



14 July 2014 | Issue 137 | WHAT THE PAPERS SAY...

Dacia celebrates 25,000th handover

"In just 18 months Dacia, the darling of the European car market, has blazed quite a trail in the UK," says DieselCar.

"And now, not long since cruising past 10,000 sales, it's already popping a few more corks of high quality - but affordable - bubbles, after handing over its 25,000th model."

The landmark is evidence that the firm is "taking on the establishment and winning", says the mag.

"The 'shockingly affordable' brand proudly makes an enemy of the unnecessary, offering high-quality, spacious and well-built cars at affordable prices. Clearly, after racking up an awe-inspiring 15,000 extra sales in just eight months, it's a winning combination.

"With its sales still soaring, it's setting a pace which others are struggling to match. In fact, even now it's already sitting pretty on an order bank of a further



3,500, and is hunting down established players like Mazda, Mini and Volvo in the sales charts.

"Dacia, Europe's fastest-growing car brand, is also the most successful UK retail car launch in history. Its 'pay for what you value' ethos, offering British buyers exactly what they need is clearly striking a chord."

Diesel
17 June

Dacia pulls its weight

The Dacia Logan MCV did itself proud in WhatCar? magazine's Tow Car True MPG test.

The "lightest and cheapest" of the six cars on test, the Logan is "something of a bargain, even in range-topping Laureate spec". WhatCar? continues: "It also promises rock-bottom running costs, not least because of its remarkable claimed Government combined mpg figure.

"With a low kerbweight of just 1,165kg and a legal towing limit of 1,150kg, the Logan is better suited to pulling lightweight trailers. We matched it to one loaded up to weigh 800kg.

"Driving away from our base at the MIRA test track and out on to the A5, the Logan pulled up to speed well despite the extra weight of the trailer. A downchange from fifth gear to fourth was needed on



inclines, but the engine's 162lb/ft of pulling power meant it didn't feel laboured.

"Then we hit the M42. The Dacia sat quite happily at 60mph in fifth and felt stable and settled. The return leg on the A444 incorporated several changes of speed limit, which showed the need for patience when accelerating, but there was no need to thrash the engine.

"The result? The Dacia returned 34.3mpg when towing, an impressive benchmark for the others to beat."

WHATCAR?
August

Good advice from Honest John

A Telegraph reader writes in to Honest John to ask for some advice for his son, who is replacing his old family estate.

"With two children and a big mortgage, he can't afford very much, but he needs a good, reliable workhorse. He's not worried about lots of toys.

"Having just read about a Dacia with a seven-year warranty, I suggested he take a look. Is that a good

choice, or should he look at something else?"

Honest John replies: "The Dacia comes with a standard three-year warranty. Extending it to seven years or 100,000 miles costs £850. But a Logan MCV 1.5 dCi Laureate remains the cheapest new diesel estate he can buy. And there are cheaper, lower spec versions, lacking things like radio, air-con and electric windows. Spare wheels are extra on all of them."

Telegraph
8 July

Dacia defines value for money

Britain has "fallen" for Dacia cars since their arrival in mid-2012, says the Daily Record's Peter Keenan, who gets behind the wheel of the "carefully packaged" Sandero Stepway.

"The Stepway further entices once you appreciate the cabin offers a lot more room than most cars in its class - yet costs thousands less than the cheapest.

"Another thing to notice about this soft-roader is its chunky off-road looks. It appears ready for anything even if, in fact, it isn't, despite the raised ride height and scuff plates in satin chrome.

"This is all in keeping with the car's cheeky-chappy air, which the Stepway legend plastered along the front doors does nothing to dispel."

The car is "solid and dependable", Keenan highlighting this praise especially for the interior plastics.

"Renault donates lots of parts and technology to Dacia and the Stepway shows off the benefits of this generosity on the clutter-free, thoughtfully set-out dashboard.

"It's relatively easy to get a decent driving position and the oil burner is no slouch once up to speed, while the ride and handling are more than adequate.

"The large windows give the interior an airy feel and all occupants an excellent view. The boot opens with a key, but offers plenty of room - more than enough for a weekly supermarket shop.

"Motoring costs for the dCi 90 Laureate are motoring poetry, with fuel economy and insurance costs on a par with the best of its rivals."

Keenan concludes: "This car could be the dictionary definition of value for money, given the price, spacious interior and competitive running costs."

