



## Press Release

### **J.D. Power Asia Pacific Reports: Lexus Ranks Highest in Sales Satisfaction in Japan for a Fifth Consecutive Year**

#### Luxury Brands Perform Well in New-Vehicle Sales Experience

**TOKYO: 28 September 2011** — Lexus ranks highest in satisfying customers with the new-vehicle sales experience in Japan, according to the J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2011 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study<sup>SM</sup> released today.

The study, now in its 10th 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 (33%); purchase condition (25%); sales system/process (19%); facility (13%); and product exhibit (11%). Sales service performance is reported as an index score based on a 1,000-point scale.

Overall sales satisfaction averages 614 points in 2011, with luxury and import brands performing well in the rankings. Lexus ranks highest among the 13 brands included in the ranking, with a score of 717—the same score as in the 2010 study. Mercedes-Benz ranks second (668), moving up from fifth place in 2010 and improving by 36 points. This brand improves in all factors from the previous year, particularly in the salesperson and the sales system/process factors.

Audi and BMW rank third in a tie with 653, and Volkswagen follows with 631. Volkswagen is followed by two domestic brands: Honda (627 points) and Nissan (625 points). Nine of the 13 brands score above the industry average.

The study finds that one-half of customers took a test drive. Satisfaction among customers, who didn't need to take a test drive before purchasing, is 627 points. However, satisfaction drastically declines (525 points) among customers who weren't asked if they wanted to take a test drive by the salesperson, even though they did want a test drive.

“It is imperative for dealers to make their facilities available for a test drive, and at the same time, it is important for salespersons to proactively ask their customers if they want a test drive,” said Masako Hori, director at J.D. Power Asia Pacific, Tokyo. “A test drive is an important opportunity for customers to experience the vehicle's features, performance and appeal. Also, customers are more satisfied with their sales experience when it includes a test drive.”

The study also finds that at least 20 minutes should be allotted for a test drive, as satisfaction declines notably when it is shorter. Twenty-one percent of customers took a test drive that was 20 to 30 minutes in length, compared with 30 percent of customers who took a test drive that was 10 minutes in length or shorter.

“Satisfaction drastically declines when the length of the test drive is 10 minutes or less,” said Hori. “However, there may be no opportunity for the salesperson to offer the customer a test drive, or it may be difficult for some dealers to prepare test drive vehicles because of the facility size and conditions.”

The study finds that customers who are satisfied with their purchase experience are more likely to repurchase a vehicle from the same dealer and to recommend the dealer to their family, friends and acquaintances. In addition, among customers whose overall SSI scores are high (scores of 800 or higher), 40 percent say they would visit only their dealer for all of their after-sales services.<sup>1</sup>

Among customers with high satisfaction levels, 70 percent say they have recommended their dealer to their family, friends and acquaintances, compared with 50 percent of customers overall who say they have recommended their dealer to others. Conversely, among customers with low satisfaction (scores of 500 and lower), the percentage of those who provide negative mentions of their dealer is 31 percent.

“In the Japanese automotive market, where demand is stagnant, it is imperative for dealers to satisfy customers during their new-vehicle purchase experience in order to retain them for after-sales services and future vehicle sales,” said Hori. “It also becomes more important to respond to customers thoroughly when they are shopping for a vehicle so that each dealer can acquire new customers recommended by their existing customers.”

The 2011 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study is based on responses from 7,118 domestic and import vehicle owners after an average of two to eight months of ownership. The online survey was fielded in June 2011.

For the ratings factors for the brands included in the sales satisfaction index ranking, visit the Power Circle Ratings™ (PCRs) at [www.jdpower.com/jp](http://www.jdpower.com/jp).

J.D. Power Asia Pacific will release 2011 Japan Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) study, which measures overall customer satisfaction with service performed at automotive dealer facilities, in early October, 2011.

#### **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)

#### **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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<sup>1</sup> The following eight items are measured for after-sales services: routine maintenance; shaken inspection; installation of accessories; oil change; replace consumables; purchase or replace tires; repairs for breakdowns or problems; and body work or paint.

