

GM re-invents the intermediate pickup segment

By **JIM ROBINSON**

Metroland Media

DEL MAR, CA: You'd think by now the carmakers would have plumbed every niche there is, but GM thinks it has found one and biggie at that.

The Chevrolet Colorado and GMC Canyon are the first intermediate pickup trucks to come to market in almost a decade. On top of that, there currently are only two competitors, the Toyota Tacoma and Nissan Frontier that are basically unchanged in that time.

More to the point, GM sees the mid-size pair as part of its three-truck strategy of offering an intermediate, light duty full-size and heavy duty trio that cover the market from top to bottom also noting that Nissan and Toyota have so far avoided the heavy duty segment.

At the press preview of the two new trucks, both GMC and Chevy spokespersons claimed their research had found existing owners were "dissatisfied" with their trucks due to dated interiors and noise plus lack of utility options.

On Colorado and Canyon, the innovative side step on the rear bumper is standard, as is the EZ Lift and Lower tailgate that glides down when opened instead of flopping with a bang.



With a starting price of \$19,900, Chevrolet's new mid-size 2015 Colorado pickup is aimed squarely at those who need the same utility as a full-size pickup but not the size of fuel consumption.

The GearOn two-tier accessory system enables a wide range of bed storage options. For instance, bicycles or canoes can be raised up on a metal stand and secured to four permanent or 13 adjustable tie-down locations, leaving the area beneath free for tents, luggage or what have you.

Both trucks are offered in rear- and four-wheel-drive configurations.

When it comes to payload, the Colo-

rado can haul 721 kg (1,590 lb) and the Canyon 735 kg (1,620 lb). The reason for Canyon's slightly better performance is due to the alloy wheels instead of the heavier steel wheels on the Colorado.

Tow ratings are impressive at 1,588 kg (3,500 lb) up to 3,175 kg (7,000 lb) with the Z82 trailering package.

On the technology front, both trucks offer OnStar 4G LTE connectivity including Wi-Fi access on the go through

the OnStar Voice Command button. This will also allow connection for up to seven mobile devices and video streaming at 10 times faster than 3G and 100 times faster than 2G.

While they are mechanically the same, they differ in appearance, with the Canyon more dressed up with standard alloy wheels, flashy grille and lots of bright exterior trim.

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