

## Buzz on business: PetSmart to open in Bossier City

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A PetSmart store will open in late July at Interstate 20 at Airline Drive in Bossier City.

The store is part of the first phase of businesses in the shopping center being built by Stirling Properties. The building will measure 20,000 square feet.

The PetSmart store on Youree Drive in Shreveport opened in April 2005. It employs about 35 full- and part-time employees.

### Another Chinese automaker brings vehicles to Detroit show

T-minus two years.

That's the countdown the second Chinese automaker to bring its vehicles to the Detroit auto show -- with a presentation that featured traditional images such as dragons and cheetahs -- gave this week for selling on American soil.

It's unclear whether Changfeng Group, which bills itself as the largest builder of SUVs in China, can meet that time frame.

Whatever advantage Changfeng or any other Chinese automaker holds in manufacturing costs, industry experts say it will have to clear the same hurdles of sales, marketing and customer preferences all foreign automakers have faced.

But the experts agree a Chinese model likely will roll onto U.S. shores by 2010.

One year after Geely Motors became the first Chinese automaker to show a car in Detroit, Changfeng is floating a "trial balloon," said Michael Robinet, vice president of global vehicle forecasts at CSM Worldwide. "It's not enough to just build vehicles "" you have to get them to customers and you have to service them."

### Rate of late credit card payments hit a high in summer

Late payments on credit card bills climbed in the summer to their highest point in a year, suggesting some consumers are feeling financially squeezed.

The American Bankers Association, in its quarterly survey of consumer loans, reported Tuesday the percentage of credit card payments 30 or more days past due increased to 4.57 percent in the July-to-September quarter of last year.

That was up from 4.41 percent in the second quarter and was the highest since the third quarter of 2005, when the delinquency rate stood at 4.74 percent.

"The pressure points that squeeze consumers' budgets still remain, making it difficult for some people to meet their debt obligations," said James Chessen, the association's chief economist.

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