

Chevy Is First Non-Luxury Brand On PSI List

by [Karl Greenberg](#), Yesterday, 4:24 PM

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Mercedes-Benz dealerships ranked highest in the new 2010 Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index (PSI) U.S. Auto Industry study. But Detroit automakers are the most improved in the study, which uses "mystery shoppers" to gauge how consumers are treated while shopping.

In the study, 25 of 34 major auto brands have higher scores, led by luxury brands: Lexus came in second overall, followed by Land Rover, Acura, Jaguar, Audi, Cadillac, Lincoln and BMW.

Chevrolet is the first non-luxury brand to appear on the list, coming in at No. 10 and followed by Ford, Honda, Infiniti, Mazda and Toyota. At the bottom of the PSI are Mitsubishi in last, preceded by Suzuki, Scion, Saab, and Mini. Just above them are Chrysler, Jeep and Dodge.

Ford, Lincoln and Chevrolet were the most-improved brands, scoring above the industry average for the first time since PSI auto industry benchmarking began four years ago.

The firm says that when comparing the Ford shopping experience this year versus 2007, the salesperson was 52% more likely to discuss vehicle features that were unique from the competition, 29% more likely to introduce him or herself and 65% more likely to proactively mention the availability of different financing options.

Volvo and BMW salespeople mentioned their brand's maintenance program and associated costs 80% of the time or more, while fewer than a third of Scion, Mitsubishi or Dodge salespeople mentioned such things. Lexus and Porsche salespeople talked about vehicle features and controls 95% of the time before leaving on a test drive, but BMW salespeople reviewed it only 74% of the time.

At Land Rover, Smart or Mini dealerships, salespeople nearly always handled the entire visit themselves and rarely introduced shoppers to dealership management. In contrast, at Suzuki, Volkswagen, Nissan, Toyota and Infiniti dealerships, the salespeople introduced shoppers to dealership management to help close the sale 40% of the time or more.

Salespeople who work for dealerships selling Nissan, Mazda, Infiniti, Mercedes-Benz, Toyota or Volkswagen were most likely to follow up with shoppers within 48 hours after the initial visit, while salespeople who work for dealerships selling Buick, Mitsubishi, Chevrolet and Acura were least likely to do so.

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