



Media Issue Brief

HONDA R&D CREATING NEW VALUE IN THE U.S.

Honda R&D Americas, Inc. (HRA) is responsible for creating advanced technologies and products in the U.S. that provide new value to Honda and Acura customers. Established in Southern California in 1975 to conduct local market research and design activities, HRA now operates 14 R&D facilities in North America with the capability of “complete product creation” – developing all-new vehicles starting from market and technology research to support for mass production preparation. HRA is also taking a leading role in the advancement of leading-edge safety and environmental technologies.

Product Research & Development

- ◆ **From market and technology research to styling, engineering design, fabrication and testing to local parts procurement, Honda R&D Americas is helping create new value for Honda customers through innovation in the development of new Honda and Acura products.**
 - Seven of 21 Honda and Acura models sold in America, and 5 of 8 light truck models, were researched, designed and developed in America. These include innovative and trend-setting cars and light trucks such as the Acura MDX, Acura TL and Acura ZDX, and the Honda Pilot, Element (with B pillar-less side), Ridgeline truck (with in-bed trunk) and Civic Coupe and Civic Coupe Si.
 - In 2006, the U.S.-developed Civic and Ridgeline truck became the first vehicles ever to earn the Car and Truck of the Year awards from *Motor Trend* magazine, the North American Car of the Year jury, and the Automotive Journalist Association of Canada for the same manufacturer in a single year.

Product Styling Design

- ◆ **Honda R&D Americas’ Los Angeles Center and three California-based design studios are responsible for market research, concept development and styling for Honda and Acura products.**
 - The Honda Design Studio (part of the Los Angeles Center) is responsible for the styling design of Honda brand automobiles, light trucks, and motorcycles.
 - The Acura Design Studio (opened in May 2007) in Torrance is responsible for the styling design of Acura brand automobiles and light trucks.
 - The Advanced Design Studio (opened in December 2006) in Pasadena is responsible for creating future design concepts for Honda and Acura products and works closely with leading design schools.

Environmental Technology Development

- ◆ **In addition to its work on new vehicle design and development, Honda R&D Americas is engaged in programs to advance alternative-fuel technologies including natural gas and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles.**
 - Supporting the development and deployment of the new-generation FCX Clarity hydrogen fuel cell vehicle, launched in June 2008 with plans to deliver up to 200 vehicles to customers in Southern California over the next three years.
 - Development and operation of two of the world’s most advanced hydrogen refueling stations at Honda’s Los Angeles Center: a prototype, solar-powered hydrogen station utilizing Honda-developed solar cells, and the fourth-generation of the company’s experimental Home Energy Station technology for residential hydrogen fueling with heat and electricity cogeneration.
 - Collaborative research of the Civic GX natural gas vehicle’s environmental benefits and customer usage, to support the sales and marketing of natural gas-powered vehicles and the expansion of refueling infrastructure to help support retail vehicle sales.

Safety Technology Research and Development

- ◆ **Honda R&D Americas is also making significant contributions to Honda’s safety leadership.**
 - The HRA Ohio Center includes an Automotive Safety Research Facility that houses one of the world’s highest resolution crash test barriers and the world’s first pitching crash test simulation sled. This facility is responsible for the development and testing of nearly all safety systems on its U.S.-developed vehicles.
 - Five of American Honda’s industry-leading 10 model year 2009 models¹ that achieve both the NHTSA’s five-star rating for frontal and side impacts² and the IIHS’ “Top Safety Pick” ratings were developed by Honda R&D Americas. They are the Honda Element, Pilot and Ridgeline, and the Acura MDX and Acura TL.

