

newsworthy trends

American Convertibles Making A Comeback

(NAPSA)—For the first time in more than 35 years, two American convertible icons are side-by-side in dealer showrooms—and together they're enabling one manufacturer to remain the industry leader in convertible sales.

According to industry experts, the timing couldn't be better, as convertible sales are considered extremely healthy. R.L. Polk & Co. estimates that 2001 convertible sales totaled 310,595, up more than 10 percent over 2000. ASC, a leading partner for specialty vehicle and open-air development, says that 2001 marked the first time in 30 years that sales surpassed 300,000 vehicles.

Not surprisingly, when the mercury begins to climb, ragtop sales start to run hot. Approximately 40 percent of convertible sales occur during the summer months. However, warm weather states don't own exclusive rights to riding with the top down. The top three cities for convertible sales are Los Angeles, New York and Miami, followed by San Francisco, Orlando, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Washington, D.C. and Dallas.

From the deluxe Mustang Convertible starting at \$23,625 to the premium Thunderbird roadster with a removable top at \$39,455, Ford makes the ragtop experience available to fit any lifestyle. Looking for power under the hood? Check out the new 390 horsepower SVT Mustang Cobra Con-



Ford Mustang and Thunderbird remain the “living legends” among American convertibles.

vertible. Its new, high-quality cloth material—found on exotics in Europe—adds to the top's durability and provides better sound insulation for the interior.

“Mustang is again the best-selling convertible in the country and, with Thunderbird in our lineup, Ford once again dominates convertible sales,” says Ford Division President Steve Lyons. “These automotive icons epitomize America's love affair with convertibles.”

While many things have changed in the last 35 years, customers still list “fun to drive” as the top reason for buying a convertible.

“With dramatic styling, rear-wheel drive, available V-8 and great sound systems,” adds Lyons, “Mustang and Thunderbird convertibles provide a feeling of freedom that goes with summertime fun.”