Unit 4 – Week 1

1 post 75 words

2 post 75 words

Repost….

Interactive 2: Critique the work of another learner. Do you agree with their assessment of that company’s environmental policy? Argue for or against based on this company’s car/truck production. The 2nd learner as per usual

1 post

75 words

Main Post wk1:Unit4 - Discussion Board

NaKeisha Washington

Honda

1. What are the highlights of their commitment to the environment??

"Honda's diverse portfolio of alternative fuel vehicles has included numerous technologies to improve fuel efficiency and reduce CO2 emissions including the first EV leases in California (1997 Honda EV Plus), the retail introduction of America's first hybrid (1999 Honda Insight), delivery of the first fuel-cell electric vehicle in the U.S. (2002 Honda FCX), five generations of the Civic Natural Gas (first introduced in 1998) and the first gasoline-powered vehicles in the hands of consumers to meet stricter emissions standards. Honda also has led the Union of Concerned Scientists' (UCS) rankings of overall vehicle environmental performance since 2000, and a Honda vehicle has been included on the list of America's greenest vehicles from the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) for the past 16 years; the Honda Civic Natural Gas has a combined EPA fuel economy rating of 31 mpg1‡ and an estimated fuel cost savings of up to 40 percent compared to a typical gasoline-powered compact car".

2. What steps has this company taken to date to show that it is on track with its new environmental policies?

The company has taken the steps to ensure their vehicles emit "cleaner air" and environmental safety features. In 2002 Honda offered free vehicle inspections to its customers in an effort to reduce environmental hazards. Honda has also installed a feature in its vehicles known as "econ" button which aids in fuel consumption by adjusting the performance of the engine and transmission.

3. Are these commitments universal or are they solely U.S based?

These committments are universal being that Honda is based out of Japan.

4. In your opinion, what impact do the new and stringent government laws have on the auto industry? Explain.

I think the new laws have a major impact on the auto industry because they are mandated to make theses changes to all of their vehicles. In the past the features were options on selected vehicles and were normally higher in cost. Now the industry is forced to make these a requirement as it should be in order to improve the environment.

5. Are there any links between government bailouts and new environmental leanings by the auto industry?

In my opinion there are definitely links between the government bailots and the new environmental leanings by the auto industry. Accoding to Zywicki (2011), General Motors was on the verge of lossing thousands of jobs. In an effort to prevent the losses they agreed to the bailout. Both parties were able to gain something, the Obama adminstration was able to mandate the auto industry to comply to the rules of the environmental policy and the auto industry was bailed out of bankruptcy. According to Zywicki (2011), it proves that big businessess and the government collaboratively support one another.

Zywicki, T. (2011). The auto bailout and the rule of law. National Affairs, 23(7) 41

http://www.honda.com/newsandviews/article.aspx?g=environment&id=7725-en.retrieved.05/05/14

2 post

75 words

Steve Frazier

Unit 4 Week 7 Main DB Post Body

General Motors

Highlights of General Motors (GM) commitment to the environment

General Motors has made major commitments to making their cars fuel efficient and also looking for new technologies and alternatives to ensure the environment is protected in the future. Following are the high points of GM’s commitment to these areas ("GM and the Environment," 2014):

\* Fuel economy

o 2014 Chevrolet Volt: EPA estimated 98MPGe (electric); 35 MPG city, 40 hwy (gas)

o 2014 Buick LaCrosse with eAssist technology (EPA estimated mpg 25 city, 36 hwy)

o 2014 Chevrolet Spark (EPA estimated mpg 31 city, 39 hwy) ("GM and the Environment," 2014).

\* Biofuels

o E85 ethanol powered vehicles

o Compressed natural gas

o Liquefied petroleum gas

\* Light electrification

o Light electrification enhances fuel efficiency up to 25%

o Shuts off fuel during breaking

o Stops and restarts motor during stop and go city driving

\* Electric vehicles with extended range

o Up to 35 miles of electric driving and then gas powered engine kicks in

o With this feature average MPGe is 98

o These vehicles are rated 33+ mpg on gas power

\* Pure electric

o Range is 82 miles

o Can get an 80% charge in 20 minutes

o Can save up to $150/month in fuel costs

\* Hydrogen fuel cell vehicles

o Releases water vapor instead of CO2 emissions

o The test fleet has been driven over 3 million miles by customers ("GM and the Environment," 2014).

