




DESCUBRA O PREÇO PARA VOCÊ COMPRAR SEU CARRO OKM. VER PREÇO KBB

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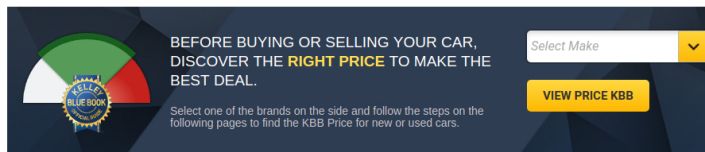
Car content - Who determines what an automobile will have or not? You do

09-11-2017 16h39 by KBB - Gustavo Henrique Ruffo

Absence of safety items is more due to profit maximization than to making vehicles more affordable to customers



Every year, the SAE (Society of Automotive Engineers) Brazil holds a conference that is an excellent opportunity to talk to executives and pick up industry trends before they even hit the streets. This year gave us, among many others, the opportunity to draw a parallel between two apparently distinct situations: one about engines and the other about safety, but both closely related. The point of convergence is how to choose what comes in and what gets out of the list of standard car equipments in Brazil. In general terms, what comes in are items consumers can see or which help to meet legal requirements. What gets out are items nobody cares about or does not know if they're there or not. Until they are needed, at least.



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Jochen Walther, director of Systems Engineering and Internal Combustion Engines at Bosch Germany, showed a series of technologies that can be incorporated into combustion engines to make them less polluting and more efficient. He presented 4 technologies: a mixture of direct and indirect injection, higher pressure nozzles, particulate filter for petrol engines and injection of water into the engines. Asked by KBB about the costs of so many new technologies in an engine, Walther said they would be no problem. "These technologies would add less than 10% to the total value of a common engine," he said.




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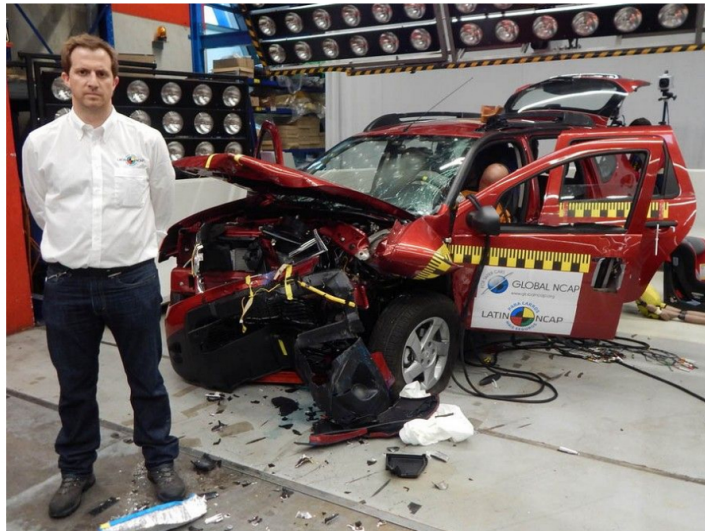


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In the same panel, Nahuel Osanai, chief engineer of Ford B platform models for South America, spoke about the challenges of manufacturers facing a world that wants mobility not as a product, but as a service. At the end of the presentation, we talked to him about the score that the Ford Ka and now the Ka Sedan took at Latin NCAP: zero stars. And, above all, [why a car designed in Brazil had eliminated the side impact door beams](#) with which the European model, launched after the Brazilian one, comes equipped. "Ka has undergone a tropicalization process and brings an ideal package to the Brazilian market, otherwise it would not be competitive," Osanai said. We insisted on the question, saying that we were not referring to side airbags, but to body reinforcements. Osanai was emphatic. "They would be very expensive for Brazil, but we know the importance of Latin NCAP and we need to adjust and improve the grades in this evaluation."

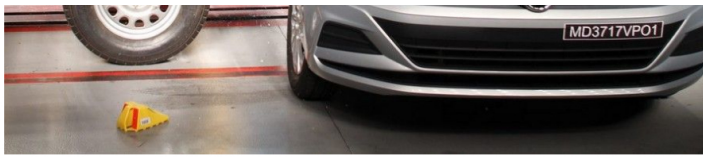


We took the opportunity to address another question about the Ford EcoSport. Would it have the side protection bars? "Yes, EcoSport comes with them. It's designed for a more affluent public, right?", said the Ford executive. Ford compact crossover, in addition to bringing the bars, [comes standard with 7 airbags](#). And it is a model that received 5 stars from Latin NCAP. This shows, first, that the same manufacturer can offer very different levels of safety, even for models built on the same platform. Second, [the importance of the recent video of Volkswagen we posted here](#), talking about the differences between parallel and original parts. The EcoSport door leaf [we've shown in a recent report](#) is probably parallel, as it comes without the anti-intrusion bars.



Earlier, in a panel on safety, Alejandro Furas, technical director of Global NCAP and general secretary of Latin NCAP, had spoken about the claim of increased costs for vehicles with safety items. And how much they weigh in when considered in large scale. "Most of these items add little cost to the price of the vehicle. Regarding the most expensive ones, less than US\$ 400 per unit. For the question that really should be asked, 'how much does a Brazilian's life cost?', what the manufacturers are saying is that they prefer to suppress safety items to maximize their profits". Commenting on the same subject, Jason Barczyk, director of Autoliv, a supplier of safety equipment, was even more incisive. "I reject this cost argument. It depends more on the good will of the manufacturers."



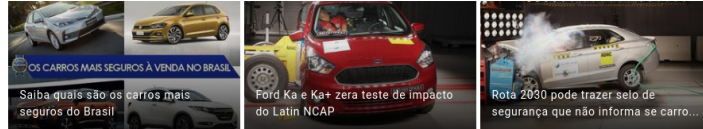


Therefore, demand is what explains the safety item's presence or their absence, according to Furas. "We are here today awarding two models with the Latin NCAP Advanced Awards, the Toyota Corolla and the VW Polo, both sold in Brazil at competitive prices. Why are they 5-star models and the competitors are not, if they cost the same?" In other words, according to Latin NCAP's director, if Toyota and Volkswagen safety efforts do not result in good sales, they will probably follow their competitors' strategy to maximize profits, or else, suppress items customers do not care about. Selling safer products surely depends on the carmaker's priorities, but demand always rewards and supports such priorities.

In the end, clients are the ones who determine what should or should not be in automobiles. "Laws come in tow of what the market demands", says Furas. Remember this on your next purchase. And enjoy reading [our guide to the safest cars for sale in Brazil](#). If you do not demand a car that protects you, as well as those who are important to you, no one else will.

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