

Press Release

Mercedes-Benz Ranks Highest in Customer Satisfaction among Premium Brands and Mazda Ranks Highest among Volume Brands in Inaugural Germany Study by J.D. Power

Highly Satisfying Service Experience Drives Customers Back to Dealer for Service and Sales

MUNICH: 16 September 2015 — **Mercedes-Benz** ranks highest among premium brands and **Mazda** ranks highest among volume brands in customer satisfaction with vehicle service, according to the inaugural J.D. Power 2015 Germany Customer Service Index (CSI) StudySM released today.

The CSI Study—conducted by J.D. Power in 16 countries worldwide—delivers a comprehensive analysis of the service experience among customers who take their vehicle to a franchised dealer facility for maintenance and repair work.

The 2015 Germany CSI Study explores customer satisfaction with their service dealer by examining five measures (listed in order of importance): service quality (26%); service initiation (23%); service advisor (19%); vehicle pick-up (18%); and service facility (14%). Satisfaction is calculated on a 1,000-point scale.

Mercedes-Benz ranks highest in satisfaction among premium brands with a score of 770. Mazda (781) ranks highest in satisfaction among volume brands, followed by **Toyota** (775) and **Nissan** (765).

Maintenance comprises the majority of dealer service work, with the most common work performed being oil changes (47%), tire maintenance (28%), brake work (19%) and other scheduled maintenance (18%). In general, satisfaction is higher with maintenance work than with repair work.

“Customers expect to take their vehicle in for routine maintenance, but having to make an unexpected repair can negatively impact satisfaction with their vehicle overall,” said **Dr. Axel Sprenger, senior director of European automotive operations at J.D. Power**. “Dealers can mitigate customer dissatisfaction and increase the odds of retaining that customer for their next vehicle purchase by delivering a highly satisfying service experience.”

The service advisor is critical to satisfaction, and delivering on such key service activities as knowing the vehicle’s service history, keeping the customer informed of the status of the maintenance or repair work and providing helpful advice all contributing to a positive service visit.

Although only 29 percent of service advisors recommend additional service work to their customers, when they do, 64 percent of customers have the recommended work done. Satisfaction is substantially higher among customers who accept the additional service work recommended by their advisor, compared with those who do not have the recommended work done (752 vs. 694, respectively).

On average, customers who accept additional work on their vehicle spend €380 on their service visit, compared with €236 among those who do not receive additional work recommendations.

Satisfaction and Loyalty

Satisfaction with dealer service leads to customer loyalty and advocacy. Among the 15 percent of customers who are highly satisfied with their dealer service (overall satisfaction scores of 900 and above), 76 percent say they “definitely will” purchase their next vehicle from that dealer and 83 percent say they “definitely will” recommend the dealer to friends and family.

“Providing a positive service experience not only increases dealer revenue, there is a distinct correlation between satisfaction and loyalty and advocacy,” said Dr. Sprenger. “When customers recommend a dealership it is more influential and impactful—not to mention less expensive—than promotions and advertising.”

The study finds that 13 percent of customers select a dealer for service based on recommendations from family or friends. Conversely, promotions/coupons (2%), newspaper advertising (1%), radio advertising (1%) and television advertising (1%) have much less influence on selection of a dealer for service.

KEY FINDINGS

- While 14 percent of customers indicate they prefer to schedule a service appointment over the Internet, only 4 percent actually do. The Internet as a method to schedule an appointment is expected to increase with the emergence of mobile apps, which make the process faster and easier.
- The most frequent reason for choosing a dealer for service is prior experience with the service department (42%), followed by location (39%) and prior experience with the sales department (35%).
- Among customers who stay at the dealership while their vehicle is serviced, the average reported wait time is 1.4 hours.
- While 47 percent of dealerships provide newspapers and current magazines in the customer waiting area, only 15 percent offer wireless Internet access and only 9 percent have a workspace to plug in computers.

The 2015 Germany Customer Service Index (CSI) Study is based on 9,430 online evaluations by vehicle owners in Germany whose vehicles were originally registered new between April 2012 and March 2014. The survey was fielded in Germany from April 2015 through June 2015.

