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Ford Website Lets Customers Customize Their Vehicles

Ford is making it easy, cost-effective and fun for Ford owners to turn their car or truck into a unique personalized ride with custom vinyl graphics. With nearly 50 designs to choose from for each vehicle, the custom vinyl graphics offer the look of a custom paint job at half the cost.



Ford custom graphics are launching with the new Ford Fiesta and will soon expand to include graphics for two of the most customized cars in the country – the Ford Mustang and F-150; the program will later roll out with customization options for all Ford vehicles.

A new website is making it easy, cost-effective and fun for Ford owners to turn their car or truck into a unique personalized ride with vinyl graphics that offer the look of a custom paint job at half the price.

The website – www.fordcustomgraphics.com – launched in November with vinyl wrap designs for the new Ford Fiesta is now expanding to include graphics for two of the most customized cars in the country – the Ford Mustang and F-150 – and later will offer customization options for all Ford vehicles.

"Ford knows that customers want a vehicle to be all their own," said Jim Abraham, Ford's Licensed Accessories manager. "The Ford Custom Graphics website complements our strong accessory portfolio and enables customers to put a personal stamp on their vehicle."

"You click on your vehicle and its exterior color, select the graphics you like, and then the website will show you exactly how the designs will look on your car or truck," explained Abraham.

Approximately 50 designs were created specifically for each vehicle. All are available in a variety of colors and sizes and were designed with the target customer in mind.

People interested in the new Ford Fiesta, for example, can choose from cool, fun designs like bubbles, arrows, dots and flowers. Mustang and F-150 customers will have an entirely different portfolio to choose from.

"Mustang owners might prefer race-themed graphics like stripes, flames or matte black accents, while our F-150 customers might like something a little more rugged like camouflage or a faux diamond plate aluminum look," said Abraham. "The neat thing about the website is that we're tailoring the designs to our customers."

According to Abraham, the website will continue to evolve over time to meet consumer demand and expectations.

"The whole idea behind the program is to offer our customers new ways to personalize their vehicle and provide a new exterior look throughout the ownership experience," he said. "In order to do this, we are going to keep revising the available graphics packages to give customers fresh new ideas to choose from."

Without giving away too much detail, Abraham says that consumers can look forward to seeing custom graphics that leverage some Ford corporate sponsorships along with other categories like green driving.

Ford Custom Graphics offers customers the look of custom-painted designs, but without the expensive price tag, according to Tom Stemple, chief executive officer of Original Wraps, Inc., a provider of "on-demand" custom graphics to the automotive industry and the company that developed the website for Ford.

"Vinyl wraps are typically half the cost of custom paint work," he said. "Another advantage is that they can be easily removed if the customer wants a new design or decides to sell the vehicle. Paint is permanent, and custom-painted vehicles are often much more difficult to resell."

In addition, all of the custom graphics feature 3M Scotchprint® On-Demand quality vinyl. They are professionally installed at Ford dealerships and include a three-year/36,000-mile limited warranty.

With cool products – like custom graphics and a variety of other vehicle accessories – Ford is aiming at a larger slice of the automotive performance parts and accessories pie.

"We are doing everything we can to be on the leading edge of trendy new product offerings, and the idea of on-demand custom graphics is a great example of that," said Abraham.

According to Sheryl Connelly, manager of Ford Global Trends and Futuring, the growing interest in vehicle personalization mirrors a broader societal trend.

"The one-size-fits-all model isn't really relevant to today's consumers, and it's not necessarily a desire to stand out from the crowd. It's more a desire not to be lost in the masses," she said.

"People are personalizing everything – cell phones, computers and clothing – and it's no different with automobiles."

SOURCE Ford Motor Company

Mercury Eliminated, Ford to Expand Lincoln Line

Ford Motor Company will end production of Mercury vehicles in the fourth quarter of this year to fully devote its financial, product development, production and marketing, sales and service resources toward further growing its core Ford brand while enhancing the Lincoln brand. The Mercury marque was founded in 1939 by Edsel Ford to market cars positioned between regular Ford models and Lincoln luxury vehicles.

