



Press Release

J.D. Power Asia Pacific Reports:

Increasing Satisfaction with Fuel Efficiency, Ride and Quietness in Original Equipment Tires is Key to Capturing High-Value Replacement Tire Customers in Japan

Bridgestone Ranks Highest in Customer Satisfaction with Original Equipment Tires in Two Segments; and Michelin and Yokohama Each Rank Highest in One Segment

TOKYO: 10 October 2012 — Although owners who prioritize tire performance over price consider fuel efficiency, ride, and quietness important when purchasing replacement tires, overall owner satisfaction is low with the performance of these elements on their current original equipment tires, according to the J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Customer Satisfaction StudySM released today.

The study, now in its 11th year, measures customer satisfaction with original equipment (OE) tires fitted on new vehicles. Customer satisfaction with OE tires is based on four factors: handling/traction; ride/quietness; durability/reliability; and appearance. Overall satisfaction scores (based on a 1,000-point scale) are calculated based on customer evaluations of 17 attributes.

The study finds that tire brand images have often not caught up with customer expectations with regard to fuel efficiency, ride and quietness. For example, while overall fuel economy ratings attributed to OE tires has increased for three consecutive years, satisfaction with the fuel economy attribute are particularly low in the minivan, SUV and passenger car segments. Although 52 percent of owners consider fuel economy important when purchasing replacement tires, even the highest-rated brand for this area gets high ratings for fuel efficiency from only 24 percent of its owners. Satisfaction scores are also particularly low for the ride/quietness factor in the mini-car segment and compact car segments.

Satisfaction in these areas is especially important among owners who place a heavy emphasis on performance. The study finds that when purchasing replacement tires, 40 percent of owners cite performance as an important consideration, rather than price. These owners pay, on average, 39 percent more for their replacement tires than other owners.

“For tire makers, original equipment tires are a key point of contact with vehicle owners,” said Taku Kimoto, executive director of the automotive division at J.D. Power Asia Pacific, Tokyo. “A wide gap exists between customer expectations for replacement tire fuel efficiency, ride and quietness and their perception of their OE tires. To capture a greater number of owners willing to spend more for better tire performance in the replacement market, tire makers need to focus on offering products with high quality and appropriately market their strengths.”

The study finds that satisfaction with OE tires has a direct impact on owners’ intentions to repurchase the same brand of tires. Among owners who are highly satisfied (overall satisfaction scores in the top 25%), 82 percent indicate that they “definitely will” or “probably will” repurchase their current brand of OE tires. Repurchase intention declines to 68 percent among owners who are

somewhat less satisfied (overall satisfaction scores in the next 25%).

2012 Ranking Highlights

The overall satisfaction rankings in the four vehicle segments that are award-eligible are as follows:

- **Mini-car segment:** Bridgestone ranks highest for a third consecutive year, followed by Yokohama. Bridgestone performs well in all four factors.
- **Compact car segment:** Bridgestone ranks highest for a sixth consecutive year, and Yokohama ranks second. Bridgestone performs particularly well in the handling/traction, ride/quietness, and appearance factors.
- **Passenger car segment:** Michelin ranks highest for an eighth consecutive year, followed by Continental and Bridgestone, respectively. Michelin performs particularly well in the ride/quietness and durability/reliability factors.
- **Minivan segment:** Yokohama ranks highest, while Bridgestone ranks second. Yokohama performs particularly well in the handling/traction, ride/quietness, and appearance factors.

The 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Customer Satisfaction Index (OE-TSI) Study is based on responses from 5,562 new-vehicle owners during the first five to 14 months of ownership. The Internet-based study was fielded in July 2012.

