

**Automated Safety Features Boost Vehicle Appeal among Buyers in Japan, J.D. Power Finds**

Lexus Ranks Highest among All Nameplates; Daihatsu Cast, Mazda CX-3, Mazda CX-5, Toyota Vellfire Rank Highest in Their Respective Segments in New-Vehicle Appeal in Japan

**TOKYO: 21 Sept. 2016** — Safety-oriented driver-assist features boost overall vehicle appeal, according to the J.D. Power 2016 Japan Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout (APEAL) Study,<sup>SM</sup> released today.

The study, now in its sixth year, examines how gratifying a new vehicle is to own and drive. Owners evaluate their vehicle across 77 attributes, grouped into 10 categories of vehicle performance: exterior; interior; storage and space; audio/ communication/ entertainment/ navigation (ACEN); seats; heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC); driving dynamics (driving performance); engine/ transmission; visibility and safety; and fuel economy. Satisfaction is calculated on a 1,000-point scale.

The overall APEAL score averages 628 points in 2016, the same as in 2015. Among all categories, the largest improvement is in engine/ transmission, increasing by 5 points in 2016, followed by interior, ACEN, seats, HVAC and driving dynamics, each up by 4 points. However, satisfaction with fuel economy has decreased by a significant 12 points to 630.

The study finds that overall APEAL scores are higher among owners of new vehicles that have been equipped with safety-oriented driver-assist features, such as lane departure warning systems, collision avoidance/alert systems and blind spot monitoring/warning systems. The percentage of vehicles equipped with lane departure warning systems increases most dramatically in the midsize and minivan segments. Lane departure warning system penetration in the midsize segment increases to 60% in 2016 from 36% in 2015, while in the minivan segment it grows to 45% from 22%.

“Safety-oriented driver-assist features contribute to higher overall APEAL scores,” said **Atsushi Kawahashi, senior director of the automotive division at J.D. Power, Tokyo**. “Consumers are interested in the latest technologies, specifically those that make their vehicle safer to drive.”

The study finds a correlation between customer satisfaction and brand advocacy. Among owners whose vehicle has above-industry average APEAL scores and who experience one or more problems with their vehicle, 87% say they “definitely would” or “probably would” recommend their brand to others. In contrast, among owners whose vehicle has below-average APEAL scores and who experience no problems with their vehicle, only 67% say they “definitely would” or “probably would” recommend their brand to others.

**Segment Key Findings**

- **Mini-Car segment:**  
The mini-car segment is the only segment to post a year-over-year decline in overall APEAL, dropping to 591 in 2016 from 603 in 2015. Satisfaction decreases across all categories, with the largest drop of 32 points in fuel economy. Storage and space declines by 16 points, while visibility and safety drops by 10 points.
- **Compact segment:**  
The overall APEAL score remains at 619, the same as in 2015. Satisfaction with fuel economy decreases by 10 points, while satisfaction in the other categories increases or remains the same.
- **Midsize segment:**

The overall APEAL score increases by 10 points year over year to 668. Satisfaction improves between 10 and 12 points in all categories except exterior, which is up by 5 points.

- **Large segment!**

Overall APEAL increases by 7 points from 2015 to 716 this year. Satisfaction increases across all categories, with storage and space improving by 12 points and ACEN and HVAC each improving by 10 points.

- **Minivan segment:**

Overall APEAL increases by 9 points year over year to 633. Satisfaction increases in all categories, with driving dynamics, engine/ transmission, interior, ACEN, seats and HVAC each up by at least 10 points.

### **2016 APEAL Ranking Highlights:**

**Lexus** ranks highest among nameplates, with an overall APEAL score of 756. Lexus is followed by **BMW** (714), **Volvo** (707), **Mercedes-Benz** (700) and **Audi** (697).

### **Top Three Models Per Segment:**

- Mini-Car segment: Daihatsu Cast ranks highest, followed by Suzuki Lapin and Honda N-BOX
- Compact segment: Mazda CX-3 ranks highest, followed by Mazda Demio and Honda Fit
- Midsize segment: Mazda CX-5 ranks highest, followed by Toyota Prius, and Subaru Forester and Subaru Levorg in a tie.
- Minivan segment: Toyota Vellfire ranks highest, followed by Toyota Alphard and Toyota Esquire

The 2016 Japan APEAL Study is based on responses from 19,573 purchasers of new vehicles in the first two to nine months of ownership. The study includes 16 automotive brands and 134 models and ranks models with a sample size of 100 or more usable returns. The study was fielded from early June through late June 2016.

