

COMMERCE

Bentley's showrooms, Flying Spur propelled Q1 units sold 25pc

April 12, 2013



By ERIN SHEA

British automaker Bentley Motors reported a 25 percent increase in units sold during the first quarter of 2013 due to the release of the Flying Spur and eight new dealerships.

[Sign up now](#)

[Luxury Daily](#)

The automaker announced that global deliveries to customers in the first quarter of 2013 increased by 25 percent to a total of 2,212 vehicles, compared to 2012's first quarter sale of 1,759 vehicles. Bentley's unique position in the luxury auto market could also explain why its sales increased.

"As high-end as they are, these Bentley vehicles are understated and they are for everyday use," said Milton Pedraza, CEO of the [Luxury Institute](#), New York. "I do think that putting out new vehicles has been fabulous [for Bentley], but it is because the cars are everyday cars.

"They are not showy," he said. "They are high-performance cars that can be used everyday."

Mr. Pedraza is not affiliated with Bentley, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Bentley](#) did not respond by press deadline.

Securing a position

In addition to selling more vehicles, Bentley introduced a new vehicle to its lineup and opened new dealerships in the first quarter.

The automaker did a three-city tour for the launch of the Flying Spur in the United States.



Flying Spur

Bentley partnered with American Express Publishing's Departures magazine to host a series of three "One Night Only" events in the U.S., the first of which took place March 26 in New York. Other cities include Miami and Los Angeles ([see story](#)).

Furthermore, the automaker's sales were likely increased by the price range of vehicles that put it in an ideal spot in the luxury auto market.

"Bentley brought down the price [of a vehicle] from ridiculous to high value," Mr. Pedraza said. "That combination of eye candy, high performance and everyday use makes them successful.

"They are smart cars," he said. "They are sensible, but also extremely addictive and that is a wonderful combination."

Staying strong

Many luxury automakers experienced an increase in profits last year.

Automakers such as BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Audi, Lexus, Porsche, Bentley Motors and Rolls-Royce Motor Cars reported above-average sales for 2012.

This was partly due to marketing campaigns as well as an attractive buying economy for affluent consumers, experts said.

Also, these sales records likely resulted from strong branding efforts and signal an

increase in competition for attention ([see story](#)).

In addition to its growth in sales, Bentley noted that the U.S. remains its largest market. During the first quarter, 632 Bentley vehicles were delivered to customers in North and South America, more than any other region.

Since the bounce back of the U.S. economy, affluent consumers are now ready to confidently spend again. This attitude helps high-end automakers such as Bentley.

"The U.S. economy is so resilient that it continues to be the best market for luxury goods and services," Mr. Pedraza said.

"We have such a large critical mass of wealthy people," he said. "We have more multi-billionaires than anywhere in the world and they are confident."

Final take

Erin Shea, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

© Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.