	5 429	14.4%
FMC	FORD Figo	1 203	3.3%	1 109	2.9%
	FORD Fiesta	695	1.9%	784	2.1%
	FORD Ikon	355	1.0%	0	0.0%
	FORD Focus	348	0.9%	464	1.2%
	FORD Kuga	341	0.9%	286	0.8%
FMC TOTAL		3 669	10.0%	2 834	7.5%
BMW GROUP	BMW 3-Series	1 048	2.8%	1 401	3.7%
	BMW 1-Series	449	1.2%	484	1.3%
	BMW X3	146	0.4%	186	0.5%
	BMW X5	142	0.4%	104	0.3%
	BMW 2-Series	124	0.3%	0	0.0%
BMW GROUP TOTAL		2 404	6.5%	2 815	7.5%
GMSA	CHEV Spark	545	1.5%	400	1.1%
	CHEV Aveo	411	1.1%	322	0.9%
	CHEV Cruze	329	0.9%	382	1.0%
	CHEV Sonic	177	0.5%	199	0.5%
	CHEV Trailblazer	138	0.4%	256	0.7%
GMSA TOTAL		1 939	5.3%	1 860	4.9%
MERCEDES-BENZ SA	MERCEDES C-Class	891	2.4%	1 415	3.8%
	MERCEDES A-Class	288	0.8%	59	0.2%
	MERCEDES E-Class	223	0.6%	123	0.3%
	MERCEDES B-Class	129	0.4%	149	0.4%
	MERCEDES M-Class	87	0.2%	193	0.5%
MERCEDES-BENZ SA TOTAL		1 884	5.1%	2 157	5.7%
NISSAN	NISSAN Almera	419	1.1%	0	0.0%
	NISSAN Micra	317	0.9%	66	0.2%

TOP 5 PASSENGER MANUFACTURER RETAIL SALES FOR MARCH 2014					
MANUFACTURER	TYPE	2014	SHARE	2013	SHARE
NISSAN	NISSAN Juke	305	0.8%	769	2.0%
	NISSAN Qashqai	207	0.6%	402	1.1%
	NISSAN X-Trail	120	0.3%	245	0.7%
NISSAN TOTAL		1 598	4.3%	1 824	4.8%
RENAULT	RENAULT Clio IV	496	1.3%	0	0.0%
	RENAULT Duster	495	1.3%	0	0.0%
	RENAULT Sandero	365	1.0%	390	1.0%
	RENAULT Sandero II	118	0.3%	0	0.0%
	RENAULT Fluence	61	0.2%	33	0.1%
RENAULT TOTAL		1 595	4.3%	608	1.6%
JAGUAR LAND ROVER	L-R Discovery 4	314	0.9%	394	1.0%
	JAGUAR XF	172	0.5%	194	0.5%
	L-R Range Rover Evoque	165	0.4%	371	1.0%
	L-R Range Rover Sport	154	0.4%	52	0.1%
	L-R Freelander 2	47	0.1%	150	0.4%
JAGUAR LAND ROVER TOTAL		921	2.5%	1 212	3.2%
HONDA	HONDA Brio	288	0.8%	344	0.9%
	HONDA CR-V	170	0.5%	181	0.5%
	HONDA Civic	117	0.3%	262	0.7%
	HONDA Jazz	98	0.3%	392	1.0%
	HONDA Ballade	52	0.1%	156	0.4%
HONDA TOTAL		753	2.0%	1 400	3.7%
CHRYSLER SA	JEEP Compass	227	0.6%	239	0.6%
	JEEP Grand Cherokee	201	0.5%	239	0.6%
	JEEP Wrangler	135	0.4%	155	0.4%
	DODGE Journey	65	0.2%	98	0.3%
	JEEP Patriot	63	0.2%	55	0.1%
CHRYSLER SA TOTAL		730	2.0%	876	2.3%
SUZUKI	SUZUKI Swift	235	0.6%	79	0.2%
	SUZUKI Alto	125	0.3%	82	0.2%
	SUZUKI Jimny	87	0.2%	75	0.2%
	SUZUKI SX4	56	0.2%	46	0.1%
	SUZUKI Grand Vitara	33	0.1%	21	0.1%
SUZUKI TOTAL		539	1.5%	314	0.8%
MITSUBISHI MOTORS SA	MITSUBISHI ASX	99	0.3%	202	0.5%
	MITSUBISHI Pajero Sport	83	0.2%	22	0.1%
	MITSUBISHI Outlander	37	0.1%	12	0.0%
	MITSUBISHI Pajero	34	0.1%	50	0.1%
	MITSUBISHI Lancer	11	0.0%	4	0.0%