This annual J.D. Power study provides consumers with information to help them make purchase decisions about vehicle models sold in Germany, and helps manufacturers understand the factors that drive high levels of satisfaction among their customers.

Media Relations Contacts

Patricia Kneis, Edelman GmbH; München; +49-(0)89-41 301-822; patricia.kneis@edelman.com
John Tews; J.D. Power; Troy, Mich., USA; +1 248-680-6218; media.relations@jdpa.com

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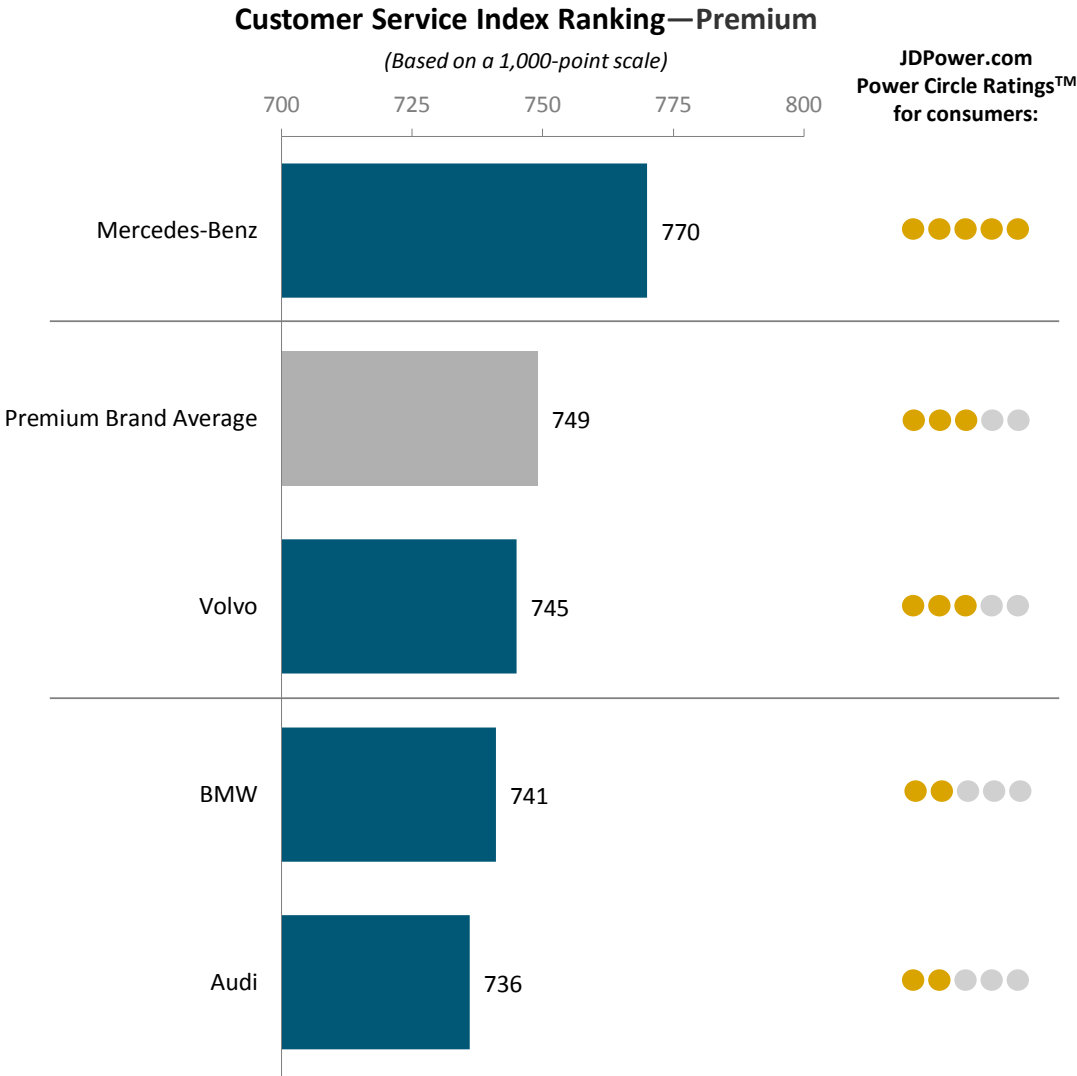
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(Page 2 of 2)

NOTE: Three charts follow.

