



## Press Release

### **J.D. Power and Associates Reports: Embattled U.S. Automakers Make Substantial Gains in Initial Quality, Outpacing Industry-Wide Improvement**

While Quality Gap Continues to Narrow, Import Nameplates Capture 15 of 22 Segment Awards

**WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif.: 22 June 2009** — New vehicles sold by Chrysler, Ford and GM's domestic brands have improved in initial quality by an average of 10 percent, compared with 2008, surpassing the 8-percent rate of improvement by the industry overall, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2009 Initial Quality Study<sup>SM</sup> (IQS) released today.

Overall, the industry average for initial quality is 108 problems per 100 vehicles (PP100) in 2009, down from 118 PP100 in 2008. Initial quality for domestic brands has improved to an average of 112 PP100 in 2009 from 124 PP100 in 2008. Lower PP100 scores indicate a lower rate of problem incidences and higher quality.

“Even in the face of unprecedented challenges, the Detroit automakers are keeping their focus on designing and building high-quality vehicles, which is a precondition for long-term success,” said David Sargent, vice president of automotive research at J.D. Power and Associates. “High quality generally translates into reduced re-engineering costs and lower warranty expenses during a vehicle's life cycle. High quality also enhances an automaker's reputation for reliability, which is a critical purchase consideration for many consumers.”

In addition to the marked improvement by domestic automakers, many import brands continued to perform well in 2009. Lexus leads the overall nameplate rankings, averaging 84 PP100. Following in the rankings are Porsche, Cadillac (which moves from 10<sup>th</sup> rank position in 2008 to third in 2009), Hyundai (improves from 13<sup>th</sup> rank position in 2008 to fourth in 2009) and Honda, rounding out the top five. Suzuki posts the largest improvement in ranking, moving from 32<sup>nd</sup> place in 2008 to ninth in 2009.

The study finds that initial quality for newly launched and redesigned models in 2009 has improved compared with previous years. Historically, all-new models have typically launched with below-average levels of initial quality. However, several all-new models in 2009, including the Hyundai Genesis, Kia Borrego, Toyota Venza and Volkswagen CC, perform considerably better than their respective segment averages. Many redesigned models in 2009 also show notable improvement from the previous generation—particularly the Acura TL, Ford F-150, Honda Pilot and Nissan Z.

“Achieving high levels of initial quality in all-new models is one of the greatest challenges for manufacturers,” said Sargent. “Now that more manufacturers are getting their launch quality right straight out of the gate, consumers can expect the quality of new vehicles to continue to rise.”

The Initial Quality Study serves as the industry benchmark for new-vehicle quality measured at 90 days of ownership. The study is used extensively by manufacturers worldwide to help them design and build better vehicles and by consumers to help them in their vehicle purchase decisions. Initial quality has been shown over the years to be an excellent predictor of long-term durability, which can significantly impact consumer purchase decisions. The study captures problems experienced by owners in two distinct categories—design-related problems and defects and malfunctions.

## **2009 IQS Ranking Highlights**

Toyota Motor Corporation captures 10 segment awards—more than any other corporation in the 2009 study—including five for Lexus, four for Toyota and one for Scion. Lexus receives awards for the IS, GS, GX, LS and LX models. The Lexus LX has the fewest quality problems in the industry, with just 52 PP100. Toyota models receiving awards in their respective segments are the 4Runner (in a tie); Sienna; Tundra (in a tie); and Yaris.

Ford receives three awards for the Edge (in a tie); F-150 (in a tie); and Mustang. Garnering two awards each are Nissan (Altima and Z); and Honda (CR-V, in a tie, and Ridgeline).

Also receiving segment awards are: Chevrolet Trailblazer (in a tie), Chrysler PT Cruiser Wagon (in a tie), GMC Yukon, Hyundai Elantra Sedan, Mercury Sable and Scion tC.

## **Assembly Plant Awards**

The Toyota Motor Corporation assembly plant in Higashi-Fuji, Japan, receives the Platinum Plant Quality Award for producing vehicles yielding the fewest defects and malfunctions. Averaging just 29 PP100, the plant produces the Lexus SC 430 and Toyota Corolla. Plant awards are based solely on average levels of defects and malfunctions and exclude design-related problems.

Among North and South American plants, the Honda plant in East Liberty, Ohio, which produces the Civic Sedan, CR-V and Element, achieves the Gold Plant Quality Award.

