

### **Automotive Service Quality Rises Along with Overall Customer Satisfaction, J.D. Power Finds**

#### Lexus, Buick Rank Highest in Customer Satisfaction in Respective Segments

**COSTA MESA, Calif.: 16 March 2017** — Quality of automotive service continues to show significant improvement and is driving an increase in overall customer satisfaction, according to the J.D. Power 2017 U.S. Customer Service Index (CSI) Study,<sup>SM</sup> released today.

Service quality scores account for the greatest improvement, rising to 809 (on a 1,000-point scale) from 782 in 2015, when the study was redesigned. The other four measures—service advisor, service initiation, service facility and vehicle pick-up—all show improvement from 2015 levels. Overall customer service is 816, up from 802 over the same period.

The study measures customer satisfaction with service at a franchised dealer or independent service facility for maintenance or repair work among owners and lessees of 1- to 5-year-old vehicles.

“The quality of work—doing the job right the first time—can noticeably affect customer satisfaction and loyalty, but it shouldn’t be viewed in a vacuum,” said **Chris Sutton, vice president, U.S. automotive retail practice at J.D. Power**. “Proactive communication with the customer, especially while the car is being serviced, is one element that has a direct influence on loyalty.”

The study shows that among customers who are contacted by phone, 55% say they “definitely will” return for paid service. When receiving text message updates, that loyalty factor jumps to 67%. Additionally, customers’ preference for communicating via text has increased 3-6% across all generational categories since 2015. More than four in 10 (41%) Gen Y<sup>1</sup> and Gen X customers now cite this preference, as do 25% of Boomers and 10% of Pre-Boomers.

“It’s not surprising to see the preference for receiving updates through text messages continue to rise, but only 3% of customers indicate they receive text message updates,” Sutton said. “Correcting that disconnect by adding more text message capability should be a priority with a service operation.”

Additional key findings of the 2017 study include:

- **Service advisor scores big:** The highest level of satisfaction is in service advisor, with a score of 835. This is followed by service initiation (832); vehicle pick-up (810); service quality (809); and service facility (794).
- **Technology affects satisfaction:** Increases in the use of tablets by service advisors and online scheduling tend to increase customer satisfaction. Tablet usage increases to 24% from 17% in 2015, and online scheduling increases to 13% from 9% during the same period.
- **Almost a clean sweep:** Customers rate dealers higher than non-dealers in 15 of 16 attributes. The most noticeable advantages are amenities offered; comfort of waiting area; and cleanliness of

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<sup>1</sup> J.D. Power defines the generational groups as Pre-Boomers (born before 1946); Boomers (1946-1964); Gen X (1965-1976); Gen Y (1977-1994); and Gen Z (1995-2004).

dealership. Non-dealers rate higher in time required to complete vehicle service—but only by 0.06 points on a 10-point scale.

- **The value of getting it right the first time:** The vast majority (94%) of customers who take their vehicle in for service indicate that the dealer fixed it right the first time. However, among the 6% of customers indicating the service work was not completed right on the first visit, satisfaction drops to 639, which is 184 points lower than among those whose work was completed right the first time.
- **Too much static:** Dealers seem to have trouble servicing problems with radios. It's unclear if the issue is vehicle- or service-related, but only 80% of customers who sought service for a radio reception problem indicate the dealer was able to fix it right the first time.

**Lexus** ranks highest in satisfaction with dealer service among luxury brands, with a score of 874. Following in the luxury ranking are **Audi** (869); **Lincoln** (868); **Porsche** (867); and **Cadillac** (865).

**Buick** ranks highest in satisfaction with dealer service among mass market brands, with a score of 860. Following in mass market brands are **MINI** (850); **GMC** (837); **Chevrolet** (829); and **Nissan** (822).

### **About the Study**

The 2017 U.S. CSI Study is based on responses from more than 70,000 owners and lessees of 2012 to 2016 model-year vehicles. The study was fielded between October and December 2016.

