

# newsworthy trends

## Accessories Steer Car Buyers

(NAPSA)—If you're like many consumers, your next auto purchase will be driven by what you plan to do *to* your vehicle—not just what you plan to do with it.

Whether it's a drop-down DVD player, new wheels or upgrading to a more powerful engine, experts say consumers tend to base their purchases on the accessories a vehicle can be outfitted with and how easy the vehicle is to personalize. Today's hot accessories include performance parts, wheels, mobile electronics, suspension components and exterior styling products—and the hottest cars and trucks are built with these accessories in mind.

So which new vehicles are easiest to accessorize? The "Best Truck Design," "Best SUV Design" and "Best All-New or Redesigned Vehicle" were recently voted on by designers, marketers and members in the Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA). According to SEMA, any car can be accessorized, but here's a look at some of the easiest to add to.

• **Best All-New or Redesigned Vehicle:** The Mustang has long been a favorite among the accessorizing set, and the 2005 Ford Mustang won this division, hands down. The new model is fixed with a straight axle, which gives it the potential for more horsepower. "The new Mustang was born to be modified," said Austin Craig, of Steeda—a Mustang parts manufacturer. "It's easy to modify, whether you're a professional or a do-it-yourselfer. When you have a great platform to work



**The 2005 Ford Mustang was voted one of the most "accessory friendly" vehicles.**

from, like the Mustang, it's easy to improve on it."

• **Best SUV:** The 2005 Chevrolet Tahoe rode off with top honors. "There are just so many things out there for the Chevy Tahoe," said Rich Brown, SEMA member voter and Engineer, American Racing Equipment. "You can get a variety of products—everything from wheels, tires and grilles to running boards and lift kits. A customer can really customize the Tahoe to fit their individual taste."

• **Best Truck:** The new Ford F-150 has received more than 30 awards since its introduction in 2004, including this one from SEMA. "It's obvious that a lot of thought was given during the general design of the vehicle to the potential to install certain types of accessories," said Chris Shumacher, product design manager at Lund International. "I think a lot of thought was put into the vehicle in terms of the ability to mount things like running boards using existing factory holes. One of the big drivers for us is ease of installation."

For more information, visit [www.joythedrive.com](http://www.joythedrive.com).