◀ continued from previous page

TOP 5 PASSENGER MANUFACTURER RETAIL SALES FOR MARCH 2014					
MANUFACTURER	TYPE	2014	SHARE	2013	SHARE
MITSUBISHI MOTORS SA TOTAL		264	0.7%	290	0.8%
VOLVO CARS	VOLVO V40	112	0.3%	72	0.2%
	VOLVO XC60	55	0.1%	36	0.1%
	VOLVO V40 CC	35	0.1%	42	0.1%
	VOLVO S60	29	0.1%	36	0.1%
	VOLVO XC90	11	0.0%	9	0.0%
VOLVO CARS TOTAL		247	0.7%	272	0.7%
PCSA	PEUGEOT 208	110	0.3%	137	0.4%
	PEUGEOT 2008	40	0.1%	0	0.0%
	PEUGEOT 107	39	0.1%	86	0.2%
	CITROEN DS3	13	0.0%	36	0.1%
	CITROEN C1	12	0.0%	31	0.1%
PCSA TOTAL		246	0.7%	494	1.3%
FIAT GROUP	FIAT 500	100	0.3%	95	0.3%
	FIAT Panda	57	0.2%	0	0.0%
	FIAT Punto	25	0.1%	220	0.6%
	ALFA Giulietta	10	0.0%	44	0.1%
	FIAT Qubo	9	0.0%	14	0.0%
FIAT GROUP TOTAL		216	0.6%	403	1.1%
GWMSA	GWM H5	97	0.3%	66	0.2%
	GWM C10	65	0.2%	43	0.1%
	GWM Florid	3	0.0%	21	0.1%
GWMSA TOTAL		165	0.4%	130	0.3%
AAD	CHERY Tiggo	63	0.2%	75	0.2%
	CHERY J2	49	0.1%	0	0.0%
	CHERY QQ3	47	0.1%	89	0.2%
	CHERY J1	0	0.0%	4	0.0%
	CHERY J3	0	0.0%	8	0.0%
AAD TOTAL		159	0.4%	176	0.5%
SUBARU	SUBARU Forester	73	0.2%	60	0.2%
	SUBARU XV	30	0.1%	11	0.0%
	SUBARU Outback	23	0.1%	6	0.0%
	SUBARU Legacy	2	0.0%	0	0.0%
	SUBARU BRZ	0	0.0%	21	0.1%
SUBARU TOTAL		128	0.3%	100	0.3%
TATA	TATA B-Line	56	0.2%	203	0.5%
	TATA Indica Vista	11	0.0%	70	0.2%
	TATA Manza	7	0.0%	37	0.1%
	TATA Aria	1	0.0%	0	0.0%
	TATA Indica	0	0.0%	21	0.1%
TATA TOTAL		75	0.2%	331	0.9%
MAHINDRA	MAHINDRA XUV	40	0.1%	95	0.3%
	MAHINDRA Quanto	12	0.0%	0	0.0%
	MAHINDRA Xylo	11	0.0%	11	0.0%