Ford will expand and enhance its Lincoln brand lineup with seven all-new or significantly refreshed vehicles in the next four years as part of a growth plan to compete with Cadillac and Lexus in North America.

Ford intends Lincoln's hallmarks to be refined, modern design, the most fuel-efficient premium powertrains and industry-leading technology that create a unique driver experience both in the cabin and on the road.

The future of Lincoln is building from a base that includes the new flagship MKS large sedan, the all-new MKT seven-passenger crossover and a significantly refreshed MKZ mid-size sedan—all now in showrooms. The hybrid version of the MKZ will reach showrooms later this year and is expected to be the most fuel efficient premium sedan on the market.

Later this year Lincoln will debut the significantly refreshed 2011 MKX crossover, the first vehicle to feature MyLincoln Touch driver connect technology.

This will be followed by another six all-new or significantly refreshed vehicles within four years. Plans for Lincoln include:

Lincoln's first-ever C-segment vehicle

New Lincoln-exclusive powertrains, including an all-new V-6 engine and advanced fuel-efficient transmissions

EcoBoost engines available in all Lincolns – from the Navigator full-size SUV to the new C-segment Lincoln

Fuel economy leadership with each new vehicle, leading to Lincoln emerging as the most fuel-efficient luxury lineup on the market

More useful technology and features than any other competitor with a special focus on comfort and convenience. New advanced features include: fully retractable glass roofs; adaptive computer-controlled suspensions; electronic, push-button gear-selectors; active noise control; and exclusive MyLincoln Touch driver connect technology

Lincoln's share of the retail US luxury vehicle market has grown from 4.5% in 2005 to 6.3% through the first quarter of 2010.

Mercury. Mercury originally was created as a premium offering to Ford and was an important source of incremental sales. However, the continued strength of the Ford brand—particularly during the past three years—has accelerated the migration from Mercury to Ford for many customers.

Today, Mercury's customer profile, pricing and margins are almost identical to Ford, but Mercury's incremental sales have been declining.

Of Ford Motor Company's 16% market share in the US, Mercury accounts for 0.8 percentage points, a level that has been flat or declining for the past several years. That contrasts with the Ford brand, which has increased market share by 2.2 percentage points so far this year on the strength of new products and improved quality, fuel efficiency, safety, smart design and value.

Ford says that its strengthening financial position—including the return to profitability and positive cash flow—allows the company to absorb short-term costs associated with the discontinuation of Mercury and to consolidate future product investments into Lincoln.

Today, there are no stand-alone Mercury dealerships in North America. Ford is working closely with dealers to maintain properly located stand-alone Lincoln or Ford-Lincoln dealers, which will offer dealers and the company the greatest opportunity for long-term profitable growth.

SOURCE: Green Car Congress

Season of Growth for GRAND-AM Racing

Motorsports analysts typically look at a few different areas when measuring the growth or health of a sanctioning body, such as attendance, television ratings and viewership, car count and sponsorship support.

By all measures, GRAND-AM Road Racing is having an outstanding season, underscored by a series of recent sponsorship announcements that reflect the sport's overall strength.

Race attendance has been up at virtually every GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask



No. 16 and GRAND-AM Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge race this year, with record crowds reported for each of the last two stops at Barber Motorsports Park and Virginia International Raceway.

Television numbers continue to improve for GRAND-AM on its exclusive North American television home, SPEED, which kicks off a run of telecasts on six consecutive weekends with Monday's Rolex Series Memorial Day Classic at Lime Rock Park. Expanding the broadcast reach even further is a new relationship with Motor Racing Network (MRN), which offers live radio broadcasts of every Rolex Series race to all of its affiliates and through www.motorracingnetwork.com, as well as a combination of live and tape-delayed broadcasts on Sirius NASCAR Radio Channel 128.

