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2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend® Automotive Scorecard: Mercedes-Benz and Honda Lead; Kelley Blue Book’s KBB.com Debuts as Online Auto Shopping Brand of the Year

Napa AutoCare, Bose Car Audio, Pennzoil Motor Oil, Michelin, Garmin, and Yamaha Motorcycles rank highest in their categories

NEW YORK, June 25, 2012—After three years of turmoil and consumer skepticism, the automotive industry is beginning to rebound. With new car sales finally on the rise, two manufacturers – Mercedes-Benz and Honda – reign supreme in successfully harnessing their equity and leading their industries as **Brands of the Year**. In fact, Mercedes-Benz is enjoying this achievement for the second year in a row, according to the **2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend® (EQ)** study, a yearly brand-health assessment from Harris Interactive, one of the world’s leading custom and multi-client market research firms.

Mercedes-Benz Retains Title as Lead Luxury Auto Brand

2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend®
Luxury Automotive Brand of the Year

1	Mercedes-Benz Vehicles	61.02
2	BMW Vehicles	58.71
3	Lexus Vehicles	58.40
4	Cadillac Vehicles	58.39
5	Acura Vehicles	56.32
6	Infiniti Vehicles	56.19
7	Audi Vehicles	55.36
8	Category Average	54.78

In a segment where luxury is synonymous with superb quality and craftsmanship, the Mercedes-Benz brand resonates more strongly with consumers than any other luxury automotive brand included in the Harris Poll EquiTrend study. Mercedes-Benz’s strong performance in EQ has earned it the **Luxury Automotive Brand of the Year** accolade for the second year running.

“Mercedes-Benz and Lexus have been battling over this top ranking for the last eight years,” says Mike Chadsey, Senior Consultant for Harris Interactive’s Customer Relationship Consulting team. “Mercedes has ranked at the top for two years in a row and four of the last eight years, while Lexus has made it to the top spot three times. BMW is also usually within the top three, with especially strong scores over the last three years. Quality and Purchase Consideration both play important roles in these annual rankings,” says Chadsey.

Beyond these perennial leaders, Cadillac, Acura, Infiniti, and Audi also rank above the category’s average equity score.

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Honda: America's Favorite Full Line Automaker

2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend®

Full Line Automotive Brand of the Year

1	Honda Vehicles	62.55
2	Toyota Vehicles	62.51
3	Ford Vehicles	62.10
4	Chevrolet Vehicles	61.95
5	Nissan Vehicles	57.29
6	Subaru Vehicles	55.40
7	Hyundai Vehicles	53.61
8	Volkswagen Vehicles	53.39
	Category Average	53.02

The ranking was close and the results are in — Honda overtakes both Toyota and Ford to become the **2012 Full Line Automotive Brand of the Year**. It replaces last year's top-ranked automaker, Ford.

Having overcome some quality concerns and recalls in 2011, Toyota has come back strong. It climbs into second place, which is up two notches from its fourth-place position in 2011, and that much closer to the top spot it held only two years ago in 2010. Toyota's increase in brand equity is the largest of the brands

measured in the category.

Although its equity score has actually increased, Ford has slipped to third place in the 2012 rankings— a further testament to the highly competitive nature of the automotive market. Chevrolet, Nissan, Subaru, Hyundai, and Volkswagen also rank above average in the full line automotive category.

In addition to measuring the brand equity of the luxury and full line automotive manufacturers, EQ also measures the auto industry's ancillary products and services, including tires, motor oil, and service centers, among others. Here's a look at the top brands in each category and how each of the categories stacks up overall:

Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com Debuts as Online Auto Shopping Brand of the Year

2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend®

Online Auto Shopping Brand of the Year

1	Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com	62.51
2	Edmunds.com	62.02
	Category Average	55.98

Online auto sales sites constitute a new Harris Poll EquiTrend category for 2012, and Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com earns the **Online Auto Shopping Brand of the Year** accolade, followed by Edmunds.com in second place. KBB.com is the more familiar brand, due largely to its long

heritage and strong association as the industry benchmark for used car values. Additionally, KBB.com enjoys high Quality scores, compared to other brands surveyed.

Napa AutoCare Takes Brand of the Year Title in EQ Debut

2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend® Auto Service Center Brand of the Year

1	Napa AutoCare Center	61.05
2	Discount Tire	59.77
3	Goodyear Tire and Service Network	58.14
4	National Tire and Battery	56.99
5	Valvoline Instant Oil Change	54.30
6	Firestone Automotive Service Centers	53.77
7	Walmart Tire & Lube Express	53.70
8	Mobil 1 Lube Express	53.66
	Category Average	53.54

First-time EQ brand, Napa AutoCare outranks 19 competitors to earn the **Automotive Service Center Brand of the Year** accolade in the 2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend study. Discount Tire, also a new brand to the EQ study, places second, surpassing last year's top-ranked brand, Goodyear Tire and Service Network, which fell to third. National Tire and Battery, Valvoline Instant Oil Change, Firestone Automotive Service Centers, Walmart Tire & Lube Express, and Mobil 1 Lube Express all round out the top eight brands above the category average.

