



## Press Release

### **J.D. Power and Associates and *L'Automobile Magazine* Report: Highly Satisfied Vehicle Owners in France Are Notably More Likely to Repurchase the Same Vehicle Make**

#### BMW, Fiat, Mercedes-Benz, Renault, Toyota and Volkswagen Models Rank Highest in Their Respective Segments

**PARIS: 10 June 2010** – Highly satisfied vehicle owners in France are approximately six times more likely to repurchase the same vehicle make, compared with owners with lower levels of satisfaction, according to the J.D. Power and Associates/*L'Automobile Magazine* 2010 France Vehicle Ownership Satisfaction Study<sup>SM</sup> (VOSS) released today.

The study finds that 55 percent of highly satisfied vehicle owners (satisfaction scores averaging higher than 900 on a 1,000-point scale) indicate they “definitely will” repurchase the same brand. Conversely, only 9 percent of vehicle owners who are less satisfied (satisfaction scores averaging 700 and lower) say the same. In addition, providing an outstanding service experience increases brand loyalty, as highly satisfied owners are approximately three times more likely return to the servicing dealership for their next vehicle purchase, compared with owners with lower levels of satisfaction.

“It has become even more challenging for brands to build trust and loyalty among customers, considering the slow rate of industry recovery that is forecast for the coming years, as well as the increasing number of models expected in the market,” said Martin Volk, senior research manager at J.D. Power and Associates. “Loyal customers may help build a base for business success, since a brand’s customer acquisition costs decrease with each purchase that a returning customer makes.”

The study also finds that vehicle owners who indicate that they received an “outstanding” vehicle ownership experience are twice as likely to recommend their vehicle make than are less-satisfied owners.

The study is based on owners’ evaluations of their vehicles and dealers across 67 attributes grouped in four measurements of satisfaction. In order of importance, they are: vehicle appeal (32%), which includes performance, design, comfort and features; ownership costs (26%), including fuel consumption, insurance and costs of service/repair; vehicle quality and reliability (22%); and dealer service satisfaction (20%).

Among manufacturers, Honda ranks highest in satisfying new-vehicle owners for a second consecutive year with a score of 820. Honda performs particularly well in two of the four key measures: vehicle quality and reliability and service satisfaction. Rounding out the five highest-ranked nameplates are Mercedes-Benz (814); BMW (805); Dacia (787); and Audi and Škoda (in a tie with 786 each). Mercedes-Benz and Dacia also improve considerably—increasing from 2009 by 22 points and 18 points, respectively.

“Among the highly ranked brands, there are a variety of types of manufacturers, which range from premium brands to niche brands and more economical brands that have lower perceived operational costs,” said Volk. “Independent of the brand positioning, aligning product performance and dealer service to customer expectations is key to delivering an exceptional ownership experience.”

“The low-cost alternative, Dacia, provides a different experience with an excellent value for money proposition, which comes with decent quality and a good dealer service,” said Stéphane Meunier, editor in chief of *L'Automobile Magazine*.

At the model level, Toyota ranks highest in two vehicle segments with the Prius (upper medium car) and Corolla Verso (MPV), which ties with the Volkswagen Touran (MPV). Also receiving segment-level awards are the Fiat 500 (city car); BMW 1 Series (lower medium car); the Mercedes-Benz C-Class (compact executive car); and the Renault Grand Modus (small car).

Additional domestic models that rank within the top three in their respective segments are the Renault Twingo, which ranks second in the city car segment, and the Peugeot 207, which ranks third of 22 models in the small car segment. Additionally, the Citroën C5 ranks second in the upper medium segment and the Citroën Grand C4 Picasso ranks third in the MPV segment.

The 2010 France Vehicle Ownership Satisfaction Study is based on the evaluations of more than 14,000 online interviews with French car owners after an average of two years of ownership. The study was fielded from January to March 2010.

The annual J.D. Power and Associates/*L'Automobile Magazine* study provides consumers with reliable and accurate information about many vehicle models, and helps manufacturers provide high levels of satisfaction to their customers. More comprehensive study results are published exclusively in the July issue of *L'Automobile Magazine* on sale Thursday, June 10, 2010.

