

0807

*Big Toyota setback in German diesel market*  
page 2

*New Buzz: BlueMotion, EfficientDynamics*  
pages 5 - 7

*"Endangered Species" Aston vs. Maserati*  
pages 15 - 16

16.04.08

Western Europe

# Toyota grinds to a halt

Once seen with near limitless potential to rise, Toyota suddenly hits bumpy patch

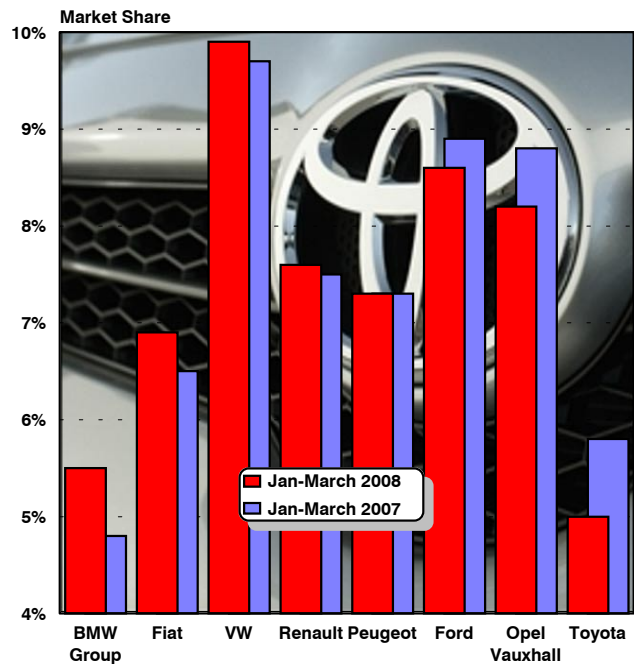
HAS TOYOTA's powerful and fast speeding European car sales train finally hit the buffers? That is the question facing bemused rival carmakers and industry commentators alike as they digest the extraordinary and unexpected sudden change in this year's Toyota car sales fortunes in Western Europe.

Mighty Toyota, largely unfamiliar until now with shrinking market share, suddenly ranks among the region's biggest main losers. In a mildly contracting 2008 car market - down 2.8 per cent so far - that has been jumpy right from the start, Toyota sales have fallen by a steep 17 per cent. Worse still, its slipping March sales figures mark an accelerating downward trend. Its sales, which have now tumbled for three months running, have dropped almost twice as fast as the overall market. Inevitably, its closely watched market share has fallen to date by almost one percentage point to 5 per cent after slipping to 5.2 per cent during March itself.

The toxic nature of this year's trendbucking dive threatens to take some of the shine off Toyota's carefully nurtured win-win image. That's chiefly its long-fostered pedestal position as the world's most dynamic and also most successful carmaker to date.

Western Europe Car Sales

Winners & Losers



AID Graph 08/25

Europe . . . 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 12, 13, 16, 18  
Austria . . . 2, 4  
Belgium . . . 2, 4  
Bulgaria/Czech Republic . . . 2  
Denmark/Eire . . . 2  
Estonia/Latvia/Lithuania . . . 2  
Finland . . . 2  
France . . . 2, 4, 8, 12, 13  
Germany . . . 2, 3, 4, 5-9, 10, 11, 12, 14  
Greece/Hungary . . . 2  
India . . . 13  
Italy . . . 2, 4, 15  
Japan . . . 3, 7, 9, 18  
Morocco . . . 13  
Netherlands . . . 2, 4  
Norway . . . 2, 4  
Poland . . . 2  
Romania . . . 2, 13  
Russia . . . 13  
Slovakia/Slovenia . . . 2  
South Korea . . . 3, 9, 18  
Spain . . . 2  
Sweden/Switzerland/Portugal . . . 2  
Turkey . . . 13  
UK . . . 2, 4, 13, 15, 16  
USA . . . 2, 4, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19

**"Thanks for the memory"**  
Aston Martin Vantage Roadster & Maserati Gran Turismo - EU may drive them off the roads . 15 - 16

**In Depth & Other Topics:**

**"Music has stopped"**  
Toyota rivals treated to rare dose of Schadenfreude . . . . . 1 - 4

**"Fast Lane to Green lane"**  
Germany - Shoppers' eyes on CO2 - BlueMotion fever . . 5 - 7

**"Easter Blues"**  
German March sales pulled down by fewer shopping days . 7 - 12

**"Mind over matter"**  
Renault cranks up sales to meet Ghosn's grand ambitions 12 - 13

**"Price of success"**  
Euro pains - Germans face huge financial hit in US . . . . 14 - 15

Alfa Romeo . . . . . 3, 9  
Aston Martin . . . . . 9, 15, 16  
Audi . . . 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 18  
AvtoVaz . . . . . 13  
Bentley . . . . . 9, 19  
BMW 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10- 14, 16, 18, 19  
Chevrolet/Daewoo . . . . . 3, 8, 9  
Chrysler . . . . . 9, 18  
Citroën . . . . . 3, 9, 10  
Credit Suisse . . . . . 12, 13  
Dacia . . . . . 3, 8, 9  
Daihatsu . . . . . 3, 9, 19  
Daimler . . . . . 3, 9  
Deutsche Bank . . . . . 13, 14  
Fiat . . . . . 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 15  
Ford . . . 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 18, 19  
Ferrari . . . . . 3, 9  
GM-Opel/Vauxhall . . . 3, 9, 10, 11  
GM (US) . . . . . 3, 9, 18, 19  
Honda . . . . . 3, 9, 11, 18, 19  
Hyundai . . . . . 3, 9, 11, 18  
Jaguar . . . . . 3, 9, 13, 16  
J.D. Power . . . . . 17, 19  
Kia . . . . . 3, 8, 9, 18  
Lancia . . . . . 3, 9  
Land Rover . . . . . 3, 9, 13, 1, 18  
Lehman Brothers . . . . . 14, 15  
Lexus . . . . . 3, 9, 13, 18  
Maserati . . . . . 3, 9, 15, 16  
Mazda . . . . . 3, 9, 18  
Mercedes 3, 8, 9, 10, 12 - 16, 18, 19  
Mini . . . . . 3, 9, 19  
Mitsubishi . . . . . 3, 9, 18  
Morgan Stanley . . . . . 13, 14, 15  
Nissan . . . . . 3, 4, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 18  
Peugeot/PSA . . . . . 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11  
Porsche . . . . . 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19  
Renault . . . 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13  
Rolls-Royce . . . . . 9  
SEAT . . . . . 3, 7, 9  
Škoda . . . . . 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11  
Smart . . . . . 3, 9  
SsangYong . . . . . 9  
Standard & Poors . . . . . 13  
Subaru . . . . . 3, 9, 18, 19  
Suzuki . . . . . 3, 9, 11, 18  
Tata . . . . . 13  
Toyota 1, 2, 3, 4, 6-10, 11, 17, 18, 19  
VW . . . 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 18  
Volvo . . . . . 3, 9, 12, 18  
ZF . . . . . 15



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