

newsworthy trends

Car Color: A Sign Of The Times?



NO THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES: If you start seeing a lot more blue cars on the road, it may be because the color silver reminds consumers of the one thing they'd most rather forget.

(NAPSA)—It turns out the bursting of the tech bubble didn't just decimate millions of American's 401(k)s. It may also have cooled our love affair with the color silver—at least when it comes to cars.

Silver, you see, is thought to equal high technology in consumers' minds. And since many tech stocks are anything but the "high-flyers" they once were, leading forecasters in automotive trends predict we're about to witness a distinct shift in color preference over the next few model years.

The new hot color?

"Look for a greater variety of blues that are more colorful and include more metallic and more sparkle," says Jon Hall, a color expert at BASF, which helps manufacturers forecast car design trends and is a major supplier of automobile coatings. "Blue represents stability. Our cars are an important expression of our personalities, but world events strongly influence our

selection as well."

One North American trend Hall expects to continue is increasing interest in hot rods, and new cars that reflect a hot rod heritage.

"Hot rods reflect a simpler time for many people," says Hall. "These cars will be outlets for bold color statements like reds and yellows."

Hall notes that auto-color trends tend to be played out over several model years and are generally more conservative than fashion trends—mainly because, as he puts it, "a car isn't something you can hide in the back of your closet."

So what were the most popular car colors for 2002 models? According to BASF, silver (28 percent), white (17 percent), black (15 percent), blue (10 percent), gray (nine percent), beige (eight percent), green (six percent), red (five percent), orange (two percent), and yellow/gold (less than one percent).

For more information, visit www.basf.com/usa.