In terms of car count, the Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge has had an eye-popping average of more than 65 cars per race through its four events this year, while the Rolex Series is averaging nearly 35 entries through its first four races.

Those positive trends have translated to new sponsorship commitments for GRAND-AM and its teams. GRAND-AM continues to enjoy outstanding support from long-time partners such as Rolex, Crown Royal Cask No. 16 and SunTrust, among many others, and this season, several more high-profile partners have been welcomed.

Late last year, Continental Tire signed on as the title sponsor of the Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge. In January, GRAND-AM and Continental announced an expansion of their partnership beginning in 2011 in which Continental Tire will also become the Rolex Series' official tire.

GRAND-AM has also signed several of the world's leading auto manufacturers - such as Ford, Mazda, Porsche, BMW and MINI - to promotional partnership deals, while also beefing up contingency programs and bringing new contingency sponsors onboard for both series.

One of GRAND-AM's newest marketing alliances, with Corsa Car Care, came about through Corsa's existing relationship with the Starworks Motorsports team in the Rolex Series. Based in Arcadia, Calif., Corsa Car Care is a division of Miracle Sealants Company and manufactures professional grade automotive detailing products.

Corsa will begin running advertisements on MRN broadcasts beginning with Monday's race at Lime Rock. Corsa is also advertising on GRAND-AM.com and GRAND-AM newsletters and spotters' guides, and is offering product goodie bags as giveaways in car corrals at the Lime Rock, Watkins Glen, Mid-Ohio and New Jersey Motorsports Park GRAND-AM events.

Corsa is one of several companies that are working with GRAND-AM teams. Another one is CAP & Associates, which was announced earlier this week as a sponsor of the No. 6 Michael Shank Racing Ford Riley Daytona Prototype in the next two Rolex Series races at Lime Rock and Watkins Glen. The Columbus, Ohio-based CAP & Associates is a designer and manufacturer of fixtures and displays.

"To get the opportunity to be involved with the team like this is something we are very excited about," said Jason Prosnik of CAP & Associates. "We are proud of the work we did in helping Mike (Shank) make his race shop such a memorable place to visit, and it was a great way for us to show our other customers what kind of projects we are capable of delivering.

"With the group he has put together through the years, Mike's team is the kind of organization that we are very proud to be involved with. Hopefully, our involvement will help everyone enjoy some success on the track as well as off of it."

It's expected that Michael Shank Racing will be announcing another new partner in the near future.

Another Daytona Prototype team welcoming a new partner is Canadian-based AIM Autosport, with Pacific Mobile joining its No. 61 Ford Riley effort. Toronto-based Pacific Mobile manufactures affordable and user-friendly mobile accessories, and actively promotes its involvement in the Rolex Series on its website, www.gopacificmobile.com.

One of the leading teams in the Rolex Series GT class, Stevenson Motorsports, also has a new partner in Intersil Corporation of Milpitas, Calif. Intersil is a global technology leader specializing in the design and manufacture of high performance analog semiconductors. Intersil joined existing Stevenson partner VinSolutions, an automotive industry-leading developer of Internet-based customer relations management (CRM) and Internet lead management (ILM) software with offices in Kansas and Minnesota.

All of these team sponsors, and many others, look to GRAND-AM to grow their businesses. These companies utilize their involvement in GRAND-AM to entertain customers and clients, as well as to expose their products and services to a larger audience.

"Everybody involved in GRAND-AM - whether it's our teams, drivers or the sanctioning body itself - has worked diligently to identify and bring in new partners," said GRAND-AM Vice President of Marketing and Communications Kevin Hindson.

"Of course, the only way to get new sponsors and partners to come onboard is to offer them outstanding value for their investment, which is what we've been doing. We're able to offer our partners an opportunity to get involved in a form of motorsports that is clearly growing. We still have a lot of work to do, but we are definitely encouraged on many different levels."

