



## Press Release

### **J.D. Power Asia Pacific Reports: Fewer than One in Five Automotive Customers in Japan Indicate Their Dealership Establishes A Strong First Impression**

#### Lexus Ranks Highest in Sales Satisfaction in Japan for a Third Consecutive Year

**TOKYO: 28 September 2009** —Although creating a strong first impression among customers has a significant positive effect on their satisfaction, fewer than one in five customers in Japan indicate their dealership does so, according to the J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2009 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study<sup>SM</sup> released today.

The study, now in its eighth year, measures customer satisfaction with the sales process at automotive dealerships based on five factors that contribute to overall satisfaction. In order of importance, they are: salesperson (46%); purchase condition (19%); sales system/process (18%); facility (10%); and product exhibit (7%). Sales service performance is reported as an index score based on a 1,000-point scale.

On average, 19 percent of customers report that their impression of the dealership was “very good” upon their first service visit. Among these customers, overall satisfaction averages 749 on a 1,000-point scale—146 points higher than the industry average. Facility aspects and service practices that have a particularly strong impact on customer first impressions of a dealership include providing clear entry and exit signage; greeting and assisting customers as they park their vehicles; and having all dealer staff members greet customers.

Among customers who report their first impression of the dealer was “very good,” 27 percent say they “definitely would” repurchase from the same dealer, compared with the industry average of 13 percent.

Among the 13 brands included in the study, Lexus ranks highest in customer satisfaction with the vehicle sales process in Japan with a score of 729. Lexus performs well in all five factors. Rounding out the top five brands are BMW (656), Mercedes-Benz (653), Audi (644) and Volkswagen (628). Also ranking above the industry average are Honda, Nissan, Mazda, and Toyota, respectively.

Overall satisfaction averages 603 in 2009, up nine points from 2008. While satisfaction with import brands has remained stable from 2008, satisfaction with mini-car models and domestic brands has improved in 2009, by nine and 11 points, respectively.

While vehicle condition at purchase and product-related issues such as vehicle price and design are main reasons for owners to reject a particular vehicle model, salesperson and dealer staff issues are also cited as important reasons for rejection. Approximately 11 percent of owners state they rejected a particular vehicle model due to lack of accommodation from salespersons, while 6 percent report they rejected a model because of poor dealer atmosphere or lack of accommodation by dealer staff.

“Due to the rapid economic downturn that began late in 2008, the domestic vehicle industry has experienced an unprecedented decline in demand,” said Hiroaki Endo, General Manager at J.D. Power Asia Pacific, Tokyo. “In such an environment, improving customer interaction skills of salespersons and dealer staff can be very helpful in retaining sales opportunities.”

The 2009 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study is based on responses from 8,406 vehicle owners after an average of two to eight months of ownership. The study was fielded in May and June 2009.

**About J.D. Power Asia Pacific**

J.D. Power Asia Pacific has offices in Tokyo, Singapore, Beijing, Shanghai and Bangkok that conduct customer satisfaction research and provide performance analytics services in the automotive, information technology and finance industries. Together, the five offices bring the language of customer satisfaction to consumers and businesses in China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. Information regarding J.D. Power Asia Pacific and its products can be accessed through the Internet at [www.jdpower.com](http://www.jdpower.com). Media e-mail contact: [cc-group@jdpower.co.jp](mailto:cc-group@jdpower.co.jp)

**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. J.D. Power and Associates is a business unit of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

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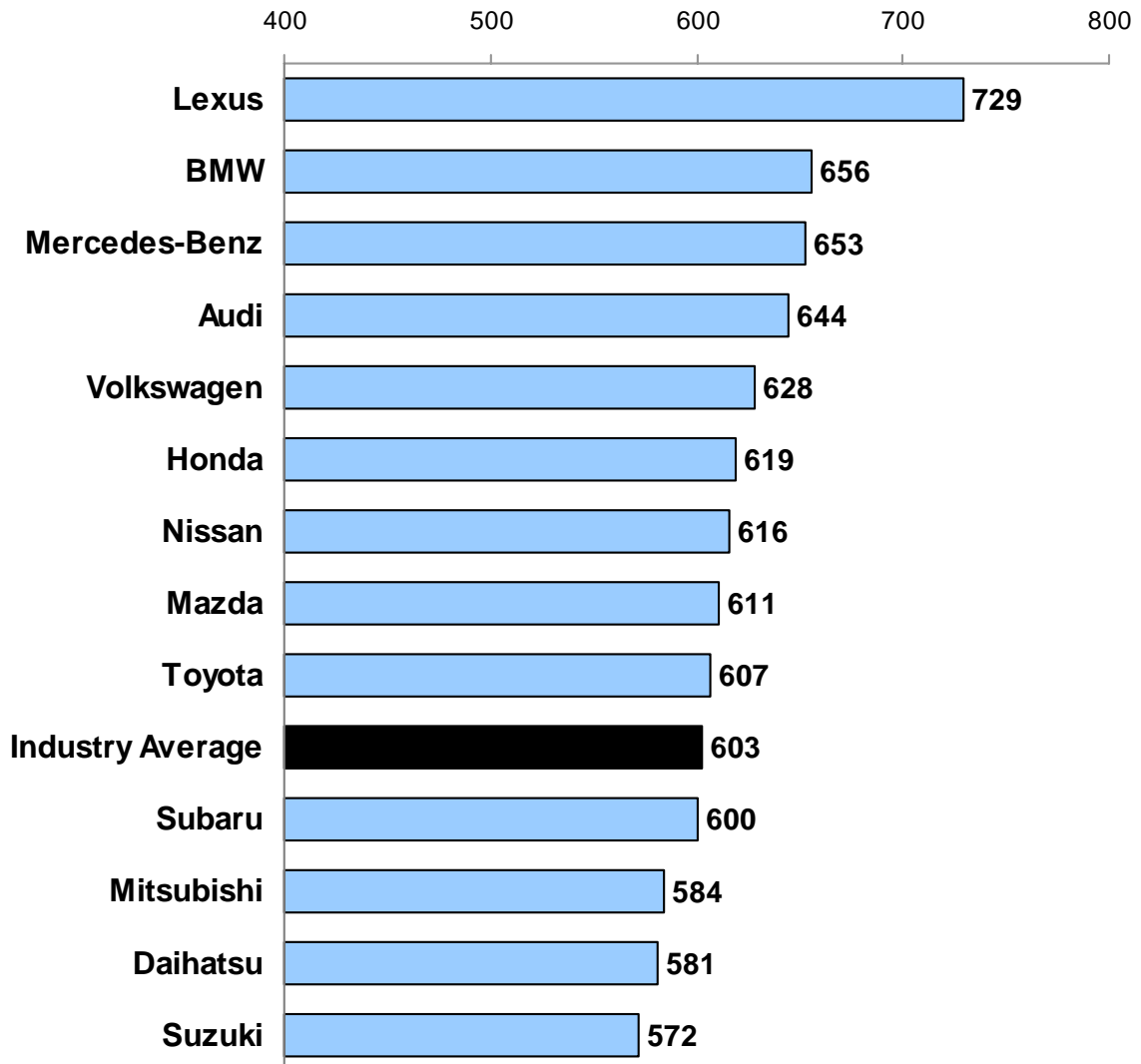
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NOTE: Two charts follow.

