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Dodge Reveals New 2008 Dodge Dakota

Restyled Dodge Dakota Offers More Power Combined with Bold Styling, Versatility and Capability

- New 4.7-liter V-8 engine with 290 horsepower (25 percent increase) and 320 lb.-ft. of torque (10 percent increase), with better fuel economy and increased refinement – the only V-8 option available in the segment
- All-new exterior in Extended Cab and Crew Cab body styles
- New interior features greatest space of any mid-size truck, with 30 cubic feet of interior space in Extended Cab models; 37.1 cubic feet for Crew Cab
- The largest and longest standard cargo bed in its class: 6-foot-6-inches in the Extended Cab
- Best-in-class towing capability of up to 7,050 pounds
- New features include built-in cargo-box utility rails, heated bench seats, under-seat storage system

February 6, 2007, Chicago - Chrysler Group today unveiled the new 2008 Dodge Dakota mid-size truck with a new engine that not only offers 25 percent more horsepower and 10 percent more torque, but also better fuel economy and increased refinement. The 2008 Dodge Dakota also features new exterior and interior styling, and many best-in-class capabilities. The new truck arrives in dealerships in August.

New for 2008 are striking exterior and interior enhancements that bear signature Dodge styling cues while creating a new persona for Dakota.

“The new 2008 Dodge Dakota was redesigned to broaden its appeal to younger customers with active lifestyles,” said Tom Loveless, Director – Dodge Marketing and Global Communications. “Dodge Dakota will attract 25- to 35-year-old individuals who need a vehicle to meet a variety of needs. Depending on an owners’ lifestyle, the 2008 Dodge Dakota may be equipped for work or play, but every Dakota is equipped with capability and versatility.”

Powertrain selections

Dodge trucks have always earned a reputation as bold, powerful and capable. The powerful and capable parts of the equation in the 2008 Dodge Dakota begin with powertrain choices, which include a new V-8 engine -- the only V-8 option available in the mid-size pickup segment.

The new 4.7-liter V-8 offers better fuel economy, power and torque than the previous 4.7-liter High Output engine, while at the same time delivering improvements in refinement. The new 4.7-liter V-8 incorporates two spark plugs per cylinder (the only Chrysler Group engine to do so, other than the 5.7-liter HEMI®), increased compression ratio, improved cylinder-head port flow and a new combustion system. The result is 290 horsepower, a 25 percent increase; and 320 lb.-ft. of torque, a 10 percent increase. The new engine is also capable of operating on E85 ethanol fuel, making the Dodge Dakota equipped with this engine a Flexible Fuel Vehicle (FFV).

Refinement improvements in the new 4.7-liter V-8 result from significant revisions to the induction system, a lightweight piston/rod assembly and reduced accessory drive noise through lower accessory drive speed. Engine smoothness at idle is enhanced with a new valve-lash adjuster system. The new 4.7-liter V-8 is also equipped with Electronic Throttle Control.

The new 2008 Dodge Dakota comes standard with a 3.7-liter Magnum® V-6 engine producing 210 horsepower and 235 lb.-ft. of torque. The engine also comes with Electronic Throttle Control for positive throttle response, and exhaust gas recirculation to help lower emissions.

The new 2008 Dodge Dakota’s powerplants are backed up by a choice of a six-speed manual transmission, standard

on all V-6 equipped 2008 Dodge Dakota models except Laramie; a four-speed automatic with overdrive available with Dakota's V-6 engine; and a five-speed automatic available on V-8-equipped models.

For more capability when traction is at a premium, the new 2008 Dodge Dakota may be equipped with a transfer case featuring two-wheel drive or four-wheel drive with locked high and low ranges, or an available transfer case with full-time four-wheel drive as well as selections for locked high and low ranges. The 2007 Dodge Dakota is the only pickup in its segment to offer full-time four-wheel drive.

New look, more model choices
In addition to powerful and capable, Dodge trucks are also known as bold.

For that part of the equation, the 2008 Dodge Dakota's exterior includes a newly styled hood, grille, front fascia, rear spoiler, fenders and headlamps. The front end has been designed to improve aerodynamics and features better fit and gap management. The hood surface was designed to signify power and further amplify the drop-fendered, signature look for Dodge trucks. With these styling enhancements, the "face" of the 2008 Dodge Dakota is better aligned with the rest of the Dodge truck lineup.

Like the Dodge Nitro, headlamps are rectangular units primarily for a contemporary appearance, but also to maximize the surface area for better forward lighting. Reflectors are deep-set behind each lense to achieve a serious demeanor.

All-new fascias better integrate with the restyled grille and incorporate fog lamps. The 2008 Dodge Dakota's tailgate includes a new spoiler that helps smooth air flow over the rear of the truck to improve fuel economy, and the top surface of the cargo box has a new protective surface.