The next event for the GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series will be the Memorial Day Classic on May 31 at Lime Rock Park (SPEED live, 2 p.m. ET) in Lakeville, Conn. Tickets are available now at www.limerock.com. A live race broadcast is also available on select MRN affiliates beginning at 1:45 p.m. ET and delayed broadcast on Sirius NASCAR Radio Channel 128.

About GRAND-AM

GRAND-AM Road Racing, which operates and sanctions the Rolex Sports Car Series and the Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge, is the foremost sanctioning body of sports car racing in North America. The 12-race Rolex Series 2010 schedule and the 10-race Continental Tire

Sports Car Challenge 2010 calendar deliver professional sports car racing to key markets throughout North America with televised distribution in the U.S. and Canada on SPEED and globally through ESPN International. In addition, MRN radio will broadcast nationally through their affiliates and Sirius NASCAR Radio XM - 128. GRAND-AM Road Racing showcases emerging and legendary drivers from around the globe and thoroughbred racing machines from the industry's leading constructors and the world's top automobile manufacturers. Learn more about GRAND-AM at www.GRAND-AM.com.

Source: GRAND-AM Road Racing

IndyCar to Switch to 6-Cylinder Engines for 2012

Fans and industry representatives have asked for increased manufacturer participation in the sport, and the IZOD IndyCar Series is providing such a platform with its new engine strategy.

The series announced that its next generation of engines will be more powerful and efficient than the current formula -- along with being relevant to the public and automobile industry. The new engine strategy is based on a recommendation from the ICONIC (Innovative, Open-Wheel, New, Industry-Relevant, Cost-Effective) Advisory Committee.

The new platform, which debuts in 2012, will allow manufacturers to produce engines with a maximum of six cylinders as well as maximum displacement of 2.4 cubic liters. The ethanol-fueled engines will produce between 550 and 700 horsepower to suit the diverse set of tracks on which the IZOD IndyCar Series competes and will be turbocharged to allow for flexibility in power.

"The ICONIC Advisory Committee has researched future engine platforms with manufacturers, teams, drivers and fans, and they felt this strategy best highlights key attributes of the sport -- speed, competition and diversity," said Randy Bernard, chief executive officer. "We feel this open and all-inclusive platform will make our sport an attractive option to engine manufacturers, while allowing development of a relevant and innovative platform to the current and future automotive industry by highlighting efficiency, performance, durability, quality, environmental responsibility and safety."

The IZOD IndyCar Series will explore new and relevant technologies to incorporate into the engine such as energy recovery, hybrids, fuel conservation and other developing green initiatives.

"Everyone wants to see competition and high performance on the track," said Bernard. "We are the fastest and most versatile racing in the world and this new engine strategy will continue to enhance that. Now that we have a platform in place, it is our job to put this package in front of the automotive industry to attract the type of participation that will elevate the sport. We truly want to challenge manufacturers to once again make our sport a proving ground and a platform to showcase technology that will benefit the future of their industry."

The new engine strategy will require that the IZOD IndyCar Series to adopt rules that can accommodate various engine architectures.

"We will continue to evaluate rules that will keep a level playing field across the board with the various engines that could enter our sport," said Brian Barnhart, president of competition and racing operations.

“For example, we could see a V-6 competing against an Inline 4 at all IZOD IndyCar Series events in the future. We will require reference engines as a benchmark in performance while looking at sonic air restrictors, fuel flow restrictions and more as key criteria for competition.”

The IZOD IndyCar Series formed the ICONIC Advisory Committee is tasked with reviewing, researching and making a recommendation to the league on the next generation IZOD IndyCar Series engine and chassis. The league plans to have a decision on its chassis by June 30.

“Speaking on behalf of the ICONIC Advisory Committee members, it has been an honor to contribute to the development of the new generation of Indy car,” said Gil de Ferran, team owner representative to the ICONIC Advisory Committee. “We feel this new engine strategy is open, inclusive, powerful and high performance, in keeping with the historical values associated with Indy car racing. Additionally it poses relevant challenges to which the automotive industry faces today”.

