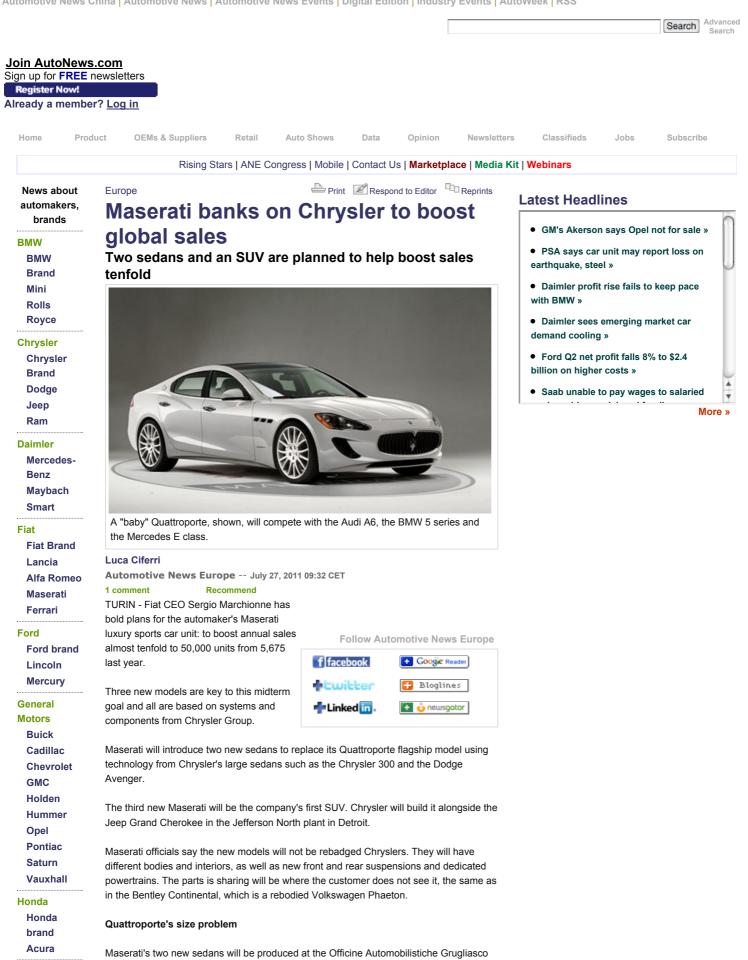
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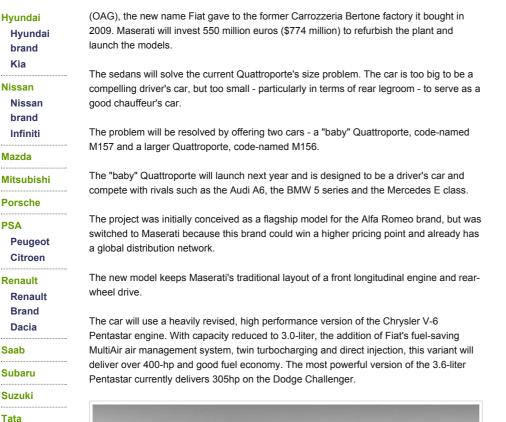
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The "baby" Maserati, shown, was initially conceived as a flagship model for Alfa Romeo.

Europe would also get a diesel variant of the baby Quattroporte with a beefed-up version of VM Motori's 3.0-liter V-6 engine currently offered on the Jeep Grand Cherokee for export.

Maserati says the new car will fit a price range between 55,000 euros to 70,000 euros in Europe (\$78,000 to \$99,000).

Mercedes S class rival

The large Quattroporte will be considerably bigger than the current model to compete better with chauffeur-driven, long-wheelbase versions of German flagship sedans such as the Audi A8, BMW 7 series and Mercedes Benz S class.

With overall length at about 5170mm, the new model would be 70mm longer than the current Quattroporte and 220mm longer than the "baby" Quattroporte.

Maserati's new flagship will use a revised version of the Ferrari-built 4.7-liter V-8, switching to direct injection and delivering about 475hp, coupled with ZF Group's eight-speed automatic transmission. This sporty, fuel-saving transmission is already available on large Audi and BMW models, while Chrysler will begin offering it on the 2012 model

year on the 300 large sedan and its Dodge Charger sibling.

Maserati will add all-wheel-drive and stop-start technology, aiming to reduce fuel consumption by 25 percent from the current Quattroporte.

Maserati said the new Quattroporte should increase the brand's share in the global superluxury sedan segment to 8 percent from the current 3 percent. The company counts superluxury sedans as models priced between 125,000 euros and 150,000 euros in Europe.

The sedans will account for about 30,000 to 35,000 units of Maserati's 50,000 annual sales target and the SUV for about 10,000 to 15,000. The remaining 5,000 units would come from Maserati's current core products, the GranTurismo coupe and the GranCabrio convertible.

The new Maseratis were designed by the Maserati Styling Center in Turin, under the direction of Marco Tencone and the supervision if Fiat group design supremo Lorenzo Ramaciotti. For the past two decades, Maseratis have been styled either by Italdesign Giugiaro S.p.A. or Pininfarina S.p.A.

Frankfurt SUV debut

Maserati will debut a concept at the Frankfurt auto show in September that hints at its Jeep Grand Cherokee-based large SUV set to hit the market in 2013. The Maserati variant features specific body panels and a new interior.

The engine would be Maserati's 4.7-liter V-8 unit capable of about 450-hp, coupled with ZF's eight-speed automatic transmission.

Possibly only for Europe, the Maserati SUV could also get a diesel variant using VM Motori's 3.0-liter V-6, with power increased to over 300hp from 241-hp the engine currently delivers on the Grand Cherokee exported to Europe.

Maserati declined to give a price target for its large SUV, but in Europe it would cost considerably more than the Jeep Grand Cherokee 5.7-liter V-8 Overland that in Italy starts at 63,800 euros.

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Swedish_market_researcher wrote:

A baby Quattroporte that could compete with 6-cylinder BMW 5-series, Audi 6-series and Mercedes E-class models is probably not a bad idea.

However, I wonder whether Fiat ever considered to give this car an in-house,

Maserati V-6 engine and what the calculated break-even point was.

The cost for designing and tooling of a new V-6 engine would probably have been almost 200 million USD. On the other hand, an in-house Maserati engine would probably be the most powerful possible marketing tool you could get for a car like this. Remember that it was the Maserati V-6 engine which sold the Citroen SM. Not because it was a good engine (it was a bad engine) but because it was an incredible image booster. A soaped-up Ford Zodiac V-6 engine like the ones used in the Ford Capri or a 2.8-litre 6cylinder, fuel-injected Opel engine would probably have been more reliable and given the same performance. But such engines would have been devastating from an image point of view.

Furthermore, I wonder how many Kyalamis Maserati would have sold without an in-house engine. The Kyalami was about the same car as the De Tomaso Longchamp, except for the engine.

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