



## Press Release

### **J.D. Power Asia Pacific Reports: Infrequent Use of Winter Tires on Snow-Covered Roads Negatively Impacts Satisfaction with the Tires on Regular Road Conditions**

#### Michelin Ranks Highest in Customer Satisfaction with Winter Tires in Japan For a Seventh Consecutive Year

**TOKYO: 27 May 2010** — Winter tire owners in Japan who drive infrequently in snowy or icy road conditions tend to be less satisfied with the performance of their tires overall, as well as on regular road conditions, compared with owners who frequently drive on ice and snow, according to the J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2010 Japan Winter Tire Customer Satisfaction Index Study<sup>SM</sup> released today.

The study, now in its seventh year, measures customer satisfaction with winter tires by examining five key factors. The factors are (in order of importance): tire performance on snow-covered road conditions (28%); icy road conditions (21%); and regular road conditions (18%), as well as tire appearance (17%) and tire quality/durability (16%).

Among owners who very infrequently drive on snow-covered, icy or slushy roads, overall satisfaction with winter tires averages 23 points lower (on a 1,000-point scale) than satisfaction among owners who often drive in these conditions. In addition, satisfaction with tire performance in regular road conditions is significantly lower among owners who drive in winter conditions infrequently—43 points lower than among owners who frequently drive on snow and ice. In particular, owners who infrequently drive in winter conditions are less satisfied with tire traction when driving, at stops on wet or dry roads in regular road conditions, and with tire traction at curves.

The frequency of using winter tires in snowy and icy conditions also has an impact on repurchase intent. Among winter tire owners who frequently drive on ice and snow, 16 percent indicate they “definitely would” repurchase the same brand of winter tires. However, among owners who infrequently drive in these conditions, only 12 percent say the same.

“While it is important for winter tire manufacturers to satisfy customer expectations for tire performance in snow-covered, icy or slushy road conditions, attention should also be focused on winter tire performance on regular road conditions, as this may have an impact on customer loyalty,” said Tatsuya Hattori, project manager at J.D. Power Asia Pacific, Tokyo.

Among the nine brands ranked in the study, Michelin ranks highest for a seventh consecutive year with a score of 612. Michelin performs particularly well in all five factors that drive overall satisfaction. Bridgestone follows Michelin in the rankings with a score of 572 points.

The study also finds that the problems most frequently cited by winter tire owners are poor traction on icy roads (by 11 percent of owners overall) and poor traction on snow-covered roads (5 percent of owners). Among owners who indicate having experienced a problem with their winter tires, overall satisfaction scores are lowest among those who say they experienced poor traction on snow-covered roads.

In addition, owners who experience poor traction on snow-covered roads are least likely to say they “definitely would” or “probably would” repurchase their winter tire brand, compared with owners who have experienced other types of problems.

The 2010 Japan Winter Tire Customer Satisfaction Index Study is based on responses from 5,753 vehicle owners who purchased new winter tires for their own private passenger vehicles (including mini-cars) between May 2007 and February 2010, and who are still using the tires. The study was fielded in 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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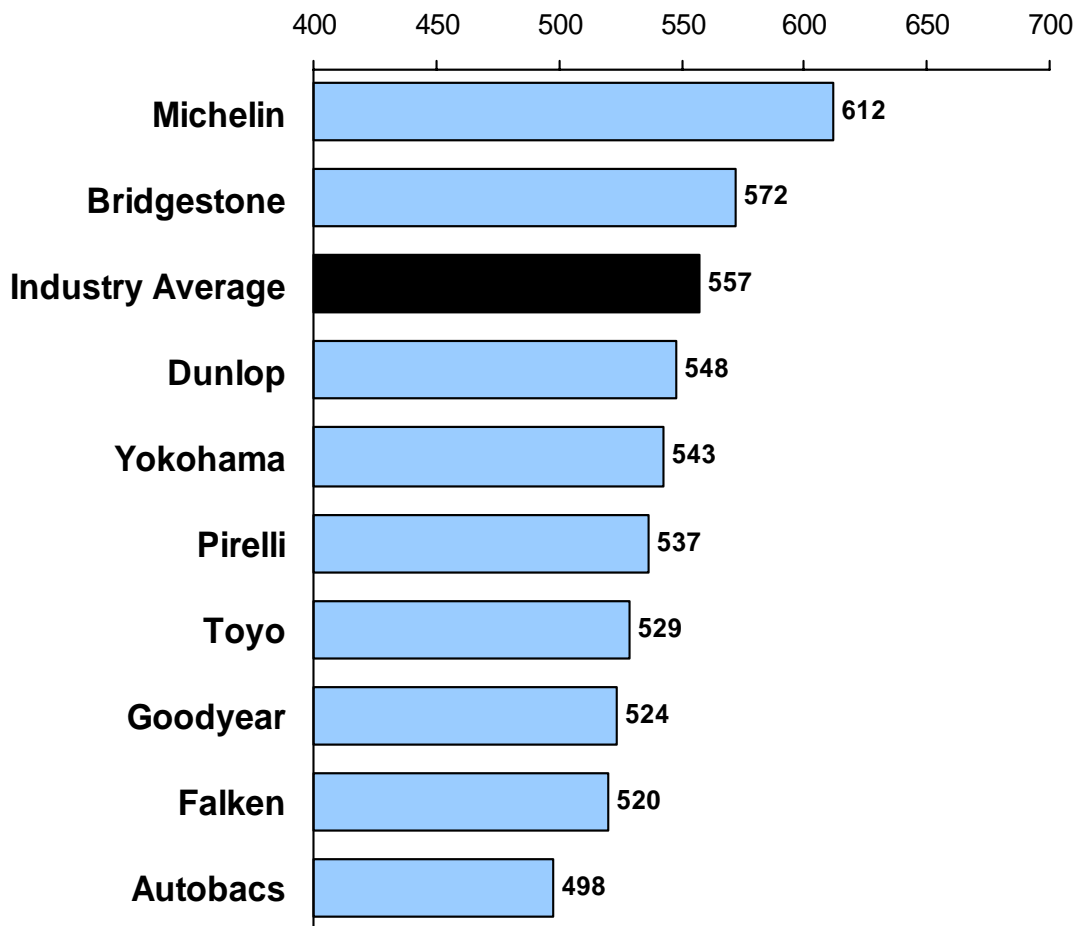
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NOTE: Two charts follow.

