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Dodge Introduces Nitro Concept Vehicle

February 10, 2005, Chicago -

Full-Size Attitude in a Mid-size SUV

What happens when you bring the Dodge brand's "Grab Life by the Horns" attitude to the mid-size SUV market? You get the Dodge Nitro concept. Making its debut at the 2005 Chicago Auto Show, the Dodge Nitro is a mid-size SUV concept with a uniquely bold, powerful design statement that would ignite an automotive segment more typically characterized by bland styling.

Once again, the Dodge brand is breaking the rules and exploring yet another bold proportion with the Dodge Nitro concept. The Dodge Nitro concept would be the first mid-size SUV for Dodge, completing the brand's current lineup, which now consists of passenger cars, minivans, trucks and a full-size SUV. The five-passenger Nitro is designed to attract a customer seeking style, performance and utility.

"The Dodge Nitro concept is brimming with character; it evokes emotion through its rugged styling and dominant stance," said Trevor Creed, Senior Vice President – Chrysler Group Design. "This is more than just another typical mid-size SUV design statement."

Exterior Styling — Bold and Powerful

The Dodge Nitro's bright "Anodized Red" exterior color, confident stance and unique full exterior style not only amplify the vehicle's persona — they set a tone that is continued throughout.

The face of the vehicle features the signature chrome Dodge crosshair grille flanked by jewel-like rectangular headlamps. The imposing hood carries distinctive character lines that relate directly to the front-end features.

Dodge Nitro's crisp lines and substantial body size create a brawny character not found in any mid-size SUV on the road today. Eye-catching, 20-inch, cast-aluminum wheels convey a no-nonsense functional statement. Brushed silver vents positioned on each front fender and generously proportioned door handles add to the vehicle's modern design and contemporary flair.

The rear of the vehicle features an integrated trailer tow hitch, chrome dual exhaust tail pipes and a brushed silver license plate visor.

The roof is garnished with a satin silver and black-trimmed roof rack and crossbars that nest between integrated side rails, completing the functional look of the Dodge Nitro concept.

"Although the Dodge Nitro concept is a mid-size sport-utility vehicle, its expressive form and fullness of surface are similar to that of much larger SUVs," said Rick Aneiros, Vice President – Jeep® and Truck Design. "The vehicle is not just an exercise in design; its attributes are functional and purposeful."

Interior Styling — Sleek and Utilitarian

The Dodge Nitro concept's spacious interior is both functional and flexible for people and cargo. Upon entry into the vehicle, chrome, silver and red accents have a dynamic presence throughout the interior.

A three-pod, four-gauge instrument cluster with electroluminescent lighting, featuring white gauges with red pointers, is accented by silver bands, giving the interior a sense of technical precision. Most stunning is the vehicle's satin silver center console, which houses a DVD-based navigation radio with a seven-inch fixed LED screen. Control buttons, shifter knob, door handles, gauges, speakers and assist handles are also satin silver. The attention to detail continues on to the driver pedals, which are made of brushed aluminum with black rubber anti-slip inserts.

The seats, which have a rich, polished appearance, are black leather with rugged bright red inserts. Black netting

placed in the center of the head rests gives the vehicle a built-for-fun appeal. Assist handles are located in the back of the front driver and passenger seats to enable easy entry and exit. Front passenger and rear seats fold flat, allowing for ample cargo capacity.

The rear cargo floor is made of rugged-textured vinyl and is easy to clean. With the rear hatch open, the cargo floor slides rearward for easy and convenient loading and unloading of packages. Modular storage bins and a first-aid kit are located in the rear quarters of the vehicle.

Performance — Functional and Fun

The Dodge Nitro concept is not only great to look at, it's fun to drive. The Dodge Nitro concept's estimated performance figures include a top speed of 108 mph, standing 1/4 mile at 16.9 seconds, and can go from 0–60 mph in 9.6 seconds.

The Dodge Nitro concept incorporates existing Chrysler Group components, including the 3.7-liter SOHC V-6 engine, which generates 210 hp (157 kW) @ 5200 rpm and 235 lb.-ft. torque (319 N•m) @ 4000 rpm, the 42RLE four-speed automatic transmission and independent SLA front and five-link rear suspension system. The vehicle has full-time four-wheel drive and weighs in at 4,115 pounds (1867 kg).

Dodge sold more than 1.4 million vehicles worldwide in 2004. With a 6.9 percent market share, Dodge is the fifth largest nameplate in the United States and will arrive in European volume segments in 2006.

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