TOP 5 PASSENGER MANUFACTURER RETAIL SALES FOR MARCH 2014					
MANUFACTURER	TYPE	2014	SHARE	2013	SHARE
MAHINDRA	SSANGYONG Korando	8	0.0%	23	0.1%
	MAHINDRA Scorpio	2	0.0%	10	0.0%
MAHINDRA TOTAL		73	0.2%	139	0.4%
PORSCHE	PORSCHE Cayenne	25	0.1%	82	0.2%
	PORSCHE Panamera	14	0.0%	12	0.0%
	PORSCHE 911	4	0.0%	48	0.1%
	PORSCHE Boxster	1	0.0%	62	0.2%
	PORSCHE Cayman	1	0.0%	0	0.0%
PORSCHE TOTAL		45	0.1%	204	0.5%
FERRARI	FERRARI California	1	0.0%	4	0.0%
	FERRARI FF	1	0.0%	2	0.0%
	FERRARI F12	1	0.0%	0	0.0%
	FERRARI 458 Speciale	1	0.0%	0	0.0%
	FERRARI 458 Italia	1	0.0%	0	0.0%
FERRARI TOTAL		5	0.0%	12	0.0%
MASERATI	MASERATI GranCabrio	0	0.0%	4	0.0%
	MASERATI Quattroporte	0	0.0%	1	0.0%
	MASERATI GranTurismo	0	0.0%	3	0.0%
MASERATI TOTAL		0	0.0%	8	0.0%
GRAND TOTAL		36 785	100.0%	37 609	100.0%

Figures courtesy of SA Department of Trade and Industry and and Lightstone Auto

TOP 5 SELLING PASSENGER CARS FOR MARCH 2014		
TYPE	2014	2014 SHARE
VW Polo Vivo Hatch/Sedan	2 553	6.9%
TOYOTA Etios	2 364	6.4%
VW Polo	1 858	5.1%
HYUNDAI i20	1 333	3.6%
HYUNDAI i10	1 273	3.5%
		36 785

TOP 5 SELLING LCV CARS FOR MARCH 2014		
TYPE	2014	2014 Share
TOYOTA Hilux	3 415	21.6%
FORD Ranger	2 167	13.7%
NISSAN NP200	1 654	10.4%
CHEV Utility	1 437	9.1%
ISUZU KB	1 432	9.0%
		15 833

Figures courtesy of SA Department of Trade and Industry and and Lightstone Auto

TOP 5 LCV CAR MARKET BY TYPE FOR MARCH 2014					
NAAMSA STANDARD	TYPE	2014	SHARE	2013	SHARE
SUB ONE-TON	NISSAN NP200	1 654	10.4%	1 712	11.2%
	CHEV Utility	1 437	9.1%	1 464	9.6%
	DAIHATSU Gran Max	297	1.9%	103	0.7%
	CHEV Lumina UTE	0	0.0%	12	0.1%
	CHEV Corsa Utility	0	0.0%	1	0.0%
SUB ONE-TON TOTAL		3 388	21.4%	3 292	21.5%
ABOVE ONE-TON DCAB	TOYOTA Hilux	1 474	9.3%	1 217	8.0%
	FORD Ranger	1 056	6.7%	922	6.0%
	ISUZU KB	488	3.1%	295	1.9%
	VW Amarok	289	1.8%	386	2.5%
	MAZDA BT-50	181	1.1%	116	0.8%
ABOVE ONE-TON DCAB TOTAL		4 135	26.1%	3 856	25.2%
ABOVE ONE-TON SCAB	TOYOTA Hilux	1 660	10.5%	1 991	13.0%
	ISUZU KB	771	4.9%	533	3.5%
	FORD Ranger	739	4.7%	558	3.7%
	HYUNDAI H100 Bakkie	419	2.6%	368	2.4%
	TOYOTA Landcruiser PU	329	2.1%	142	0.9%
ABOVE ONE-TON SCAB TOTAL		5 016	31.7%	5 393	35.3%
ABOVE ONE-TON XCAB	FORD Ranger	372	2.3%	339	2.2%
	TOYOTA Hilux	281	1.8%	429	2.8%
	ISUZU KB	173	1.1%	69	0.5%
	MAZDA BT-50	74	0.5%	74	0.5%
	NISSAN Navara	45	0.3%	115	0.8%
ABOVE ONE-TON XCAB TOTAL		951	6.0%	1 039	6.8%
MINIBUS	TOYOTA Quantum	1 121	7.1%	1 040	6.8%
	NISSAN NV350 Taxi	329	2.1%	0	0.0%
	FORD Tourneo Custom	122	0.8%	44	0.3%
	VW Caddy	59	0.4%	32	0.2%
	VW T5 Transporter Cr-Bus	44	0.3%	20	0.1%
MINIBUS TOTAL		1 703	10.8%	1 175	7.7%
PANEL VAN	VW Caddy	112	0.7%	91	0.6%
	CHEV Spark	88	0.6%	16	0.1%
	FORD Transit Custom	67	0.4%	95	0.6%
	NISSAN NV200	63	0.4%	0	0.0%
	FIAT Fiorino	60	0.4%	43	0.3%
PANEL VAN TOTAL		640	4.0%	531	3.5%
GRAND TOTAL		15 833	100.0%	15 286	100.0%

