



## Press Release

### **J.D. Power Asia Pacific Reports: Mercedes-Benz Ranks Highest in Customer Satisfaction with Dealer Service**

#### Overall Customer Satisfaction with Dealer Service in China Increases Considerably

**SHANGHAI: 30 July 2008** — Mercedes-Benz ranks highest in customer satisfaction with authorized dealer after-sales service in China, according to the J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2008 China Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) Study<sup>SM</sup> released today. Audi authorized dealers rank second, while SGM-Chevrolet authorized dealers rank third.

Overall customer satisfaction has improved considerably in China in 2008, increasing by 12 points since 2007 to 815 on a 1,000-point scale. This is an improvement of 32 points since the inception of the study in 2001.

“With new-vehicle sales in China showing signs of slowing, providing superior customer satisfaction is of primary importance for automakers and dealers,” said Dr. Mei Songlin, general manager of research at J.D. Power Asia Pacific China operations. “In the highly competitive China automotive market, dealers are finding it increasingly difficult to achieve profitability from new-vehicle sales. Manufacturers are creating differentiation and directing their dealers to grow their business through superior after-sales service, which ultimately benefits consumers.”

The annual industry-wide CSI study has been conducted independently by J.D. Power Asia Pacific since 2001 to measure customer satisfaction with maintenance and repair service at authorized dealerships at 12 to 18 months of vehicle ownership. The study includes data on virtually every manufacturer selling new passenger vehicles in China. Overall customer satisfaction is measured by dealer performance attributes, which are grouped into seven factors (in order of importance): problems experienced; user-friendly service; service delivery; service quality; in-service experience; service advisor; and service initiation. A higher CSI score indicates greater customer satisfaction with the maintenance and repair experience at authorized dealerships.

Included in the rankings for the first time, Mercedes-Benz achieves a CSI score of 854 in 2008, a new benchmark for the industry. Mercedes-Benz performs particularly well in six of seven factors: service initiation; service advisor; in-service experience; service delivery; user-friendly service; and problems experienced. In addition, nearly 40 percent of Mercedes-Benz customers say they received at least 21 of 24 services measured in the study—a rate twice that of the industry average (20 percent). Forty-four percent of Mercedes-Benz customers say they “definitely would” recommend their service dealers. This compares to an industry average of 23 percent for other automakers’ customers who say they “definitely would” recommend their service dealers.

Audi follows Mercedes-Benz in the rankings with a score of 850, improving by 22 points from 2007. Audi continues its consistent ranking among the top three automakers in the study, and performs particularly well in the service quality factor. The proportion of Audi customers who say they experienced product quality problems has declined from 30 percent in 2007 to 24 percent in 2008, which has resulted in a smaller share of repair customers in 2008.

SGM-Chevrolet ranks third in the study, and has the highest performance among non-premium brands. SGM-Chevrolet posts the largest improvement of any brand since 2007. In addition, 19 percent of the brand’s customers “strongly agree” that SGM-Chevrolet dealers are doing better than before, compared with the industry average of 12 percent.

The study finds that improved vehicle quality is a key driver of the industry-wide increase in CSI in 2008. The number of product problems reported by customers has decreased by 4 percent since 2007. In turn, this has resulted in 12-point improvement in the problems experienced factor, as well as in an improvement of more than 2 points in overall CSI.

“The proportion of repair service customers has declined to a historic low in 2008, down to 41 percent from 60 percent in 2004,” said Mei. “Improved levels of vehicle quality have led to a decline in the need for vehicle repairs during the first 12-18 months of ownership.”

The study finds that improved overall customer satisfaction results in higher customer loyalty. The proportion of customers who say they “definitely would” recommend their service dealer has increased to 23 percent in 2008 from 19 percent in 2007. The number of customers who report that they “definitely would” revisit their dealer for post-warranty service also increases in 2008—to 31 percent from 27 percent in 2007. Customers who say they are “delighted” with the service they received are nearly twice as likely to revisit the dealer for post-warranty service, compared with customers who are merely “pleased.” Only 4 percent of customers in 2008 say that they are not satisfied with the service they received from the dealer.

The 2008 China Customer Satisfaction Index Study is based on evaluations from 9,267 new-vehicle owners, and includes 39 makes. The personal-use passenger vehicle owners surveyed purchased their vehicles between August 2006 and May 2007. The fieldwork for the study was conducted from February to May 2008 in 24 major cities in China.

The CSI Study is one of four consumer-based studies J.D. Power Asia Pacific conducts in China and is the first one to be released in 2008. The 2008 China Sales Satisfaction Index (SSI) Study, which measures satisfaction with the new-vehicle sales process, will be released in late August. The 2008 China Initial Quality Study (IQS), which measures problems experienced by new-vehicle owners during the first two to six months of ownership, will be released in late October. The 2008 China Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout (APEAL) Study, measuring what excites and delights owners about their new-vehicle’s performance and design during the first two to six months of ownership, will be released in late November.

#### **About J.D. Power Asia Pacific**

J.D. Power in the Asia Pacific region has offices in Tokyo, Singapore and China conducting customer satisfaction research and providing consulting services in the automotive, information technology and finance industries. Together, the three 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: [songlin\\_mei@jdpower.com.sg](mailto:songlin_mei@jdpower.com.sg).

