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News Brief

Mercedes Dealers Treat 'Em Right, Per Pied Piper

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Mercedes-Benz dealerships ranked highest in the new 2009 Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index (PSI) U.S. Auto Industry Study. The study measures how consumers are treated when shopping for a new car, motorcycle, RV or boat via 3,531 hired anonymous "mystery shoppers" who go into auto dealerships and measure how each brand's dealerships treat car shoppers.

The 2009 study showed that a brand or dealership's treatment of shoppers paralleled their retail sales success. Eight of the Top 10 brands when ranked by PSI also gained market share from 2008 to 2009, while eight of the bottom ten brands when ranked by PSI lost market share from 2008 to 2009, per the firm.

Luxury brands captured nine of the Top 10 positions, with GM's Saturn dealerships representing the only non-luxury brand, as well as one of the two -- along with Cadillac -- Top 10 brands owned by a U.S. company. Toyota, Ford, Chevrolet, Honda and Nissan all improved as did Mercedes-Benz, Mini, Smart and Chrysler.

The Monterey, Calif.-based firm said that, among the brands on the block, Saturn finished well above the industry average, Volvo scored at the industry average, Hummer scored below the industry average, while Saab and Pontiac scored well below the industry average.--*Karl Greenberg*



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