

Testing the cars

Written by Administrator

Monday, 11 August 2008 22:13 - Last Updated Friday, 09 October 2009 07:02

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Introduction

Testing the cars – how to decide which car is the best for me.

Buying an old car is sometimes very costly, as you may spend thousands of dollars later, on fixing parts. If you are thinking of buying a new car then read this article;

When you are buying a new car, the next 5 years are covered by warranty, you don't have to pay the mechanic for the next couple of years for the pink slip and a new car is safer, not only do they definitely have airbags but they also carry funny abbreviations such as:

? (ESP) Electronic Stability Program

? (ABS) Anti-lock Brake System

? (TCS) Traction Control System

? (EBC) Engine Braking Control

Breaking and car stability is controlled by computer.

Articles about testing cars are published in auto magazines which most ordinary drivers don't read, and when they do see them it is at the most random places such as a dentist or GP, the magazine being around 3 years old. The car has not been tested by a layman driver who is just driving to work, shopping and schools and the joy of driving is not their hobby.

The articles about new cars on the market which have been written for magazines, are often written from the perspective of a person who is a professional driver.

Further, the articles in the magazines are written by employees of the magazine. It is important to note this, as we know that magazines often fund themselves through advertising revenue, in this case, the revenue, is coming from the advertisements car companies place in these magazines.

Therefore we may observe that a possible "conflict of interest", could cause the authors of these articles to record data which is biased in its results.

When the layman driver reads these articles, she/he will read details about carburettors,

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injections, torque or that the car could have a 77kW of peak power, and other chilling unknowns. Therefore it's mostly about the things an ordinary driver does not understand correctly and therefore, isn't interested in. To read that the car can reach 180km/h in 10 seconds is fantastic especially for me as a driver as I can only drive 110km/h in Australia. I am being facetious here!

On one side of the barricade are marketing managers, car magazines and advertisement agencies that are living in a different world from us ordinary drivers, who function on the other side of this barricade.

Just look at the television advertisements for new cars, the ads made by advertisement agencies and marketing managers!!!

There are TV advertisements which show cars being driven at a speed which would put the driver straight in gaol. One can see on TV how cars are driven on roofs, in open oceans and do other things which look like something out of science fiction.

Not so long ago I saw an advertisement for a Ford which appeared to be a speeding boat. Just for a joke I went to a Ford dealer and asked if I could take a car for a test drive. The dealer and I were happily driving along, when he noticed me trying to drive onto a beach with a small marina.... It is a pity that you did not see his face when I told him that, "yesterday I had seen this car in an advertisement in water and I loved it and I would like to test it!!! He looked horrified and I said: "Do not tell me that it's a lie, advertising couldn't be misleading, therefore if this is just a joke could I assume that your ad saying xy years warranty, reliability etc of this car could also be a lie?".

By the way, do you remember the Vodafone advertisement for the red sim card? When you buy a red Vodafone sim card and you are in an aeroplane, your economy class changes to super duper first class, with big seats and space and lovely airhostesses with champagne.

After seeing this add on the tele, I went to visit a Vodafone shop and requested a sim card which could change my aeroplane seats. I also enquired further as to whether this plan works on international flights as well as just interstate and whether it is just for Qantas or does it work on all airlines. I finished my enquiry with the comment, "Do not tell me that this is a lie....." The poor company managers totally freak out about my angle of enquiry into the promises they promote with the purchase of their product. Interestingly enough, I have noticed that this TV advertisement has disappeared from our TV screens.

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I would like to know, what is an ordinary everyday driver to you, what is important when YOU buy a car. Do you ask your friends? Do you prefer to buy cars from the same company as before? And what are your experiences with buying new cars?

Please send me your comments or experiences with buying a new car to my email car@coleoptera.org

We will try to test a car for at least 1 week (7days) in Sydney, by just doing the usual stuff any family does such as shopping, going to work, taking the kids to and from school, and in peak hour traffic, and for 3 days going out of the city to test the car on Hume Highway. We are trying to test how economical and comfortable the car is for everyday use and what we think are the pros and cons for each model.

The first problem that we find is the consumption in the city, on the highway when the car is going at a constant speed without hills, big turns and having to stop regularly, when you put cruise control on 110km/h and drive 2-3 hours, (e.g. Škoda – diesel, fully loaded with me, 4 members of my family and 20kg of luggage, used only 4.6 litres of diesel per 100km, which means that we all go from Sydney to Canberra and back just for \$42 = 1 person \$8 for 600km this is really amazing!).

Driving in the city is a completely different thing, constant stopping, changing the speed, for example when you get stuck in a traffic jam you have to instantly stop and then need to accelerate again, which eats so much petrol to the point where its unbelievable, because the car is equipped with a computer you can see the consumption of petrol/diesel in real time. I have noticed how the car in a few seconds has shown consumption of 55 litres per 100km momentarily. Therefore the same journey made in heavy traffic could cost you triple against your driving in the middle of the night.

Even the pros and cons are not easy to establish because everybody has different taste, an example being that my children love the big glass sunroof in the Škoda Roomster and the 6 CD player. However my wife on the other hand is not worried about the 1 or 6 CD player but is more concerned that the sunroof only had the net cover and didn't completely block the sun. Where as, for me it is very important, especially in this time to have a lockable petrol tank, in order to guard against petrol theft or silly pranksters who may put sugar in my petrol tank for their own amusement.

Therefore after 10 days of testing each car my article about each car tested will show the results of the test drive written in layman's terms, easy to read and understand. We will not write 20 pages of results, but we will write down what we consider to be the main and important bits of information in a short popular article