Bose Tops New Car Audio Category

2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend® Car Audio Brand of the Year

1	Bose In-Vehicle Audio	67.15
2	Harman/Kardon In-Vehicle Audio	65.82
3	Boston Acoustics In-Vehicle Audio	63.62
4	Infinity In-Vehicle Audio	62.98
5	Alpine In-Vehicle Audio	62.22
	Category Average	60.85

Another of Harris Poll EquiTrend's new categories is **Car Audio**, where Bose debuts as the Brand of the Year. This is an especially important finding for luxury automotive manufacturers, which select branded audio systems that fit their own brand promises and appeal to consumers.

and Purchase Intention scores among the general population, as well as top-ranked Leadership and Brand Momentum scores. Clearly, Americans see Bose as a leader within its category, as well as a brand that has a bright future," says Chadsey.

"Bose enjoys very strong Familiarity, Quality,

Well-known by consumers, Harman/Kardon, Boston Acoustics, Infinity, and Alpine all ranked above the category average.

Pennzoil Motor Oil Makes It Three Years in a Row

2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend® Motor Oil Brand of the Year

1	Pennzoil Motor Oil	63.93
2	Mobil 1 Motor Oil	63.11
3	Valvoline Motor Oil	62.83
4	Rotella Motor Oil	62.48
5	Quaker State Motor Oil	62.14
6	Castrol Motor Oil	62.02
	Category Average	61.65

In a category filled with many well-known brands, Pennzoil takes the **Motor Oil Brand of the Year** honor for the third consecutive year. Despite a large drop in overall Familiarity, Pennzoil retains its strong Quality and Purchase Intention scores to keep its top ranking. Mobil 1, Valvoline, Rotella, Quaker State, and Castrol motor oils also placed above the category average.

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Michelin Enjoys Six Years as America's Tire Brand

2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend® Automotive Tire Brand of the Year

1	Michelin Automobile Tires	66.43
2	Goodyear Automobile Tires	63.60
3	BF Goodrich Automobile Tires	62.31
4	Bridgestone Automobile Tires	60.73
5	Pirelli Automobile Tires	60.42
6	Cooper Automobile Tires	60.15
	Category Average	59.09

Michelin continues to dominate the automotive **tire** market, achieving the highest-ranked position in the Harris Poll EquiTrend study for six consecutive years. As usual, Goodyear and BF Goodrich round out the top three brands in the 2012 study. Bridgestone, Pirelli, and Cooper also rank better than the category average.

Garmin Navigates to Top Position

2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend® GPS Navigation System Brand of the Year

1	Garmin Navigation System	66.19
2	Category Average	59.20

Garmin is ranked as the **GPS Navigation Brand of the Year** for 2012. Garmin leads in key aspects of brand equity, including Familiarity, Quality, and Purchase Intention.

Yamaha Cuts off Harley-Davidson

2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend® Motorcycle Brand of the Year

1	Yamaha Motorcycles	50.88
2	Harley-Davidson Motorcycles	50.53
	Category Average	48.20

Gains made in Quality and Purchase Consideration by Yamaha pushed the brand ahead of Harley-Davidson to secure the **Motorcycle Brand of the Year** accolade in the 2012 Harris Poll EquiTrend study.

Higher scores in Familiarity, Quality, and Purchase Intention helped move Yamaha ahead of Harley-Davidson.

About Harris Poll EquiTrend®

Harris Poll EquiTrend® is a leading Brand Equity tracking study conducted by Harris Interactive that measures and compares brand health for more than 1,500 brands. The study was conducted online from January 31 through February 20, 2012 and analyzes the responses of over 38,500 consumers on key measures of brand health - including how well the public knows a brand, how positively they think of the brand and their consideration to do business with or donate to a brand. Each brand is rated 1,000 times among respondents who are familiar with the brand. Harris Interactive has conducted its EquiTrend

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study regularly since 1989, and can offer yearly trended data from 2005. The Equity Score, a key take-away from EquiTrend, has been validated against financial performance by Georgetown University.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

The Harris Poll EquiTrend® study results disclosed in this release may not be used for advertising, marketing or promotional purposes without the prior written consent of Harris Interactive.

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For a complete listing of all the brands covered in the study, contact Corporate Communications at 212-539-9600 or press@harrisinteractive.net.

About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is one of the world's leading market research firms, leveraging research, technology, and business acumen to transform relevant insight into actionable foresight. Known widely for **the Harris Poll®** and for pioneering innovative research methodologies, Harris offers proprietary solutions in the areas of market and customer insight, corporate brand and reputation strategy, and marketing, advertising, public relations and communications research. Harris possesses expertise in a wide range of industries including health care, technology, public affairs, energy, telecommunications, financial services, insurance, media, retail, restaurant, and consumer package goods. Additionally, Harris has a portfolio of multi-client offerings that complement our custom solutions while maximizing our client's research investment. Serving clients in more than 215 countries and territories through our North American and European offices, Harris specializes in delivering research solutions that help us - and our clients - stay ahead of what's next. For more information, please visit www.harrisinteractive.com.

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