



## Press Release

### **J.D. Power Asia Pacific Reports: The Sales Staff Has A Significant Impact on Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty with Winter Tire Retailers in Japan**

**TOKYO: 24 June 2010** — The sales staff at winter tire retailers in Japan has a significant impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty, according to the J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2010 Japan Winter Tire Retailer Satisfaction Index Study<sup>SM</sup> released today.

Now in its fifth year, the study measures customer satisfaction with winter tire retailers by examining four key factors that drive the overall sales experience. In order of importance, they are: salesperson (34%); service skill (27%); shop facility (25%) and product offered (15%).

Overall satisfaction with winter tire retailers averages 607 on a 1,000-point scale in 2010. Winter tire owners are most satisfied with the salesperson factor (630), which is also the most important to overall satisfaction. Owners are least satisfied with the product offered factor (577).

The study finds that winter tire retailers that provide customers with product suggestions or recommendations and advice on winter tire maintenance may notably improve customer satisfaction. Among customers who receive information regarding the life expectancy of tires or advice on tire maintenance, overall satisfaction averages at least 74 points higher than that of customers who did not receive this information. In addition, among customers who are contacted about after-sales services by the retailer after purchasing their winter tires, overall satisfaction averages 84 points higher than that of customers who were not contacted about after-sales services.

“Vehicle owners are focusing on economizing and are maintaining their vehicles with the intent of using them for a long time,” said Yuko Tajima, project manager at J.D. Power Asia Pacific, Tokyo. “Therefore, it has become more important for tire retailers not only to sell tires but also to give customers advice on tire maintenance as an aspect of total vehicle care.”

Overall, 18 percent of customers indicate that they “definitely would” repurchase their next set of winter tires from the same tire retailer. Among customers with the highest levels of satisfaction, this percentage increases to 41 percent.

“It is important for tire retailers to improve customer satisfaction, as it impacts customer loyalty for not only winter tires, but also replacement summer tires,” said Tajima.

The study also examines the various channels from which customers purchase winter tires. One-third of owners purchase their tires at auto parts/service stores, while slightly more than one-quarter purchase tires from tire shops. Approximately 17 percent of customers purchase tires from car dealers (17%), while 8 percent purchase from service stations and 7 percent purchase tires from repair shops.

Among the retailer segments, repair shops are the most satisfying to customers (achieving an average score of 629), followed closely by car dealers (628). Repair shops overall demonstrate particular strength in the sales person and service skill factors. Repair shops also have the highest percentage of repeat customers among the five retailer segments.

Service stations and tire shops tie with a score of 611, and are followed by auto parts/service stores (593). Tire shops, as a whole, perform better than industry average in each factor, with the exception of the shop facility factor. Among each of the five retail segments, auto parts/service stores perform particularly well in the product offered factor.

The 2010 Japan Winter Tire Retailer Satisfaction Index (WT-RSI) Study is based on responses from 4,437 consumers across Japan. The Internet-based survey was conducted in February 2010 and includes customers who purchased new, studless winter tires for their private passenger cars (new or used) including mini-cars between May 2008 and February 2010.

#### **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 consulting 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 and Thailand. 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: [shizue\\_hidaka@jdpower.co.jp](mailto:shizue_hidaka@jdpower.co.jp)

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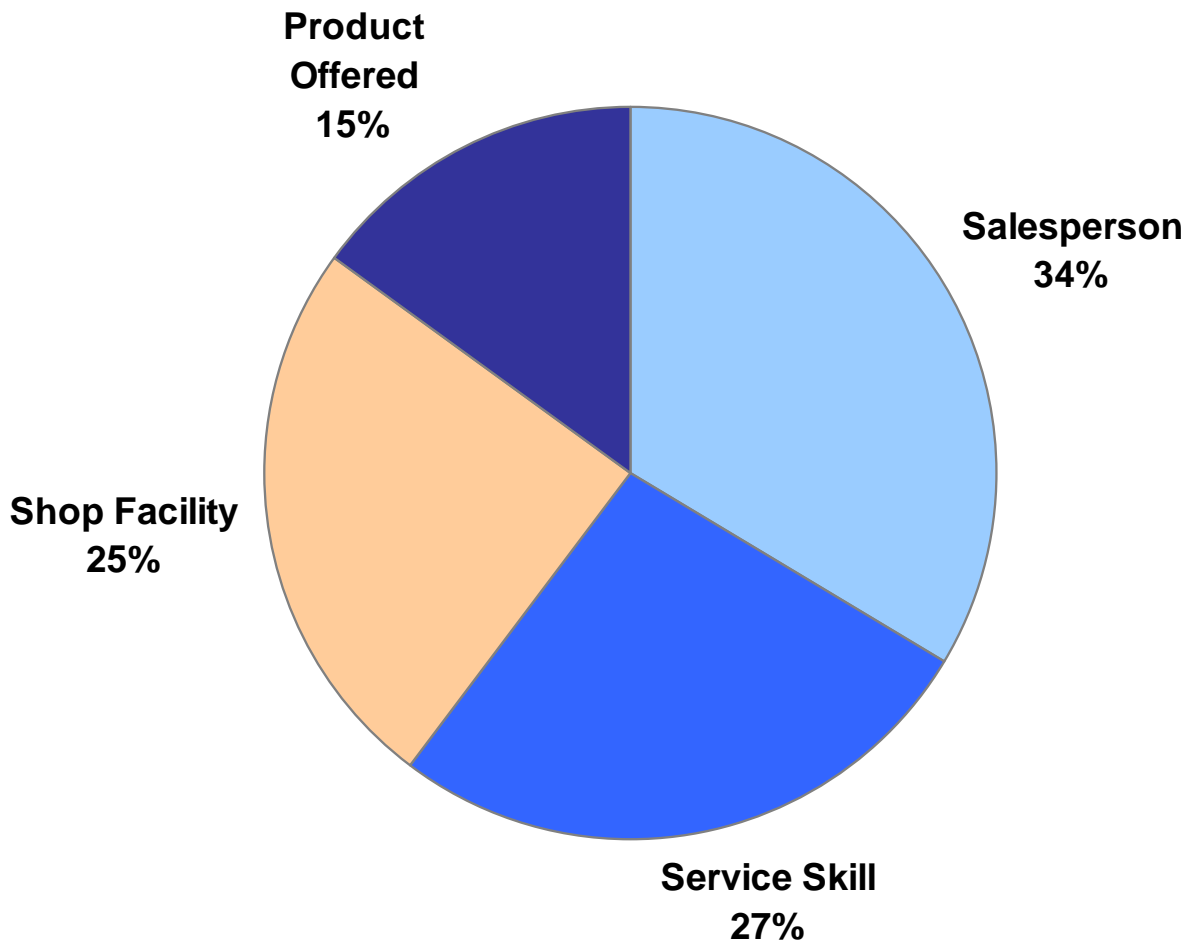
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NOTE: Two charts follow.

