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## **A LEGEND RETURNS**

### **Saleen Will Assist with Ford GT Production**

IRVINE, Calif. – Saleen, Inc. is immensely pleased and proud to have been selected by Ford as one of the key suppliers to the re-creation of one of the great cars of all time, the production version of the GT40 concept vehicle.

“To have been chosen by Ford as one of four core suppliers to the GT project is a reflection of Ford’s confidence in our niche manufacturing capabilities,” says Saleen, Inc. president, Steve Saleen.

During the past 20 years, Saleen has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to design, engineer, manufacture and market high-performance specialty vehicles working closely with Tier 1 suppliers around the world.

“Our expertise has been primarily focused on high performance,” Saleen continued, “but it’s been diverse as far as the types of vehicles we have produced — everything from Mustangs to Explorers to our new S7 supercar.”

Chris Theodore, Ford’s vice president of product development, handpicked the members the GT *Dream Team*, including Saleen’s chief engineer Neil Hannemann. “When the Ford GT arrives on the scene, it will set a new standard for supercars,” says Theodore. “And it will teach us valuable lessons about the power of small, nimble product teams.”

The Ford GT project is built for speed — on the road and in the system. The project serves as a lightning rod for consumer excitement and a catalyst for change within the Ford system.

To build the low-volume supercar, Theodore assembled a team of performance engineering experts, such as Saleen, with the skills to deliver and the knowledge to get things done within Ford while operating outside the established system.

Many of the assembly processes already employed by Saleen to manufacture its Mustangs and S7s will be used for the paint and vehicle assembly responsibilities Saleen will assume for the new Ford GT. The assembly area is where all the various component parts are brought together by certified technicians to create the finished cars.

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## **Saleen and Ford GT**

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Saleen brings to the GT project nearly two decades as a high-performance vehicle manufacturer. Based in the creative epicenter and performance capital of the automotive world — Southern California — Saleen has developed a reputation for building enthusiast vehicles and parts that surpass the performance of some of the most expensive and exclusive vehicles in the world. Since its inception in 1984, Saleen has led specialty vehicle manufacturers in innovation and quality. Saleen vehicles and parts are built under the same strict governmental guidelines and certification as those of large automotive companies—ensuring safety and emissions compliance as well as quality. As certified with the U.S. Government, Saleen vehicles meet or exceed all applicable EPA/CARB and NHTSA-FMVSS requirements.

Saleen Mustangs are sold only through Saleen-certified Ford dealers and they come with a full bumper-to-bumper Saleen warranty. Saleen also has factory pricing and financing.

Steve Saleen began his company with a vision of the perfect performance vehicle that would be appreciated by anyone. Since its inception, Saleen has produced over 9,000 vehicles, more than any other specialty manufacturer.

Today Saleen is housed in a 150,000 square foot building in Irvine, Calif. just down the road from Ford's headquarters for the Premier Auto Group (PAG). The corporate office space houses the design, engineering and assembly operations, as well as the corporate offices, customer service center and the parts distribution facility. Saleen has also opened a new 180,000 square foot manufacturing facility in Troy, Michigan and another manufacturing plant in Canada. An eight-time Manufacturers' Champion in GT sports car racing, Saleen's line of products and services also includes Saleen Performance Parts, Saleen Composites and Coatings and Saleen Engineering and Certification Service.

From the very beginning, racing has been an important component of the Saleen DNA. "The knowledge we gain from motorsports feeds right back into our performance road cars," says founder Steve Saleen. "Our customers love performance. Our powerful specialty vehicles are a direct translation of superior racing technology adapted to street use."

For some manufacturers the terms niche manufacturing and mass customization—creating customized products in an efficient mass-production manner—are new. But they aren't new to Saleen. The company has been employing these concepts from the very beginning. Unlike so-called "tuners," Saleen's team follows the same procedures as mega-manufacturers to certify vehicles in compliance with Federal and state regulations.

Saleen's latest achievement in crafting niche market vehicles involves the use of *best practices* components along with specifically engineered ultra-high performance parts to create the S7. Using its expertise in mass-customization, along with outsourced parts and services as needed, Saleen created the S7 for the exotic vehicle market in less than 18 months. And it is expertise such as this that will allow Ford to achieve its goal of debuting the new GT.

The supercar joins Thunderbird, Mustang and the Forty-Nine concepts as part of Ford's "Living Legends" lineup.

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