

Big names like Harley-Davidson, Royal Enfield, Bajaj likely to skip Auto Expo

By *Sharmistha Mukherjee & Ketan Thakkar*, ET Bureau | 2 Feb, 2016, 04.00AM IST

[Post a Comment](#)

NEW DELHI/MUMBAI: Legendary motorcycle makers Harley-Davidson and Royal Enfield will likely be noted at the [Auto Expo](#) for their absence, and so will be Bajaj Auto.

[Skoda](#) India, Volvo Cars and International Cars & Motors, as well as [Daimler](#) India Commercial Vehicles and Volvo Trucks & Buses, too, will give the show a miss this time.

High infrastructure costs, lack of guaranteed eyeballs and inadequate access to the exhibition site in Greater Noida are among the reasons that these companies cited to stay away from the nation's largest automobile exhibition. A few others, such as Ford Motor, are participating, but have not waited for the biennial show to begin on Friday to unveil their product plans and market strategies.



Legendary motorcycle makers Harley-Davidson and Royal Enfield will likely be noted at the Auto Expo for their absence, and so will be Bajaj Auto. (Representative image)

RELATED COMPANIES

[Bajaj Auto](#)

Portfolio **ADD TO** Watchlist **OUTLOOK?** +ve -ve

Not Upbeat About it
COS UNVEILING NEW PRODUCTS AHEAD OF EXPO

FORD Motor is participating out has not waited for the biennial show to begin on Friday to unveil its product plans and market strategies.

FORD India has opted to unveil the Mustang sports coupe in India last week, ahead of the Auto Expo.

ON Monday, Bajaj introduced the V, a 150cc bike made of scrap metal from India's first aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant.

VOLKSWAGEN will unveil its made-in-India sedan ahead of the auto show.

ROYAL Enfield is scheduled to unveil its 'Himalayan' bike on Tuesday.

ET SPECIAL: Love visual aspect of news? Enjoy this exclusive slideshows treat!

Given that participating in such an event entails "significant costs ... and more importantly enormous effort, especially by precious R&D resources", participation should be "very purposeful", said [Bajaj Auto](#) managing director Rajiv Bajaj.

There can be one or more of four objectives for exhibiting products at an auto show, he said. "To create brand awareness, which is important for Bajaj in new overseas markets but not in India where we are a household name. Secondly, to showcase new concepts for imagery, which I think is a wasteful gimmick as its shelf life is barely a few days.

To present new products ahead of time, which is stupid as it unduly forewarns competition. To do so for current products simply because everyone else does, but then that's not the way that we think about anything that we do ... besides we have dealers to do precisely that."

On Monday, Bajaj introduced the V, a 150cc bike made of scrap metal from India's first aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant. Showcasing the V at the Auto Expo would have cost Rs 5 crore, said Rajiv Bajaj. "By showcasing it here (outside the expo), we are able to do that at Rs 5 lakh; we are a Marwari company," he added. Royal Enfield is scheduled to unveil its 'Himalayan' bike on Tuesday.

The cost to participate in such an exhibition is "prohibitive", a senior executive at a car maker said, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

"The infra costs for fabricating a stall at the venue and equipping it with adequate manpower for fringe players range from Rs 20-25 crore. For the ones reserving larger spaces, the cost is at least three times higher. There are 30-odd events on the media day. Smaller players do not get the desired amount of voice and coverage amid all the noise by the larger ones," this executive said.

"While auto shows give an opportunity to engage with a cross-section of people across the industry, it may not always give the best visibility," said VG Ramakrishnan, managing director of consultancy firm Avanteum Advisors.

"It is especially true of smaller players who get lost in the clutter. They therefore choose either to refrain from the show or make announcements in advance to get adequate coverage."

The venue is another reason for the lack of interest among some companies. The exhibition site in Greater Noida is about 40 kms from the city centre, with limited public transport facilities.

Since the show moved to the new venue from Pragati Maidan in Delhi in 2014, it has become difficult to get guaranteed eyeballs, said some executives.

"Overseas, though auto expo sites are located on the outskirts, access is not a problem. Here connectivity to the venue is limited. If you showcase exciting quirky concepts you may get some footfalls, but the average consumer for mass-market products will not travel so far to see products from the portfolio which is already on display at showrooms within the city," said another industry executive.

While an executive at Royal Enfield called the exhibition a "car show", Daimler India Commercial Vehicles rued the lack of focus on commercial vehicles.

Florian Laudan, head of corporate communications at Daimler Trucks Asia, said: "The Indian Auto Expo is heavily focused on the two-wheeler and passenger vehicle segment. Being a commercial vehicle manufacturer, our focus has been customercentric and in the past we have always used our own event formats... (which) has helped us to engage regularly with our key stakeholders."

[Ford India](#) has opted to unveil the Mustang sports coupe in India last week, ahead of the Auto Expo. In 2014, too, the company had unveiled a concept entry-level sedan (Aspire) ahead of the expo.

Ford also refrained from a holding a press briefing on the days of the show, as it did during the recently concluded North American International Auto Show in Detroit. Volkswagen will unveil its made-in-India sedan ahead of the auto show.

[Michael Mayer](#), director for Volkswagen [Passenger Cars](#) India said the Ameo - "made in India and made for India" - is a very significant milestone for the company and Volkswagen wanted to give it prime importance.

"By premiering it prior to the Auto Expo, we seek to provide media and therefore consumers a more detailed exposure of the product, as well as a greater access to the Volkswagen management," said Mayer.

Stay on top of business news with [The Economic Times App](#). [Download it Now!](#)   

[Live Market](#) [News](#) [Portfolio](#) [Mobile](#) [Live TV](#) [Newsletter](#) [Commodities](#) [Speed](#) [QnA](#) [Blogs](#) [Alerts](#) [RSS](#)

Other Times Group news sites

[Times of India](#) | [इकनॉमिक टाइम्स](#)
[ઈકોનોમિક ટાઈમ્સ](#) | [Mumbai Mirror](#)
[Times Now](#) | [Indiatimes](#)
[नवभारत टाइम्स](#) | [महाराष्ट्र टाइम्स](#)
[ವಿಜಯ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ](#) | [Lifehacker](#)
[Gizmodo](#) | [Eisamay](#) | [IGN India](#)
[NavGujarat Samay](#)

Living and entertainment

[Timescity](#) | [iDiva](#) | [Bollywood](#)
[Zoom](#) | [Luxpresso](#)
[Online Songs](#) | [Travel](#)
[Guides](#) | [Hotel](#)
[Reviews](#) | [Cricbuzz.com](#) | [Prepaid](#)
[Mobile Recharge](#)

Networking

[itimes](#) | [MensXP.com](#)

Hot on the Web

[Daily Horoscope](#) | [Weather in Delhi](#)
[Mumbai Map](#) | [Horoscope 2016](#)
[Hotels in Delhi](#) | [Xiaomi Mobile](#)
[Phones](#)

Services

[Book print ads](#) | [Online shopping](#)
[Matrimonial](#) | [Astrology](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Property](#) | [Buy car](#) | [Bikes in India](#)
[Used Cars](#) | [Online Deals](#) | [Restaurants in Delhi](#) | [Movie Show Timings in](#)
[Mumbai](#)
[Remit to India](#) | [Buy Mobiles](#) | [Listen Songs](#) | [Voice Greetings](#) | [Technology](#)
[News](#) | [Augmented Reality](#) | [Mobile Recharge](#) | [Compare Mobile Phones](#)