



CSM Automotive Production Barometer (APB)

CSM Worldwide, the leading provider of market intelligence and forecasting to the automotive industry, announces the October 2005 CSM Automotive Production Barometer™. Released in advance of existing sources of information, this service provides an accurate tally of light vehicle production for the previous month to assist automotive economists and financial analysts in their ongoing industry evaluations.

"Our Automotive Production Barometer is intended to mirror and expand on the Federal Reserve's estimate of U.S. light vehicle production," said Greg Mount, chief economist at CSM Worldwide. "With our industry knowledge, historical record-keeping and expertise in forecasting, we're able to provide an accurate count of U.S. and aggregate North American light vehicle production an average of three to four days in advance of the Federal Reserve's report. In an industry where minutes can matter, we see this as a significant advantage."

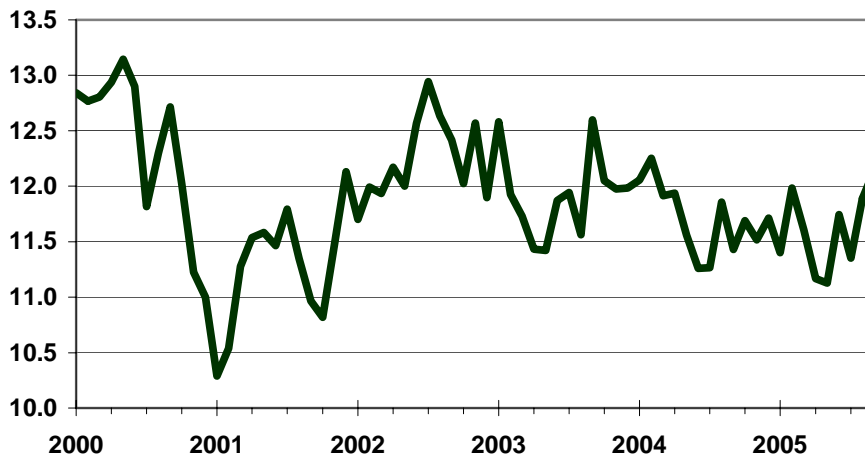
The CSM Automotive Production Barometer for October 2005 is currently available via the CSM Worldwide website: www.csmauto.com/auto-production-barometer.

While U.S. sales fell 7.5% in September on energy pricing volatility and the lingering after effects following recent employee discount programs, production rebounded 6.3% over last year to seasonally adjusted rate of 12.14M units, their strongest level since February 2004. Total U.S. light vehicle production totaled 1.07M units for the month, which is down 3.1% over last month, but up 4.8% over last year's results due to inventory restocking. Overall, U.S. production continues to lag last year's pace, with output off 1.1% at a seasonally adjusted rate of 11.61M units.

North American output continued its rebound with production increasing 4.0% on a year-over-year basis to a seasonally adjusted 16.30M units in September. Depleted inventories and the introduction of several new and redesigned models have helped fuel the recent increase in production. With the employee sales pricing programs from General Motors, Ford and DaimlerChrysler coming to an end, sales are expected to slow in coming months and inventories are already beginning to swell, particularly for traditional full-frame mid- and full-size trucks. Also driving their weakness is consumer's reaction to increasingly volatile gasoline prices of late due to hurricanes' Katrina and Rita that have added to another price layer on top of the already present war and terror premiums.

The traditional Big 3 manufacturers will be challenged to make gains through the remainder of the year, as they rely heavily on full-frame trucks for volume and profitability. Unlike year's past, the Big 3 are more prepared as they offer smaller, more fuel efficient crossover SUVs that consumers may seek with more are on the horizon. GM in particular faces a timing dilemma as it prepares to launch its redesigned GMT900-based full-size SUVs (Tahoe, Yukon, Escalade) in 1Q 2006. While fuel prices certainly have an impact on demand for such full-size vehicles, they have proven to be more a reflection of lifestyle and status with marginal buyers being the most susceptible to opting out of purchasing. These vehicles also face a more difficult time in the used vehicle arena than on the new vehicle front. Renewed incentive efforts are also expected to help drive sales and production in the short-term.

CSM Automotive Production Barometer (U.S. SAAR, Mil. Units)



- September U.S. light vehicle production increased to a 12.14M unit SAAR, highest since February 2004.
- September U.S. light vehicle production increased 6.3% Y/Y on an adjusted basis.
- U.S. light vehicle production increased 4.8% Y/Y to a NSA 1.07M units in September.
- Year to date, U.S. light vehicle production is at an 11.61M unit SAAR, down -1.10% over last year.

Light Vehicle Production (Mil. Units)	Jul-05	Aug-05	Sep-05	YTD	2003	2004
US Total (SAAR, Mil. Units)	11.35	11.89	12.14	11.61	11.92	11.71
Autos	4.14	4.25	4.29	4.24	4.45	4.18
Light Trucks	7.22	7.64	7.86	7.38	7.47	7.53
US (NSA, Mil. Units)	0.57	1.10	1.07	8.80	11.87	11.64
NA (SAAR, Mil. Units)	14.56	16.63	16.31	15.67	15.90	15.79

Light Vehicle Production (Y/Y %)	Jul-05	Aug -05	Sep -05	YTD	2003	2004
US Total (SAAR, Mil. Units)	0.80%	0.30%	6.30%	-1.10%	-2.40%	-1.70%
Autos	1.60%	-0.90%	1.00%	0.40%	-11.20%	-6.00%
Light Trucks	0.30%	0.90%	9.40%	-1.90%	3.60%	0.90%
US (NSA, Mil. Units)	-5.40%	7.00%	4.80%	-0.50%	-1.70%	-1.90%
NA (SAAR, Mil. Units)	-7.40%	6.40%	4.00%	-1.10%	-2.90%	-0.70%

CSM Automotive Production Barometer Historical Accuracy vs. Federal Reserve