# J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2010 Japan Winter Tire Retailer Satisfaction Index Study<sup>SM</sup>

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## *Factors Contributing to Overall Satisfaction With Winter Tire Retailers*



*NOTE: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.*

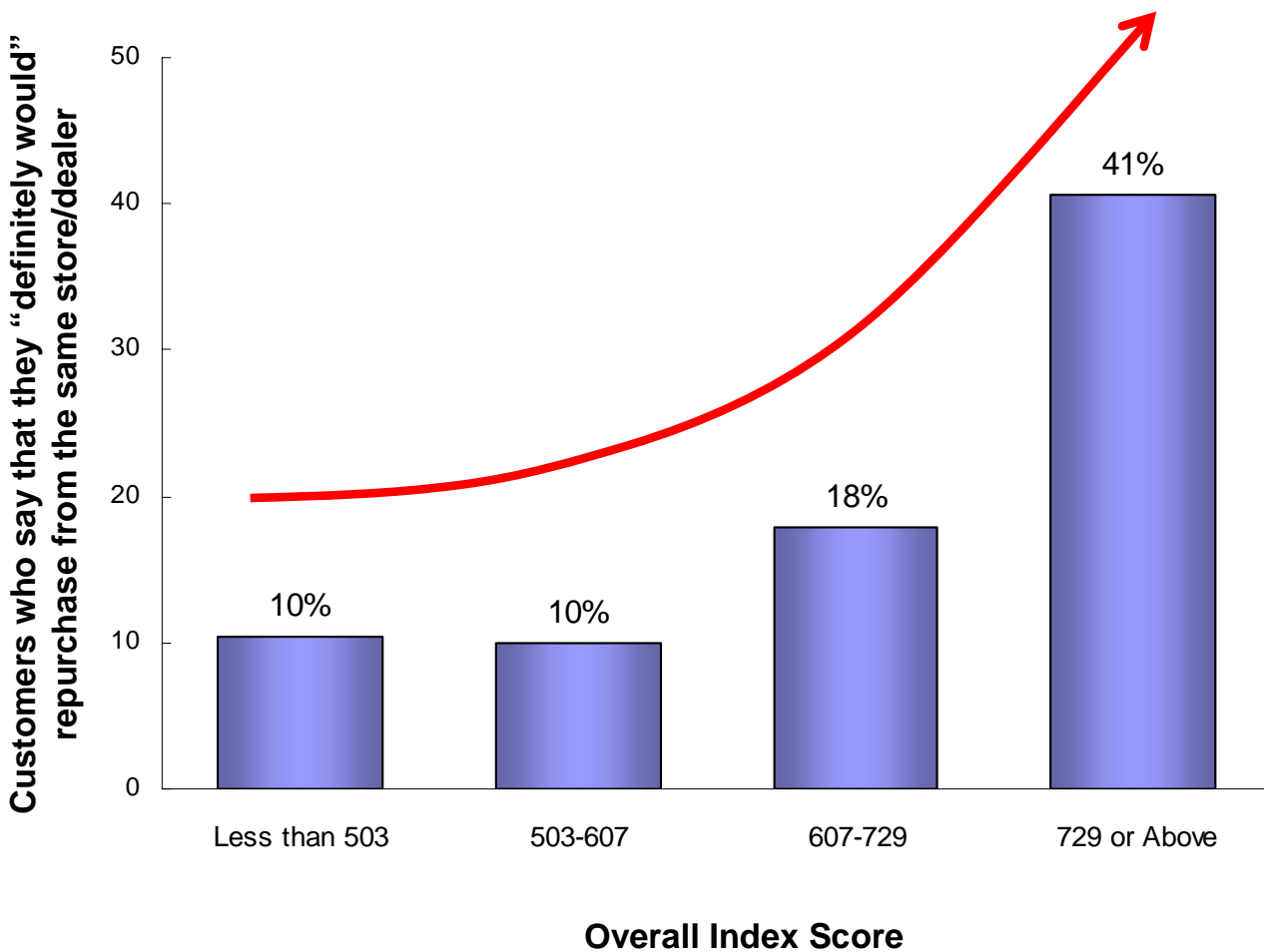
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*Source: J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2010 Japan Winter Tire Retailer Satisfaction Index Study<sup>SM</sup>*

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# J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2010 Japan Winter Tire Retailer Satisfaction Index Study<sup>SM</sup>

## *Relationship Between Retailer Satisfaction Index and Repurchase Intention From the Same Store/Dealer*



Source: J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2010 Japan Winter Tire Retailer Satisfaction Index Study<sup>SM</sup>

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