Tracking GM to monitor their progress on their environmental policies

It is quite easy to say or tell customers or the government what they want to hear. It is something else to then actually do. Looking back at a report GM put out in 2013 it would appear that they are doing what they are saying as the following were in the 2012 Sustainability Report ("Tracking GM," 2013). They projected that by 2017 there would be over 500,000 GM vehicles on the road with some sort of electrification and are well on the way with the Chevrolet Volt, Chevrolet Spark EV, and the 2014 Cadillac ELR ("Tracking GM," 2013). Doubling the models with greater than 40 mpg highway or better by 2017, which they are well on their way with most vehicles today in the mid to high 30’s mpg in 2014 ("Tracking GM," 2013), ("GM and the Environment," 2014). Another goal in that report was to reduce average United States (US) fleet emissions by 15% by 2016 and 27% by 2020 in Europe ("Tracking GM," 2013). By looking back at what GM has said it would do and then seeing it being done is a great method of tracking and appears to be on track.

Are these commitments universal or solely United States (US) based?

It would appear that there are indeed different standards or goals being set for different geographical areas ("Tracking GM," 2013). In the 2012 Sustainability Report different goals were set for the US and Europe ("Tracking GM," 2013). On the GM Canada website it states that GM Canada is committed to assess all aspects of its operations in regards to environmental impacts to comply with applicable laws, regulations, and other requirements ("GM Canada," n.d.). While the GM Canada did not get into specifics GM in China is making concerted efforts to help the Chinese control a currently uncontrollable situation which is rampant pollution. The first step taken was a three year, three stage program carried out called the GM Restoring Nature’s Habitat Project which involves efforts to improve ecology, protect biodiversity, and educate the public on preserving the environment ("GM International," 2013). In China GM has also created the GM Center for Advanced Science and Research in Shanghai worth $250 million dollars to explore alternative fuels and advanced propulsion systems in China ("GM China and the Environment," 2014). GM appears to be making a rigorous effort to create fuel efficient and environmentally friendly cars worldwide from the references above. The different status of each area will determine what can be done, i.e., it will be hard to introduce electric cars effectively for some time in China as there is not the same access to electricity as there is in the US.

This researcher’s opinion on the impact of new and stringent government laws on the auto industry

It is the opinion of this researcher that any new government laws whether they are severe or lenient have and will have a significant impact on the auto industry. Further, these new laws which are generally establishing new standards for fuel efficiency and CO2 emissions should be embraced by the original equipment manufacturers and suppliers and used as a competitive advantage ("Government, Laws, and the Environment," 2010). There are many people, especially in the US who have serious concerns about the environment and this is an excellent way to spin something that by law they are required to do and take credit for it. It seems that the leaders in environmental protection in the auto industry will have a competitive advantage in the future, and the companies that excel and exceed the bare requirements can use that as a dynamic marketing too. This researcher not only believes that they are good for the general public but also for the manufacturers as they will be more efficient and their businesses will have a long, strong life.

Are there links between government bailouts and new environmental leanings by the auto industry?

From the research done it would appear that there was very little impact on the auto industry regarding the environment in relation to the bailout. The largest impact was made by President Obama in a speech in Minnesota in 2011 where he stated that it was time that GM stopped just making pickups and SUVs and we will be telling them they have to pursue electric cars (Flaherty, 2013). The research seems to indicate that of the good intentions of the bailout it was probably done more for political reasons and political impact than anything else ("GM Bailout Ethics," n.d.). It would appear that the major winners of the bailout were; certain stakeholders who did not want a Chapter 11 Bankruptcy, the unions, the state of Michigan, and the government as they looked like the knight on the white horse coming to the rescue (Ikenson, 2011). Even though the government has taken many good steps as referenced in above paragraphs to force the auto industry to be more environmentally responsible it would appear that the bailout did not have much impact. This researcher has travelled to Michigan numerous times in the last several years and the state is still in chaos as far as unemployment and also infrastructure as there is not money to fix anything or even to educate their children properly (S. Frazier, personal communication, Winter, 2014). The bailout will be analyzed for years to come but does not seem to have had an impact on the environment or even on the hardest hit state, Michigan.

Unit 4 DB Post References

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