Daily Record
20 June

Logan dares to look back

The Logan's entry price, "and this is true," stresses Giles Smith in the Sunday Times, is £6,995. "Even one of the top-spec Laureate models, which I drove, at £9,795 is almost £2,000 cheaper than anything roughly equivalent by Skoda, and more than £2,500 less than a Seat estate. With seats folded, the Logan offers close to the load space of a Volvo V70 – yet at little more than the price of a Volvo's wing mirror. Talk about 'budget-priced room'. You almost expect to open the back and find Lenny Henry in there, having a kip.

"It's arresting to think that while other manufacturers worry over app interfaces and the best ways forward for infotainment streaming, Dacia is fondly reimagining a world in which you don't even get a radio. OK, the base-model Logan does come with the wiring for one. Nevertheless – no radio! You couldn't make a car stand more boldly against the prevailing culture, short of fastening a horse to the front of it. My dad would have loved it."

He continues: "There's a temptation with the entry-level car to say the price is the answer to any



question you might care to ask about it. What is it like to drive? About £6,995. How are the brakes? About £6,995. Is it any good? About £6,995. At the same time we're not talking about salvaged scrap. We're talking about good-quality Renault parts that happen to be a bit last generation. "Or not even that: the perfectly acceptable 0.9-litre TCe 90 engine in my test model is also in the current Renault Clio.

"Everything considered, I like the Logan. I liked the way it drove, I liked what it stood for and I liked what it harked back to: a less precious and simpler time."

by Giles Smith
THE SUNDAY TIMES
15 June

Behind the scenes at Dacia

"Cut-price car brand Dacia was a sales sensation in the UK last year," says Auto Express, as it heads to Romania to find out the secrets behind its success. "How did a relatively unknown manufacturer from one of the strictest former Eastern Bloc countries pull off such a successful assault on the UK car market?" In 1999, Renault bought a controlling stake in the firm and "set about transforming the brand into what it is today".

Visiting Dacia's "relatively new" design studio in Bucharest, Auto Express notes that the "development of homegrown talent is still key" to the brand. Despite being brought into line with Renault's global vision, design chief Geoff Gardiner has "no illusions" what Dacia stands for: "You get a lot for your money from Dacias. They are robust, with a Germanic feel."

The magazine's next visit is the firm's engineering and testing headquarters, located in Titu. Speaking to Sorin Buse, General Manager, the magazine learns Dacia "follows the same standards and procedures at Renault worldwide". "The centre is a base for a number of endurance tests," including door-opening robots and extreme conditions testing. "Both are relatively new for Dacia and show the brand's continuing modernisation."

The magazine concludes: "What we've seen here in Romania explains exactly why Dacia has done so well since its reintroduction to the UK. It's entirely comfortable as a brand knowing that it isn't up against premium offerings like Audi, and those involved know that it's value for money that counts with this manufacturer.

"But it's also continually striving to improve and give customers an affordable car that far exceeds their expectations. Something, you could argue, it does better than any other brand."

by Auto Express

14 July

Duster brushes off month of mishap

Diesel Car's Duster has had a "rough month" after running out of fuel and suffering a punctured tyre in quick succession.

It remains "loveable" though to Adam Sloman as its journeys pounding up and down the highways and byways of Britain have otherwise "passed without incident".

He writes: "Thankfully the Duster's load-lugging abilities remain as good as ever and this month I've pressed it into service as a tyre transporter, with the Dacia swallowing up two complete sets of Falken tyres



for two of my MGs. The eight tyres easily fitted in the back of the car once the seats were dropped, yet again underlining the Duster's versatility."

Diesel Car
July

Dacia defies slow market

European car market sales experienced a two-decade low last year but one marque bucked the trend, the Financial Times reports.

"Renault's no-frills Romanian brand has chimed with belt-tightening consumers in recent years to defy a sluggish European car market," says the paper.

"Sales of Europe's fastest growing car brand rose 24 per cent in the first six months of the year, making

up the entire 4.7 per cent increase in the Renault Group's total global sales."

Jérôme Stoll, Chief Performance Officer, said: "Dacia has made important progress in Europe and is the fastest growing brand in the region. As a result, Renault is able to diminish the impact of the decline in our main emerging markets and to maintain the group's positive momentum."

Financial Times
8 July

Easy access motor

"If you've got a £660 deposit and can stump up £110 a month, you can have a brand-new Dacia," Quentin Willson tells Sunday Mirror readers. "Target Car Leasing's 47-month personal lease on a Sandero 1.2

Access is one of the most affordable out there. You'll get an uncomplicated and decent family workhorse with a three-year warranty, low ownership cost and 50mpg. Sounds like a good deal."

Sunday Mirror
15 June