#### **About J.D. Power and Associates**

The European headquarters of J.D. Power and Associates is located in Munich, Germany. With world headquarters in Westlake Village, California, U.S.A., 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. J.D. Power and Associates is a business unit of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

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#### **About *L'Automobile Magazine***

With a monthly circulation of 180,000, *L'Automobile Magazine*, established in 1946, is the first monthly car magazine in France. With its ISO 9001-registered test drives; sneak previews on new cars; annual and official "Guide to Quality and Reliability;" and its retro, design and sport stories, *L'Automobile Magazine* attracts both the most passionate car enthusiasts and car buyers alike who are looking for advice.

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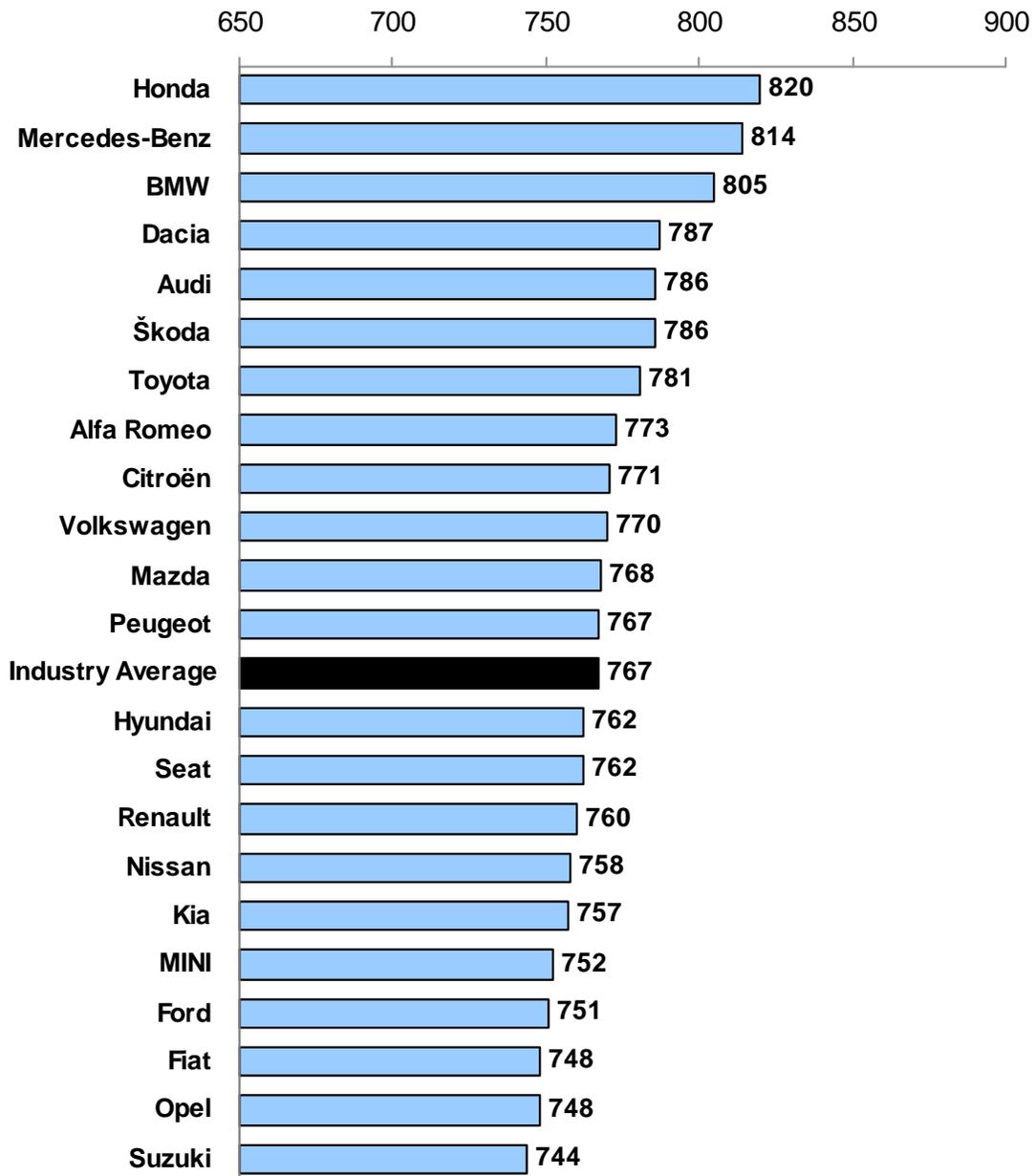
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NOTE: Three charts follow.