The study is one of eight consumer-based benchmark studies conducted by J.D. Power Asia Pacific in Japan. Other 2012 studies conducted by J.D. Power Asia Pacific include:

- The Japan Winter Tire Customer Satisfaction Index Study was released in late May 2012.
- The Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study, which measures satisfaction with the new-vehicle sales process, was released in late August 2012.
- The Japan Initial Quality Study (IQS), which measures problems experienced by new-vehicle owners during the first two to nine months of ownership, was released in late August 2012.
- The Japan Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) Study, which measures overall customer satisfaction with service performed at automotive dealer facilities, was released in late September 2012.
- The Japan Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout (APEAL) Study, which measures what excites and delights owners about their new vehicle's performance and design during the first two to nine months of ownership, was released in late September 2012.
- The Japan Navigation Systems Customer Satisfaction Index Study, which measures customer satisfaction with original equipment and aftermarket navigation systems, will be released in October 2012.
- The Japan Replacement Tire Satisfaction Study will be released in November 2012.

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. Media e-mail contact: 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 providing 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.

About The McGraw-Hill Companies

McGraw-Hill announced on September 12, 2011, its intention to separate into two public companies: McGraw-Hill Financial, a leading provider of content and analytics to global financial markets, and McGraw-Hill Education, a leading education company focused on digital learning and education services worldwide. McGraw-Hill Financial's leading brands include Standard & Poor's Ratings Services, S&P Capital IQ, S&P Indices, Platts energy information services and J.D. Power and Associates. With sales of \$6.2 billion in 2011, the Corporation has approximately 23,000 employees across more than 280 offices in 40 countries. Additional information is available at <http://www.mcgraw-hill.com/>.

Media Relations Contacts:

Shizue Hidaka; J.D. Power Asia Pacific; Toranomom 45 MT Bldg. 8F; 5-1-5 Toranomom; Minato-ku, Tokyo; Japan 105-0001; Phone +81-3-4550-8090; shizue_hidaka@jdpower.co.jp

John Tews; Director, Media Relations; J.D. Power and Associates; 320 E. Big Beaver; 5th Floor, Suite 500, Troy, MI, 48083 USA; 001 248-680-6218; john.tews@jdpa.com

No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the information in this release without the express prior written consent of J.D. Power and Associates. www.jdpower.com

