

The Japan Automotive Digest Headlines
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At the Top of the News:

Toyota To Make 9.42 Million, Sell 9.34 Million Next Year, May Nudge General Motors Out of 1st Place

New Nichia LED, Ten Times Brighter Than Incandescent, May Get To Market By 2009

Japan Will Retain Tax Incentives on Hybrids for Now; 2006 Sales Climb By Almost 30%

Japan:

Japanese Domestic Sales of Standard Vehicles Will Fall to 3.64 Mln, a 30-Year Low, in 2007

Toyota Issues Up-Engined, Luxury Auris as 'Blade;' Plans 280hp V-6 Version

Mitsubishi Chinese Affiliate Soueast Sells 8,000 Delica Vans To Iran for Use as Taxis

China:

Honda Civic Tops VW Bora, Toyota Corolla in a J.D. Power Chinese Customer Survey

SAIC Gearing for Another Attempt To Make Ssangyong SUV in China

Chery Is Reported Planning To Go Public on Shanghai, Hong Kong Markets in 2008

Guangzhou Honda Plans Research Center, Expects Sales To Grow 20% to 310,000 in '07

Sumitomo Corp. Will Buy 49% of Chinese Auto Sales Unit from Baosteel

Asia:

With Overseas Sales Hurt By High Won, Hyundai Scrambles To Cope

South Korea's 2006 Automotive Exports Will Climb To \$43.3 Billion in Fifth Straight Gain

Tata Motors, Thonburi Form JV To Make and Sell Pickups in Thailand

Honda to Move S.E. Asia Production Planning, Purchasing to Thailand

Suzuki Indonesia Exports of APV Minivans Surpasses 12-Month Target in 11 Months

Korean Auto Importers Expect Sales To Climb 50% To 63,000 a Year By 2010

Europe:

November 2006 and YTD European Sales

NAFTA:

Newly Allied With Toyota, Isuzu Says It Might Build North American Pickup Plant

Ford Now Thinks It Will Slip Behind Toyota When Tundra Appears in February

Mazda Will Scrap Cars Damaged at Sea

Global:

Honda To Open Saitama Engine Plant a Year Sooner To Help Fill Global Demand

Nissan Will Far Exceed 2007 Global Light Commercial Vehicle Sales Target This Year

November 2006 and YTD Mexican Sales

Materials:

Kobe Steel, Alcoa End Auto Aluminum Sheet Ventures

NSC Seeks Control of Brazil's Usiminas, Would Give It Automotive Sheet Technology

Baosteel Settles With Brazil's CVRD on a 9.5% 2007 Ore Price Rise; Japanese Mills to Follow

Environment:

Nissan Will Also Try To Cut Manufacturing and Junking Emissions, Waste

Parts:

Bridgestone Plans ¥32 Billion Tire Plant; First New Domestic Unit in 30 Years

New Yazaki Harness Uses Copper-Tin Alloy Wire To Cut Thickness and Weight

Electricals Houses Invest in Developing Automotive Components

Honda Wins YachiyoTender

Itochu To Buy 10% Share in Akebono, Stake in Its North American Management Unit

Kayaba Will Invest ¥4 Billion To Raise U.S. Capacity for Shock Absorbers 60% by 2008

Tachi-S Will Raise Mexican Seat Capacity 80% To Service Rising Production at Nissan Units

Technology :

Nissan, NEC To Partner in Lithium Ion Batteries, Plan ¥10 Bln Production Unit by 2010

Nippon Piston Ring Provides Solution To Engine Vibration, Noise