Figures courtesy of SA Department of Trade and Industry and and Lightstone Auto

THE TOP SOUTH AFRICAN HCV / MCV MARKET FOR MARCH 2014 (MEDIUM, HEAVY & EXTRA HEAVY COMMERCIALS, & BUSES)			
MANUFACTURER	CATEGORY	2014	SHARE
MERCEDES-BENZ SA	MCV	235	8.2%
	HCV	83	2.9%
	XHV	426	14.9%
	BUS	25	0.9%
MERCEDES-BENZ SA TOTAL		769	26.9%
TOYOTA	MCV	254	8.9%
	HCV	138	4.8%
	XHV	33	1.2%
TOYOTA TOTAL		425	14.8%
GMSA/ISUZU TRUCKS	MCV	123	4.3%
	HCV	92	3.2%
	XHV	32	1.1%
	BUS	0	0.0%
GMSA TOTAL		247	8.6%
UD TRUCKS	MCV	62	2.2%
	HCV	56	2.0%
	XHV	102	3.6%
UD TRUCKS TOTAL		220	7.7%
SCANIA	XHV	174	6.1%
	BUS	36	1.3%
SCANIA TOTAL		210	7.3%
VOLVO TRUCKS	XHV	206	7.2%
VOLVO TRUCKS TOTAL		206	7.2%
IVECO	MCV	132	4.6%
	HCV	12	0.4%
	XHV	51	1.8%
	BUS	3	0.1%
IVECO TOTAL		198	6.9%
MAN	HCV	19	0.7%
	XHV	103	3.6%
	BUS	28	1.0%
MAN TOTAL		150	5.2%
TATA	MCV	58	2.0%
	HCV	63	2.2%
	XHV	12	0.4%
	BUS	7	0.2%
TATA Total		140	4.9%
VOLKSWAGEN GROUP SA	MCV	85	3.0%
VOLKSWAGEN GROUP SA TOTAL		85	3.0%
FAW	MCV	1	0.0%
	HCV	22	0.8%
	XHV	26	0.9%
FAW TOTAL		49	1.7%
POWERSTAR	XHV	49	1.7%
POWERSTAR TOTAL		49	1.7%
RENAULT TRUCKS	XHV	31	1.1%
RENAULT TRUCKS TOTAL		31	1.1%
AMH	MCV	30	1.0%
AMH TOTAL		30	1.0%
PCSA	MCV	25	0.9%
PCSA TOTAL		25	0.9%
JMC	MCV	13	0.5%
JMC TOTAL		13	0.5%
FIAT GROUP	MCV	9	0.3%
FIAT GROUP TOTAL		9	0.3%
VOLVO BUS	BUS	3	0.1%
VOLVO BUS TOTAL		3	0.1%
BABCOCK	HCV	0	0.0%
	XHV	3	0.1%
BABCOCK TOTAL		3	0.1%
NC2 TRUCKS SA	XHV	0	0.0%
NC2 TRUCKS TOTAL		0	0.0%
VDL BUS & COACH SA	BUS	0	0.0%
VDL BUS & COACH SA TOTAL		0	0.0%
GRAND TOTAL		2 862	100.0%

Figures courtesy of SA Department of Trade and Industry and and Lightstone Auto

AutoAfrica News

Solution to Need for Sales Statistics in Africa

BY ROGER HOUGHTON

The dearth of motor vehicle sales statistics in Africa north of South Africa and its neighbouring Customs Union is a big challenge for exporters. Information is not only difficult to obtain but much of it is also unreliable. This makes it very difficult for companies doing business on the continent to know the true picture which is important for sales and product planning.

