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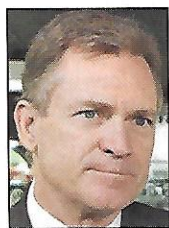
licize new products and promote our brand. Utilizing auto shows and outside events are not either-or propositions however," Chevrolet said in a statement to *Automotive News*. "When used in concert, they can be powerful approaches to reaching our audience and achieving positive brand opinion."

Kentucky Derby

Organizers of the Detroit auto show point to the numbers to prove that automakers still see it as an important launch pad.

Detroit's 2016 show, for instance, was home to 53 worldwide introductions of production vehicles and concepts, up from 38 in 2012. And 2013 was its best year in terms of global unveilings in the last five years, when automakers debuted 61 products and concepts.

But with so many brands competing for the spotlight, it's understandable that some feel it's to their benefit to unveil products early in addition to having them displayed on the floor, says Rod Alberts, executive director of the North American International Auto Show.



Alberts: Shows get coverage.

Alberts, who likens competitive automakers to Kentucky Derby horses, says he has no issues with Buick and Mercedes staging their own events. He just doesn't want every brand to do it.

"In my mind, it's still a product of the show," Alberts said of the early unveilings. "We still come out on top, and we still get the coverage."

Although brands want to cut through the clutter with early product unveilings to get a leg up in the coverage race, one longtime PR pro says this can make life rough for the journalists they're relying on to spread the word.

Jason Vines, a former PR executive for Chrysler, Nissan and Ford who was instrumental in the planning process for auto shows, says Chrysler popularized the practice in the mid-1990s. He heard from some reporters that the extra time spent covering events before press days made shows longer and wore them out.

"At Chrysler, we were the guiltiest of all parties early on. Now, it seems like everybody is trying to one-up the other," Vines told *Automotive News*. "Part of me says that's good; competition is good. But don't do it at the expense of journalists."

No wrong way

Alberts believes brands that launch early lose some of the ex-



Chevrolet, which unveiled the 2016 Camaro at Detroit's Belle Isle Park, says auto shows and outside events can work as a marketing tandem.

With global debuts, Nissan makes the most of Miami

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MIAMI — Nissan felt Miami was an ideal spot to reveal the Rogue because it's a prime market to reach Hispanic buyers.

Nissan is among the leading brands for Hispanic consumers, with a market share around 12 percent among that demographic, according to IHS. The Rogue is one of Nissan's top sellers to Hispanics and in the U.S. overall.

Rogue sales are up 14 percent through August, with 215,160 sold.

"This is one of the vehicles we're selling best for this market. This is a market that is not only growing, but is meant to grow even more," Nissan North America Chairman Jose Munoz told *Automotive News* after the Rogue's unveiling this month. "We believe that launching in Miami [is] a strong sign of commitment."

A Nissan spokeswoman said the brand has had success owning regional auto shows such as the Miami International Auto Show. Nissan had two global debuts in Miami this year — revealing the Rogue at a launch event the day before the show and the Sentra SR Turbo

the following day for press on the show floor.

The global unveilings were welcome news for Rick Baker, the show's manager.

Baker, who also is president of the South Florida Automobile Dealers Association, said the show was moved up from its traditional November dates to September because of construction at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

The November time slot meant Miami lost out on global launches to the Los Angeles Auto Show. He remembers instances where manufacturers would only have displays on the opening weekend for his show before quickly removing them so they could be transported to Los Angeles.

This year, Miami hosted three global debuts — the two Nissan models and the Ford F-150 STX. The show plans to stick with the September time frame next year.

Baker said he doesn't mind if automakers debut products at outside venues during exclusive launch events in the city. As long as the vehicles make it to his show, he's fine.

"Give me a couple [global debuts] a year. It's all I want," Baker told *Automotive News*. "Keep me on the map." **AN**