Committee members include Brian Barnhart, Tony Cotman, Gil de Ferran, Eddie Gossage, Rick Long, Tony Purnell and Neil Ressler. It is mediated by retired Air Force Gen. William R. Looney III.

SOURCE: IndyCar

State-of-the-Art Automotive Management Training Facility Opens

More than 300 auto industry representatives, community leaders, students, faculty and administrators celebrated the official grand opening of the 10,000 square-foot Automotive Partners Building at Cerritos College on Friday, May 21.

The event, held inside the facility's glass-lined showroom, marked the culmination of years of planning, fundraising and collaboration between the college, public officials and local auto dealers. Cerritos College apportioned community bond funding toward the \$5.1-million facility, and major private donors included the Southland Motor Car Dealers Association (SMCDA) and the Greater Los Angeles New Car Dealers Association (GLANCDA), who each contributed a half million dollars toward the facility. L. A. County 4th District Supervisor Don Knabe and the Conant Auto Retail Group each provided gifts of \$100,000.

The building is the centerpiece of the \$15mm auto training center on the Cerritos College campus. "Area dealers have long drawn talent from Cerritos College's Automotive Technology Program -- now they join the college in offering management training," explained SMCDA Executive Director Todd Leutheuser. "The future of their business starts here, in a deliberate convergence of industry and education."

In addition to the prominent show room that can exhibit vehicles and features a wall of video screens for training purposes, the building also features space for students and managers alike. Traditional classrooms and conference-style board rooms are equipped with video conference capability and wireless capability. A marketing media room seats up to 24 people and includes video and teleconference capability, and several board rooms.

Housed within the building are offices for Northwood University's West Coast program center, which offers a bachelor's degree program in automotive marketing and management for students who want to work in the auto industry. The program hosts its business and auto management courses in the classrooms, while providing walk-in academic guidance and program information directly from the new offices. SMCDA also has its offices inside the building, and area dealers will be able to schedule meetings and employee training at the facility.

Since 1932, the Southland Motor Car Dealers Association (SMCDA) has represented the new franchised automotive dealers in the southern Los Angeles County. Visit the association online at www.smcda.org.

www.smcda.org, www.scctt.org, www.cerritos.edu

SOURCE Southland Motor Car Dealers Association

MSU Wins Year Two of EcoCAR Competition

Students from Mississippi State University placed first in the 2010 EcoCAR: The NeXt Challenge finals in San Diego on May 27 after designing and building a biodiesel extended-range electric vehicle (EREV).

Virginia Tech earned second place with an ethanol-powered EREV design and Penn State came in third place building a biodiesel EREV vehicle.

Mississippi State beat out 15 other universities to win first place in Year Two Finals of the three-year competition sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy and General Motors (GM). The competition challenges university engineering students from across North America to re-engineer a GM-donated vehicle to minimize the vehicle's fuel consumption and emissions, while maintaining its utility, safety and performance. The winning teams will answer questions about their work and vehicles during an online chat on Friday, June 4 at 3 p.m. EDT.



During the second year of the EcoCAR competition, the teams utilized cutting-edge automotive engineering processes, such as Hardware in the Loop (HIL) simulation, to move their designs into the physical vehicles. Once the vehicles were built and rolled out of their respective Green Garages - or design and construction shops - they went through a series of safety and technical tests at GM's Desert Proving Grounds in Yuma, Ariz., similar to those conducted on production

vehicles. Each of the cars was evaluated based on the ability to decrease fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, and maintain consumer acceptability in the areas of performance, utility and safety.

The Mississippi State EcoCAR team chose to design an EREV hybrid with a 21.3 kWh A123Systems battery pack, which provides an electric range of 60 miles. It's also equipped with a 1.3 L GM turbodiesel engine and 75 kW UQM generator in a series plug-in configuration. During testing, the vehicle's fuel economy stood out, achieving 118 miles per gallon gas equivalent (combined city/highway cycle). In addition to the overall winner's award, Mississippi State won nine additional awards, including performance events in auto-cross and acceleration.