In the Europe and Africa region, Daimler's East London, South Africa, plant, which produces the Mercedes-Benz C-Class, receives the Gold Plant Quality Award.

The 2009 Initial Quality Study is based on responses from more than 80,900 purchasers and lessees of new 2009 model-year cars, trucks and multi-activity vehicles surveyed after 90 days of ownership. The study is based on a 228-question battery designed to provide manufacturers with information to facilitate identifying problems and drive product improvement. The study was fielded between February and May 2009.

Find more detailed results on new-vehicle quality performance as well as model photos and specs by watching a video, reading an article and reviewing quality ratings at [JDPower.com](http://JDPower.com).

## **About J.D. Power and Associates**

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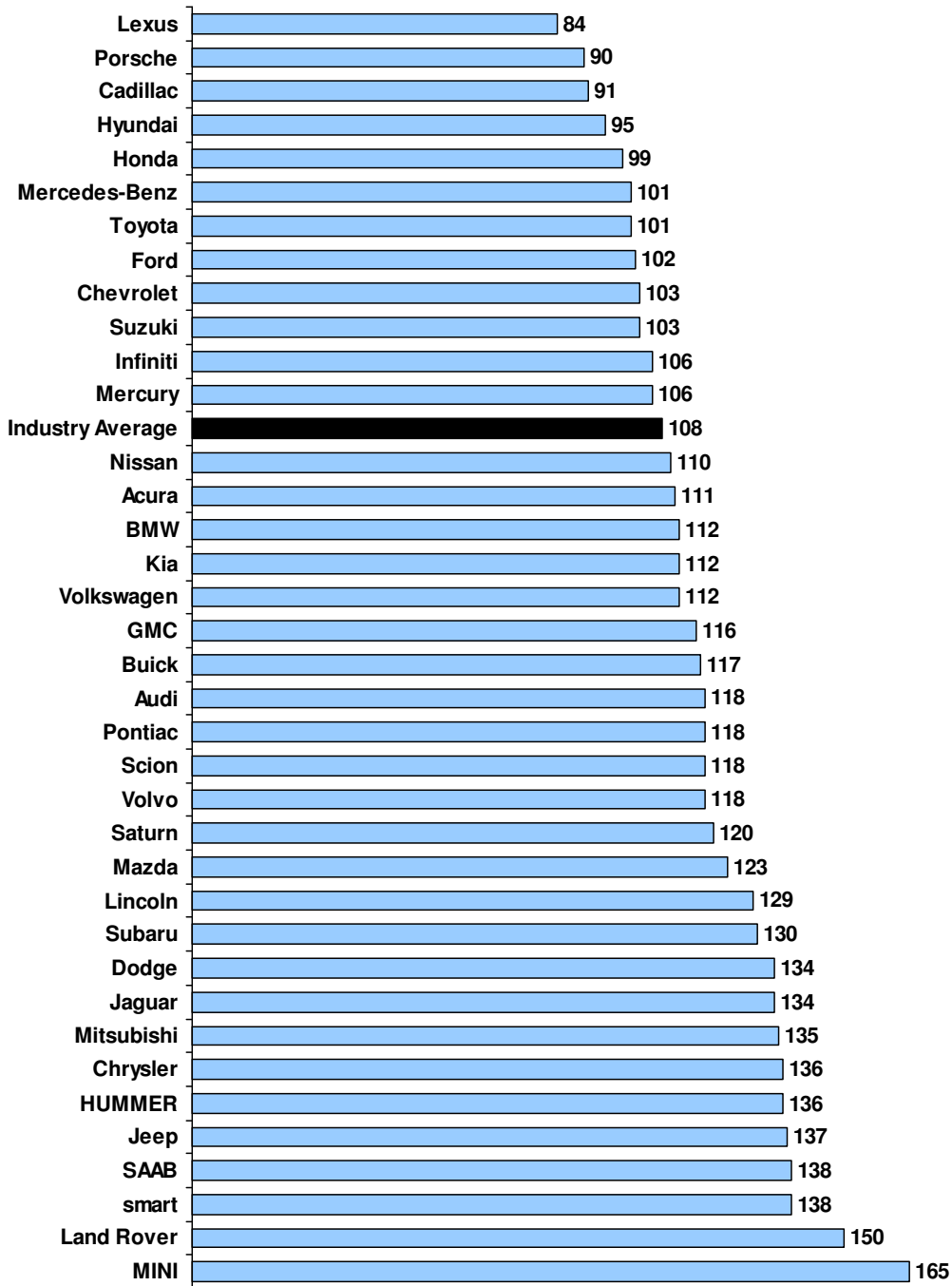
(Page 2 of 2)

NOTE: Four charts follow.

