Winners and Losers

There are always winners and losers in the car sales game, but how are things going for the Italian makes in Britain at present?

Looking at things to the end of October 2011, the only winner is - perhaps surprisingly- Alfa Romeo. Although we are looking at a relatively small number of cars, Alfa are 47.73% up with sales of 10266 giving them a market share of 0.61%, the Giulietta certainly helping here.

Chrysler -now controlled by Fiat and with the Lancia Delta and Ypsilon rebadged into their range- are 33.73% down with 839 vehicles representing a penetration of 0.05% although, to be fair, until the advent of the pseudo-Lancias they have really had very little to sell this year.

Fiat are 21.86% down despite some positive marketing, probably due to the range having some notable gaps. Their 37041 sales gives them 2.19% and leaves them in niche-market territory when they should really be up with the volume players.

Maserati are down 15.37% with sales of 347, their 0.02% share being understandable if not entirely desirable.

Of course, none of these figures exist in isolation, so how are the competing makes doing? Setting Alfa's benchmark against Audi (+13.07% with a 5.92% market share) and BMW (+8.28% at 5.91%) is perhaps unfair given the latter pair's much wider ranges, but it still shows how once minor makes can be consistently developed.

Chrysler cannot really be compared with anything until their new range becomes established, but Maserati share their 0.02% penetration (with Lotus (-37.28%), although if compared to Porsche (-7.67% but still with a 0.30% share) … .

So how do Fiat measure up against other 'popular' makes? Citroen (-7.11% at 3.53% penetration) and Renault (-28.32% at 3.54%) are really where they need at least to be, rather than being outsold by Skoda (+10.98% at 2.32%) and even MINI (+15.13% at 2.46%).

Oh, I almost forgot Abarth. Down 5.94% with a 0.07% market share, it is difficult to decide just who they are competing against and while the move to distance them from Fiat was laudable in view of the more recent badge engineering which the name had suffered, it might have been better to allow them to develop their own identity alongside their parent rather than thrusting them into a competitive market from scratch.

By the way, in case you are wondering about Lamborghini and Ferrari, they are lost among the 755 'other imports', although -ironically- selling one of either will provide their dealers with a profit margin equal to a very good number of sales from the more mundane makes.

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