"This was our most challenging year and stakes were high to have our vehicle ready for inspections. To finish a year of hard work and long hours in first place is an incredible honor for me and my teammates," said Matt Doude from Mississippi State. "We look forward to the next chapter of the competition - with so much talent among the schools it will not be an easy road to another victory. But it's this rigorous, hands-on process that gives us the valuable experience we'll need in the workplace."

"During the last 12 months, these teams faced a difficult challenge - to build an innovative vehicle and continually refine and improve its operation," said Pat Davis, program manager of DOE's Vehicle Technologies Program. "These students demonstrated extreme determination and commitment to make their vision a reality, and it is with great pleasure that I congratulate Mississippi State on its outstanding work and well-deserved first-place finish.

"The students' hard work goes beyond this competition - each EcoCAR team member's contribution and innovation is also helping to build a cleaner energy future."

"These students worked tirelessly in their Green Garages building the next generation of clean vehicles and their progress has exceeded our expectations," said Karl Stracke, GM vice president, Global Vehicle Engineering.

"Each team experimented with technologies and made great strides towards optimizing fuel efficiency and minimizing emissions. With critical and successful testing under their belts, we're excited to see the teams refine and improve their vehicles in the last leg of the EcoCAR competition," Stracke said.

The Virginia Tech EcoCAR team designed an EREV vehicle with a 40 mile electric range.

Penn State's EcoCAR vehicle is also an EREV design, which includes a 12.8 kWh battery pack coupled with a GM 110 kW Electric Traction Motor and 75 kW UQM generator. It includes a 4-cylinder 1.3 L biodiesel engine and achieved more than double the fuel economy of the baseline vehicle, or 57 miles per gallon gas equivalent.

For photos, video and updates from Finals, and information about the online chat on Friday, June 4 at 3 p.m. EDT, please visit the Inside the Green Garage blog or for more information about the EcoCAR program please visit www.ecocarchallenge.org.

About EcoCAR

EcoCAR is a three-year competition that builds on the 20-year history of DOE advanced vehicle technology competitions by giving engineering students the chance to design and build advanced vehicles that demonstrate leading-edge automotive technologies. General Motors provides production vehicles, vehicle components, seed money, technical mentoring and operational support. The U.S. Department of Energy and its research and development facility, Argonne National Laboratory provides competition management, team evaluation, technical and logistical support. Through this important partnership, EcoCAR aims to inspire and support the next generation of scientists and engineers to unite around the common goal of sustainable mobility.

Participating Schools

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

Georgia Tech

Michigan Technological University

Mississippi State University

Missouri Univ. of Science and Technology

North Carolina State University

The Ohio State University

University of Ontario Institute of Technology

Pennsylvania State University

Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology

Texas Tech University

University of Victoria

University of Waterloo

University of Wisconsin

Virginia Tech

West Virginia University

Source: General Motors

Industry Press Releases June 3, 2010

All New 2011 Saleen S302 Debuts at Carlisle Ford Nationals, June 4-6

TROY, Mich., June 2 /PRNewswire/ -- Saleen Performance Vehicles is unveiling the latest product in its premiere line of high-performance cars, the 2011 Saleen S302. The debut will take place this weekend at the Carlisle Ford Nationals in Carlisle, PA. This is the first Saleen vehicle launched this year, following the successful launches of the 435S and S281 in 2009.

The Saleen S302 is based on the 2011 Ford Mustang 5.0 and builds on the Saleen tradition of offering limited-edition, high-performance vehicles for enthusiasts who are looking for an exhilarating driving experience, with refined drivability for real-world road conditions.

Available in both coupe and convertible body styles, the S302 boasts a premium level of design consideration, both exterior and interior, with performance to match.