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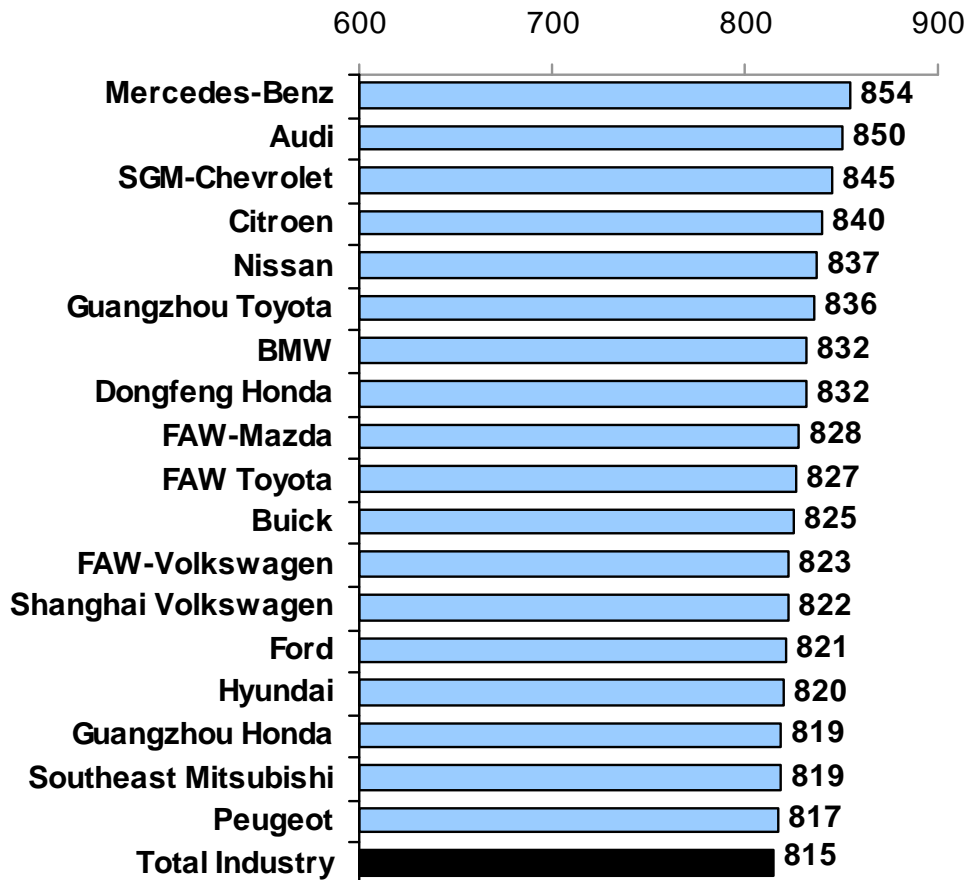
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NOTE: Two charts follow.

# J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2008 China Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>

## Above Industry Average Nameplates Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



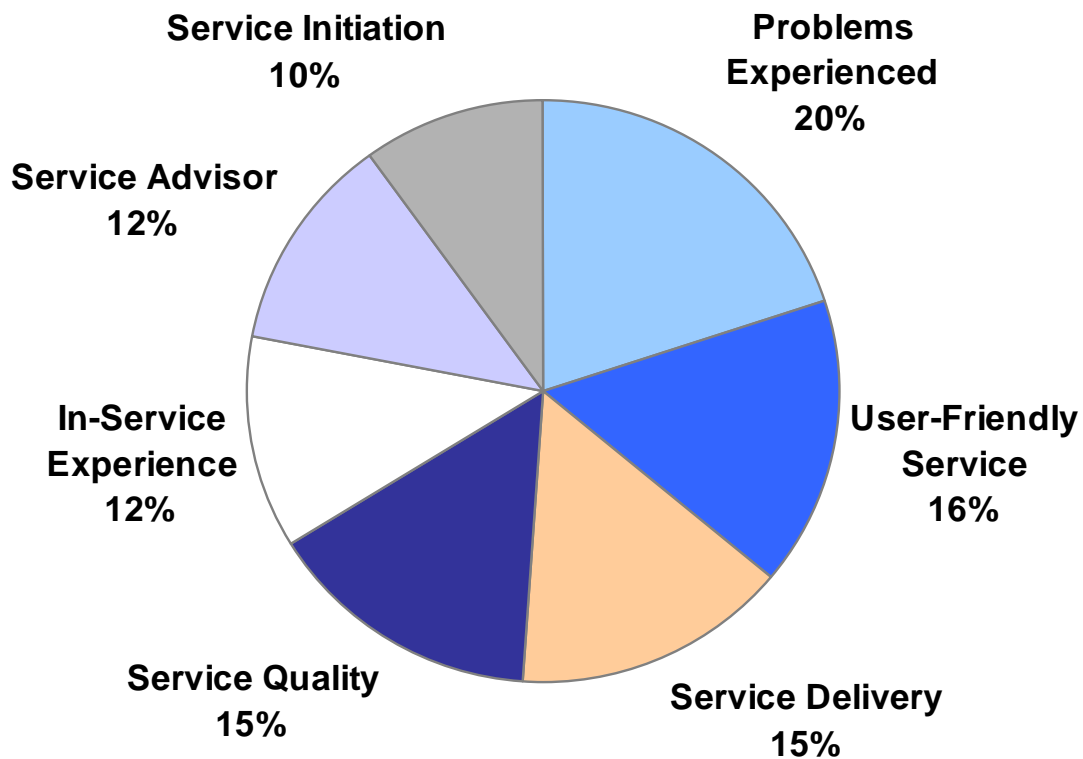
Source: J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2008 China Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>

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# J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2008 China Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>

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## *Factors Comprising Overall Satisfaction*



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Source: J.D. Power Asia Pacific 2008 China Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>

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