

10 Japanese comeback cars for 2012

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2011 was a rough year for Japanese automakers. Here are 10 cars that will help them get back on the road.

Whatever happened to Japan's plans to conquer the U.S. auto market? There's a lot of talk about the revival of the Detroit Three (Ford's dividend, Chrysler's new life, GM's small cars) but the once-feared Japanese Three and their smaller siblings are struggling. Hit by earthquakes at home and floods abroad, and punished by the strengthening of the Japanese yen, Toyota, Honda, and Nissan have been pummeled this year. News of their activities has been pushed to the back pages while Hyundai, Kia, and German automakers dominate the headlines.

As a result, 2012 is shaping up as a benchmark year for these once-unstoppable companies. Will they be able to regain the momentum that once helped push two of the Detroit Three into bankruptcy? Or will they continue their slide as they fight each other -- and try to cope with forces that are out of their control?

Here are 10 Japanese cars that will help separate the winners from the losers

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