"We've taken high performance vehicles to the next level with this S302 Saleen," said Michael Timarac, Brand Manager, Saleen Performance Vehicles. "The S302 is being built now and will be in dealerships in the coming weeks. I'm proud of this product and those who value performance vehicles will agree that the S302 is one of the best American exotic vehicles available on the market."

The S302's exterior design features carefully crafted sculptural detailing, with lines and forms that flow naturally and suggest suppleness, power and agility. It features an understated yet imposing grille and front fascia, and a refined treatment of the familiar Saleen extended rear fascia and trunk lid with a simple, elegant, integrated wing.

The S302's 5.0-liter V8 engine produces 425 hp and 395 lb.-ft. of torque, sent to the rear wheels through a six-speed manual transmission and a limited-slip differential with 3.73:1 final drive ratio.

The interior features new, leather sport seats with Ultrasuede inserts, highlighted by chevron-like Ultrasuede red tabs in the seatback bolsters, and unique treatments of the gauges, steering wheel, center console and shifter. There also are contrasting Saleen logos in the door panels, and Saleen logos in the door sill plates that illuminate when the door is opened.

Additional exterior highlights include unique, 20-inch, 7-spoke alloy wheels with Pirelli P-Zero high-performance tires, and Saleen S302 fender badging.

About Saleen Performance Vehicles

Saleen Performance Vehicles is a manufacturer of limited-edition, high-performance cars and trucks, headquartered in Troy, Michigan. Saleen vehicles embody sophistication in engineering, styling and performance, resulting in a dynamic driving experience that is both exhilarating and refined. For more information, please visit the Saleen Performance Vehicles website at www.saleen.com.

Source: Saleen Performance Vehicles

Performance Auto Label HKS USA and InterWorks Unlimited Partner to Innovate Precision Racing Controller

CITY OF INDUSTRY, Calif., June 2 /PRNewswire/ -- InterWorks Unlimited Inc., the fastest-growing distributor of innovative gaming peripherals, today announced they have entered into an exclusive deal with HKS USA, Inc., the premier manufacturer and supplier of premium automotive performance systems, to co-develop for a line of professional racing video game controllers.

"HKS deploys advance racing techniques through their performance products," said Michael Kidakarn, executive creative director of InterWorks. "We are sharing these professional racing technologies and precision control processes, such as heel/toe drifting, and integrating into our game controller."

Only with these advanced racing controllers, gamers can easily execute these real-world racing techniques, gaining the competitive gaming advantage.

"InterWorks passion for innovation aligns with HKS passion for driving performance," said Rick Lafferty, president of HKS USA, Inc. "Their new video game controller will take racing games to a new level of challenge and realism by allowing players to replicate the bets driving techniques used by race drivers."

The HKS® Racing Controller for PlayStation®3 computer entertainment system will be shown by appointment only at the InterWorks booth at the upcoming Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles, June 15-17, 2010.

About HKS USA, Inc.

HKS USA, Inc. is a leading manufacturer and supplier of premium automotive aftermarket performance systems, parts and accessories. Delivering its products to both the import and domestic car markets, HKS has been recognized for its engineering and performance excellence in the automotive industry since 1973. Established in 1982, HKS USA, Inc. is a wholly-owned subsidiary of HKS Company, Ltd. Japan and distributes its products through its worldwide dealer network. For more information about HKS USA., visit www.hksusa.com.

About InterWorks Unlimited

Based in City of Industry, InterWorks Unlimited Inc. distributes a wide range of high-quality gaming peripherals and software under several brands and licenses, including Eagle3 and Photo World. For more information, please visit www.eagle3.com.

PlayStation and PS3 are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

All other marks are the property of their respective holders.

SOURCE HKS USA, Inc.

KAASE'S BOSS NINE GETS BLOWN!

Winder, GA: Seven months ago Jon Kaase introduced his new Boss Nine engine to much acclaim. Constructed with either a cast iron or cast aluminum block it was developed using five intake manifolds. These suit 4150- 4500- and Tunnel Ram-style carburetors, Keith Wilson's EFI conversion, and Hilborn's stack injection. But today's news is of their blower version.