For more information about the 2017 U.S. Customer Service Index Study, visit <http://www.jdpower.com/resource/us-customer-service-index-study>

See the online press release at <http://www.jdpower.com/pr-id/2017027>.

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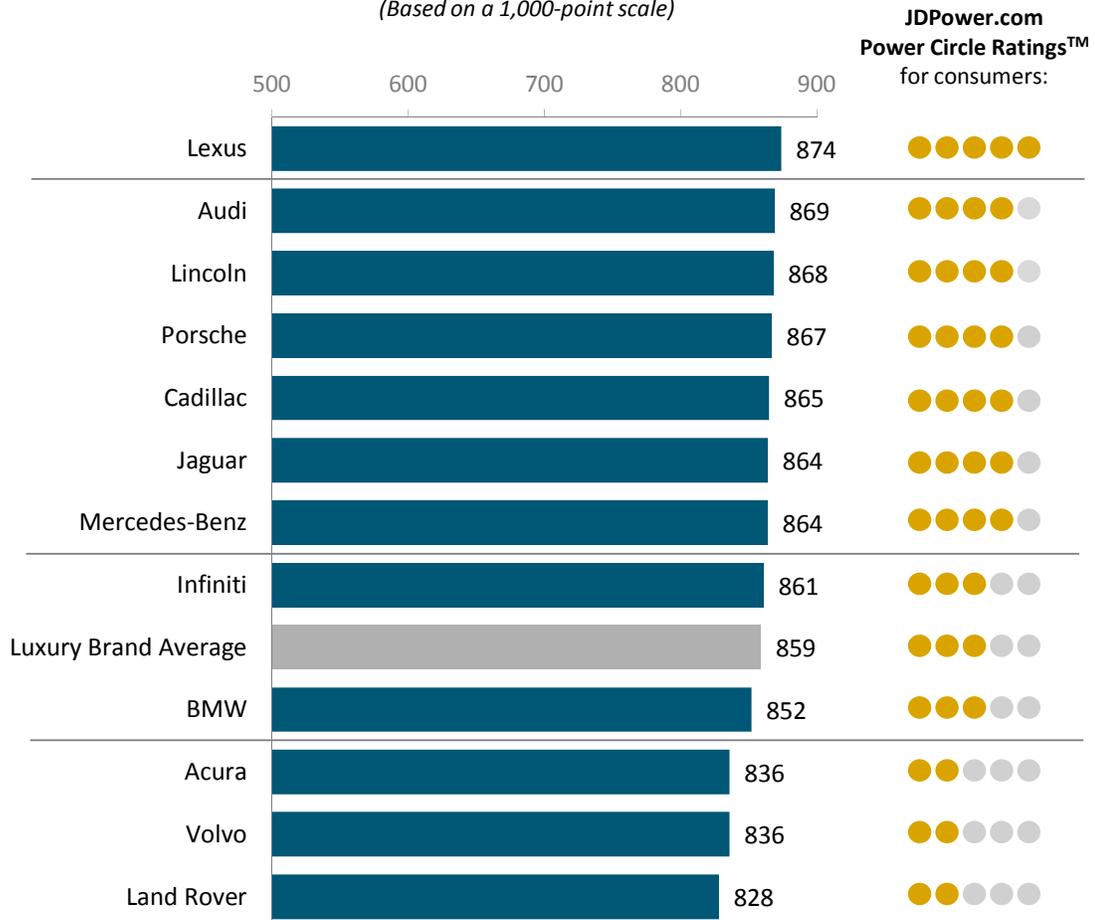
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Note: Two charts follow.

# J.D. Power 2017 U.S. Customer Service Index (CSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>

## Customer Service Index Ranking Luxury Brands

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Note: The CSI rankings are based on dealer service performance during the first three years of new-vehicle ownership, which typically represents the majority of the vehicle warranty period. Tesla is not included in the ranking due to non-representative sample.

