

SMITH DAVID BRUTON  
 Form 3  
 October 24, 2008

**FORM 3 UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**  
**Washington, D.C. 20549**

OMB APPROVAL

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**INITIAL STATEMENT OF BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES**

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934,  
 Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section  
 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

<p>1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *</p> <p>SMITH DAVID BRUTON</p> <p>(Last) (First) (Middle)</p> <p>C/O SONIC AUTOMOTIVE, INC., 6415 IDLEWILD ROAD, SUITE 109</p> <p>(Street)</p> <p>CHARLOTTE, NC 28212</p> <p>(City) (State) (Zip)</p>	<p>2. Date of Event Requiring Statement</p> <p>(Month/Day/Year)</p> <p>10/16/2008</p>	<p>3. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol</p> <p>SONIC AUTOMOTIVE INC [SAH]</p>	<p>4. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer</p> <p>(Check all applicable)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Director <input type="checkbox"/> 10% Owner  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Other                  (give title below) (specify below)                  Executive Vice President</p>	<p>5. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)</p>	<p>6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form filed by One Reporting Person  <input type="checkbox"/> Form filed by More than One Reporting Person</p>
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**Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned**

1. Title of Security (Instr. 4)	2. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned (Instr. 4)	3. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5)	4. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5)
Class A Common Stock	16,919 <sup>(1)</sup>	D	À

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

SEC 1473 (7-02)

**Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB control number.**

**Table II - Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)**

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 4)	2. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)	3. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 4)	4. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative	5. Ownership Form of Derivative Security:	6. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5)
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	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date	Title	Amount or Number of Shares	Security	Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5)	
Options to Purchase	Â (2)	10/23/2012	Class A Common Stock	3,000	\$ 16.2	D	Â
Options to Purchase	Â (3)	04/21/2013	Class A Common Stock	2,000	\$ 15.9	D	Â
Options to Purchase	Â (4)	10/23/2013	Class A Common Stock	2,000	\$ 26.36	D	Â
Options to Purchase	Â (5)	04/21/2014	Class A Common Stock	10,000	\$ 23.42	D	Â
Options to Purchase	Â (6)	04/21/2015	Class A Common Stock	8,000	\$ 19.23	D	Â
Options to Purchase	Â (7)	10/19/2015	Class A Common Stock	20,000	\$ 21.23	D	Â
Options to Purchase	Â (8)	04/19/2016	Class A Common Stock	14,405	\$ 26.42	D	Â
Options to Purchase	04/18/2008	04/18/2017	Class A Common Stock	7,203	\$ 30.07	D	Â

## Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
SMITH DAVID BRUTON C/O SONIC AUTOMOTIVE, INC. 6415 IDLEWILD ROAD, SUITE 109 CHARLOTTE, NC 28212	Â X	Â	Â Executive Vice President	Â

## Signatures

/s/ David Bruton  
Smith

10/24/2008

\*\*Signature of  
Reporting Person

Date

## Explanation of Responses:

- \* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, *see* Instruction 5(b)(v).
- \*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. *See* 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).
- (1) Includes shares of restricted stock granted pursuant to the Sonic Automotive, Inc. 2004 Stock Incentive Plan. 8,112 of these shares are subject to forfeiture, in whole or in part, based on Sonic's earnings per share performance for the 2008 fiscal year.
- (2) Options to purchase vested in three equal annual installments beginning on 10/23/2003.
- (3) Options to purchase vested in three equal annual installments beginning on 4/21/2004.
- (4) Options to purchase vested in three equal annual installments beginning on 10/23/2004.
- (5) Options to purchase vested in three equal annual installments beginning on 4/21/2005.
- (6) Options to purchase vested in three equal annual installments beginning on 4/21/2006.
- (7) Options to purchase vested in three equal annual installments beginning on 10/19/2006.
- (8) Options to purchase vested in two equal annual installments beginning on 4/19/2007.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, *See* Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.