



## Press Release

### **J.D. Power Asia Pacific Reports:**

**Overall Customer Satisfaction with the New-Vehicle Sales Process Declines;  
Nearly One-Third of Hybrid Vehicle/Electric Vehicle Buyers Are Dissatisfied with Fuel Efficiency**

### **Lexus and Volkswagen Rank Highest in Sales Satisfaction among Luxury Brands and Mass Market Brands, Respectively**

**TOKYO: 28 August 2012** — Customer satisfaction with the new-vehicle sales process at automotive dealerships in Japan has declined during the past year, according to the J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study<sup>SM</sup> released today.

The 2012 study, now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year, finds that fuel efficiency is the most frequently cited factor in choosing a new-vehicle, mentioned by 48 percent of owners, which indicates an increase in awareness of vehicle fuel efficiency and overall economy. In comparison, 46 percent of consumers cited fuel efficiency as a purchase factor in 2008, when manufacturer reliability and vehicle design (each 55%) were the most-frequently cited purchase decision factors. In 2012, manufacturer reliability (45%) and vehicle design (41%) are the second and third most frequently cited purchase decision factors, respectively.

A comparison of post-purchase dissatisfaction with fuel efficiency by vehicle type shows that 29 percent of hybrid vehicle/electric vehicle (HV/EV) buyers indicate that their fuel efficiency is lower than expected, compared with just 21 percent of owners of non-HV/EVs.

“Hybrid vehicle and electric vehicle buyers show a strong tendency of dissatisfaction, based on the gap between expected fuel efficiency and actual fuel efficiency,” said Taku Kimoto, executive director of the automotive division at J.D. Power Asia Pacific. “Automakers and dealers need to carefully manage buyer expectations regarding fuel efficiency from their new HV or EV, which may vary greatly, depending on driving conditions.”

Furthermore, the study compares dissatisfaction with fuel efficiency among all who purchased a new-vehicle. The study finds 22 percent of HV/EV buyers whose previous vehicle was an HV/EV indicate dissatisfaction with fuel efficiency, compared with 30 percent of buyers whose previous vehicle was not an HV/EV. Conversely, there is no major change in the percentage of non-HV/EV buyers indicating dissatisfaction with the fuel efficiency of their newly purchased vehicle, compared with previous vehicle type purchased.

The study finds that a higher proportion of HV/EV buyers than non-HV/EV buyers received an explanation of eco-friendly driving suggestions from their salesperson when they purchased their vehicle. Satisfaction with fuel efficiency among buyers who received suggestions from their salesperson is higher than among buyers who did not receive suggestions from their salesperson.

“HV/EVs have just begun to become prevalent in Japan, as 89 percent of buyers who purchased these types of vehicles in the past year did not previously own an HV/EV,” said Kimoto. “For this reason, a dealer’s sales process that ensures first-time HV/EV buyers understand actual fuel efficiency is essential. It is vital to provide easy-to-understand explanations that include case examples about fuel efficiency—the matter of highest concern to those who purchase HV/EVs—and to manage customer expectations about fuel efficiency.”

The study 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 604 index points in 2012. In the luxury brand segment, Lexus ranks highest with a score of 720 points, 35 points higher than the segment average. Lexus performs particularly well in the sales system/process, facility and product exhibit factors.

Mercedes-Benz (709) ranks second in the luxury segment, performing well in the salesperson and purchase condition factors. Volvo (668) ranks third, followed by BMW (659) and Audi (653).

In the mass-market brand segment, Volkswagen ranks highest with a score of 642 and performs well across all factors. MINI (618) ranks second and performs well in the product exhibit factor. Nissan (612) ranks third, followed by Mitsubishi (607) and Daihatsu (606).

The 2012 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study measures customer satisfaction with the dealer where they purchased their new passenger vehicle. The study is based on responses from 7,056 domestic and import vehicle owners after an average of two to eight months of ownership. The online survey was fielded from late May to mid-June 2012.

The Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study is one of 8 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 2012 Japan Winter Tire Customer Satisfaction Index Study, which measured overall customer satisfaction on winter tire, which was released in late May.
- The 2012 Japan Initial Quality Study (IQS), which measures problems experienced by new-vehicle owners during the first two to nine months of ownership, will be released in late August.
- The 2012 Japan Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) Study, which measures overall customer satisfaction with service performed at automotive dealer facilities, which will be released in late September.
- The 2012 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, will be released in late September.
- The 2012 Japan Original Equipment Tire Satisfaction Study, which measures customer satisfaction on original equipment tires, will be released in October.
- The 2012 Japan Navigation Systems Customer Satisfaction Index Study, which measures customer satisfaction on OEMs and aftermarket navigation system, will be released in October.
- The 2012 Japan Replacement Tire Satisfaction Study, which measures customer satisfaction on replacement tires, will be released in November.

#### **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 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](#),

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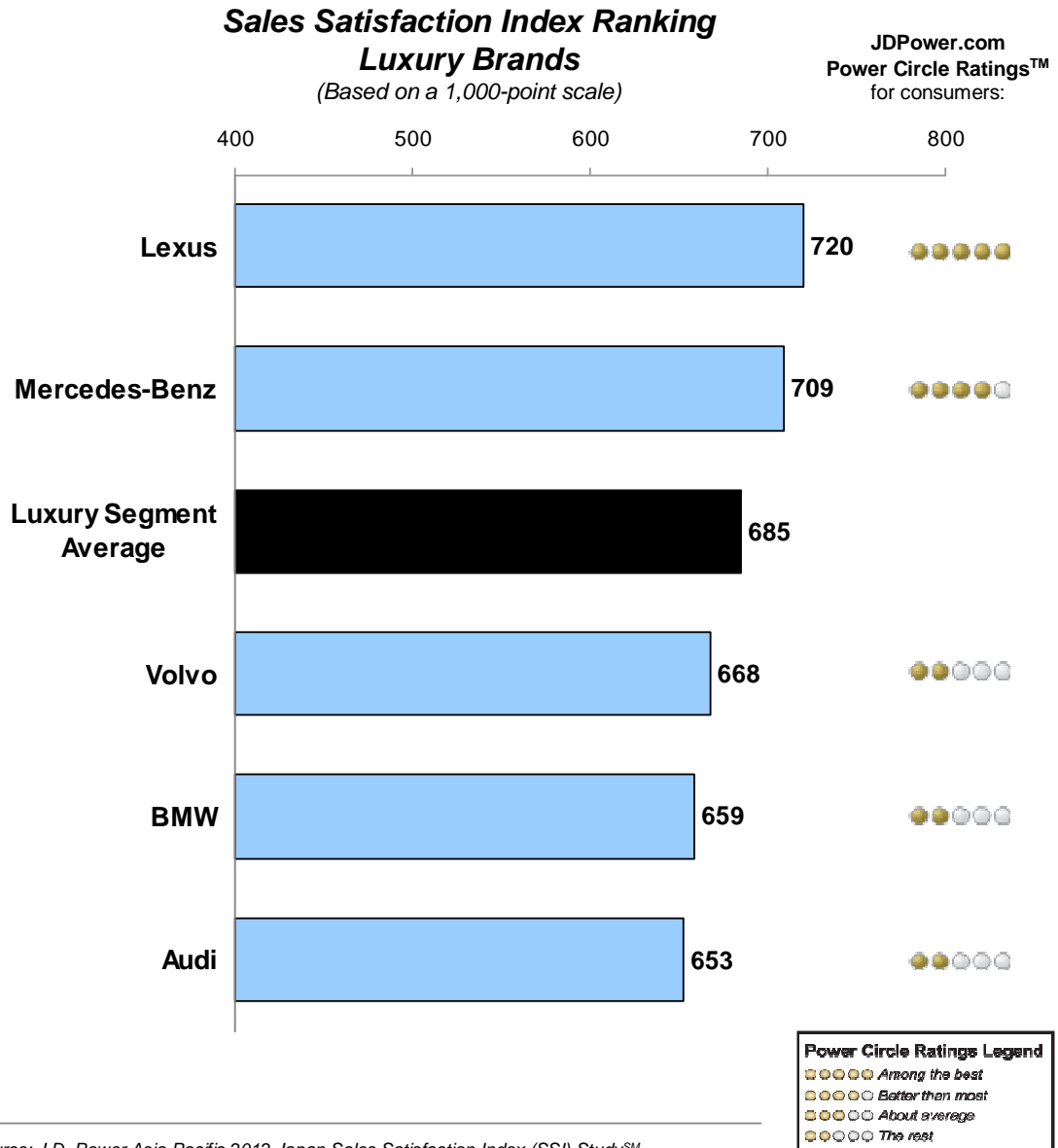
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NOTE: Three charts follow.

