



Press Release

J.D. Power Asia Pacific Reports: Environmentally Friendly and Safety-Related Technologies Garner High Levels of Interest Among Vehicle Owners in Japan

TOKYO: 24 December 2009 — Among vehicle owners in Japan, environmentally friendly and safety-related technologies garner particularly high levels of interest, according to the J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2009 Japan Automotive Emerging Technologies Study.SM

This study, now in its seventh year, measures consumer familiarity, interest and purchase intent for 41 automotive emerging technologies within the Japan market. Certain technologies are designed to meet needs and circumstances of consumers with a specific region, including DCM, a data communication module that allows drivers to access real-time traffic information, operator-assisted service, remote problem diagnosis and safety and security support. A variety of alternative powertrain technologies are also included in the study.

Of the emerging technologies included in the study, the ten highest-rated in terms of purchase intent are eco-drive mode; regenerative brakes; eco-drive monitor; rear-vision camera; automatic toll/road-charge debiting system; hybrid engine; low speed collision prevention/mitigation system; rear parking assist; interior monitoring system ; and wireless connection system.

Compared with 2008, certain environmentally friendly technologies such as fuel cell vehicles and plug-in electric vehicles have declined in rank position in 2009, while interest in hybrid engines has remained stable. However, eco drive technology garners particularly strong interest.

“Unlike other alternative powertrain technologies, eco-drive features are relatively inexpensive, which reflects a growing tendency among vehicle owners to consider not only environmental impact, but also the costs involved in adopting new technologies,” said Yuko Tajima, project manager at J.D. Power Asia Pacific, Tokyo. “Owners are acutely interested in getting good gas mileage, and they are most interested in low-cost technologies that will help them achieve it.”

The study finds that while familiarity with idle-stop systems has increased by 14 percentage points from 2008 to 90 percent in 2009, familiarity and interest levels for other next-generation fuel technologies have remained stable from 2008. In addition, although interest in hybrid engine technology remains relatively stable at varying price levels, for other next-generation fuel technologies, price has a stronger effect on consumer interest.

The study also finds that although gasoline prices have declined from 2008 levels, owner intent to downsize and select more fuel-efficient vehicles has remained high in 2009.

“By cutting taxes and providing subsidies to boost sales of environmentally friendly vehicles, the Japanese government is attempting to counteract the effects of the declining birthrate and economic climate on the new-vehicle market,” said Tajima. “Although it will continue to be essential for manufacturers to be responsive to consumer demand for technology, it will also be important for automakers to offer added value through new features at relatively low costs.”

The 2009 Japan Automotive Emerging Technologies Study is based on responses from 5,434 consumers in Japan who purchased a new passenger vehicle (including mini-cars) within the past five years and are the main drivers of the purchased vehicle. The study was fielded in November 2009.

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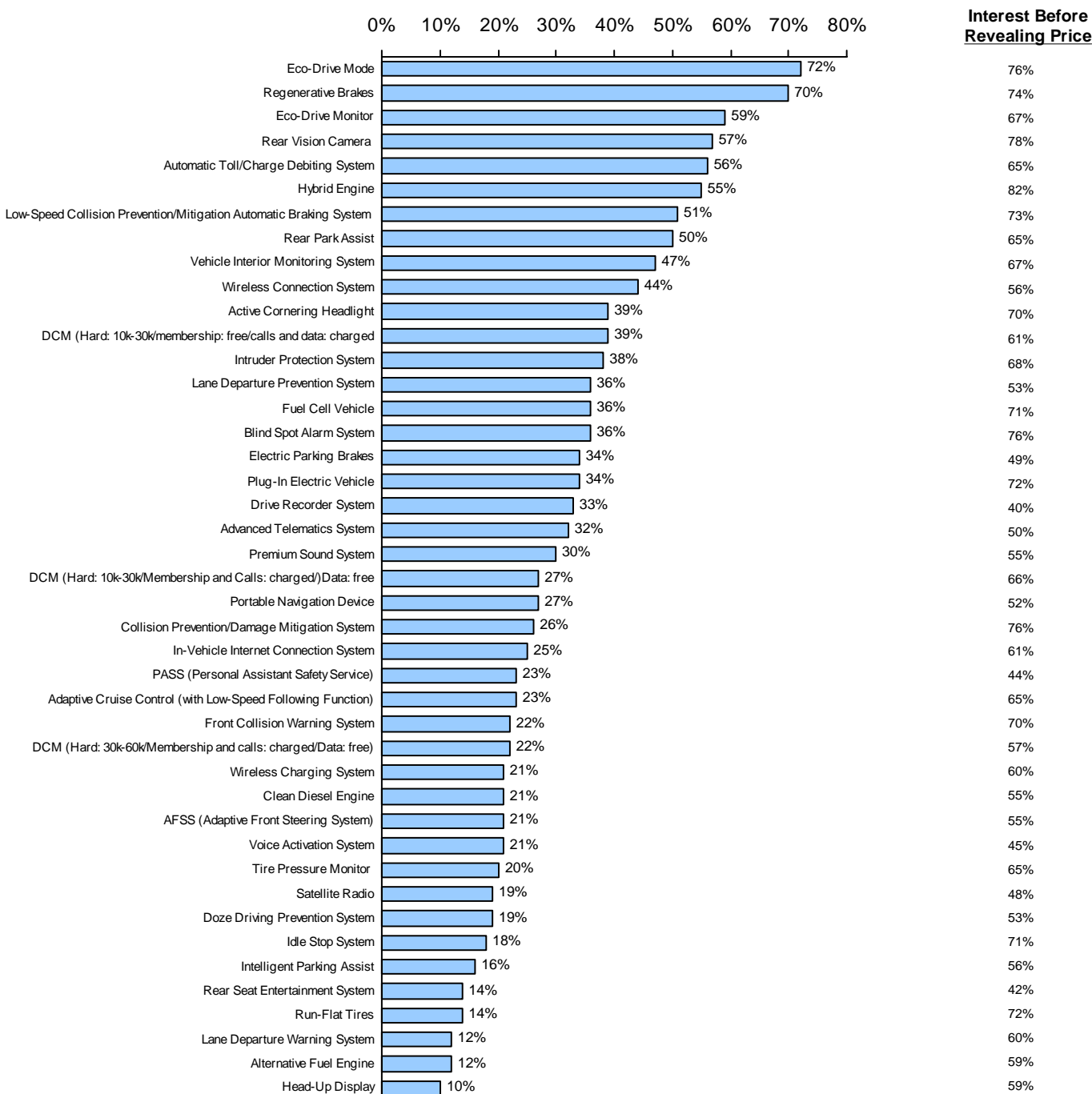
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NOTE: One chart follows.

J.D Power Asia Pacific 2009 Japan Automotive Emerging Technologies StudySM

Average Purchase Intention (After Market Price Is Revealed)



Note: The bar graph indicates the average purchase intention of consumers who say they “definitely will” or “probably will” purchase the technology after lower, mid-point and higher price points are revealed.

Source J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2009 Japan Automotive Emerging Technologies StudySM

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