J.D. Power 2015 Germany Customer Service Index (CSI) StudySM



Note: Included in the study but not ranked due to small sample are Jaguar, Land Rover, Lexus and Porsche

Source: J.D. Power 2015 Germany Customer Service Index (CSI) StudySM

Power Circle Ratings Legend

●●●●● Among the best

●●●●● Better than most

●●●●● About average

●●●●● The rest

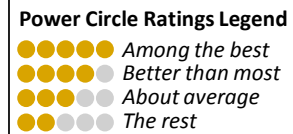
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Note: Included in the study but not ranked due to small sample are Alfa Romeo, Jeep, Lada, Lancia, MINI, Mitsubishi, smart, Ssangyong, Subaru and Suzuki

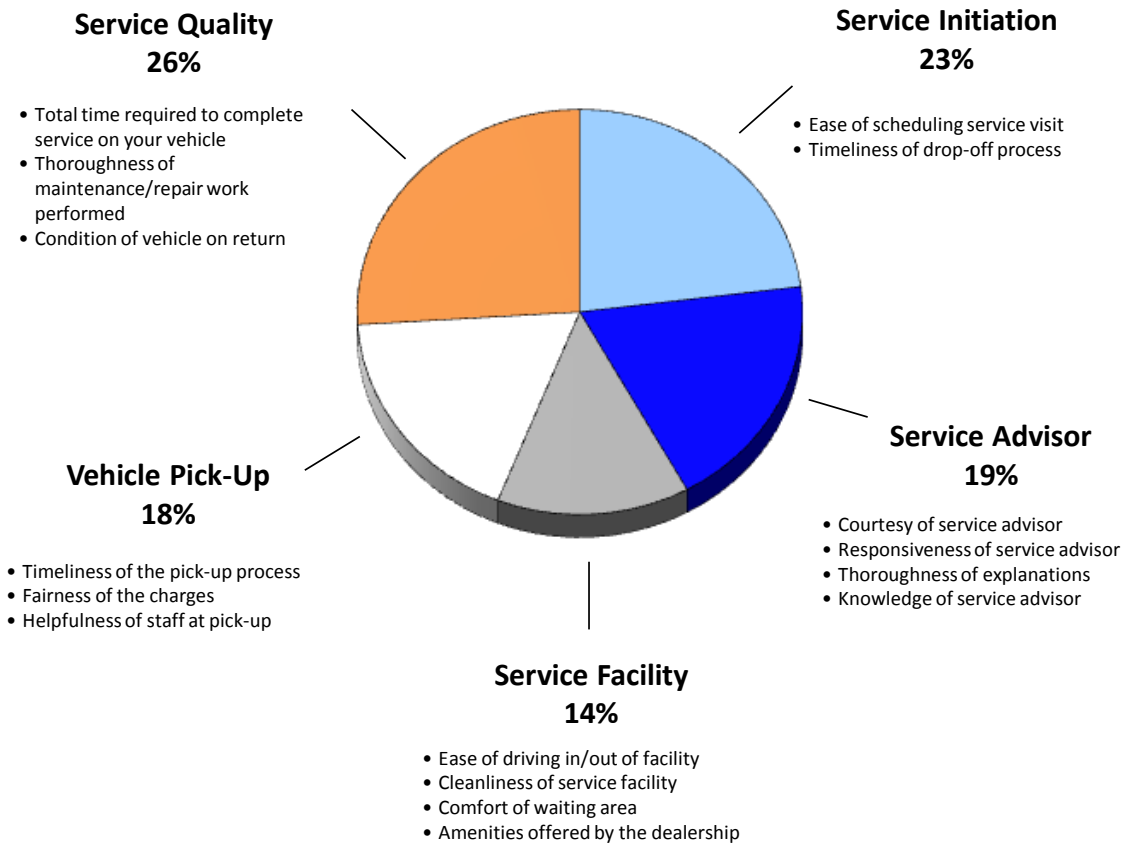
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Measures Contributing to Overall Customer Service Satisfaction



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