The Edsel Encyclopedia Article

The Edsel

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The Edsel

Announced with great fanfare in 1957 after almost a decade of planning, the Ford Motor Company's Edsel model car became one of the great flops in automotive history. The car was forecasted to sell over 200,000 units in its first year, but sold less than 85,000 during its three year run. Despite massive advertising—including pre-empting *The Ed Sullivan Show* with *The Edsel Show* featuring Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra—the Edsel was the wrong car at the wrong time. The auto industry, after years of massive sales, hit a post-Sputnik slump and the new car, with its strange oval grille, was doomed. Named after Henry Ford's son Edsel, the name is now synonymous with failure. As such, Edsel is often used as a punchline and visual gag. The car can be seen in films such as *Pee Wee's Big Adventure,*

The 1958 Edsel Citation
and in *Airplane II,* where the engine from a 1959 Edsel is used to jumpstart a space shuttle.

Further Reading:

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