# J.D. Power and Associates 2009 Initial Quality Study<sup>SM</sup> (IQS)

## 2009 Nameplate IQS Ranking

Problems per 100 Vehicles



Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2009 Initial Quality Study<sup>SM</sup>

Charts and graphs extracted from this press release must be accompanied by a statement identifying J.D. Power and Associates as the publisher and the J.D. Power and Associates 2009 Initial Quality Study<sup>SM</sup> 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 and Associates survey results without the express prior written consent of J.D. Power and Associates.

# J.D. Power and Associates 2009 Initial Quality Study<sup>SM</sup> (IQS)

## Top Three Models per Segment Car Segments

<b>Sub-Compact Car</b>	<b>Midsize Premium Car</b>
<b>Highest Ranked: Toyota Yaris</b> Hyundai Accent Honda Fit	<b>Highest Ranked: Lexus GS</b> Acura RL Lexus ES
<b>Compact Car</b>	<b>Midsize Sporty Car*</b>
<b>Highest Ranked:</b> <b>Hyundai Elantra Sedan</b> Toyota Prius Honda Civic	<b>Highest Ranked: Ford Mustang</b>
<b>Compact Sporty Car*</b>	<b>Large Premium Car*</b>
<b>Highest Ranked: Scion tC</b> Volkswagen GTI	<b>Highest Ranked: Lexus LS</b> Mercedes-Benz S-Class
<b>Compact Premium Sporty Car*</b>	<b>Midsize Car</b>
<b>Highest Ranked: Nissan Z</b> Mercedes-Benz SLK-Class	<b>Highest Ranked: Nissan Altima</b> Pontiac G6 Chevrolet Malibu
<b>Entry Premium Vehicle</b>	<b>Large Car</b>
<b>Highest Ranked:</b> <b>Lexus IS</b> Cadillac CTS (tie) Infiniti G-Series (tie)	<b>Highest Ranked: Mercury Sable</b> Toyota Avalon Chevrolet Impala

**For more detailed findings on new-vehicle quality performance,  
visit [www.jdpower.com](http://www.jdpower.com)**

*NOTE: For a segment award to be issued, there must be at least three models with sufficient sample that comprise 80 percent of market sales within an award segment. There were only two premium sporty models and no large van models with sufficient sample size, thus no premium sporty or large van awards have been issued.*

*\*No other model in this segment performs above the segment average.*

Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2009 Initial Quality Study<sup>SM</sup>

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# J.D. Power and Associates 2009 Initial Quality Study<sup>SM</sup> (IQS)

## Top Three Models per Segment *Truck/Multi-Activity Vehicle (MAV) Segments*

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### Compact MAV

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**Highest Ranked:**  
**Chrysler PT Cruiser Wagon (tie)**  
**Honda CR-V (tie)**  
Mitsubishi Outlander

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### Midsized MAV

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**Highest Ranked:**  
**Chevrolet TrailBlazer (tie)**  
**Ford Edge (tie)**  
**Toyota 4Runner (tie)**

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### Large MAV\*

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**Highest Ranked: GMC Yukon**  
Chevrolet Tahoe

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### Midsized Premium MAV

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**Highest Ranked: Lexus GX**  
Lexus RX  
Cadillac SRX

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### Large Premium MAV

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**Highest Ranked: Lexus LX**  
Cadillac Escalade  
Mercedes-Benz GL-Class

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### Large Pickup

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**Highest Ranked: Ford F-150 (tie)**  
**Toyota Tundra (tie)**  
Chevrolet Avalanche

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### Midsized Pickup

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**Highest Ranked: Honda Ridgeline**  
Nissan Frontier  
Ford Ranger

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### Minivan\*

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**Highest Ranked: Toyota Sienna**  
Honda Odyssey

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*NOTE: For a segment award to be issued, there must be at least three models with sufficient sample that comprise 80 percent of market sales within an award segment. There were only two premium sporty models and no large van models with sufficient sample size, thus no premium sporty or large van awards have been issued.*

