

Maruti Suzuki Alto crosses 45-lakh mark

Aroosa Ahmed
Mumbai

Bullish on the growth of the hatchback segment, India's largest automobile maker Maruti Suzuki has crossed the 45-lakh units sale of its Alto brand.

The company that introduced Alto in 2000, touched the 10-lakh sales milestone in 2008, 20-lakh in 2012, 30-lakh in 2016, and 40-lakh in 2020.

"Maruti Suzuki Alto remained the best seller for 16 years till 2019-2020 in the industry and was the number one car in 2004. Alto has been a good-selling model for us, the sales per hour for the vehicle is 100 Altos sold every hour. A larger percentage of the sales is happening in Tier-2 and -3 cities," Shashank Srivastava, Senior Executive Officer, Marketing

and Sales, Maruti Suzuki India Ltd, told *businessline*.

The company that currently offers Alto K10 is expecting to cross the 50-lakh sales milestone by 2025, while the next 10 lakh is targeted by 2028.

HATCHBACK GROWTH

While the overall hatchback segment has seen a dip in sales with the uptick in the SUV segment for the Indian automobile market, the company has witnessed green shoots in the hatchbacks and is bullish on demand.

"In the year 2022-23, there was a 20-per cent jump in the hatchback segment, wherein the sales increased to 13,40,000 from 11,52,000 in 2021-22. The price elasticity is very high in the segment and we saw the affordability factor coming down and that is why there was a decline in



volumes. The jump in 2022-23 that we saw after Covid was good and was because we witnessed a reversal, wherein prices stabilised and income levels got back to the lower end. First-time buyers are nearly 45-48 per cent. It also depends on whether the first-time buyers move to other segments, but I expect there would be consumers at the lower end who would not shift to other segments," said Srivastava.

CONSUMER PROFILE

Maruti Suzuki has also witnessed a shift in consumer

profile for its Alto with an average age of consumers coming down to 38 years. About 50 per cent of the Alto buyers are first-time car buyers.

"The average age is now 38 years as compared with 41 years earlier. Alto has a two-humped camel profile with consumers between 22 and 28 years and slightly older between 50 and 55 years. Young consumers prefer the car because of its good mileage, low after-sales maintenance, and great value. Older consumers purchase the car as an additional buy or a secondary car. The additional car buying for Alto was 19 per cent in 2013, which has now jumped to over 38 per cent. The car has a 17 per cent retention rate with consumers purchasing another Alto and is considered a family car even as it is in the smaller car category," he added.