

AUTOMOTIVE

Supercars increase in sales, along with the number of global billionaires

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Image courtesy of McLaren

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

The United States made up 30 percent of the worldwide total for ultra-luxury automobile demand last year, according to a [new report from Jato](#).

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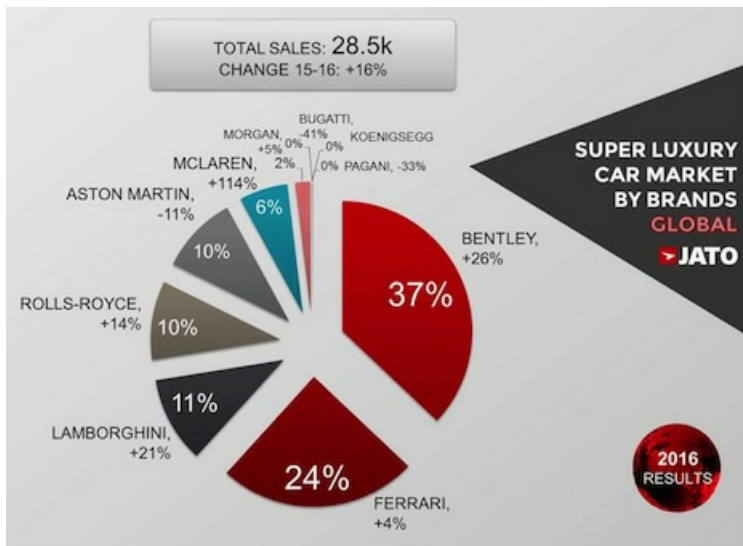
As the number of billionaires on a global level grow, due to investments and advancements in technology, sales of ultra-luxury vehicles are on the rise. From 2015 to 2016, supercars sales grew by almost 16 percent.

"The latest Forbes list of billionaires showed a record year for the richest people on earth," said Felipe Munoz, analytical expert at Jato, Italy. "According to the publication, there were 2,043 billionaires around the world, which is 233 more people or 13 percent higher than the total number of 2016 list.

"It is the first time the Forbes list exceeds 2,000 10-figure-fortunes," he said. "In fact the total number of billionaires have doubled since the year 2010. Technology, communications and retail are the main sources of the wealth of the richest people on earth."

Billionaires and supercars

China is one of the biggest markets that is driving the billionaire and ultra-luxury car sales growth. The country is responsible for the highest number of new billionaires last year.



Graph from Jato

Billionaires around the world are seeing a particularly positive year so far, with 1,037 individuals increasing their net worth, according to another study from Hurun.

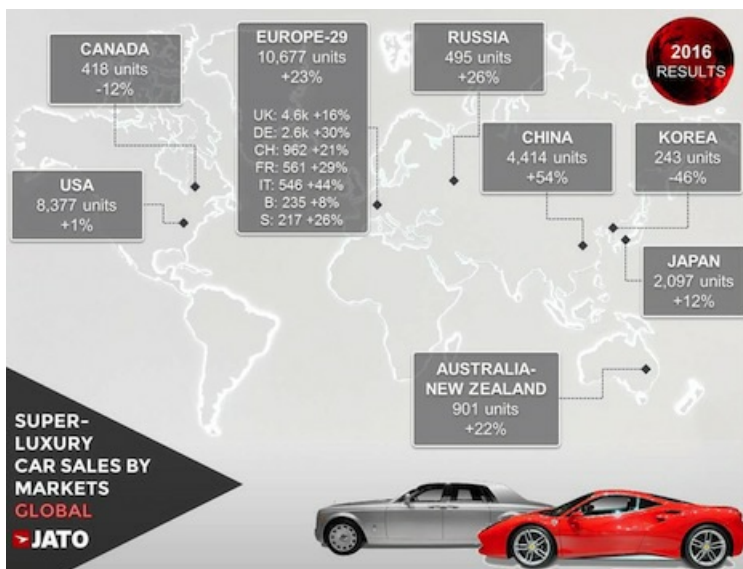
Hurun's "Global Rich List 2017" shows that 343 individuals joined the world's billionaire list as established persons saw their wealth grow. However, 740 people saw a decrease in funds and 276 dropped off the list from last year completely ([see more](#)).

The United States continues to be the largest market for supercars, however the market only grew by 1.1 percent. The United Kingdom on the other hand grew by 15.6 percent and 4,600 units.

However, China remained as the second in the largest supercar market with demand growing by more than half with a 54 percent increase and 4,400 units. Germany and Japan also both secured a spot in the top five with double-digit growth.

Automakers and sustainability

Super luxury cars are defined as extremely high-end automotive brands such as Bentley, Aston Martin, Bugatti, McLaren, Lamborghini and Ferrari. Jato puts the cap on the number of these brands at 10.



Graph from Jato

With growing consumer interest in sustainability, nine out of the 10 super-luxury auto brands have introduced some sort of hybrid or electric capability. For instance, McLaren expects more than half of its inventory be labeled as hybrid and Ferrari is likely to introduce a hybrid soon.

British automaker Bentley Motors also recently shared with attendees of the Geneva Motor Show its ambitions to define the electric luxury automotive segment with a new concept vehicle.

On March 7, Bentley unveiled its electric concept vehicle the EXP 12 Speed 6e, a model that evokes the automaker's

levels of craftsmanship and refinement paired with electric performance and grand touring capabilities. As all sectors make moves to become more sustainable, the automotive industry has been heavily pressured to adapt to changes in consumer expectation and demand by embracing alternative fuel sources ([see more](#)).

"From the 10 brands that make part of this exclusive category, nine of them have already announced electrification/hybrid plans," Mr. Munoz said. "McLaren aims the hybrids to become more than half of its cars by 2022.

"Bentley has just presented the EXP 12 Speed 6e Concept full-electric car. Lamborghini's CEO considers electrification as an area of great attention' for them," he said. "Meanwhile Rolls-Royce is considering a plug-in hybrid version for its first SUV, to hit the market shortly.

"The next generation Aston Martin Rapide may go all-electric, and Ferarri's boss Sergio Marchionne said in Geneva this year that the production hybrid cars could arrive quickly."

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