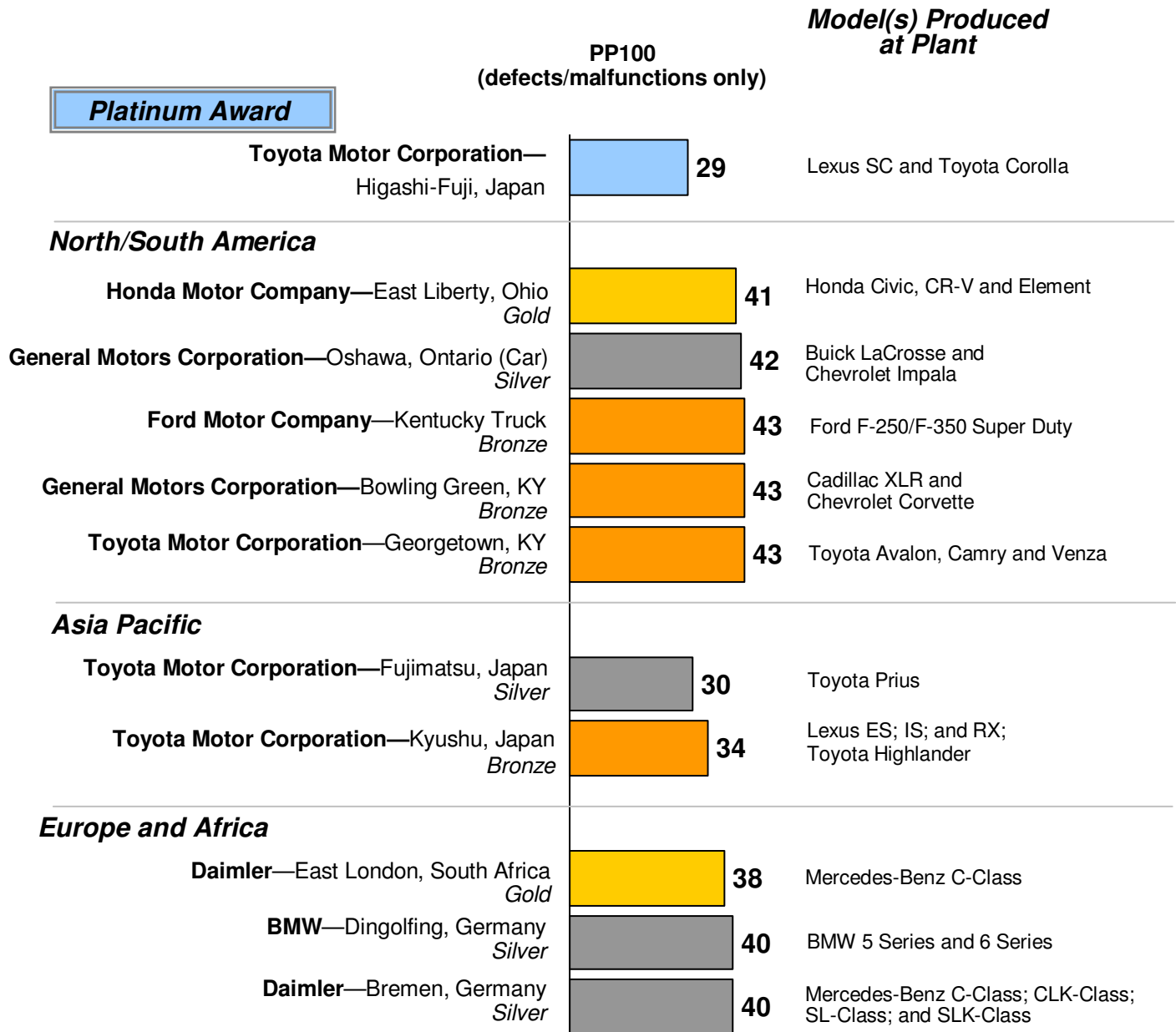
*\*No other model in this segment performs above the segment average.*

*Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2009 Initial Quality Study<sup>SM</sup>*

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# J.D. Power and Associates 2009 Initial Quality Study<sup>SM</sup> (IQS)

## 2009 Assembly Plant Quality Award Recipients Based on Vehicles Produced for U.S. Market



Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2009 Initial Quality Study<sup>SM</sup>

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