# J.D. Power and Associates 2010 France Vehicle Ownership Satisfaction Study<sup>SM</sup> (VOSS)

## VOSS Manufacturer Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



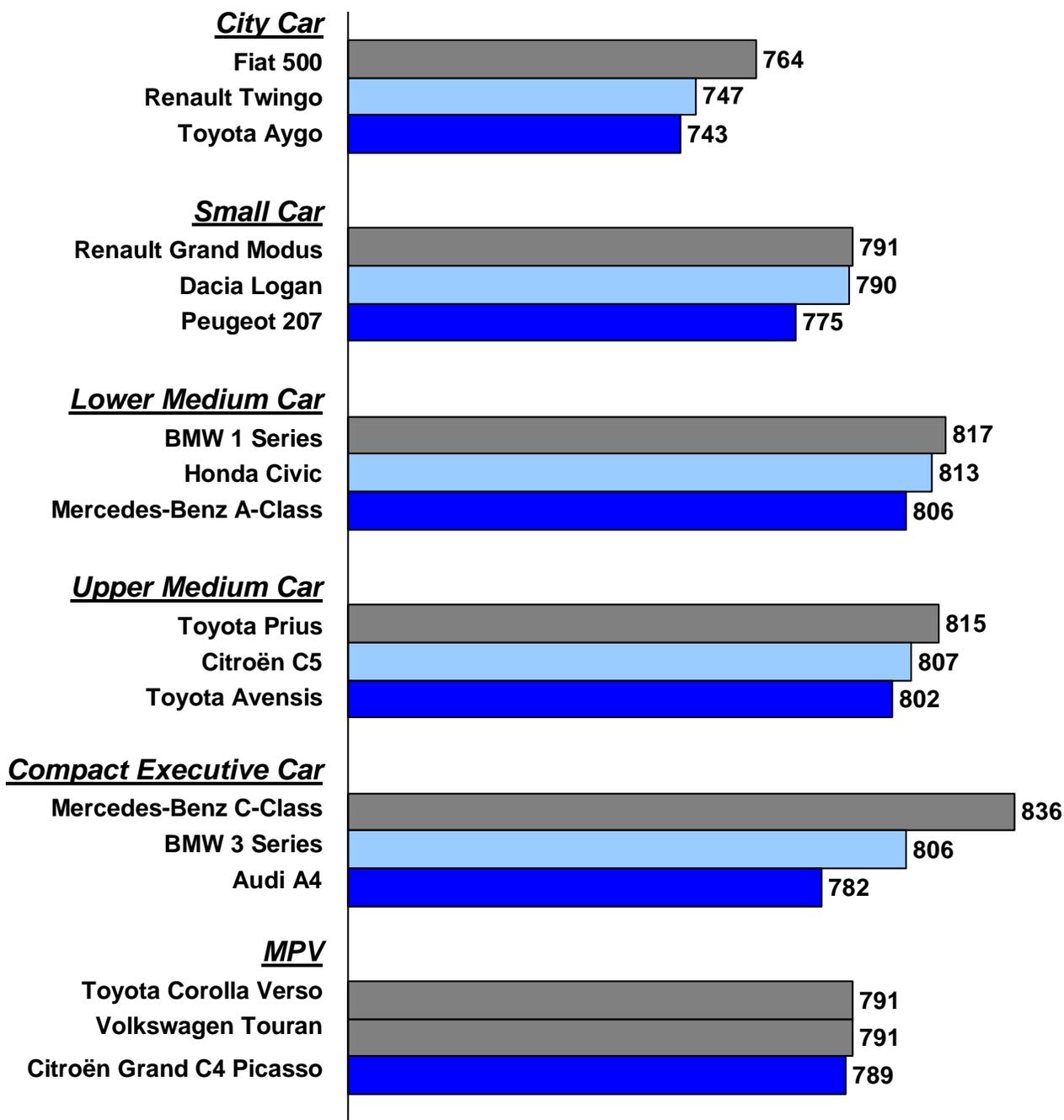
Included in the study, but not ranked due to small sample size are: Chevrolet, Dodge, Lancia, Land Rover, SAAB, smart and Volvo.

Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2010 France Vehicle Ownership Satisfaction Study<sup>SM</sup> (VOSS)

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# J.D. Power and Associates 2010 France Vehicle Ownership Satisfaction Study<sup>SM</sup> (VOSS)

## Top Three Models per Segment Overall VOSS

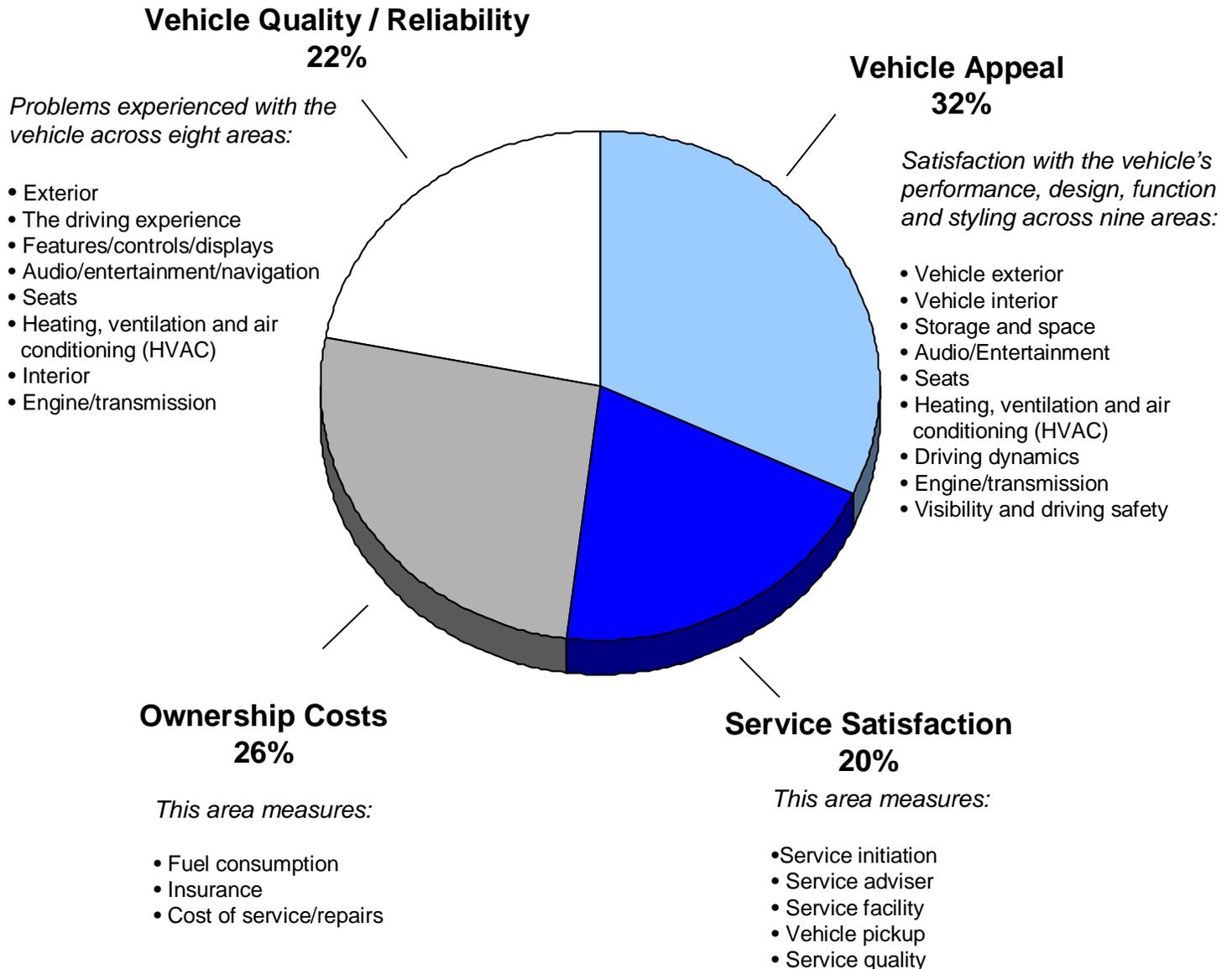


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## Factors Contributing to Overall Vehicle Ownership Satisfaction



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