# J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2009 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>

## Sales Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Included in the study but not ranked due to small sample size are: MINI, Peugeot and Volvo.

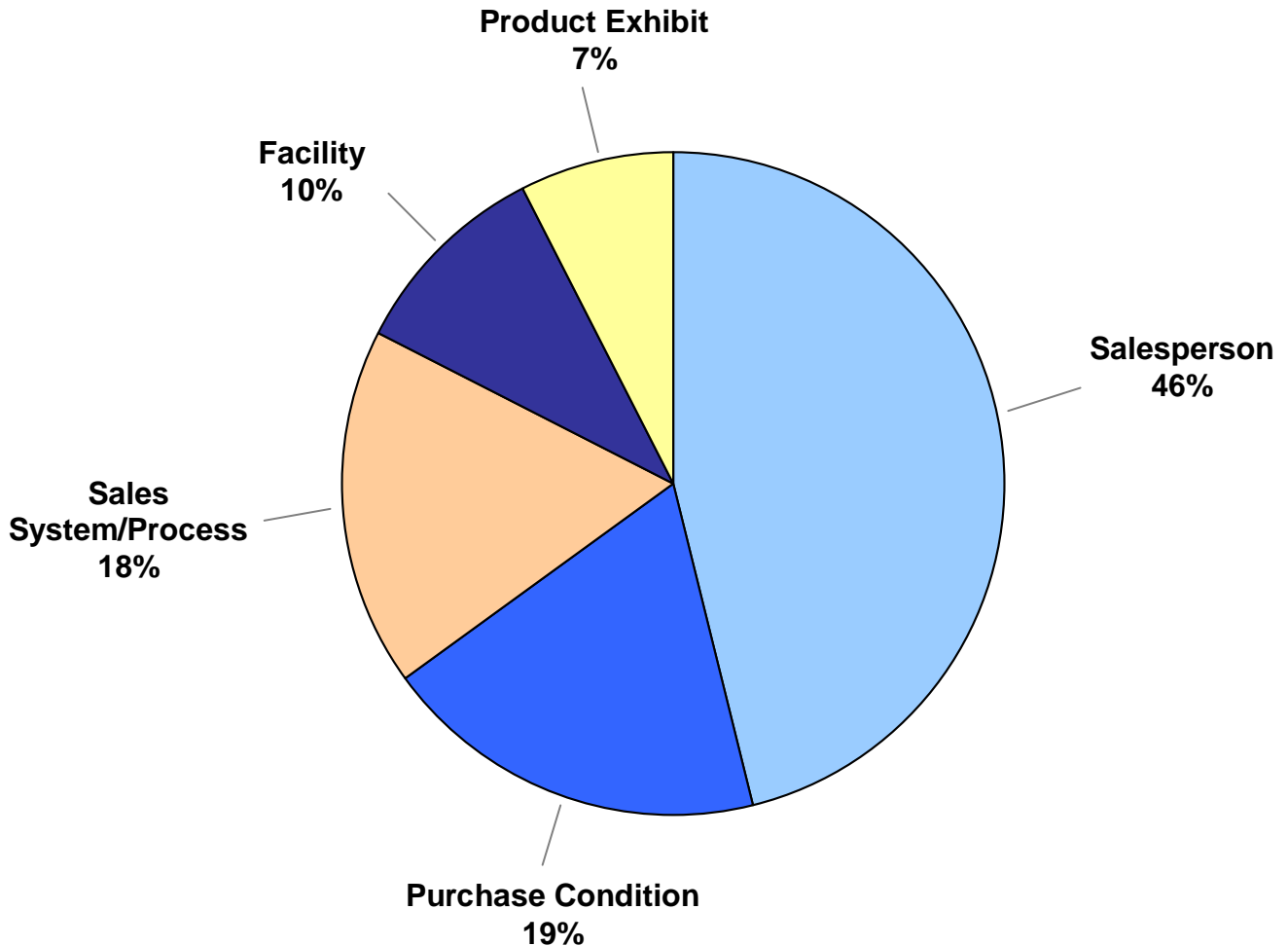
Source: J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2009 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>

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# J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2009 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>

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## ***Factors Contributing to Overall Satisfaction***



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