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

## Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking (Based on a 1,000-point scale)



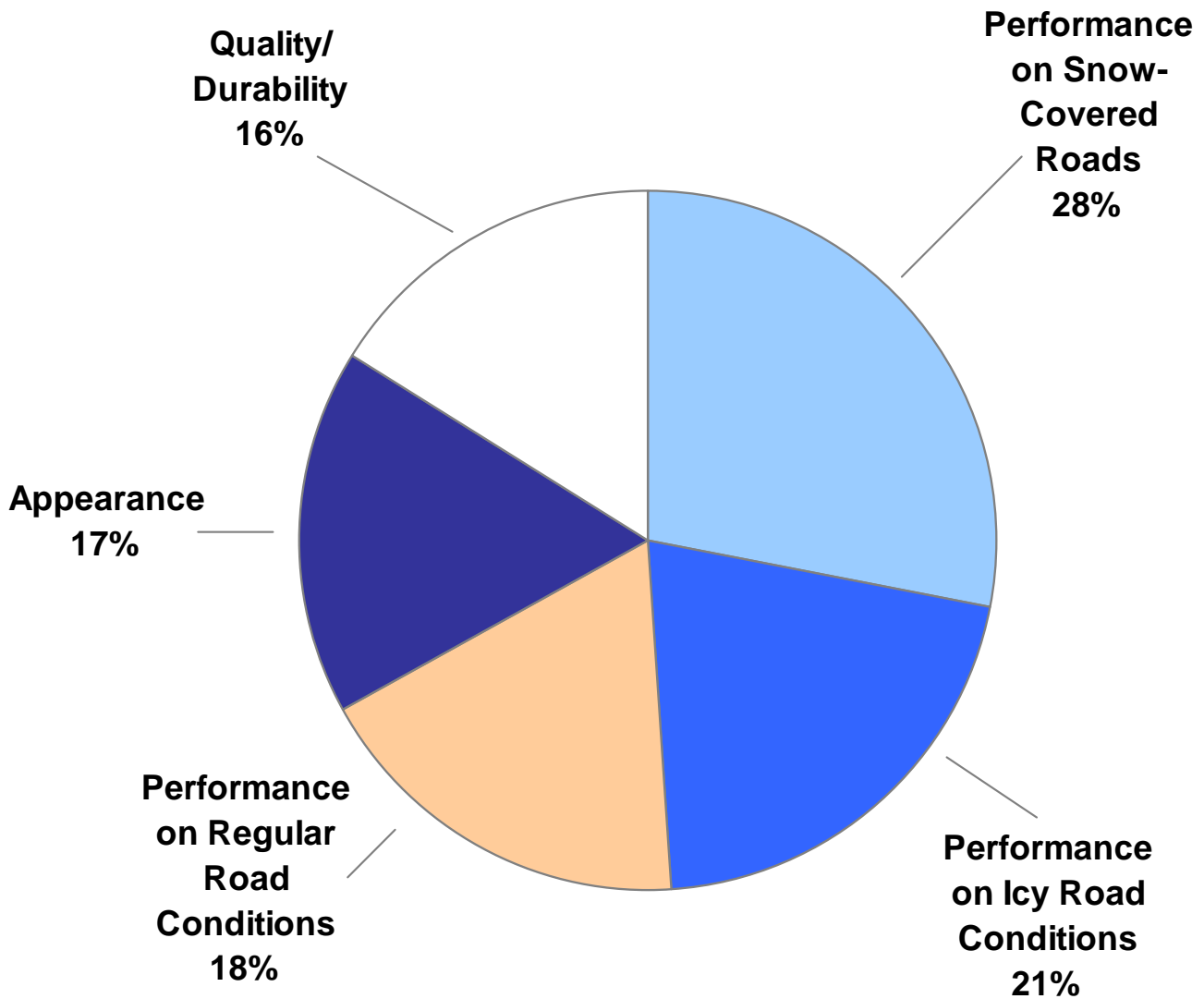
Source: J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2010 Japan Winter Tire Customer Satisfaction Index Study<sup>SM</sup>

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

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## *Factors Contributing to Overall Satisfaction*



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