

RECORD CROWDS--2009 GLOBAL TOKYO AUTO SHOW



With more than 600 cars on display and a record number of exhibitors, nothing at the 2009 Tokyo Auto Salon tuner show hinted at the global economic downturn. As always, there was a great mix of styles, from hard-core, 1,000-hp, super tuned machinery to weird customized scooter tricycles. Auto manufacturers tried hard to capture the minds--if not the wallets--of the younger-than-30 crowd with customized versions of production cars, while tuners were busy persuading power junkies to choose them for their next engine modification.

The new Nissan 370Z took center stage, and Nissan's in-house tuner arm, Nismo, used the opportunity to unveil the S-tune version. The 370Z S-tune should eventually make it to the United States. Zele Performance stunned crowds with its Lamborghini-orange 370Z, which joined the GT-R we saw at the Specialty Equipment Market Association show last fall.

The new fuel efficient SMART Blitz Turbocharged Toyota iQ made an impressive debut. The tiny iQ has only been on sale in Japan for a few weeks, but Blitz is already offering modifications to boost performance. Under the hood of this Smart-sized city car is a Blitz turbo kit complete with polished piping and a swooshing blow-off valve, which ups power from the 68-hp, 1.0-liter engine by 30 hp. Performance suspension and lightweight wheels keep handling in check.

Other cars that wowed the large crowds included the T&E D1-Grand Prix BMW M3, Mugen Acura NSX-RR concept, and the Euphoria Daihatsu Copen.

Many experts commented that although the US auto market is soft global auto sales remain in decent shape. For employment opportunities visit www.employmentcrossing.com