Fitted with heavy-duty bearings and special double-lipped Teflon seals for prolonged life, the BDS 871 series three-lobe standard helix blower proudly sits atop the mighty Boss Nine. In its naturally aspirated form it typically produces between 700 and 1000 horsepower on pump gasoline. Add to this the displacement of the BDS Roots-style supercharger (416cu in) and the 40-50 percent additional horsepower its makers claim, and hot rodders can expect much! One wonders if the crafty Kaase has considered a slight detune to maintain its flush of excitement and make it last forever.



Though a variety of engine capacities can be specified, from 429 to 600cu in, the most popular displacement has proven to be 520cu in. And so it is with the blower version. By using a 429 passenger car block with a .030in overbore (4.390in) and a 4.300in stroke ensures engine parts are readily available, making this the most cost-effective unit to build.

Like its naturally aspirated forerunner, the 520cu in blown engine uses either a forged crankshaft or the Bryant billet creation. The pistons, however, in the blower engine are very different to those of the naturally aspirated. With compression ratios of 8 to 8.5:1 Diamond's low-compression pistons allow higher blower boost, producing lots of low-end and mid-range torque. Similarly, the camshaft was designed to eradicate any jerking and bucking at off-idle and part throttle in the low gears. Kaase resolved this problem with a camshaft design that sounds suitably belligerent yet beautifully drivable.

There is so much more to be said about this engine, not least the intricate work on the cylinder heads and timing gear, the full-race roller-tipped billet rockers by WW Engineering, the race-bred 3/8in thick-wall Trend pushrods, or the nostalgic Kaase Boss Nine valve covers.

For further information contact:

Jon Kaase Racing Engines, Inc.

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Winder, GA 30680,

Telephone (770) 307-0241 or e-mail: JonKaaseRacing@gmail.com

For latest offerings, visit the Kaase website at: JonKaaseRacingEngines.com

Editors' Contact: Vic Moore (706) 531-0058

Vic@MooreGoodInk.com

3M Introduces 3M(TM) FX Premium Automotive Window Film

New Cost-Effective Films Combine No Signal Interference With Lifetime Warranty



ST. PAUL, Minn., Jun 01, 2010 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- 3M today introduced the 3M(TM) FX Premium Automotive Window Films, a new addition to 3M's automotive window film line. Building off the success of its FX auto film series, 3M has developed the FX Premium product to deliver a high quality window film at an attractive consumer price point.

"FX Premium leverages nearly a century's worth of expertise in adhesives and more than 40 years in window films to provide consumers with an economical window film alternative that doesn't sacrifice the quality they've come to associate with 3M," said Jon Hanbury, marketing manager for 3M Renewable Energy Division.

The FX Premium film comes with a limited lifetime warranty and a scratch-resistant coating. It is also manufactured without any metals, resulting in no interference with signals for cell phones and GPS systems. FX Premium is offered in VLT's (Visible Light Transmitted) of 5, 15, 25, 30, 35 and 55 percent to accommodate various state tinting laws.

Additionally, FX Premium provides the same 3M auto film benefits valued by consumers, such as 99% UV protection. UV protection helps reduce cracking and fading of a car's trim, upholstery and carpet, while also protecting the vehicle occupants from harmful UV rays. FX Premium carries the Skin Cancer Foundations recommendation as a product that offers

effective protection from UV rays. FX Premium improves comfort by reducing heat and glare. The added aesthetic value of tinting helps ensure the car performs and looks better over time.

"3M is committed to be the global leader in window film technology," noted Hanbury. "The company will continue to leverage its global reach to serve customers wherever they are located."

Dealers and consumers can find more information or locate an installer for FX Premium at the following website: www.3m.com/carbuyers

3M's Energy Conservation business, a part of the 3M Renewable Energy Division, joins both adhesive and film technologies to provide window films for residential, commercial, government, and automotive use serving customers all over the world.

About 3M

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