

Bouncing back

Automakers dazzle at the Geneva auto show with fresh products and new confidence

Automakers are bouncing back from the hard economic times of the past two years with an array of dazzling new cars and concepts at this year's Geneva auto show. These are the key themes:

AMBITION – Helped by its new subsidiary Italdesign Giugiaro, Volkswagen Group will unveil on onslaught of concept cars to show the industry it has the design depth, as well as the production capability and the financial strength, to topple Toyota as the world's No. 1 automaker.

VISION – BMW's futuristic concept for a roadster shows how driver-assistance systems and infotainment features can be networked

via the Internet in ways unimaginable a few years ago.

GREEN – Being environmentally friendly is now an important selling point in new cars and the rollout of electric vehicles and hybrids continues. Among the debuts are new cars from Toyota and Honda that will bring hybrid technology to the key subcompact segment.

SPORTY – Mercedes-Benz wants to capture younger customers with two sporty cars that premier in Geneva. Alfa Romeo's vision for the brand's first affordable rear-wheel-drive car in 20 years will be another bigger crowd-pleaser.

DOWNSIZING – A "mini" Mini called the Rocketman and a Smart speedster will show that BMW's and Daimler's small-car brands have big ideas for the future.

SENSIBLE – A "sensible" Ferrari? Yes, the Italian supercar brand plans a four-door model with a tailgate and a roomy luggage area. You can go shopping in it – and get to the store faster than the neighbors, thanks to a 660-hp, 6.3-liter V-12 gasoline direct-injection engine.

On the following pages key automaker debuts are listed. For the latest news from the show, visit our Geneva show Web site at europe.autonews.com/geneva.

ALFA ROMEO

Alfa Romeo plans a rear-engine, rear-wheel-drive coupe. The lightweight two-seat model is set to go on sale as the 4C GTA in late 2012, priced at about 40,000 euros, delighting Alfa enthusiasts who have dreamed of an affordable rwd Alfa since the Duetto Spider was discontinued in 1994. Alfa's styling center in Turin designed a concept for the 4C GTA that will be unveiled in Geneva.

AUDI

Sporty concept will enlarge the A3 range

Audi will debut a concept that previews a sporty notchback version of its A3, as well as a production RS3 Sportback. The concept is set to go on sale as a new addition to the A3 family, which currently consists of a three-door hatchback, five-door Sportback and a convertible. The A3 notchback will be built in Audi's factory in Győr, Hungary, likely

starting in 2014. The five-door RS3 Sportback, which will compete against the BMW 1-series M coupe, will top the A3 range. It offers a five-cylinder, 340-hp, 2.5-liter gasoline direct-injection engine linked to a seven-speed S-tronic transmission and is equipped with Quattro all-wheel drive. The car's base price in Germany is 49,900 euros.



Audi A3 concept

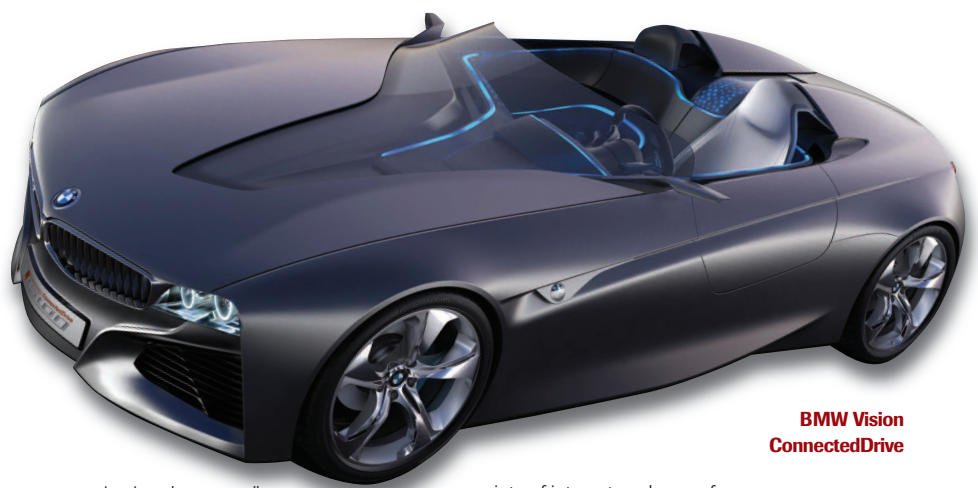
BMW

BMW's vision of the future

BMW's Vision ConnectedDrive roadster concept combines a futuristic design with technological innovations. The concept highlights how cars can be part of a networked world.