At last a system is being developed by Richard Buy, and his team at Ric Consulting in Johannesburg. Using data from a number of sources, including distributors, manufacturers and organisations such as the Japan Automobile Manufacturers' Association (JAMA) an easy-to-use and very comprehensive matrix is being developed into a product called Click View Africa.

(you can E-mail: richard@ricconsulting.co.za or Tel: +27-11-234-4178.)

An impressive demonstration was given by Buy to the attendees at a recent meeting of the NAAMSA Africa Export Forum at Nissan's head office in Rosslyn. Now input is required from Ford and General Motors to make the statistics even more comprehensive.

The chairman of the forum, Dr. Norman Lamprecht, a director of the Automotive Industry Export Council (AIEC), gave the members interesting run-downs on the development of Tripartite and SADEC Free Trade Areas (FTAs) for Africa, as well as progress in developing an Africa Export Strategy for the SA motor industry at the request of the NAAMSA CEOs.

Dr Lamprecht also gave details of the shows and trade fairs in Africa in which the South African automotive industry will participate in 2014.

Nissan's aggressive plans for Africa

Nissan South Africa is continuing to get more and more involved in the African market with the recent announcement in Engineering News that it will in future take over the role of distributor for Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Tanzania in addition to its current responsibility for South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Nissan is also making significant progress in the potentially huge Nigerian market including SKD assembly.

Nigeria loosens control

Nigeria is set to reduce state control over the transport industry to encourage investment in transport so as to assist in lessening the country's economic dependence on crude oil. This follows a successful easing of controls in the electricity supply industry last year when 15 suppliers were privatised. ■

Vehicle for Africa to be Made in Kenya

A new car company based out of Nairobi, Kenya is pushing the boundaries of the African transport market. Mobius Motors designs, manufactures and sells highly durable, highly affordable vehicles in Kenya for the needs of rural African customers. Mobius aims to reimagine the car; designing vehicles around common road terrain, transport usage and average consumer income across the region.

The majority of roads in rural and peri-urban areas of sub-Saharan Africa are highly degraded. For many people, this makes transportation difficult and restricts mobility. The most common vehicles across East Africa are imported used from more developed economies and aren't designed for the typical transport needs of Africa's mass market. High import duties and maintenance costs on foreign-made vehicles continue to push up the cost of owning a vehicle — locking out entry-level buyers, particularly entrepreneurs who need cost-effective vehicles in order to successfully run their businesses.

The Mobius vehicle is built to meet this need. The first production vehicle, Mobius II, is locally assembled in Kenya and planned for launch by July 2014. Mobius II has the key functionality and



The Mobius II, an inspirational entry-price vehicle for Africa's mass market.

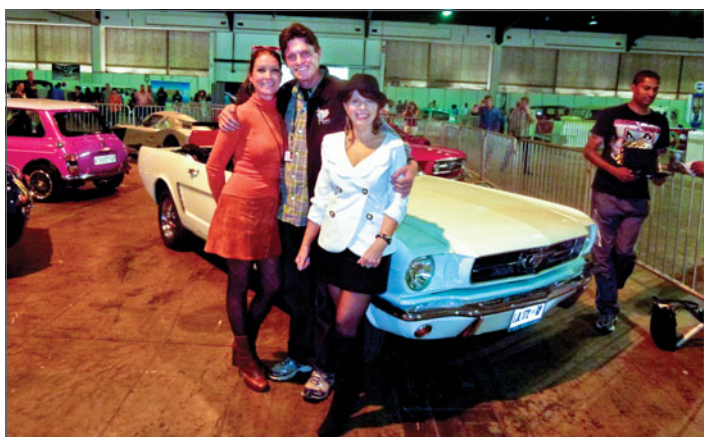
durability of an off-road car, able to carry 8 passengers – or 625kg of payload – and is sold at 950 000 KES (115 000 Rand) a price similar to a used sedan in Kenya. With a custom developed highly-rugged suspension system, 26 cm of ground clearance and a 41° approach angle, Mobius II is well equipped to reliably cover long distances on rural Africa's degraded roads.

