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News Releases

DuPont Reports Global Color Popularity Ratings for Vehicles

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55th DuPont Report Says White Now Outranks Silver As Top Choice in Some Countries

TROY, Mich., December 4, 2007 - Silver is no longer the undisputed color champion of the automotive world, according to the DuPont 2007 Global Automotive Color Popularity Report.

After seven years in first place, silver ran into tough competition this year with white/white pearl rising to the lead color choice for vehicles in one key region and two countries. In North America, white/white pearl, silver and black/black effect are in a virtual tie for first, with white/white pearl narrowly taking the top spot, according to the report issued by the company's Automotive Systems business. White overcame silver in Japan and is the decisive leader in Mexico, more than doubling the popularity of gray.

DuPont has tracked color statistics for more than 55 years and reports converging trends in color preference. This year, DuPont sees white/white pearl as a trend-shifting color, and anticipates the new black metallic and other color effects will show an increase in popularity over time. Red also continues to gain ground and is ensuring a more vividly colored outlook in nearly all segments.

"Our customers are looking at niche colors and effects, including matte finishes and warm neutrals with effect," said Karen Surcina, color marketing and technology manager - DuPont Automotive Systems. "The rise in popularity of white/white pearl and the long reign of silver suggest that we can expect a more dramatic shift in the top color choice."

"We are not surprised to see a proliferation of white/white pearl in DuPont's report this year," said Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute and author of *Color: Messages and Meanings*.

"It follows the global trends in home furnishings, fashion, consumer products and industrial design where we're seeing a return to white as a clarifying agent before change, a color of purity and minimalism," Eiseman said. "White also is considered a fashion statement. The car you drive is a fashion statement, and consumer preferences for white agree. White pearl itself is a combination of many colors, allowing an ability to change, reflecting, in effect, layers of white."

This year's DuPont Global Color Automotive Popularity Report tracks color across vehicle segment and also reports by geographic region -- the only report of its kind to do so. New for 2007, Mexico

and Brazil vehicle color popularity data are available independently.

The report remains the industry's authoritative standard for analyzing and predicting vehicle color trends based on consumer choices. While the DuPont study is a benchmark for the automotive industry, its influence reaches beyond the automotive segment to other industries including home furnishings, consumer electronics and fashion.

Global Trends in Color

"The growth of white pearl and black effect represents two neutrals with special effects, including metallic and hue shifting finishes," DuPont's Surcina said. "This provides a safe color space for customers with the ability to add a level of customization or flair."

As in the fashion industry, coatings manufacturers present their annual "collections" of colors to automakers in a formal presentation. The theme of this year's DuPont Color Show is "Winning with Color," highlighting the games people play globally, across generations. Among the playfully named colors DuPont is presenting to customers this year are Whitney White, Gwendolyn Gray, Roger Rocket (white with a hint of blue), Remington Red, Giselle Glacier (white), Gaby Goldfish (orange) and Nemo Night (dark blue). "The strength of the neutral palette globally shows that customer preferences are becoming more common around the world," Surcina said.

From a global perspective, overall color popularity is beginning to shift from silver to an increased interest in gray. White/white pearl remain a very important color for trucks and SUVs, based on the high volume of those vehicles. This also is represented in the growth of white/white pearl among luxury buyers and other segments. The popularity of red globally is growing significantly, with an increase of 2 percent overall.

"Red, in particular, is a popular choice with people who want to express a level of individuality with their vehicles," Surcina noted. "We see the growth of vibrant colors -- red and orange -- as an option for those interested in mass customization - the chance to personalize a mass-produced object."

Color Popularity Data by Region and for Selected Countries

North America - White/white pearl led in popularity with 19 percent of the overall vehicle market and 26 percent of the market for the truck/SUV category. White/white pearl tied in popularity with black for the luxury segment in North America, while silver reigned in intermediate/CUV and compact/sport segments, but declined in popularity in the past year by a combined 5 percent since the 2006 DuPont report.

Mexico - Mexico also saw white/white pearl in the lead, with 32 percent of the overall market. Gray and red rounded out the top three in Mexico, with 15 percent and 13 percent, respectively.

Brazil - In its debut as an independent segment within the report, Brazil shows silver leading in overall color popularity with 34 percent of the market. Black ranks a distant second with 23 percent and gray in third with 15 percent.

Europe - Black is resoundingly the most popular color, with approximately 25 percent of the market, overtaking silver, and up 1 percent over last year's report. Black is the clear leader in every vehicle segment in Europe, except in the MPV category, where it is in third place. Similar to American tastes, black metallic effects also are gaining ground. A clear commitment to color in grays and more vibrant basic colors, such as blue and red, can be detected.

Japan - White/white pearl leads overall, with 24 percent, tied with last year's popularity in the market. Silver is a close second with 22 percent, down 5 percent from the 2006 report. Similar to North America, silver leads in the intermediate and compact/sport segments.

China - The race between silver and black is close -- silver led by just one percentage point. White/white pearl, blue and red round out the top five in that country, followed by gray.

South Korea - Silver was the leader with 39 percent of the market. White/white pearl represent 25 percent of the market, with black and black effect at 22 percent.

“Reporting color preferences by region and country allows DuPont to better meet its customers’ needs for a global color palette in the dynamic automotive marketplace,” Surcina said. “This color trend show generates great dialogue with our direct customers and the automotive manufacturers on trends we see and the color palette we are planning for the future.”

DuPont is a science-based products and services company. Founded in 1802, DuPont puts science to work by creating sustainable solutions essential to a better, safer, healthier life for people everywhere. Operating in more than 70 countries, DuPont offers a wide range of innovative products and services for markets including agriculture and food; building and construction; communications; and transportation.

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[Click](#) or copy and paste link below to access an extensive package of high-resolution video clips, B-roll, still images and data charts developed to illustrate the DuPont 2007 Global Automotive Color Popularity Report. There is also a backgrounder on DuPont automotive innovations.

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For an interview with Karen Surcina, DuPont Color Marketing and Technology Manager, please contact Andrew Schreck at 248-362-4200 or e-mail at aschreck@baileypr.com

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