

GM CEO: Pickup Truck Debut Going Smoothly

The Associated Press

WARREN, Mich. (AP) — Revamped full-size pickup trucks from General Motors are starting to arrive at Chevrolet and GMC dealers nationwide, and the company's top executive says the launch has gone well.

CEO Dan Akerson said Wednesday that the smooth debut of the Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra trucks is an example of how GM plans to maintain high quality while replacing many of its older vehicles this year.

"We've produced tens of thousands of these new trucks. Initial cut is it's probably our best launch ever," Akerson said, while noting that GM has had "mixed success" with product launches in the past.

Akerson spoke after a ceremony marking GM's performance in this year's J.D. Power and Associates initial quality scores.

GM was the top overall company in the widely read J.D. Power quality survey with 98 problems reported per vehicle, well below the industry average of 113. Many of the problems that people reported weren't mechanical. They were problems with voice recognition software, cellphone connections and other new technical gadgets.

The pickup launch is coming at the right time. Pickup truck sales are rising as businesses start to replace vehicles they've kept since at least the Great Recession. U.S. big pickup truck sales through May were up 21 percent over a year ago, according to Autodata Corp.

The Silverado is GM's top-selling vehicle in the U.S. and is second only to Ford's F-Series in pickups. Silverado sales are up 24 percent for the year, while Sierra sales are up 18 percent, but the current versions of the trucks have been out for six years and need to be updated. Their replacement was delayed at least a year by GM's 2009 trip through bankruptcy protection.

Akerson said GM is working to keep quality levels high even as it launches new vehicles.

"It just takes attention to detail, crisp execution. Inspect, inspect, inspect, and I think we've got that down," he said. "I won't tell you that we're going to be flawless, but that's what we're going to strive for."

Akerson made his comments in front of about 2,000 workers at the company's technical center in the Detroit suburb of Warren, Mich.

GM also announced at the ceremony that Alicia Boler-Davis, the company's vice president of global quality and U.S. customer experience, has been promoted to

GM CEO: Pickup Truck Debut Going Smoothly

Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

senior vice president with global responsibilities for both quality and the customer buying experience.

GM shares were up 33 cents to \$32.16 at midday.

Source URL (retrieved on 11/23/2014 - 1:47pm):

<http://www.impomag.com/news/2013/06/gm-ceo-pickup-truck-debut-going-smoothly>