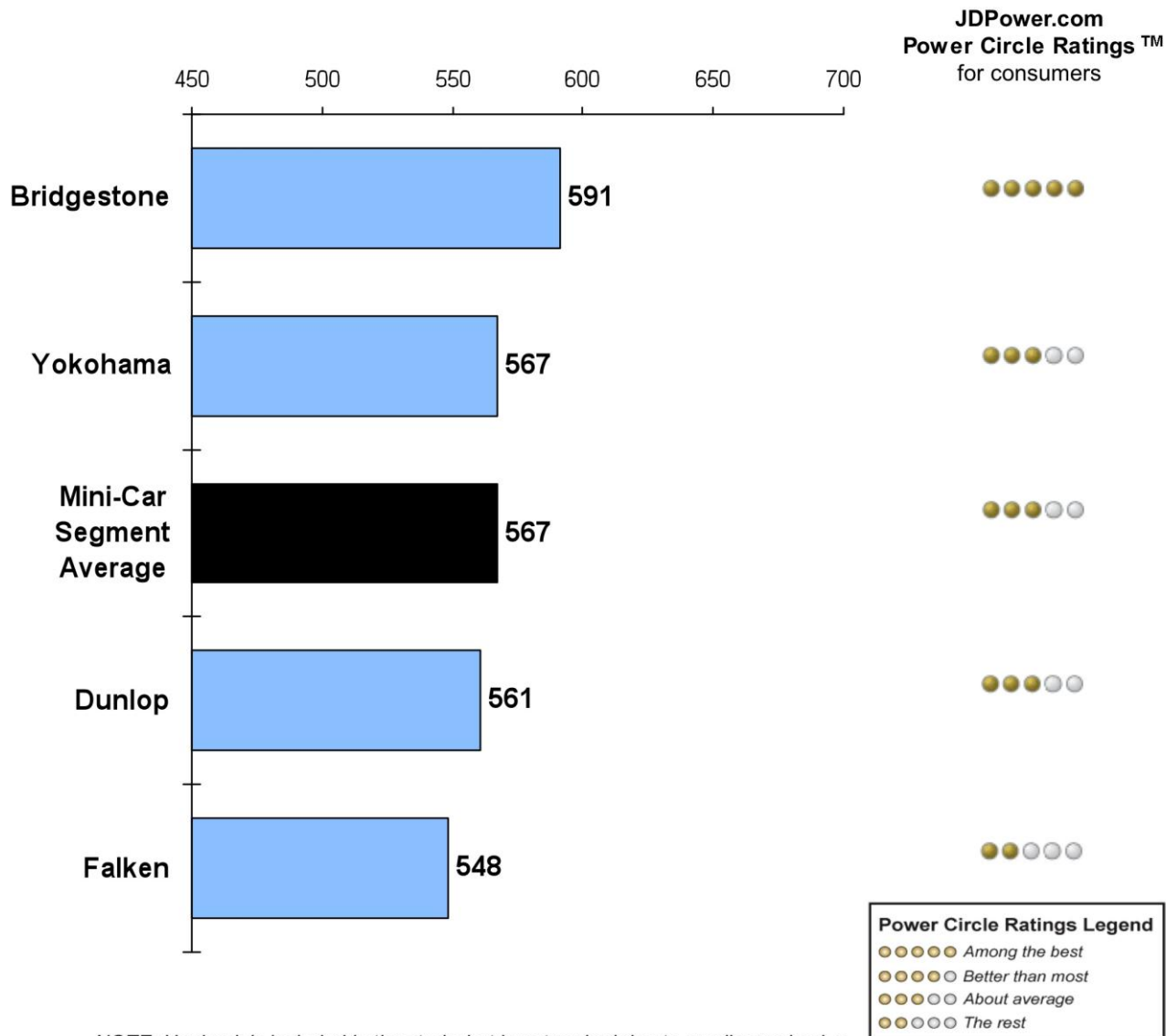
#

(Page 3 of 3)

NOTE: Four charts follow.

J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Customer Satisfaction StudySM

Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking Mini-Car Segment *(Based on a 1,000-point scale)*



NOTE: Hankook is included in the study, but is not ranked due to small sample size.

Source: J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Customer Satisfaction StudySM

Charts and graphs extracted from this press release must be accompanied by a statement identifying J.D. Power Asia Pacific as the publisher and the J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Customer Satisfaction StudySM as the source. Rankings are based on numerical scores and not necessarily on statistical significance. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the information in this release or J.D. Power Asia Pacific study results without the express prior written consent of J.D. Power Asia Pacific.

J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Customer Satisfaction StudySM

Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking Compact Car Segment (Based on a 1,000-point scale)



