

Automobile industry races backwards

By Valentine Biscarrat
Profile Editor

Car companies threatened by stagnant economy.

As most of you know, America is experiencing a recession.

One of government's main concerns right now is the automobile industry.

If the automobile industries go out of business, over 3 million people will lose their jobs.

Already, 2 million jobs have been lost in this

recession, and if 3 million more are lost, America will come upon one of its worst unemployment rates in years.

But what are the main reasons of the car companies losses?

"It is mainly because of dried up credit, high expenses and the lack of competitiveness in American car companies," Laguna Beach High School economics teacher Mark Alvarez said.

While banks have been going bankrupt, it has been more difficult for people to obtain credit.

Since Americans used

to buy cars through credit, car companies such as GM have been suffering. However, GM has also been struggling because of high wages and the new Japanese competition.

Before the Japanese car market arrived in the United States, GM, Chrysler and Ford didn't have to worry about competing for low prices with foreign car markets.

"As Hyundai, Toyota and Honda rushed to the American automobile market, the big three (Ford, GM and Chrysler) had to start worrying about the cost and efficiency of car

production," Alvarez said.

For example, Hyundai pays their labor force \$27.50 and GM pays their labor \$70.

Moreover, while it takes GM 4 hours to produce a car, it takes Hyundai only 2 hours to produce one because of their technologically-advanced factories.

As a result, Hyundai can produce more, and most importantly, cheaper cars.

The ultimate question is, why should we bail out the automobile companies if they can't even compete with foreign automobile

car markets?

"Because of the number of people who would be affected if the Big Three declared bankruptcy, some estimate that the ripple effect could mean 3 million people lose their jobs," Alvarez said.

As of now, The Big Three need to improve their reputations by continuing to develop more competitive and fuel efficient products.

They also need to cut costs such as expenses.

Overall, Chrysler sales have gone down 47%, GM sales have dropped 41% and Ford have fallen 31%. Chrysler says it needs

7 billion dollars to get through the year and GM needs 4 billion just to get through this month.

Finally, in order to start being more competitive, GM said it would cut up to 30,000 jobs, shut down 9 plants and slash 1,750 dealerships.

On the other hand, Ford will accelerate plans for fuel-efficient and gas-electric vehicles, sell Volvo and cut 10% of their work force.

"It will take some loans from the Federal Government to survive through this crisis" Alvarez said.

Music masterminds hit the music scene with a bang

By Brit Yeager
Reporter

Adapting quickly to their relatively new fame, Black Kids is notorious in both Europe and the United States; Black Kids has been an active band on the music scene since 2006. It wasn't until 2007 that they received any recognition for their musical talents.

They have been classified as being an alternative rock,

Indie rock, and Indie pop band. Black Kids initially only played gigs in their hometown of Jacksonville, Florida, but it wasn't until the Athens pop music festival in Athens, Georgia, that they first acquired national music attention.

Black Kids first appeared in Rollingstone Magazine's "Artists to watch" list back in 2007. Since this assimilation the band has

been on fire ever since. The band consists of members: Reggie Youngblood (vocals

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and guitar), Owen Holmes (bass guitar), Kevin Snow (drums), Dawn Watley (keyboards and backing

vocals), and Reggie's sister Ali Youngblood (keyboards and backing vocals).

Black Kids has recently begun working with Quest Management, the same management company that

manages the artists Arcade Fire and Björk.

The band has written chart topping singles such as "Hurricane Jane" and "I'm not gonna teach your boyfriend how to dance with you", which have been played on the radio in the UK and in the USA. Black Kids music has also been heard in new movies such as "Role Models." Their new album titled "Partie

Traumatic" was released July 2008.

Touring in both Europe and the United States Black Kids have been seen at the Coachella Music festival, Radio 1's Big Weekend, Glastonbury Festival, and T in the Park and Camp Bestival. If you enjoy catchy music that is fun to dance to, then check out their new album in stores today.

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