

NEWS



RELEASE

The 2005 Washington Auto Show: "Driven by Design"

Hosted by the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association

The Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association (WANADA) will offer area car lovers and consumers a special one-of-a-kind holiday gift when **The 2005 Washington Auto Show** opens its doors on Sun., Dec. 26, 2004 at the Washington Convention Center. Hundreds of thousands of visitors will enter the turnstiles during the eight-day staging of the 63rd auto show, entranced by that new car smell and the chance to peruse 700 makes and models from 37 domestic and important manufacturers, all under one roof.

Show organizers were "Driven by Design" this year and intent on delivering an automotive showcase with 13 months of staying power. Beginning in 2006, The Washington Auto Show will move to late January show dates, Jan. 23 -29 initially, a change long sought-after and much-welcomed by manufacturers, dealers and civic leaders. On tap this year is an event that closes the holiday timeframe in fitting fashion.

The change in show dates is just one more enhancement in the steady growth in stature and impact of The Washington Auto Show®. Last year, the show celebrated an eagerly awaited new home – the expanded Washington Convention Center. The expanded convention center is now a 2.3 million square foot facility, with 725,000 square feet of exhibit space. Show visitors will find that space filled to the brim with the best and brightest of the coming model year, coupled with concept cars and prototypes that hint of what's to come.

While a love of cars is now an American tradition, The Washington Auto Show was born of a very simple marketing goal. In 1921, a group of 20 Washington area car dealers and distributors planned the first

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show to sell the public on the virtue of the horseless carriage. From that humble beginning, The Washington Auto Show has truly been on the fast track in terms of growth and popularity. Housed in a variety of area venues, the show was staged for 18 years in the National Guard D.C. Armory. The show has gone on hiatus twice in over six decades – once for war and once due to poor economic conditions. The Washington Auto Show even captured presidential attention in the 1930's and was used by President Franklin Roosevelt to overcome seasonal buying peaks disrupting the economy.

After a break in the 70's, the Washington Convention Center and The Washington Auto Show opened together in early 1983. By this date, the auto show had grown to require every available foot of display space, covering nearly eight acres – almost four times the physical size of the Armory shows with three times as many models.

Steady growth in size and prominence has made The Washington Auto Show one of the industry's most prestigious events. Since 1988, The Washington Auto Show has been held between Christmas and New Year's Day, garnering a tremendous base of loyal fans and annual visitors. It is with those supporters in mind that the upcoming date shift was made.

"The date change will enhance the size, stature and magnitude of the show Washingtonians have so loyally supported for generations," says Gerard N. Murphy, WANADA president and Washington Auto Show producer. "It means more cars, more manufacturers, and a heightened level of involvement from the automotive industry and related fields, as well as the business and governmental communities."

The Washington Auto Show now includes features its founders could have never foreseen, including a Media Preview Day to accommodate more than 250 registered media members and industry leaders reporting to a public that now eagerly awaits every new development of the "horseless carriage." The auto show's tradition of charitable giving would also be a welcome evolution for those early planners, already active in civic causes. The 2005 Washington Auto Show Congressional Gala and Charity Preview will benefit many area health and children's charities, while events in past years have raised more than \$850,000 for the community.

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Finally, planners in 1921 who looked for every imaginative twist to draw attention to that new-fangled mode of transportation would be amazed to learn that today's auto show features a full-slate of entertainment, contests, interactive displays and family activities that can actually offer visitors a break from all those cars!

For a full schedule of entertainment and special events, operating hours, ticket information and discounted "e-tickets," visit the Washington Auto Show online at www.washingtonautoshow.com or contact WANADA at 1-866-WASH-AUTO or 202.237.7200.

Now entering its 88th year of existence, WANADA represents dealerships throughout the Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia area.

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