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HOT CAR REPORT

December 22, 2010



Note: For Top/Bottom 5 Models, only vehicles where the weekly page views fall above the 30th percentile are used for analysis.

Summary:

A slew of new vehicles entered the mix this past week, and all have made an impact on new-car shopper activity. The intro/redesign that experienced the greatest increase in share was the 2011 Acura TSX. Typically a shopper's interest is not sparked by a wagon introduction, but we are starting to see a change in this trend highlighted by the TSX, as well as the Cadillac CTS Wagon a few months back. Another intro/redesign making a big splash is the 2011 MINI Cooper Countryman, increasing its share 134.7 percent, to top all high-traffic models.

Commentary:

It is a well-worn and over-used cliché, but this week's Hot Car report proves its merit once again: "There is nothing in the car business that good product will not fix." All of our top performers this week are of the "all-new" variety, and they highlight the amazing level of choice available to car shoppers in 2011. Strong interest in MINI's Cooper Countryman small SUV illustrates the power of one of our perennial Best Resale Value Award-winning brands, as this vehicle brings a go-kart spirit to a segment not normally known for fun. The early interest in the 2011 Nissan Quest also is surprising as Nissan all but gave-up on the minivan segment during the last few years, but it may finally be bringing to market a vehicle able to proudly compete with the Odyssey, Sienna and Town & Country. Acura has been on an unexpected fast track in 2010, with sales up 24 percent thus far versus 2009, but it continues to lack a clear image among many drivers. The 2011 TSX Sport Wagon takes this brand into new territory and may help set a new character for the company going forward, even though they expect low overall sales volume for this special European-designed model.