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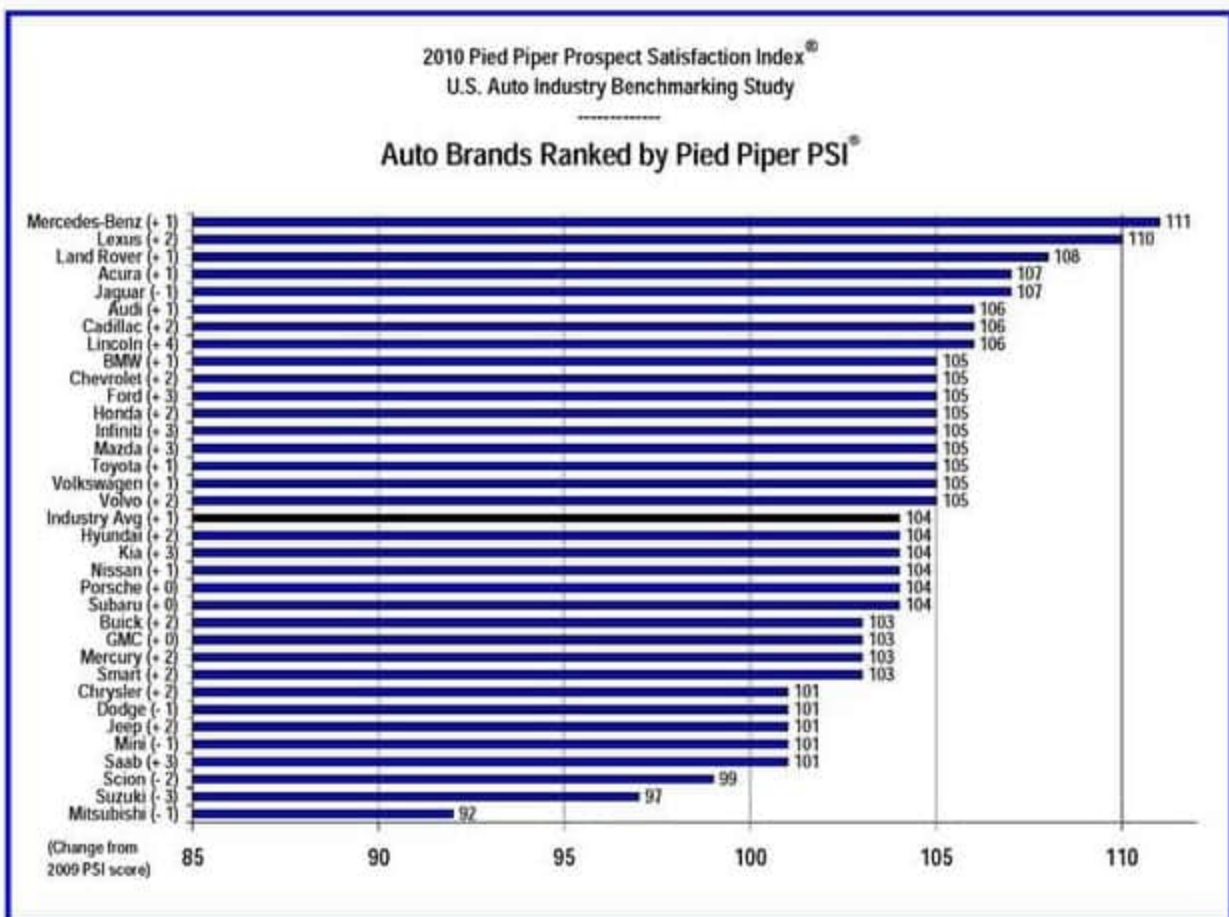
News and Advice for Car Shoppers and Owners

Luxury Automakers Top Mystery Shopping Study



Mercedes Benz and other luxury automakers topped the list of the best dealership experience, according to the results of the 2010 [Pied Piper](#) Prospect Satisfaction Index (PSI) U.S. Auto Industry Study. Though luxury brands took the top nine spots, the study showed that the domestic brands showed the most improvement in 2010, with Ford, Lincoln and Chevrolet scoring above the industry average for the first time since PSI study began four years ago.

The Pied Piper study also pointed out some interesting behavioral trends at the dealership. For example, shoppers are more likely to get an inattentive salesperson than pushy one. "The stereotypical car shopping experience of having an overbearing salesperson happened far less often (6% of the time) than the opposite: a salesperson who simply was not helpful enough and did not devote enough time and attention to the car shopper (18% of the time)," the report concluded.



Consumers who enjoy receiving a vehicle's brochure after a test drive may be disappointed to learn that industry wide, salespeople offered a brochure following a visit only 57% of the time, which is the lowest level in the last three years. The good news is that the industry scores improved overall from 2009. According to the report, 25 of 34 major brands improved their score from last year.

The Pied Piper study sent 3,658 anonymous mystery shoppers into auto dealerships nationwide, made a number of observations and compiled the results into a measurement of how each brand's dealerships treat car shoppers.

Edmunds.com sometimes conduct its own informal [mystery shopping](#) experiences, and they prove to be useful barometers of the average car buying experience.