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## Mercedes Scores Top Dealer Marks; Most Brands Improve Over Last Year



Today 04:00 PM by [Benson Kong](#)



A recent dealer study conducted by Pied Piper of Monterey, California, reports that Mercedes-Benz has the most highly rated dealers in the United States according to the Prospect Satisfaction Index.



In what is sure to be reassuring news for the auto industry as a whole, 25 of the 34 brands scored higher compared to last year's index. During the survey, Pied Piper dispatched 3658 mystery shoppers to dealers to gather feedback for a variety of dealer-consumer criteria, mainly focusing on salesperson interaction.

Sitting atop this year's PSI is Mercedes, followed by [Lexus](#), Land Rover, Acura, and Jaguar to round out the top five. The first mass-market brand to appear in the order is Chevrolet at tenth; Ford and Honda placed directly behind. After the industry average, just 12 brands were rated to be below average, with Mitsubishi owning the dubious honor of 34th place.

"Today's car shoppers are armed with far more vehicle and pricing information than ever before," said Pied Piper CEO Fran O'Hagan. "Successful brands and dealerships have responded by acting as helpful enablers for today's shoppers. At the most successful dealerships, the stereotype of the old-fashioned car salesperson no longer exists."

This year's study was especially important for [Ford](#), Lincoln, and Chevy, as it was the first time the three had scored above average in the four years the PSI has been conducted.

### Other notable study findings:

- Showroom visitors are likely to encounter an overbearing salesperson six percent of the time
- About 18 percent of the time, salespeople did not pay enough attention to the shopper
- 57 percent of salespeople offered a brochure, underlining the decision "by some brands and dealerships to limit or discontinue offering brochures," the study says
- 95 percent of Lexus and Porsche sales personnel reviewed a vehicle's features and controls before a test drive, compared with 74 percent at [BMW](#)
- Land Rover, Smart, and Mini salespeople rarely introduced shoppers to dealership personnel
- Suzuki, Volkswagen, Nissan, Toyota, and Infiniti dealership employees used introductions to dealership management 40 percent of the time to help clinch a deal
- Nissan, Mazda, Infiniti, Mercedes-Benz, Toyota, and Volkswagen dealerships are most likely to initiate follow-up contact within 48 hours after an initial visit
- Buick, Mitsubishi, [Chevrolet](#), and Acura dealerships were the least likely to follow up within 48 hours after a shopper's first visit
- At BMW and Volvo stores, 80 percent of the time, personnel told shoppers about their free scheduled maintenance programs

Source: Pied Piper via [Automotive News](#) (Subscription required)