



GM prepares for another management shakeup

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General Motors, which has already been riding a rollercoaster of management changes since it emerged from bankruptcy last July, is preparing for another shakeup that could be announced as soon as Tuesday, the Free Press has learned.

A GM spokesman declined comment. But the changes are expected to center on GM's North American operations, where Mark Reuss, who is three months into his job as president, is putting his team in place, people familiar with the situation said.



Susan Docherty, left, and Mark Reuss (JIM FETS FOR GENERAL MOTORS, LEFT; WIECK, RIGHT)

The shakeup comes as industry sales results for February are set to be released Tuesday. Analysts believe that Ford will report a strong month given Toyota's recall problems and that GM should see some improvement.

GM has had three CEOs in the past year and multiple management shakeups as the automaker, led by Chairman and CEO Ed Whitacre, continues restructuring and working toward becoming profitable again.

While no major executives are expected to leave the company as part of the management shuffle, the Detroit automaker is said to be working on separating the U.S. sales and marketing operations.

Reuss was promoted to the North America president's chair about 90 days ago after former GM CEO Fritz Henderson resigned under pressure and Chairman Ed Whitacre assumed the top executive role.

Whitacre quickly put in place his new senior leadership team, saying they would have to produce results quickly. Whitacre has said he hopes GM will be profitable this year.

A large part of that responsibility falls on Reuss, who came to the job after a short time as vice president of engineering, following time managing GM's Australian operations.

Part of the expected management changes include Susan Docherty, currently vice president of both the sales and marketing functions, losing her sales duties while Reuss assumes them, the Free Press has learned.

Automotive News on Sunday reported the automaker is looking to separate the U.S. sales and marketing operations.

An organizational structure that separates sales and marketing functions sounds similar to one put in place last summer by Henderson but undone by Whitacre when he became CEO.

Jason Laird, a GM spokesman, declined comment.

GM announced today that its monthly call to talk about sales results with media and industry analysts would be held several hours earlier than usual.

More management changes at Whitacre's GM wouldn't surprise industry observers, who expect continuous change as the new CEO develops a better understanding of the auto business and pushes his people to deliver results.

“The patience that other companies might have, or GM had in the past, is probably going to bear no relationship to what's happening now,” Van Conway, a corporate restructuring expert at Conway MacKenzie, said.