Beyond building more appropriate and inspirational entry-price vehicles for Africa's mass market, Mobius is building a transport platform that empowers local entrepreneurs to run profitable transportation businesses with Mobius

vehicles to end-users in their communities. The range of businesses is vast, from public transport, to mobile medical care, to goods delivery – which Mobius believes will transform Africa's transport network.

As the company prepares to rollout their vehicles in Kenya and beyond, **they are looking for a Marketing Director** interested in a truly unique entrepreneurial opportunity to lead the positioning and rollout of Mobius's aspirational brand as Africa's first truly mass market car. Interested applicants should visit www.mobiusmotors.com/join-us for more information. ■

Picture Page



AutoLive's Stuart Johnston welcoming guests to Hall 5 at the 2014 Rand Easter Show. Louise Taylor on the left is the owner of the classic '65 Mustang convertible.



This is a 1939 Chevrolet Ambulance, as used at the Wilhelm Stahl Hospital in the Eastern Cape. It is part of the classic display at the Rand Easter Show in Hall 5, organised by AutoLive's Stuart Johnston.



Alfetta at Angela's picnic featured brilliant faded Teljoy racing livery to commemorate Alfa Romeo's strong showing in the early days of Group One racing at Kyalami in the mid-1970s.



Indeed, it isn't a crime. The rat-rod look is also a lot easier to achieve than a smooth body finish and 30 hand-rubbed coats of paint and clear coat, common to traditional hot-rods.



This ultra rare Lancia B20 coupe was spotted at Shawn Tyler's scrap yard on the old Pretoria-Benoni road near Petit. Body is aluminium, engine is a narrow-angle V6.



Eleanore would have been proud! Many Mustangs at the 50th Birthday bash at Melrose Arch featured the Gone in 60 Seconds Eleanore look, with tasty bodywork and engine mods to celebrate the famous movie car.



Back Page



The Sorcerer from Bologna and the Little Blue Box that Inspired Renault's Multiple Championship-winning F1 Engines

BY STUART JOHNSTON

About a week ago I was sitting all by myself in a gigantic, dusty, gloomy hall gazing at a small, boxy little car. It was the only car in a space that could happily accept hundreds of similarly-sized vehicles, and it had been delivered there the day before by its enthusiastic owner. The next day about 120 more cars would arrive for the classic car show I am currently running at the Rand Show at the Johannesburg Expo Centre

This early arrival was painted French racing blue, and had two white stripes running over it, nose-to-tail and slightly off-centre, just the way they were back in 1965 when these cars were unleashed on an unsuspecting public here.

The Renault R8 Gordini is so, so special, and yet it looks so unremarkable. Its shape is so squared off, I reckon no other car ever followed the three-box design edict so faithfully. The only relief comes in the form of an extra pair of driving lights adorning the front of what is otherwise an unremarkable Renault light car introduced at the beginning of the 1960s.

These days enthusiasts will talk to me about Cortina GTs and Capri Peranas, Holden Monaros, Ford Fairmont GTs, Chev Can Ams and Mini Coopers, but by and large they forget about the impact these little Renault Gordinis made on the hot car scene here in the 1960s.

But the okes-in-the-know, they remember. Alan Poulter, uncle of the famous rally driver Leeroy Poulter, remembers how he and his brother (the late Norman, Leeroy's father) used to cruise through to Vereeniging on a Friday night for illegal street races, in their super trick Fords. Alan had a three-litre V6 strapped into his Ford and Norman had a V8 Capri Perana.