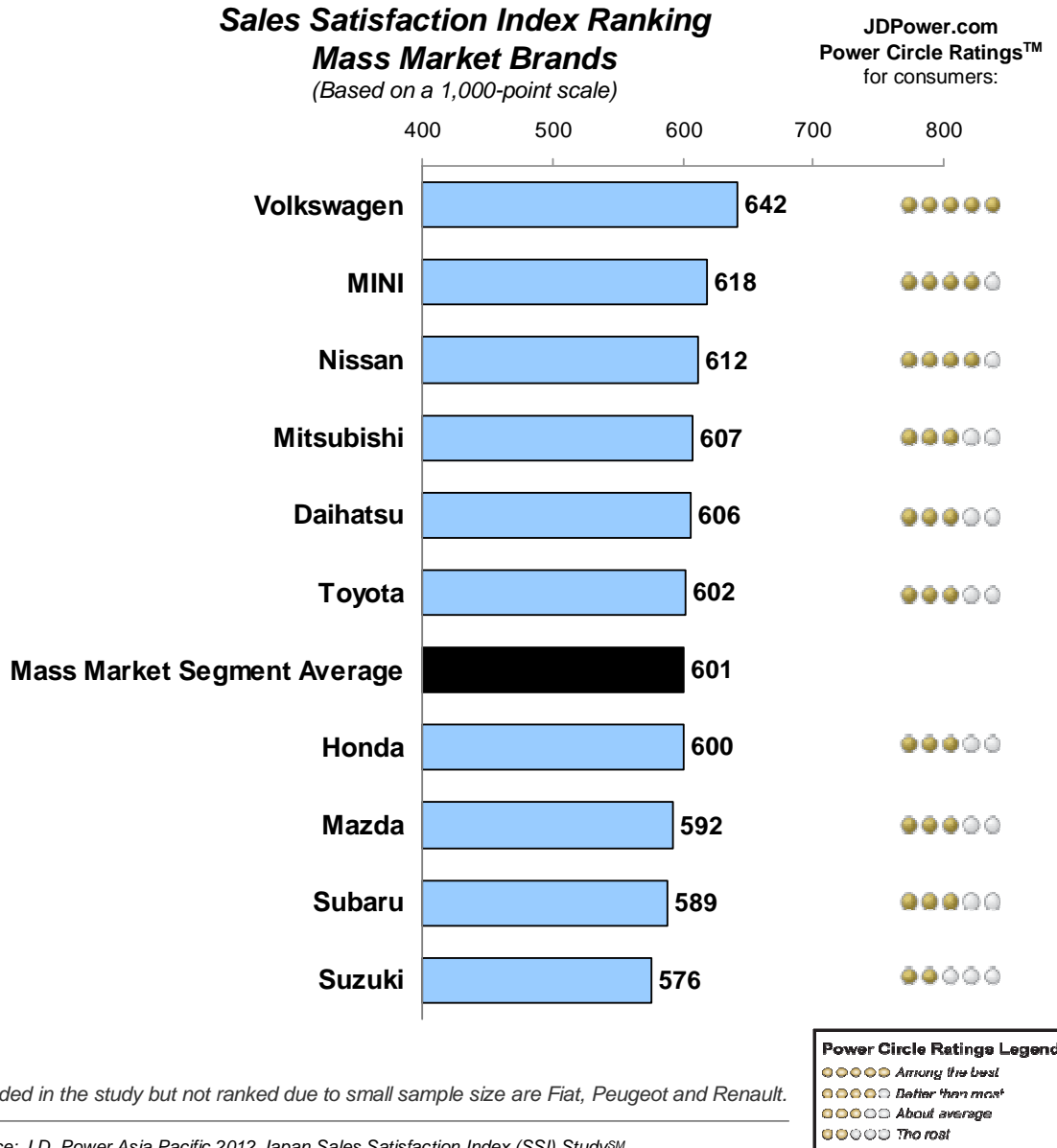
# J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>



