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**Ford Flex Making Waves Before its Launch**

*Ford of Ocala, the leading dealership for Ford sales, parts and service at Ocala, Florida, is pleased to announce that Ford Flex, to be launched at the end of June this year, is already making waves in the Coasts. The Flex will arrive in the dealership at the end of June, ....*

**/24-7PressRelease/** - OCALA, FL, April 16, 2008 - Ford of Ocala, the leading dealership for Ford sales, parts and service at Ocala, Florida, is pleased to announce that Ford Flex, to be launched at the end of the June this year, is already making waves in the Coasts.

The Flex will arrive in dealerships at the end of June, but Ford has opened the order book already, in February, and has received more than 5,000 orders from around the country. The price will start under \$29,000. The early interest on the Coasts is important because consumers on both sides of the country have been big import buyers, especially in California, which has the country's largest vehicle content. "I've already got people showing interest to buy them," said Beau Boeckmann, vice-president of Los Angeles' Galpin Ford, the largest Ford dealership in the world. "Cool people. People who haven't bought a Ford forever."

**Flex making waves**

The Flex also drew a lot of attention in New York last month during the auto show. Kate Pearce, marketing manager for the Flex, said the new Ford seems poised to be the sort of hit, the automaker was hoping for, as it starts to turn around its North American auto operations. "People are looking for something new and different, and this vehicle is really unlike anything else in the marketplace," she said. "The key is giving consumers the opportunity to see it in person."

After the New York auto show, the company left four prototype vehicles in the city. Ford drivers spent the next several days cruising around Manhattan to get the vehicle in front of potential customers. Every now and then, the drivers would pull over, let people get a closer look and take the opportunity to hand out the Flex's business card. Ford will hold similar road shows in other cities also, before the vehicle goes on sale in June. The Flex will be on the Strip in Las Vegas later this month, then in Los Angeles.

This kind of guerilla marketing was Jim Farley's trademark when he launched Toyota Motor Company's Scion brand in 2003, with a miniscule marketing budget. Now, Farley is running sales and marketing for Ford, and is hoping to work some of the same magic with the Flex. Farley has called this full-size crossover "a vehicle only Ford could have produced". It is retro and modern at the same time, he said, adding it is "a marketers' dream" because of its polarizing design.

Auto analyst Erich Merkle of IRN Inc. in Grand Rapids called the Flex "fresh" and "unique". Farley is hoping the Flex will build on the success of Ford's other new crossover, the Edge, introduced in 2006. For details, contact Ford of Ocala ([www.fordofocala.com/](http://www.fordofocala.com/)) at 2816 N W Pine Avenue Ocala, Florida 34475 or call at (800) 292-3338.

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