

New car sales pick up speed

By  Henrie Geyser

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South African new vehicle sales accelerated out of its slump last month with a huge jump in exports and a substantial increase over last year's local sales, according to figures released by NAAMSA.



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Export sales of 30,778 reflect a gain of 258% compared to September last year when industry strikes ravaged the industry and reduced exports to a paltry 8,598. Local sales notched up 60,584 sales which reflect a gain of 11.5% (6,283 more vehicles) over the same month period last year.

Industry spokesmen said the figures underline the inherent strength of the industry which were achieved despite subdued economic growth and pressure on consumers' disposable income.

Local transactions

Of the local transactions, 74.5% represented dealer sales, 17.3% represented sales to the vehicle rental industry, 4.1% to industry corporate fleets and 4.1% to government and was also boosted by a near record contribution by the car rental industry, which accounted for 23.5% of all new cars sold during the month of September.

Industry sources attributed the boost in sales to a combination of attractive incentive packages, general pre-emptive buying in anticipation of further new vehicle price increases on the back of a weakening Rand, relatively strong corporate purchases, replacement demand and the strong contribution by the car rental sector.

In spite of the overall increases in September, the industry is still predicted a domestic market decline in volume terms of between 4% and 5% for the year.

During September Toyota finished a strong top seller ahead of Volkswagen, and in the sports cars Porsche continued to dominate with 90 sales well ahead of Ferrari which sold only two cars.

ABOUT HENRIE GEYSER

Henrie Geyser joined the online publishing industry through iafrica.com, where he worked for five years as news editor and editor. He now freelances for a variety of print and online publications, on the subjects of cars, food, and travel, among others; and is a member of the South African Guild of Motoring Journalists. henrieg@iafrica.com

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