Source: J.D. Power 2017 U.S. Customer Service Index (CSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>

### Power Circle Ratings Legend

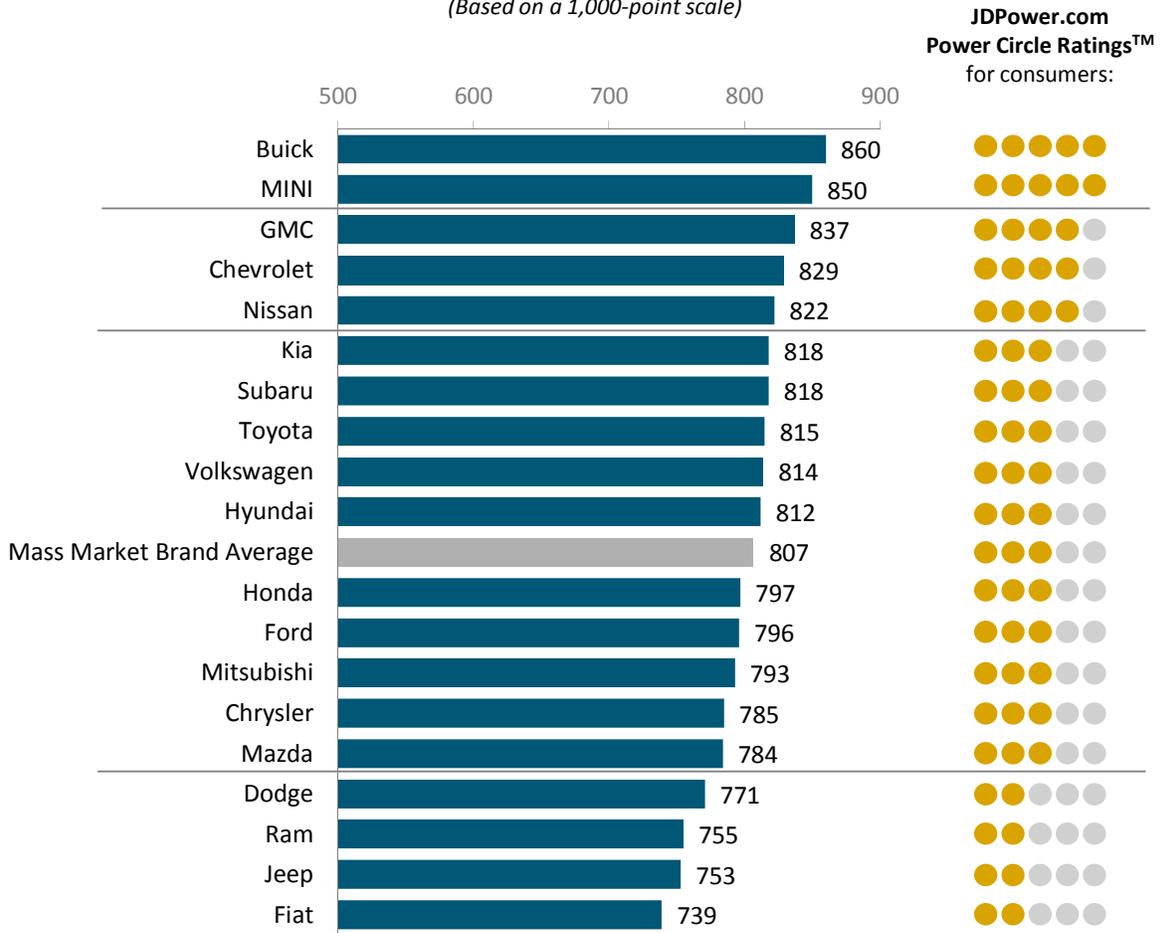
- Among the best
- Better than most
- About average
- The rest

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# J.D. Power 2017 U.S. Customer Service Index (CSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>

## Customer Service Index Ranking Mass Market Brands

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Note: The CSI rankings are based on dealer service performance during the first three years of new-vehicle ownership, which typically represents the majority of the vehicle warranty period. Smart is not included in the ranking due to small sample size.

Source: J.D. Power 2017 U.S. Customer Service Index (CSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>

### Power Circle Ratings Legend

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

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