



Press Release

J.D. Power and Associates Reports: New-Vehicle Shoppers Are Considering More Models, as Concerns Regarding Reliability Diminish

Cost and Styling Issues are Top Reasons Why Consumers do not Consider Hybrid and Electric Vehicles

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif.: 16 January 2013 — As perceptions of both reliability and actual vehicle dependability improve, new-vehicle shoppers are considering more models before making their purchase decision, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2013 Avoider StudySM released today.

The study, now in its 10th year, examines the reasons consumers do not consider—or avoid—particular models when shopping for a new vehicle.

As vehicle reliability improves across the industry, new-vehicle shoppers now consider an average of 3.3 vehicles in 2013, compared with 3.1 in 2012 and 2.9 in 2010. Additionally, fewer shoppers (21%) in 2013 purchased their vehicle without cross-shopping other models, compared with 26 percent in 2012 and 29 percent in 2010.

The study finds that only 17 percent of new-vehicle shoppers avoid a model due to its reputation for reliability, compared with 19 percent in 2012 and 21 percent in 2009. Not only has the perception of reliability and dependability improved, but also the actual quality of vehicles has improved, as the average number of problems per 100 vehicles (PP100) after three years of ownership has decreased to 132 PP100 in 2012¹ from 170 PP100 in 2009.

“Improved actual and perceived reliability has leveled the playing field, allowing many manufacturers to be considered among new-vehicle shoppers that may not have been considered in the past,” said Jon Osborn, research director at J.D. Power and Associates. “Factors, such as gas mileage, styling and comfort, play an important role in the decision-making process. The study findings suggest that marketing a brand image is just as important as building reliable vehicles.”

The styling of the model, and the image it portrays, are among the primary reasons new-vehicle shoppers avoid particular models. One-third (33%) of shoppers avoid a model because they do not like its exterior look or design, while 19 percent of shoppers do not consider a model because they don’t like its interior look or design. The study finds that the image a model portrays plays an important part in avoidance. Nearly one in five (17%) new-vehicle shoppers avoid a model because they don’t like the image it portrays.

“The impact that design and brand image have on new-vehicle shoppers is substantial,” said Osborn. “Shoppers are concerned about what the vehicle says about them as people and how it can express their individual tastes, just as much as it is about being reliable or holding its value throughout the tenure of ownership.”

Gas mileage remains the most influential purchase reason, similar to 2012, with 15 percent of new-vehicle owners in 2013 saying it was the primary reason for purchasing their vehicle. Although young owners (under age 25) cite

¹ Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2012 Vehicle Dependability StudySM
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gas mileage as the most influential purchase reason more often than their older counterparts, owners in all age groups indicate gas mileage is the most influential purchase reason.

Alternative Powertrain Vehicles

New-vehicle shoppers avoid hybrid or electric vehicles because of cost/price (36%) and exterior styling (25%) more than any other reasons. Even when considering a hybrid or electric vehicle, 36 percent of shoppers cite price/payment as the primary reason for rejecting them as a purchase option.

Although the cost and styling of hybrid and electric vehicles detract some shoppers from considering them, among those who purchased a hybrid or electric vehicle, 95 percent say that they did so due to gas mileage, while 62 percent say that it was due to environmental impact.

“Hybrid and electric vehicle owners want to get the most out of a gallon of gas and minimize the environmental impact, even if that means spending more money to purchase the vehicle,” said Osborn.

The 2013 Avoider Study is based on responses from approximately 31,000 owners who registered a new vehicle in May 2012. The study was fielded between August and October 2012.

About J.D. Power and Associates

Headquartered in Westlake Village, Calif., J.D. Power and Associates is a global marketing information services company providing forecasting, performance improvement, social media and customer satisfaction insights and solutions. The company's quality and satisfaction measurements are based on responses from millions of consumers annually. For more information on car reviews and ratings, car insurance, health insurance, cell phone ratings, and more, please visit JDPower.com. J.D. Power and Associates is a business unit of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

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