"The Dodge truck DNA is well-understood in the marketplace. We are creators of trucks with a distinct flair for style and no compromise in function," said Ralph Gilles, Vice President – Jeep®/Truck and Color and Trim Studios, and Specialty Vehicles, Chrysler Group Design. "We restyled the 2008 Dodge Dakota to reflect that DNA in a package that presents the Dakota as both a sporty lifestyle vehicle and a work truck."

For 2008, the Dodge Dakota will again be offered in two body styles – Extended Cab and Crew Cab – and six trim levels: ST, SXT, SLT, TRX4, Sport and Laramie.

Interior loaded with form and function
The new 2008 Dodge Dakota's interior includes a new instrument panel, center console and accent finishes, and several new interior storage choices.

"The interior is designed to provide an ergonomically friendly cockpit with improved comfort, utility and thoughtful storage amenities to complement a variety of lifestyles," said Gilles.

The 2008 Dodge Dakota Extended Cab's available Full Swing™ rear access doors open nearly 170 degrees – unique in the segment -- to an interior with class-leading room and seating for five. With rear seats folded, up to 30 cubic feet of storage space is available. A total of six storage hooks are located on the Extended Cab's rear interior panel.

Separately, the 2008 Dodge Dakota Crew Cab offers best-in-class room – 37.1 cubic feet -- and seating for up to six. With rear seats folded, a new under-seat storage system, a first for Dodge Dakota, is easily accessible. This system includes a unique, collapsible and removable cargo management system that enables gear to be organized and taken anywhere.

Other storage options are provided throughout the interior. For example, an additional storage bin is located above the glove box, providing easy access for everyday items. An all-new center console incorporates cup holders with modular inserts and a pull-out bin specifically designed to hold electronics such as an MP3 player (which can be plugged into any of the 2007 Dodge Dakota's audio systems), cell phone or Personal Digital Assistant. An additional power outlet is also provided.

Seating is available with YES Essentials® Worry Free Fabric, which is stain-resistant, odor-resistant and anti-static. Heated bench seats are available in the 2008 Dodge Dakota for the first time.

Seating options include an available 40/20/40 split-bench front seat with a folding center armrest. The 2008 Dodge Dakota Extended Cab is available with 40/40 rear-folding seats, while Crew Cab models have a standard 60/40 split-

folding rear seat.

Electronic choices include AM-FM stereo radios with MP3 capability and available SIRIUS Satellite Radio that delivers more than 125 channels of music, sports, news, talk and weather. Also available as stand-alone options are a 508-watt SoundBox system (available on Extended Cab models) and a DVD navigation system with turn-by-turn directions. A power accessory delay, standard on all 2008 Dodge Dakotas, allows power functions, including radio, to operate after the vehicle is turned off.

Dodge Dakota = versatility

The foundation of the new 2008 Dodge Dakota is a ladder-type frame, with main rails formed to precision tolerances under liquid pressure and fully boxed for strength and rigidity. All 2008 Dodge Dakotas feature independent front suspension with coil-over shock absorbers. The result is identical ride height for two- and four-wheel-drive models, which contributes to smooth ride and handling characteristics.

The 2008 Dodge Dakota continues to offer the largest and longest standard cargo bed in its class: 6-foot-6-inches in the Extended Cab. Built-in utility rails make cargo box tie-downs infinitely adjustable. The 2008 Dodge Dakota's dual-position tailgate may be secured in a mid-position, which provides support for extra-wide or -long cargo laid on top of wheel wells and extending beyond the end of the bed.

The new 2008 Dodge Dakota also continues to wear the crown for highest tow ratings in the mid-size pickup market, with towing ability of up to 7,050 pounds.

As a complete package, the 2008 Dodge Dakota is as safe as it is capable and versatile. Up front, octagonal front frame rail tips collapse rearward in an impact in order to absorb energy and deter force from the cabin. An anti-lock brake system is standard on rear wheels, and available on all four wheels.

Advance multi-stage driver and front passenger air bags are standard, and supplemental side-curtain air bags are available. Rear head restraints on Crew Cab models, which are designed for the driver's rearward visibility, have a foam-padded structure for increased protection.

Dodge Brand

With a U.S. market share of 6 percent, Dodge is the Chrysler Group's best-selling brand and the fifth largest nameplate in the U.S. automotive market. In 2006, Dodge sold more than 1.3 million vehicles in the global market. Dodge continues to lead the minivan market with a 20 percent market share in the U.S. In the highly competitive truck market, Dodge has a 15 percent market share. Dodge has entered key European volume segments with Nitro and Caliber.

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