BMW says the Vision ConnectedDrive has pioneering driver-assistance systems and infotainment features that show how intelligent networking will enhance people's driving experience in the future.

Among the innovations on the concept are antennas that replace the side-view mirrors. The antennas transmit information to the outside world,



BMW Vision ConnectedDrive

capture navigation data as well as assist in monitoring the traffic situation and the environment around the car. The concept also has a 3-D head-up display that fuses the actual view of the road ahead with virtual content.

A separate display allows the front-seat passenger to be a "co-pilot," for instance by evaluating information or address details received online for the navigation system and forwarding them to the driver's instrument panel. The concept also has a feature BMW calls an "Emotional Browser" that gives personalized information on

points of interest such as cafes or museums.

The concept has an electro-mechanical retracting door mechanism, similar to that on the BMW Z1, and can be driven with the outer doors open.

BMW will also debut the ActiveE, a prototype electric car based on the 1-series coupe. The four-seat EV has a pilot version of the drivetrain and energy storage unit being developed for BMW's new full-electric Megacity Vehicle, which will launch under a new subbrand called BMW i in 2013. The ActiveE is powered by a 125 kW/170-hp electric motor and has a range of 160km.

CHEVROLET

A key debut for **Chevrolet** is the production version of the Cruze hatchback, which the brand hopes will help it compete better in the European compact segment where 65 percent of sales are hatchbacks. The five-door car takes its styling from a concept unveiled at the Paris auto show in October and will go on sale in European markets mid year. Chevrolet said the Cruze hatchback will have the value-for-money positioning typical of the brand. Chevrolet will also give a European debut to the Aveo four-door sedan that was first unveiled at the Detroit auto show in January. The sedan will be aimed at families, while the Aveo hatchback, which premiered at the Paris auto show last year, targets younger buyers.

Chevrolet Cruze hatchback



Citroen DS4

CITROEN

Citroen's DS4 will be unveiled in Geneva in its production form, along with the Metropolis concept. The DS4 will go on sale in May and is

the second model in the French brand's upscale DS line after the DS3. The DS4 is based on the C4 compact hatchback but is taller than the C4 as well as slightly shorter and marginally wider. The Metropolis concept will be a further development of a hybrid large sedan concept shown at the 2010 Shanghai World Expo. The concept previewed a flagship car that

Citroen may build to compete in China with German luxury brands, possibly called the DS9.

FERRARI

Fast Ferrari that's also green

Ferrari's new FF (Ferrari Four) is the brand's first four-wheel-drive model and its first model with a wagon-shaped tailgate that gives access to a roomy cargo area. The four-seater is longer, lighter, taller and more fuel efficient than the model it replaces, Ferrari's 612 Scaglietti flagship.

The FF is powered by a new 660-hp, 6.3-liter V-12 gasoline direct-injection engine, making it the most powerful regular-production Ferrari. Its 4wd will help improve the car's safety and road holding when needed on low-traction surfaces. Although it's more powerful than the 540-hp

5.75-liter Scaglietti, the FF will be greener, using 15.4l/100km of fuel with CO2 emissions of 360g/km. The FF will go on sale in Europe in May with a 250,000-euro starting price.



Ferrari FF



FORD

With the B-Max, which debuts as a concept in Geneva, Ford will have a stronger challenger in the small minivan segment led by the Opel/Vauxhall Meriva. The five-seat B-Max will have rear sliding doors.

A production version of the concept will be the smallest offering in Ford's European range of minivans that includes the C-Max, Grand C-Max, S-Max and Galaxy.

The B-Max will have a more dynamic design than the bland Europe-only Fusion minivan that it replaces. The B-Max will be made at Ford's factory in Craiova, Romania, and go on sale in early 2012.

Ford will show the Focus Electric, which launches in Europe in 2012, and the C-Max gasoline-electric hybrid, which will be built in Spain starting in 2013, as well as the Vertrek concept, which previews a replacement for Ford's Kuga SUV/crossover with a sportier design. All three vehicles first appeared at the Detroit auto show in January.

