

a plateau in its product life cycle much too soon. The Model 597 problem for Remington is one of complexity. With razor thin standard margins of 12%, Remington must focus on increasing profitability while growing volume in the category. For a product which competes in a highly price elastic market, this presents a formidable task.

The Ilion based Model 552 Speedmaster, while boasting a healthier margin over the Model 597 of 23% comprises only a small portion of category sales. Appealing to more of a niche market, the Model 552 is not a serious competitor in the autoloading rimfire rifle market. While the moderate volumes of 2M-3M units per year remain attractive, the growth prospects for this rifle, mature in its product life cycle are limited at best.

Competitive Outlook

Principle competitors to Remington in the Autoloading Rimfire Rifle market are Ruger, Marlin, and Savage. Listed below is a brief summary of principle competitive offerings from each of these three manufacturers.

Ruger

Ruger's principle competitive autoloading rimfire product is the **Model 10/22**. Featuring a 10-shot rotary magazine, the 10/22 has established a reputation of tremendous value for the money and is widely considered to be the standard by which other autoloaders are judged against. The 10/22 is offered in wood, synthetic, and laminated stock versions with both blued and stainless configurations. Heavy barrel target versions are available as is a 10/22 Magnum chambered for .22 WMR.

Marlin

Marlin's dominant product offering in the autoloading rimfire category is by far and away the **Model 60** and its variants. Equipped with a 14-shot tubular magazine, the Model 60 is commonly referred to as the most popular .22 rifle in the world. Economically priced and widely available, the Model 60 is offered in standard wood stocked, carbon steel models with stainless steel, synthetic stocked and camouflaged versions also available. Marlin also offers scoped versions of the base wood-stocked Model 60 and the stainless steel wood-stocked model equipped with a low-cost fixed 4X scope. The stainless steel scoped version has proven to be a popular item with Wal*Mart stores.