"And you know what? The cars that used to blow us all off were those Renault Gordinis! They just came off the line so fast; no-one could catch them over a quarter mile or so. The okes used to rev them to 8 000 all day, every day, 9 000 on occasion. Those ones at Vereeniging were tweaked, bored out engines to around 1400 or so, with even hotter cams. But even the standard cars were amazing."

The racing people knew this too. At the 1969 Nine Hour at Kyalami, an international event for

sports cars that included, that year, a Porsche 917, a Renault Gordini driven by Scamp Porter and Geoff Mortimer finished the race fourth overall! True, it rained cats and dogs for about two hours, and this put the Renault at a big advantage with its skinny tyres as the big Porsches, Ferraris and Ford GT40s slithered down the straight aquaplaning all over the place.

But most of the race was dry and yet the results read: First Porsche 917, second Lola T70 and third a Porsche 908. Behind the Gordini in fourth you had two more Porsches, two Chevrons, which were purpose-built sports cars, a Ferrari 330 P4, and a host of Alfas. In fact the Alfa GTV which was driven by Formula One ace Basil van Rooyen and Dave Charlton with a much bigger engine than the Renault's and skinny tyres just as suitable in the downpour, finished 20 laps behind the Renault R8 Gordini.

I drove one about two years ago, and I can tell you, this little car still feels quick today and that's not something you can say about, for instance, a Mini Cooper S. The Gordini had a 1 255 cc push-rod engine, with an ingenious cylinder head design employing the hemispherical combustion chamber principle, two, fat twin-choke, side-draught carbs (Solexes rather than Webers) and a beautiful tubular branch exhaust system. Oh, and it had a five-speed close-ratio 'box which helped its sprint ability enormously, as did the rear-engine location for traction off the line.

Thinking back, I rode out to the road that now runs past the Ford factory in Silverton one night on



The fabulous Renault R8 Gordini. This is a 1300 cc example, although earlier ones in 1965 were 1100 cc.

my little 50 cc Yamaha, and saw Gordinis wipe out the Ford street racer contingent in the exact manner that Alan Poulter described. So this kind of thing happened all over the country back in 1971, '72.

They were unbeatable on the track in the 1300 cc class, and never forget that our 1979 Formula One World Champion Jody Scheckter had made his name 10 years earlier in a Renault Gordini, taking on the works team in a car prepared in his father Max's garage in East London.

Those Gordinis came off the showroom floor with super-skinny steel wheels and hubcaps but almost every enthusiast fitted cast wheels branded as AMWs, which looked just like the Renault factory-racer wheels used in France, known as Deltas. What our okes didn't know was that they were made locally by a dude on the East Rand called Angelo Pera, who used to buy up stocks of old aluminium pistons, melt them down and cast them to the Delta pattern. The car sitting in the dusty hall last Wednesday is fitted with genuine Delta wheels imported from France by the current owner, Jimmy Brink, of Alberton.

Jimmy owns a host of collectible cars and his current daily driver is a Porsche Cayman S. But he says every time he climbs into that Gordini he just starts smiling, he can't help himself. "There's just something about that Gordini, everything is absolutely right on the car."

Amadee Gordini was the man who inspired those cars, an Italian from Bologna who spent most of his life in Paris. The engines bearing his name took Renaults to victory at Le Mans, and in fact it was his company that was absorbed by Renault to form Renault Sport in the mid 1970s. Those first Renault turbocharged Formula One engines of the late 1970s carried the Gordini logo on their valve covers. Amadee himself died just a few weeks before his 80th birthday and, sadly, just weeks before Renault scored its first modern-era Formula One victory at the 1979 French Grand Prix.

So, before you write Renault off for this year's F1 championship, just remember they were first with a 1,5-litre turbocharged V6 victory. Using an engine which, incidentally, sounded very much like today's V6 F1 cars! Remember that too, next time you see a French racing blue Renault R8, if it has a Gordini badge on it, show some respect. ■