



Press Release

J.D. Power and Associates Reports: Canadian New-Vehicle Shoppers' Satisfaction with an Automotive Manufacturer's Website Influences the Likelihood of a Test-Drive

Toyota Ranks Highest among Automotive Manufacturer Websites in Canada

TORONTO: 17 May 2012 — After a highly satisfying experience on a manufacturer's website, new-vehicle shoppers are significantly more likely to visit a dealership to test-drive a vehicle of interest, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2012 Canadian Manufacturer Website Evaluation StudySM released today.

Among highly satisfied online shoppers (satisfaction scores of 976 or higher on a 1,000-point scale), 76 percent are more likely to visit a dealer showroom for a test drive, compared with 14 percent of shoppers who are less satisfied (satisfaction scores of 500 or lower).

"As more shoppers use manufacturer websites to conduct initial vehicle research, the need to create a great first impression is imperative," said J.D. Ney, automotive account analyst at J.D. Power and Associates. "The significant gap in the intent to test-drive is a reminder that first impressions matter and weigh heavily on the shopper's mind when considering a new vehicle."

Website Changes Boost Satisfaction

As the Web continually evolves and shoppers are introduced to new technology on a regular basis, expectations of online new-vehicle shoppers are constantly shifting. As these new technologies and preferences emerge, the study finds the more active a manufacturer is in adapting its Web presence to these changes, the more likely shopper satisfaction with the website is to increase.

Overall new-vehicle shopper satisfaction with manufacturer websites has increased significantly to 821 in 2012, up 37 points from 2011. Satisfaction in all factors—speed (+42 points); appearance (+40); navigation (+34); and information/content (+33)—has also increased significantly, contributing to the rise in the overall satisfaction score.

The study finds that website redesigns and refreshes help manufacturers improve their website satisfaction scores. In some cases, very small updates to processes and individual elements are enough to boost satisfaction scores of frequently used tools, such as the payment estimator.

"The key is not to refresh or redesign the entire website constantly, but to understand specifically where problems with content and navigation are in order to allow shoppers to find exactly what they need," said Ney. "Those strategic changes, whether big or small in scale, show the shoppers that automakers are listening to what they want."

Luxury vs. Mass Market Brands

Higher expectations of a brand lead to a gap in satisfaction when comparing the websites of luxury brands with those of mass market brands. Among online new-vehicle shoppers, mass market brands' websites have a higher average overall satisfaction score (822) than do luxury brands (818), although the luxury brand opinion rating is significantly higher than mass market brands (4.38 vs. 4.00, respectively, on a 5-point scale).

“Shoppers have much higher expectations of luxury brands and expect those expectations to be conveyed on their websites as well,” says Ney. “When perception and reality do not match, the shopper’s satisfaction with the website drops. Luxury brands need to put more effort toward making their website a premium experience.”

Canadian Manufacturer Website Evaluation Results

Now in its seventh year, the study measures the usefulness of Canadian automotive manufacturer websites during the new-vehicle shopping process from the perspective of online shoppers who intend to purchase a new vehicle within the next 12 months. Four factors contribute to overall shopper satisfaction with manufacturer websites: information/content, speed, navigation and appearance.

Toyota ranks highest in overall shopper satisfaction with a score of 858 and performs particularly well across all four factors. Lincoln and Buick follow in the rankings, with scores of 845 and 843, respectively.

The 2012 Canadian Manufacturer Website Evaluation Study is based on evaluations provided by 3,078 new-vehicle shoppers who indicated they would be in the market for a new vehicle within the next 12 months. The study was fielded between February and March 2012.

About J.D. Power and Associates

Headquartered in Westlake Village, Calif., J.D. Power and Associates is a global marketing information services company operating in key business sectors including market research, forecasting, performance improvement, Web intelligence and customer satisfaction. The company's quality and satisfaction measurements are based on responses from millions of consumers annually. For more information on [car reviews and ratings](#), [car insurance](#), [health insurance](#), [cell phone ratings](#), and more, please visit JDPower.com. J.D. Power and Associates is a business unit of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

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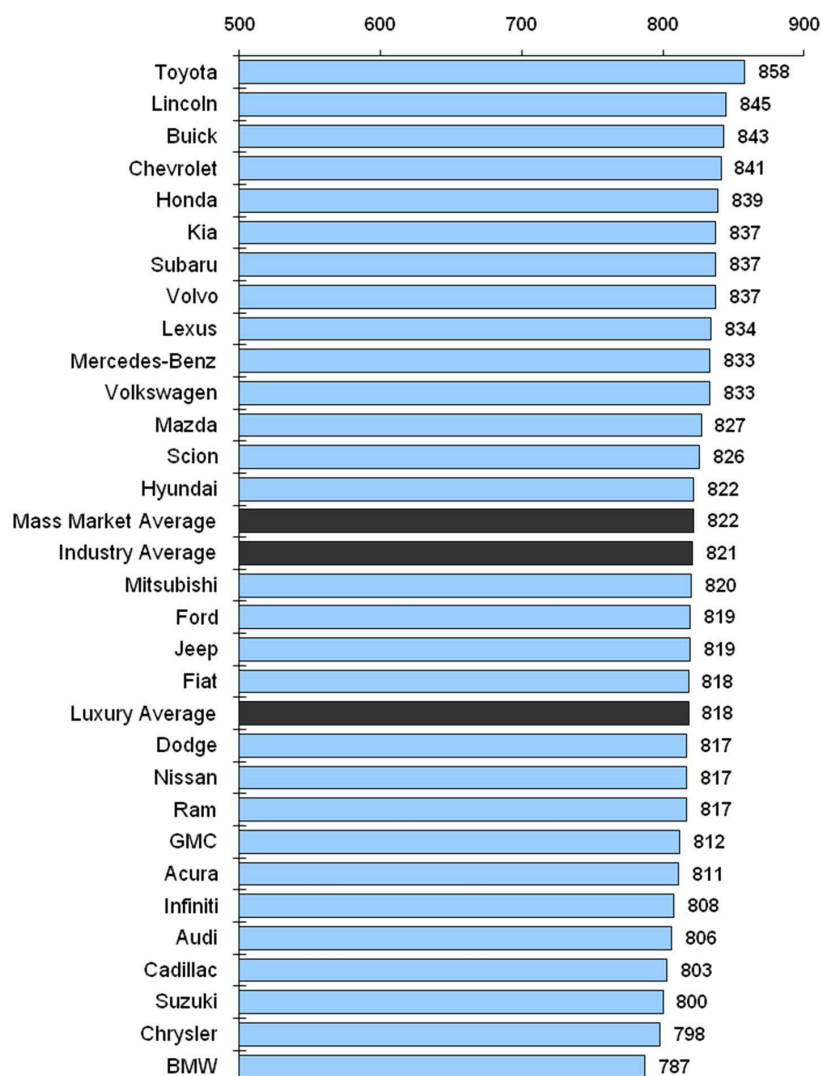
(Page 2 of 2)

NOTE: One chart follows.

J.D. Power and Associates 2012 Canadian Manufacturer Website Evaluation StudySM

Manufacturer Website Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Included in the study but not ranked due to small sample size is MINI

Source: J.D. Power and Associates
2012 Canadian Manufacturer Website Evaluation StudySM

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