Source: J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>

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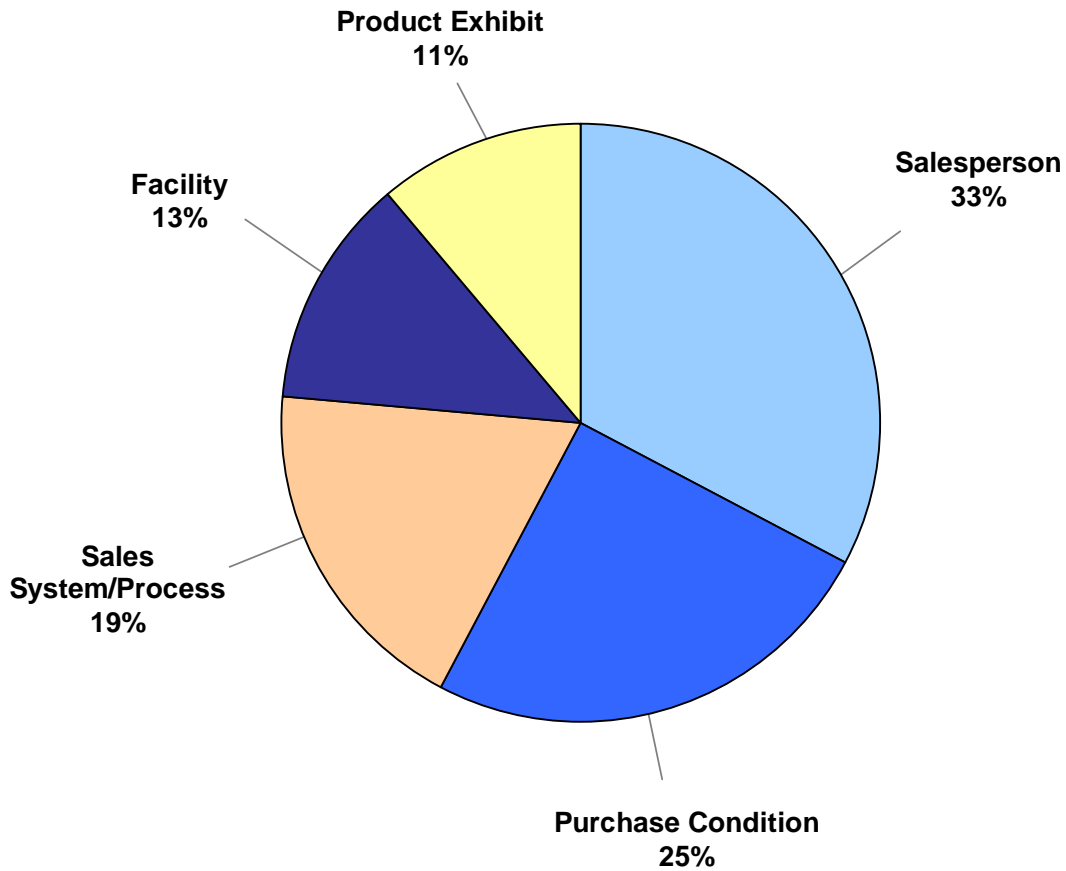


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## *Factors Contributing to Overall Satisfaction*



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

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*Source: J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2012 Japan Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>*

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