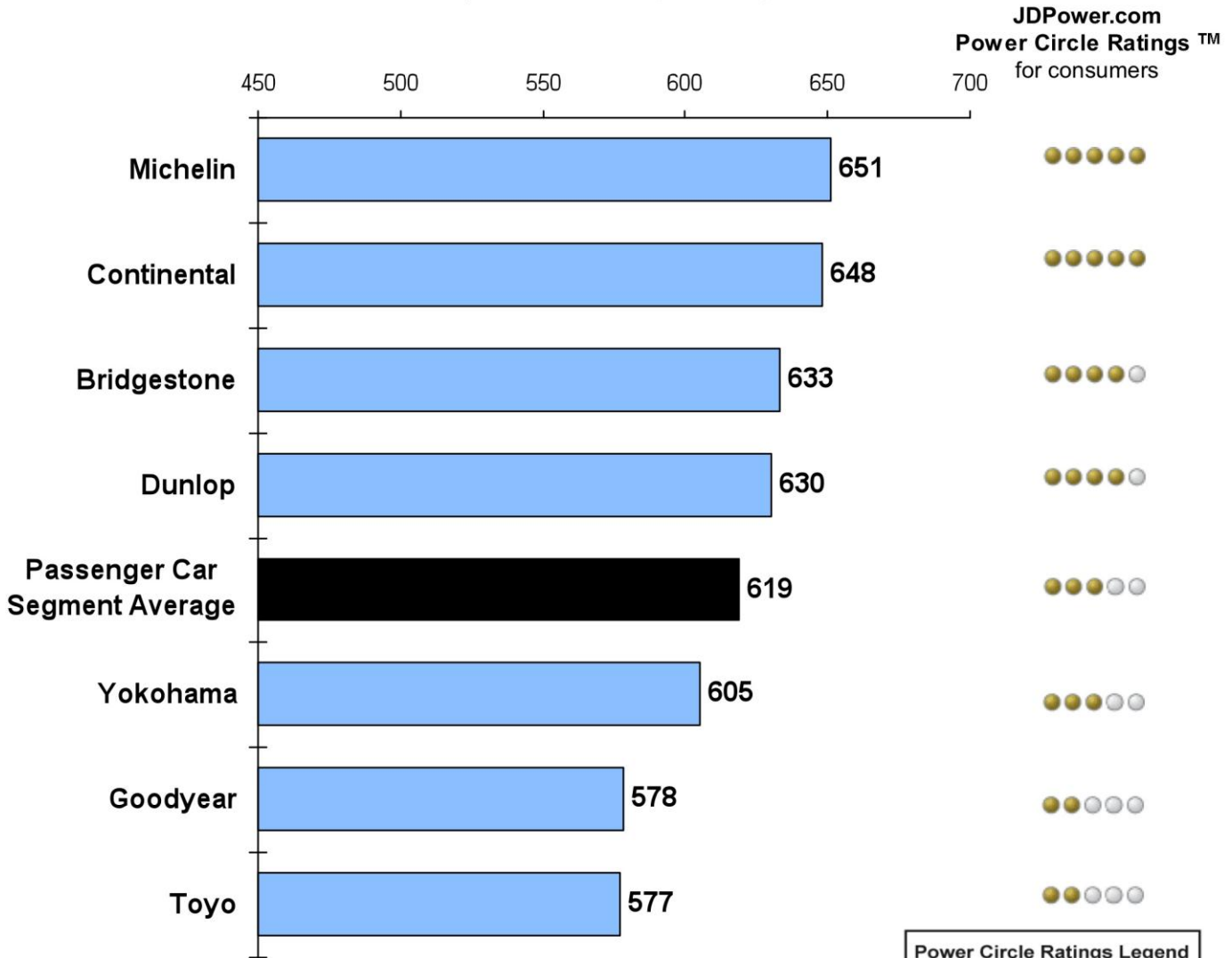
NOTE: Continental and Goodyear is included in the study, but is not ranked due to small sample size.

Source: J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Customer Satisfaction StudySM

Charts and graphs extracted from this press release must be accompanied by a statement identifying J.D. Power Asia Pacific as the publisher and the J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Customer Satisfaction StudySM as the source. Rankings are based on numerical scores and not necessarily on statistical significance. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the information in this release or J.D. Power Asia Pacific study results without the express prior written consent of J.D. Power Asia Pacific.

J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Customer Satisfaction StudySM

Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking Passenger Car Segment *(Based on a 1,000-point scale)*