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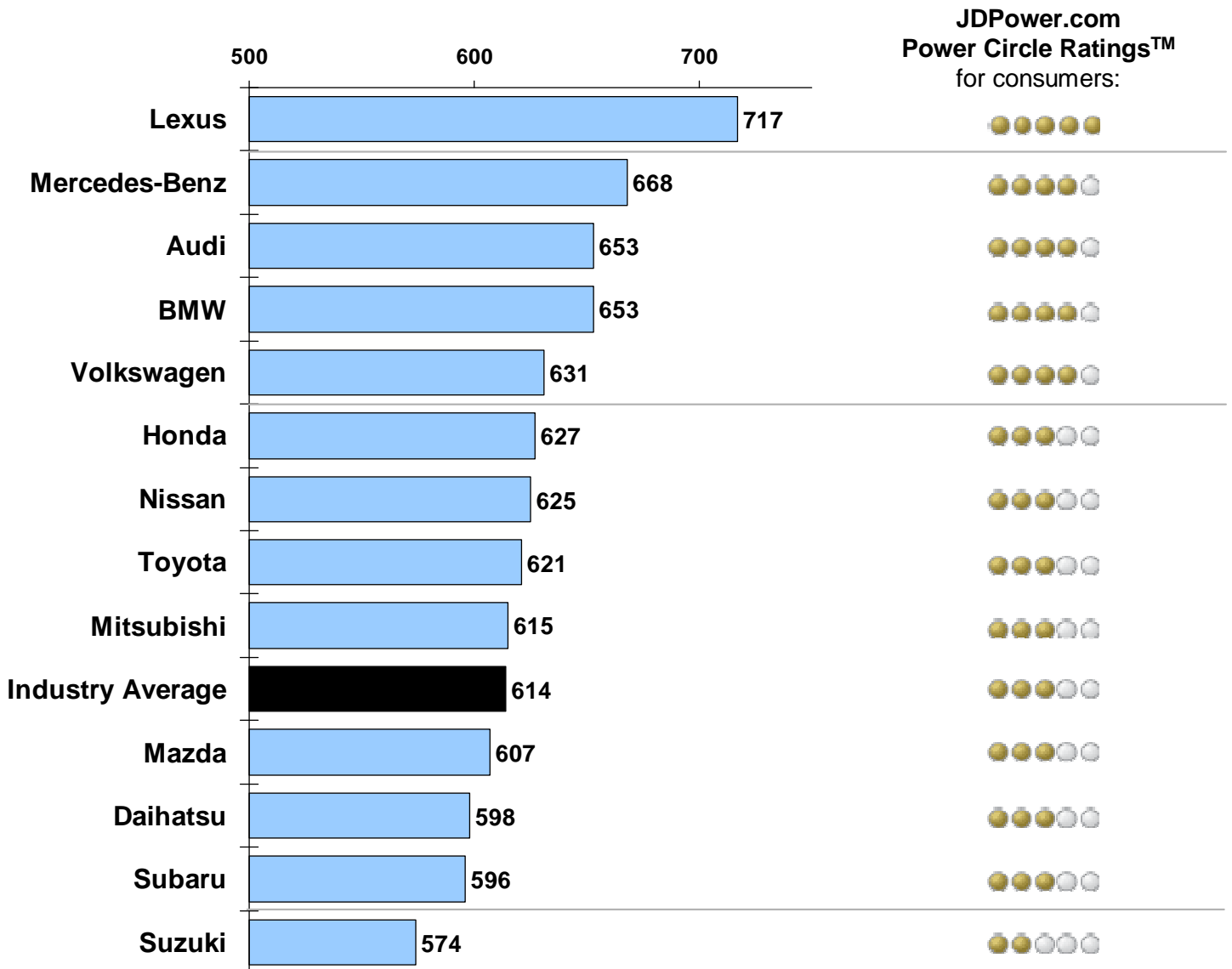
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NOTE: Two charts follow.

# J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2011 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 Fiat, MINI, Peugeot and Volvo.

