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GEORGE GARDNER / Staff

Workers assemble X-Series vehicles at the BMW factory near Greer. Sales of the X3 soared 64.5 percent in April while X5 sales were up 1.6 percent.

Auto sales rebound across most makes

BMW U.S. sales up 9 percent

By Jenny Munro
STAFF WRITER
jmunro@greenvillenews.com

The U.S. auto industry, which was decimated last year, continued to improve in April – with even Chrysler seeing a year-over-year increase in sales during the month.

Chrysler Group said its sales were up 25 percent last month, its first double-digit increase in nearly five years. Officials said the sales increase is a signal that the turnaround plans are starting to take hold. Sales also were up 3 percent from March.

BMW Group reported U.S. sales of 21,111 vehicles in April, up 9 percent from the same month a year ago. In the first four months of the year, BMW's sales were up 7.9 percent over a year ago.

"April's positive results are an achievement keeping in mind we have two high-volume models in short supply due to the end of their lifecycles," said Jim O'Donnell, president of BMW of North America. "Both the X3 and 5 Series are in transition. The all-new X3 arrives at the end of this year, and we anticipate strong demand."

The BMW plant in Greer is completing a $750 million expansion in anticipation of the production of the X3, which is being moved from Austria this year. The South Carolina plant also produces the X5 sports activity vehicle and the X6 sports activity coupe.

Sales of the X3 soared 64.5 percent in April, while X5 sales were up 1.6 percent and X6 sales dropped 9.2 percent.

Ford Motor Co. reported its sales rose by 25.5 percent to 162,996 vehicles. General Motors Co. also posted a sales gain of 6.4 percent.

When the Pontiac, Hummer, Saturn and Saab brands it has closed or sold are factored out, sales rose by 20 percent.

Nissan reported a 35 percent increase in the U.S. in April, while Hyundai sales rose 30 percent. Honda's U.S. sales rose 12.5 percent, while Mercedes' U.S. sales were up 25.1 percent in April.

Toyota said its U.S. sales rose 24 percent.