Major North American R&D Facilities

Los Angeles Center Torrance, Calif. (1975)	Automobile and Motorcycle market research and concept development including Honda Design Studio
Ohio Center Raymond, Ohio (1985)	Automobile and Motorcycle research and development; and Automotive Safety Research Facility
Honda Proving Center of California Mojave Desert, Calif. (1990)	Comprehensive automobile and motorcycle testing including a 7.5-mile flat oval track and numerous on-road and off-road test courses.
North Carolina Center Swepsonville, NC (1993)	Power Equipment product research, development and testing.
Advanced Design Studio Pasadena, Calif. (2006)	Advanced concept development for next-generation Honda and Acura products.
Acura Design Studio Torrance, Calif. (2007)	Market research, concept development, and styling design for future Acura automobiles.
Marine Engine Research Facility Grant-Valkaria, Fla. (2008)	Marine engine research and testing.

¹ American Honda offers ten Honda and Acura models, more models than any other automaker, that earn both the U.S. government’s top, five-star rating for both frontal and side crash tests, and a “Top Safety Pick” rating from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS).

² Star ratings are part of the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Safercar.gov program (www.safercar.gov)

Honda R&D Americas, Inc. - Vehicle Development History

1989 Honda Accord SEi	First American-led U.S. SED developed model, coordinating U.S. Sales (S), and Manufacturing (E) and R&D (D).
1991 Accord Wagon	First HRA developed “derivative model”. Based on the 1990 Accord Sedan for North America and exported to Japan and Europe
1993 Civic Coupe	First Civic Coupe - a “derivative” model based on the 1992 Civic hatchback.
1994 Accord Wagon	First HRA “derivative model” developed simultaneously with its base car, the 1994 Accord Sedan.
1997 Acura CL 2.2 (Coupe)	First U.S.-developed Acura, first all-new vehicle development by HRA, and the first development led by an American engineer
1997 Acura CL 3.0 (Coupe)	First Honda or Acura vehicle to receive all-new, high-output V6 engine
1997 Acura 1.6EL	New Acura model developed exclusively for Canadian market.
1998 Accord Coupe	First Accord Coupe with exclusive exterior styling.
1999 Acura 3.2TL	Second all-new Acura model developed by HRA.
2001 Acura 3.2CL	HRA’s third all-new Acura model and first to apply new 6-speed manual transmission for V6 engines.
2001 Acura MDX	First luxury SUV with standard 3 rd -row seating and 2001 <i>Motor Trend</i> SUV of the Year and North American Truck of the Year
2001 Civic Coupe	First small car and first coupe to earn NHTSA five-star safety rating in frontal and side impact (NCAP) crash test ratings
2002 Acura TL	Introduction of high-performance TL “Type-S” model
2003 Honda Pilot	First eight-passenger crossover vehicle and five-time winner of <i>Car and Driver magazine’s</i> “5 Best Truck” award.
2003 Honda Element	Innovative SUV with flat cargo floor, washable interior surfaces and B-pillar-less, wide-opening side doors.
2004 Acura TL	Second-generation of the TL developed by HRA, and America’s best selling luxury sedan in 2004, 2005 and 2006.
2006 Honda Ridgeline	Honda’s first-ever (in the US), and highly innovative pickup truck – 2006 <i>Motor Trend</i> , North American, and Canadian, Truck of the Year
2006 Accord Sedan and Coupe	Mid-model refresh of 2003 Accord. First time HRA is responsible for global launch of new model including coordination of production launch in eight plants worldwide
2006 Civic Coupe and Civic Si	Sporty 2-door coupe and high-performance Si versions of 8 th generation Civic – 2006 North American, Canadian, and <i>Motor Trend</i> , Car of the Year
2007 Acura MDX	Second generation of U.S. development for MDX, including the application of advanced new chassis and electrical system technologies researched and developed by HRA.
2009 Honda Pilot	Second generation of U.S. development for Honda’s award-winning, mid-size, eight passenger Honda SUV.
2009 Acura TL	Third generation of U.S. development for Acura’s top-selling luxury sedan.
2010 Acura ZDX	An all-new Acura vehicle concept – a 4-door coupe with SUV versatility and sports car-like dynamic performance.

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