Source: J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2011 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>

### Power Circle Ratings Legend

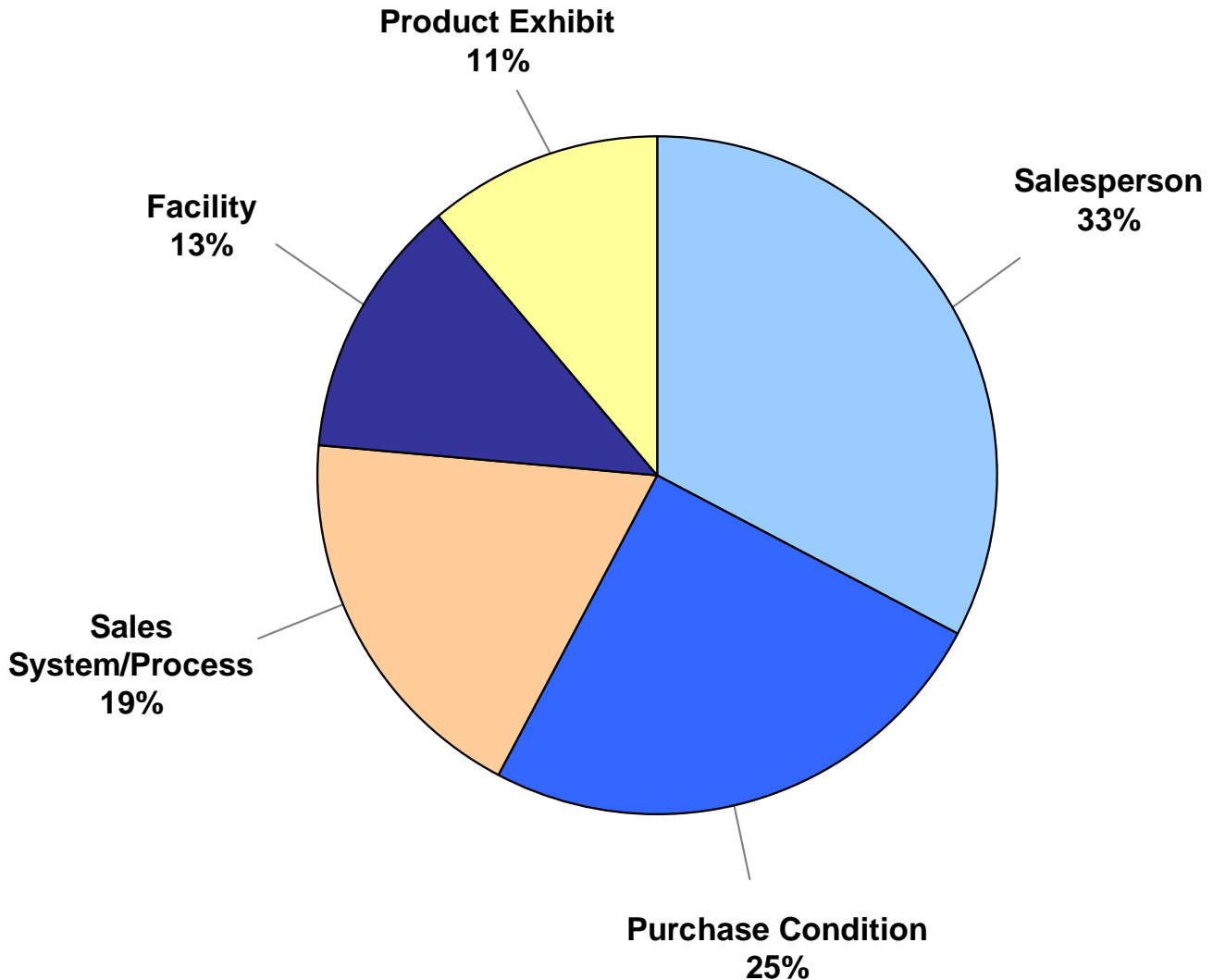
- Among the best
- Better than most
- About average
- The rest

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# J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2011 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>

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## *Factors Contributing to Overall Satisfaction*



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

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*Source: J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2011 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>*

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