

Communiqués

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The new Volvo S40 - refined sportiness and increased premium feel

- Closer visual links with the larger Volvo models
- Increasing numbers of younger buyers with high premium demands
- Improved storage
- Enhanced driving pleasure
- New safety features
- Audio system of world class
- One-third of total sales volume together with Volvo V50

When the current generation of the Volvo S40 and V50 were introduced in 2003, Volvo Cars had its sights firmly set on younger buyers with high demands on sportiness and premium feel. The new Volvo S40 and new Volvo V50 are making a joint entry onto the market with considerably refined design. A range of new features further sharpens their competitive edge in the hunt for discerning young car buyers.

"When the cars were introduced almost four years ago, we emphasised that they gave buyers the properties of the larger Volvo models but in a more compact format. Now we're taking this approach one step further by increasing the 'grown-up' quality perception even more. At the same time we are accentuating the differences between the two models. The new S40 moves closer to the Volvo S80 while the new V50 is more like the new Volvo V70," says Volvo Cars President and CEO Fredrik Arp.

Fresh figures from both the US and Europe show that the company's focus on younger target groups has made a significant contribution to sales.

Buyers under 35 years up by more than 20 percent

It's the figures for the USA that are most noteworthy:

- The proportion of S40 buyers under 35 years of age has increased from 23 percent to 45 percent.
- The proportion of singles has risen by 10 percent, from 30 to 40 percent.
- The overall average age of S40 customers has dropped by ten years from 50 to 40.

"What is more, the reasons for choosing the S40 are much more emotional than before. Today's buyers speak enthusiastically of its sporty design and driving pleasure. We're also increasingly winning the image and prestige match against our toughest competitors," reveals Fredrik Arp. In Europe, the proportion of V50 buyers whose main alternative was a premium car such as the large German makes is now touching 47 percent - compared with 24 percent for the previous Volvo V40.

The proportion of customers younger than 44 years has risen by ten percent from 45 to 55 percent. And in Europe too, it is the more emotional reasons for purchase that are gaining ground among V50 buyers, more of whom are families with children than in the case of the S40.

Improved storage

Both design and technical refinements in the new Volvo S40 focused on improving the model's already highly appreciated characteristics and on tackling weaknesses identified by customers, for instance when it comes to interior storage space.

"The design team exploited every available cubic centimetre in an intelligent way. The all-new design of the centre console and the door inside panels, for instance, has increased storage capacity and added even greater flexibility to the interior," explains Fredrik Arp.

Sharper driveline range

The driving characteristics are already among the most renowned strengths of the two models. One new feature is that the T5 engine gets a performance hike of 10 horsepower, giving an output of 230 hp. There are also five other petrol engine versions available, plus a bio-ethanol Flexifuel variant:

- 1.6 100 hp
- 1.8 125 hp
- 1.8F 125 hp (Flexifuel)
- 2.0 145 hp
- 2.4 140 hp
- 2.4i 170 hp

Diesel engines, which account for 55 percent of S40 and V50 sales in Europe and 25 percent in total, are available in three versions:

- 1.6D 109 hp
- 2.0D 136 hp
- D5 180 hp

One change here is that during the second half of 2007 the D5 engine will also be available with a manual gearbox, offering the driver no less than 400 Nm of torque compared with the automatic transmission's 350 Nm. This engine is one of the first to meet the expected Euro 5 European exhaust emission levels.

The E85-powered (85 percent ethanol, 15 percent petrol) Flexifuel variant producing 125 hp is becoming increasingly competitive. The Volvo S40 and V50 Flexifuel are sold in nine European countries and in 2007 account for 8 percent of these models' total sales.

Now with active headlights

When it comes to safety, the new S40 comes with several new features:

- Optional Active Bending headlamps that swivel the light beam in the direction of the road when the driver turns the steering wheel.
- The car's hazard warning flashers are automatically activated when the airbags are deployed, a feature that helps attract the attention of other motorists in the event of a single-vehicle accident in the dark, for instance.
- The brake lights now have the EBL (Emergency Brake Lights) function, which causes them to flash rapidly when the driver stamps hard on the brake pedal, so as to effectively alert traffic behind the car.

Audio system of world class

The new Volvo S40 can be specified with an audio system of absolute world class.

The most advanced of the three systems, Premium Sound, has a digital amplifier from Alpine, Dolby® Pro Logic II Surround and loudspeakers from Dynaudio of Denmark.

In the High Performance and Premium Sound systems it is possible to play CD discs with music in MP3 or WMA format. This means that the CD changer can store several hundred music tracks and give the owner access to his or her own private home music library even while on the move. What is more, all the audio systems now come with an extra socket (AUX) for connection of other equipment such as a portable MP3 player. USB and iPod connectors are available as accessories.

One-third of total Volvo Cars sales

The sales target for the new Volvo S40 is 75,000 cars per year.

The USA is the largest single market with one-third of total sales, while in 2007 China will advance to second place owing to local production of about 8,000 Volvo S40s. The United Kingdom, Spain, Germany and Sweden are the largest S40 markets in Europe.

The target for the new Volvo V50 is 70,000 cars annually. Here 85 percent of sales are in Europe, with Germany, Sweden, Britain, Italy and the Netherlands being the largest individual markets.

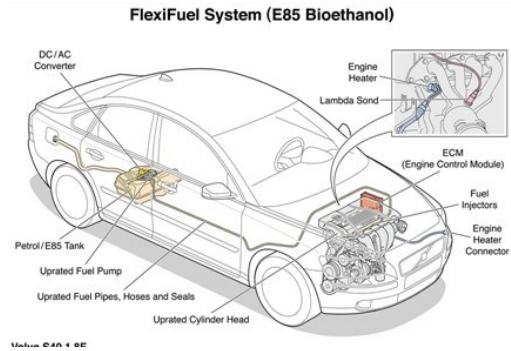
"The Volvo S40 and V50 not only account for one-third of our total sales volume in 2007; they also play a vital role in reinforcing the Volvo brand. The new models sharpen their competitiveness in every important area and I am convinced that together with the new C30, they will attract even more new and younger buyers," says Fredrik Arp.

Mots clés:

S40, Press Releases, Product News, 1995

La description et les faits repris dans le matériel de presse concernent la gamme de voitures internationale de Volvo Cars. Les équipements peuvent être optionnels. Les spécifications peuvent varier en fonction du pays et peuvent être modifiées sans préavis.

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