Guide to New Model Development

Looking for the right niche

In an industry dominated by large volumes, automakers are increasingly adding niche models to their linespans. Before the end of the decade, at least eight European automakers will launch vehicles with projected volumes of less than 100,000 units.

Audi leads the way with three key niche products – the entry-premium A1, A5 coupe and Q5 premium SUV. And in the medium SUV class, Peugeot, Citroen, Renault and Ford of Europe will enter a segment that has long been dominated by Asian automakers.

But high-volume launches will still be crucial for at least three other automakers. On this page and Page 19, we provide annual production targets, plus design and technology details for models due to arrive in European showrooms within the next two years.

**Audi Q5**
- Code-name: AU416
- Market launch: Spring 2009
- Production target: 50,000 a year in 2009, increasing to 120,000 a year in 2010

**Alfa Romeo 8C Competizione**
- Code-name: 993
- Market launch: End of 2008
- Project leader: Mauro Perialli
- Platform: Evolution of the Small platform, which also underpins the Fiat Grande Punto and Linea and Opel Corsa
- Development notes: Arrival of the Junior will allow Alfa to stop making a three-door version of the 147 when the car is replaced in 2009

**Citroen C-Crosser**
- Market launch: July 2007
- Project leader: Philippe Bacquet
- Platform: C-segment (developed by Mitsubishi and DaimlerChrysler)
- Design: Adapted from design done by Mitsubishi’s0soul Bus and Alinon Nakashima for Mitsubishi Outlander
- Where built: Mizuhojima, Japan
- Production target: 15,000 a year

**Ford CUV (concept shown)**
- Code-name: F2D
- Market launch: Late 2007 (Korean-built models)
- Development notes: Developed in Rüsselsheim; engines will come from Hyndai-Kia plant in Zilina, Slovakia
- Where built: Korea (initially), Moreovice, Czech Republic, starting in 2009

**Hyundai Arness (concept shown)**
- Code-name: FD
- Market launch: Late 2007 (Korean-built models)
- Development notes: Developed in Rüsselsheim; engines will come from Rüsselsheim; engines will come from
- Where built: Korea (initially), Moreovice, Czech Republic, starting in 2009
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Lancia Delta HPE (concept shown)
Code-name: WX
Market launch: April 2008
Production target: 26,000 a year in 2008

Mercedes GLK
Code-name: X204
Market launch: Summer 2008
Platform: Compact (also used by Fiat Bravo but wheelbase will be stretched 100mm to 2700mm)
Development notes: To reach break even at just 45,000 units, Lancia will use many parts from the Bravo including the windshield and the front door frame, right-hand-drive versions will be made so Lancia can return to UK and Japan for the first time since 2003.
Technology: All gasoline and diesel engines will be turbocharged; outputs range from 120hp to 220hp
Key suppliers: Adler Group, Automotive Lighting, Robert Bosch, Comau, Denco, Johnson Controls, KSS, Lear, Magneti Marelli, Meridian, SG Plastic/Gruppo Prima, TRW
Where built: Cassino, Italy
Production target: 70,000 to 80,000 a year

Mercedes C class
Code-name: W204
Market launch: April 2008
Platform: E Class/ W212
Development notes: Mercedes began testing C-class prototypes three years ago and used an extended computer simulation program to ensure higher levels of quality.
Technology: Alternate transmissions will be offered.
Where built: Bremen and Sindelfingen, Germany; East London, South Africa
Production target: 620,000 a year worldwide in 2008

Opel/Vauxhall Agila (spy shot)
Market launch: November 2007
Platform: M160
Development notes: Opel-badged Suzuki Wagon R, production transferred from Gliwice, Poland, to Esztergom, Hungary, because of GM production needs in central Europe for Chevrolet products.
Technology: Considering four-wheel-drive version
Where built: Esztergom, Hungary
Production target: 60,000 a year in 2010

Opel/Vauxhall Vectra
Code-name: GM770
Market launch: August 2008
Platform: Global Meltzu (Epillon 2)
Development notes: Next-generation Vectra will have its underpinnings with Saab 9-3.
Technology: All-wheel-drive capability, six-speed transmissions, active suspension and possibly hybrid technology.
Where built: Russelsheim, Germany
Production target: 125,000 a year in 2010

Porsche Panamera
Market launch: mid-2009
Platform: 970
Design: Michael Mauer
Technology: Steel-aluminum body, possible optional hybrid powertrain
Where built: Leipzig, Germany
Production target: More than 20,000 a year

Renault Laguna
Code-name: X91
Market launch: Q4 2007
Project leader: Frederic Araud
Platform: Further development of upper-medium platform
Technology: Possible four-wheel steering.
Where built: Sandvicko, France
Production target: 250,000 a year

Skoda Fabia
Code-name: SK750
Market launch: Spring 2008
Project leader: Harald Ludekne
Designers: Thomas Ingenlath and Jens Manske
Platform: PO35
Development notes: To save costs, car keeps same platform as current model, launch will start with the hatchback; station wagon will be added later.
Technology: Greater use of plastics in front for pedestrian protection; increasing the car's total length.
Key suppliers: Akoa Fujikura, Cadence Innovation, JCI
Where built: Mlad Boleslav
Production target: 100,000 a year in 2009

VW Golf
Code-name: WV350/351GP
Market launch: May 2008
Platform: PQ35GP
Design: Under Martin Gunak
Development notes: Re-engineering for three- and five-door models; Golf Plus high-roof version will not be re-engineered at the same time.
Technology: Next-generation of dual-dutch transmission, increased use of direct-injection gasoline as well as addition of twin-charged and supercharged engines.
Where built: Wolfsburg and Mosel, Germany, South Africa
Production target: 1,250,000 a year by 2010

VW Scirocco (concept shown)
Code-name: VW354
Market launch: 2008
Platform: PO35
Development notes: VW originally planned to develop the car based on the Golf, but switched to Eos platform to save development costs.
Technology: Scirocco will offer two engines: VW's TSI twicharged inline four-cylinder that produces 168hp and the 200hp 2.0-liter T FSI.
Where built: Setubal, Portugal
Production target: 525,000 a year by 2010

VW Tiguan (concept shown)
Code-name: WV456
Market launch: August
Designer: Under Robert Lesnik
Technology: Four-wheel drive, direct-shift gearbox; possible addition of a glass panoramic roof.
Where built: Wolfsburg, Germany
Production target: 110,000 a year in 2008

VW SportVan
Code-name: C-Station
Market launch: 2009
Design: Under Martin Gunak
Platform: PL57
Development notes: VW's aim is to position a model between Passat upper-medium car and next-generation Phaeton upper-premium model, four-door vehicle aimed to compete against Mercedes B class, multifunctional space concept van in upper segment, relies on Audi A6 platform and development cycle.
Technology: Longitudinal engine, choice of 2.0-liter turbo or 3.2-liter V-6 gasoline engines; all-wheel drive.
Production target: 50,000 units a year in 2010

Porsche Cayenne
Code-name: 970
Market launch: autumn 2002
Production target: 50,000 units a year

The information for this feature was gathered from automaker press offices as well as carmaker and supplier sources by Automotive News Europe reporters Luca Ciferri, Lyle Frink, Tony Lewis, Jens Meiners, Jason Stein and Wim Oudse Wieremink.