Power Circle Ratings Legend

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

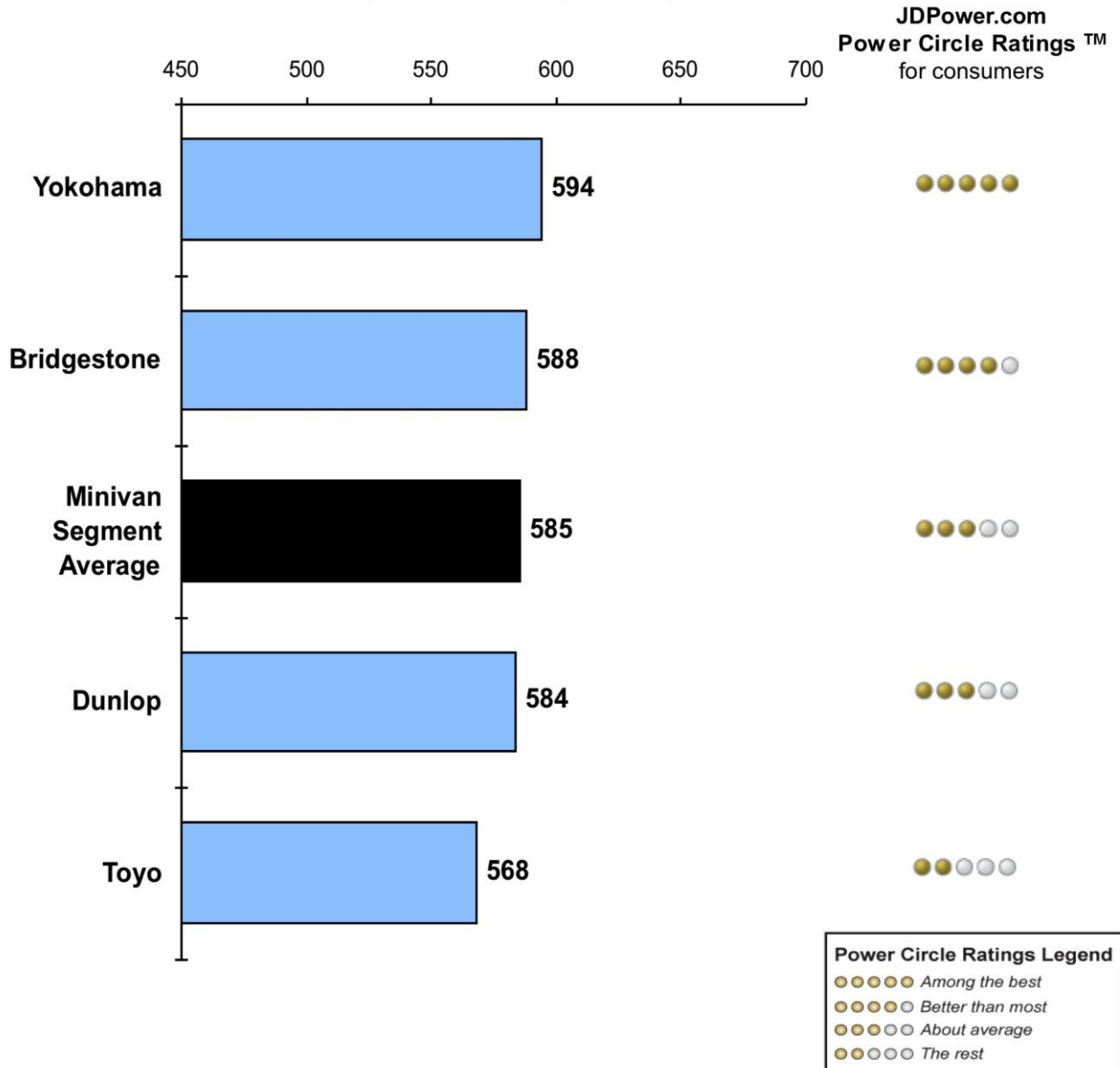
NOTE: Pirelli is included in the study, but is not ranked due to small sample size.

Source: J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Customer Satisfaction StudySM

Charts and graphs extracted from this press release must be accompanied by a statement identifying J.D. Power Asia Pacific as the publisher and the J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Customer Satisfaction StudySM as the source. Rankings are based on numerical scores and not necessarily on statistical significance. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the information in this release or J.D. Power Asia Pacific study results without the express prior written consent of J.D. Power Asia Pacific.

J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Customer Satisfaction StudySM

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



Source: J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Customer Satisfaction StudySM

Charts and graphs extracted from this press release must be accompanied by a statement identifying J.D. Power Asia Pacific as the publisher and the J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Customer Satisfaction StudySM as the source. Rankings are based on numerical scores and not necessarily on statistical significance. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the information in this release or J.D. Power Asia Pacific study results without the express prior written consent of J.D. Power Asia Pacific.