FIAT

Fiat replaces Ulysse with tweaked Dodge Journey

Fiat is rebadging the Dodge Journey to create a seven-seat minivan that will replace the brand's slow-selling Ulysse model. Fiat has given the Journey some minor exterior design tweaks, a revised interior and a stiffer and more responsive suspension and steering to cater for European driving tastes.

The Freemont will go on sale in June, competing against models such as the Ford Galaxy. Fiat hopes the Freemont will have a bigger sales potential than the Ulysse because it will offer four-wheel drive, which the Ulysse doesn't have. Dodge will stop sales of the Journey in Europe.

Fiat will also debut two concept models based

on the 500. One will be called the 500 by Gucci. It's named after the Italian luxury goods brand and will be built as a more upscale and refined version of the retro-styled minicar. The second is a 500 coupe concept created by the Milan-based Zagato design house. This variant is unlikely to be built.



Fiat Freemont

DE TOMASO

Former Fiat marketing executive Gian Mario Rossignolo will use the Geneva show to relaunch **De Tomaso**, seven years after the Italian sports car brand collapsed financially. Rossignolo's new De Tomaso company will unveil a Pininfarina-designed concept for a premium large crossover, dubbed SLC (sport luxury car). The four-wheel-drive SLC is set to go into production next year.

De Tomaso SLC



HONDA

Honda will debut the EV Concept, which hints strongly at the styling for the Fit EV, and will also show a new plug-in hybrid platform integrated into a mid-size sedan platform.

HYUNDAI

Hyundai says its new i40 mid-sized car will offer high-end features to European buyers at affordable prices, helping to move the company toward what it calls a "modern premium" positioning.

INFINITI

Infiniti's Etherea concept will preview a potential entry-level car for the brand aimed at young buyers.

JAGUAR

Jaguar will mark the 50th anniversary of its iconic E-Type car that caused a sensation when it was first unveiled at the 1961 Geneva show. But Jaguar will also look to the future and there will be a concept called B 99 for a mid-sized sporty sedan created for Jaguar by the Italian design house Bertoni.

LAMBORGHINI

Lamborghini will unveil a Murcielago replacement, which reports before the Geneva show said will be called the Aventador. The new model is lighter and more fuel efficient than the car it replaces thanks to an improved powertrain and a new carbon fiber body and chassis.

LAND ROVER

Land Rover will debut a diesel hybrid plug-in prototype called the Range_e. The concept is based on the Range Rover Sport.

MAZDA

Mazda's Minagi compact crossover concept previews the automaker's new design theme, which it calls Kodo, meaning soul of motion. The four-door Minagi is expected to reach production as the CX-5, giving Mazda a rival to models such as the Ford Kuga.

LANCIA

Lancia launches product blitz

Lancia's key debut will be the Ypsilon, which will be sold only as a five-door model in a bid to boost sales as five-door cars cover 75 percent of subcompact segment in Europe. Lancia aims to sell 130,000 units a year of the new Ypsilon. The current model's best sales result was 85,000 units in 2004. Sales of the new Ypsilon start in June. Fiat's plan to integrate Lancia with Chrysler will be highlighted in Geneva with the debuts of Chrysler-based models that will be sold in Europe as Lancias. These will be the Thema, which is a rebadged version of the new Chrysler 300C large sedan; a Lancia version of the

Chrysler Voyager large minivan, also called the Voyager, and the mid-sized Flavia, which is a rebadged Chrysler 200.



Lancia Ypsilon

KIA



Kia Rio

Kia will unveil the Rio and Picanto. To attract a broader customer base, Kia added a three-door version to both model lines, but will continue to offer five-door versions, too. Kia says the

Rio's sporty and elegant new look is designed to stand out in the highly competitive subcompact segment. The Picanto gets a bolder, more sculpted styling and more passenger room and cargo space. It has CO2 emissions as low as 90g/km.

MERCEDES-BENZ

Mercedes-Benz aims to win more younger customers with two sporty cars that debut in Geneva – the new C-class coupe and the SLK roadster. The C-class coupe will be offered with an array of active safety and fuel-saving features to help it better compete with the BMW 3-series coupe and Audi A5. About 10 percent to 20 percent of C-class customers are expected to

purchase the coupe, which targets buyers aged 35 to 45. The third-generation SLK gets a sportier design with styling cues from the SLS AMG supercar and the new CLS, as well a new engine range up to 25 percent more economical than the engines on the current SLK. The car also has an optional panoramic roof with a feature that switches from light to dark.

