

Chevrolet is back moving people

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Chevrolet is back in the seven-seat people mover business with the 2012 Orlando.

While considered a CUV, it's really a station wagon in my opinion along the same lines of the popular Mazda5 and the Dodge Journey which is currently the largest selling compact CUV on the market.

Much like the Mazda5, the Orlando is aimed at Asian and European buyers.

In Asia and Europe, the ability to carry up to seven in confined spaces is much valued and why there are so many of these vehicles offered by so many manufacturers.

The Orlando is not square like the Journey nor is it as swept in its shape as the Mazda5 although the roofline follows the same downward appearance.

Unlike its competitors, the Orlando has a theatre style seating arrangement with three rows of seats, along with a sizable cargo area and flexible storage solutions.

In spite of the sweeping roofline, the engineers and designers were able to raise the third row of seats offering passengers an improved view both forwards and to the side.

With a wide variety of seating configurations, Chevrolet claims the Orlando can be adjusted into one of the most voluminous vehicles in its class when it comes to cargo capacity at 1,594 litres (56.3 cu ft).

Power is a 2.4-litre, direct fuel injection four-cylinder engine (the same as used in the Chevrolet Equinox) producing 174 hp and 171 lb/ft of torque.

There will be three trim levels: LS, LT and LTZ. A six-speed manual is standard on the LS and LT with a six-speed automatic optional (\$1,450) on the LS and standard on the LTZ.

Fuel consumption is rated at 10.1L/100 km (28 mpg) city 6.7L/100 km (42 mpg) highway for the manual and 10.6L/100 km (27 mpg) and 6.9L/100 km (41 mpg) highway for the automatic.

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Above: The 2012 Orlando is Chevrolet's answer to the growing small, seven-seat people mover market that is so popular in Asia and Europe and is gaining ground in North America.

Left: When the second and third row seats are not in use, they can be folded for a flat cargo floor.

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