

Buy American Mention of the Week

Ford's bold moves are paying off

By Roger Simmermaker

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Few companies in any industry have taken such bold moves as Ford. And fortunately, for this American company and the American people as well, their persistence in swimming upstream has resulted in well-deserved success.

Before the credit markets froze up in 2006, Ford mortgaged basically everything it owned, including its factories and patents, along with its unmistakable blue oval trademark, so it could borrow \$23.5 billion.

Ford famously refused its own taxpayer-financed rescue but was in favor of it for GM and Chrysler. According to Ford CEO Alan Mulally, *We believed [seeking the bailout] was the right thing for the industry, the right thing for the United States of America....I'd do the same thing today.* Mulally understood that if GM and Chrysler failed, Ford might fail too since all three companies received so many of their car parts from the same parts supply companies.

Now that Ford has turned the corner and booked several consecutive quarters of profits, it can continue with what it is doing now, building great cars and trucks. According to the 2012 J.D. Power & Associates initial quality survey, the Ford Expedition, Mustang, and Taurus all won the top spot in their respective segments.

Ford has the second highest market share in the U.S. and has had the best-selling truck in America, the Ford F-150, for 34 years running. The American people have maintained their thirst for big Ford trucks even when their thirst for gasoline wasn't so big because of high gas prices. The Ford F-Series of trucks were bought by more Americans than those who bought the Toyota Camry and Nissan Altima combined. Now *that* is saying something!

But Ford doesn't just build terrific trucks. Ford took three of the top ten spots for best-selling vehicles in America for 2011, including the Ford Escape, which replaced the Honda Civic at the number five spot, and the Ford Fusion, which took the number six spot. In fact, the Ford Escape

showed the highest surge in sales between 2010 and 2011 of any vehicle in the top ten.

And what is Ford doing with the profits from the sales of all those bestselling models? Investing in America! In January 2011, Ford announced its plan to hire 7,000 more American workers, with almost half of those to help build the Ford Escape in Louisville, Kentucky. Seven hundred and fifty of those new hires were slated to be engineers who specialize in advanced technology to keep Ford on the cutting edge with its up-and coming electric and hybrid vehicles. For example, the Michigan-made 2013 Ford C-Max gets better mileage than the Toyota's imported Prius V.

Sure, foreign-owned companies like Volkswagen (VW) and Hyundai are building new plants in America, but Volkswagen received \$577million (that's over half a billion dollars) in tax incentives to build its only U.S. plant in Tennessee. That's \$577 million in U.S. tax revenue that could have been used for the benefit of American taxpayers instead of a foreign company that will send its profits to foreign investors and a foreign national treasury.

Even though you can buy American-made vehicles from Ford as well as foreign-based competitors like VW and Hyundai, does it really matter which company you support as long as that company is making automobiles in America? The answer is a definite yes.

Ford makes more cars per worker than German-owned VW and employs nearly 23 times more Americans than VW. Ford has a far higher percentage of its workforce in America compared to any foreign-based automaker, emphasizing the importance of patronizing American-based companies if the goal is to keep American workers employed.

America benefits when successful companies like Ford are headquartered in the United States. I agree with Carlos Torelli, a global branding expert at the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management, who said, *Really the know-how to make the car a better car is most likely to happen here if it's a company headquartered in the U.S.*

Roger Simmermaker is the author of *How Americans Can Buy American* and *My Company 'Tis of Thee: 50 Patriotic American Companies American Consumers Should Know About*, and writes "Buy American Mention of the Week" articles for wnd.com and his website www.howtobuyamerican.com. Roger has a degree in Electronics Engineering Technology, is president of his local Machinists Union, has been a frequent guest on Fox News, CNN, and MSNBC, and has been quoted in *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, and *Business Week* among many other publications.