Mercedes C-class coupe



MITSUBISHI

Mitsubishi will show a concept for a new small car that will be built in Thailand starting in March 2012 for export to global markets including Europe. High fuel efficiency and affordability are key features of the four-door car.



Mitsubishi Global Concept Small

MINI

The Rocketman concept previews a "mini" **Mini** with a 3+1 seating layout, similar to the Toyota iQ. A front-engine, front-wheel-drive production model could go on sale in 2013 with very low fuel consumption of 3l/100km.

PORSCHE

Bowing to the trend for greener cars, **Porsche** will unveil a hybrid version of its Panamera four-door sedan. The car uses hybrid technology already fitted in the Cayenne SUV.

SAAB

Saab will unveil what the company calls "a visionary concept" for its future products. The new Saab 9-5 SportCombi station wagon will also make its world debut.

SMART

Smart will show the Forspeed study for an electric roadster. The concept has a range of 135km and is powered by a 30 kW electric motor installed at the rear of the car.

Smart ForSpeed



Nissan Esflow

NISSAN

Nissan's Esflow concept hints at a potential rear-wheel-drive electric sports car for the brand. The concept has the same lithium ion battery packs used in the Leaf. The Esflow's aluminum chassis has been

built around the drivetrain and lightweight seats sculpted into the car's rear bulkhead so they don't need a heavy frame. The Esflow has a 240km range and achieves 0-100kph in less than 5 seconds.

OPEL

Opel's Zafira Tourer Concept shows how the brand's next medium minivan could look. It has a dynamic exterior look and the interior is airy and bright to resemble what Opel calls a "lounge on wheels." Opel will also show the production Ampera plug-in hybrid. Another concept will be an "urban mobility mover" smaller than a Smart ForTwo and similar to the EN-V (Electric Networked Vehicle) unveiled by parent General Motors at the 2010 World Expo in Shanghai.

Opel Zafira Tourer Concept



Peugeot 308

PEUGEOT

Peugeot's 308 compact range gets a face-lift that includes a restyled front end and a micro-hybrid powertrain that the company says has the lowest emissions in its segment. The changes reduce the size of the car's front grille in line with the company's new design philosophy already seen on the upcoming Peugeot 508.

RENAULT

Renault will unveil two concepts. Both will show the latest development of the company's new design strategy. One is called Captur, a muscular-looking crossover that has the brand's new frontal identity. The concept features a large Renault logo as its centerpiece. The concept is powered by a 160-hp 1.6-liter twin-turbo diesel with CO2 emissions of 99g/km. The other concept will be unveiled on the show's first press day. It will hint at a potential Scenic-sized

crossover. Renault will also show a Wind roadster that will carry the Gordini label that Renault has revived for sporty versions of its models.

Renault Captur



VOLKSWAGEN

Italdesign Giugiaro will unveil two concepts for the **Volkswagen** brand at the show, making Geneva a showcase for design legend Giorgetto Giugiaro's new influence on the styling of VW's future products. One concept will hint at how the new Scirocco coupe will look, while the second will be a study for the next Touran minivan. Giugiaro designed the first-generation Golf, as well as the first VW Passat, Scirocco and Audi 80. Last spring, VW Group bought a 90 percent stake in Italdesign to boost its design and engineering capacity. The two concepts will be displayed on Italdesign's stand at the show. On its own stand, VW will show a concept for a

minivan with styling similar to the retro Microbus concept created in 2001 but never built, as well as the new Golf convertible, which will have a folding softtop roof and will go on sale in June. Also debuting in Geneva is a face-lifted Tiguan SUV with a sleeker look and a fresh front-end.

Italdesign VW
coupe concept



TOYOTA

Toyota will show a Yaris gasoline-electric hybrid concept that will become a production model in 2012. The Yaris variant will join the Auris and Prius hybrids in Europe. Another debut will be the Prius+, a seven-seat hybrid minivan, which goes on sale mid-2012. Also unveiled in Geneva will be the FT-86 II Concept, a production-ready coupe concept that will go on sale in Europe by year-end.

VOLVO

Volvo's V60 station wagon will be displayed in Geneva with a plug-in diesel-electric hybrid powertrain. The near-production car will go on sale next year. The hybrid's front wheels are driven by a 215-hp, 2.4-liter five-cylinder turbodiesel engine. Mounted on the rear axle is a 70-hp electric motor.

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