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Note: Two charts follow.

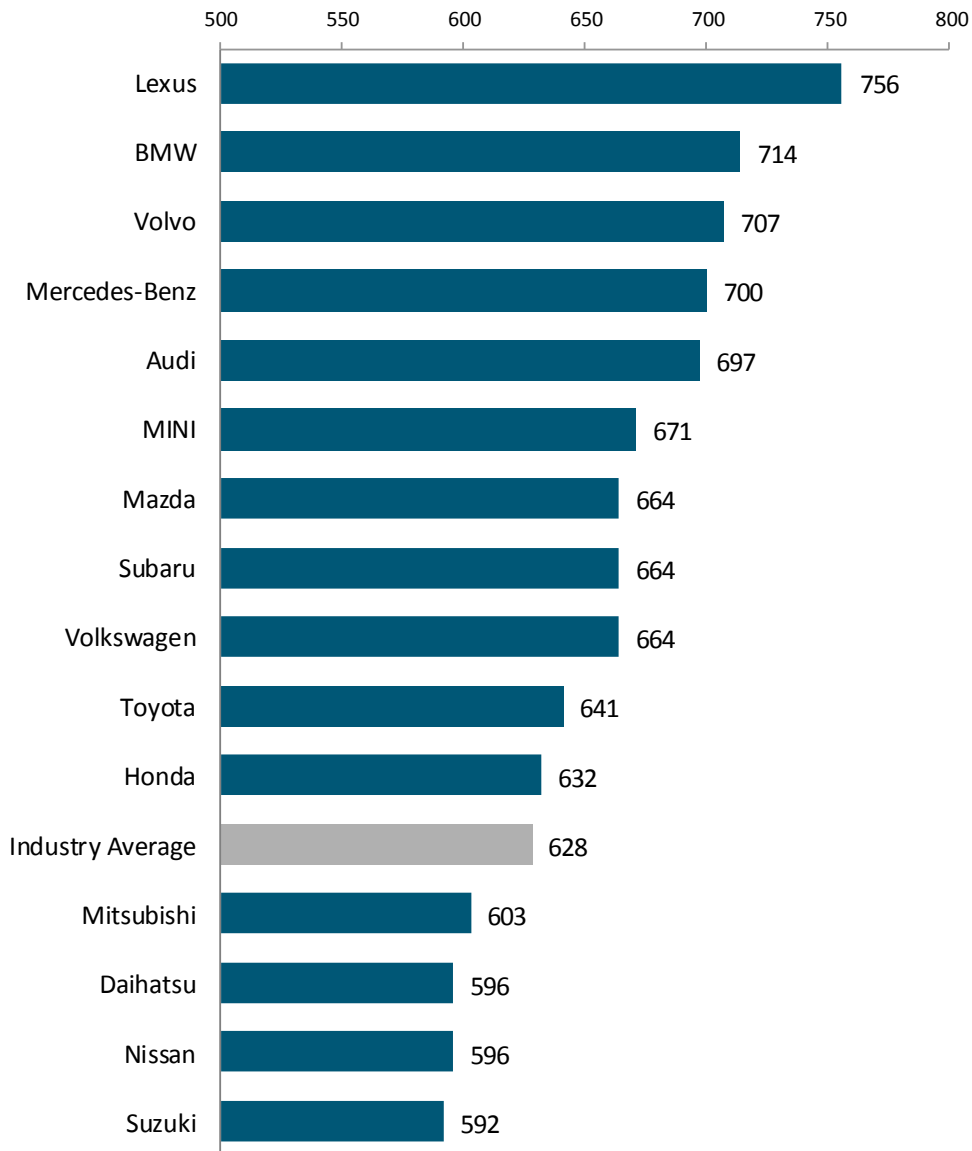
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<sup>1</sup> Official rankings are published only for segments with at least three models with sufficient sample that comprise 67% of market sales within an award segment. Therefore, no official rankings are published for the large segment.

# J.D. Power 2016 Japan Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout (APEAL) Study<sup>SM</sup>

## 2016 Nameplate APEAL Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Note: Included in the study, but not ranked due to small sample size is Fiat.

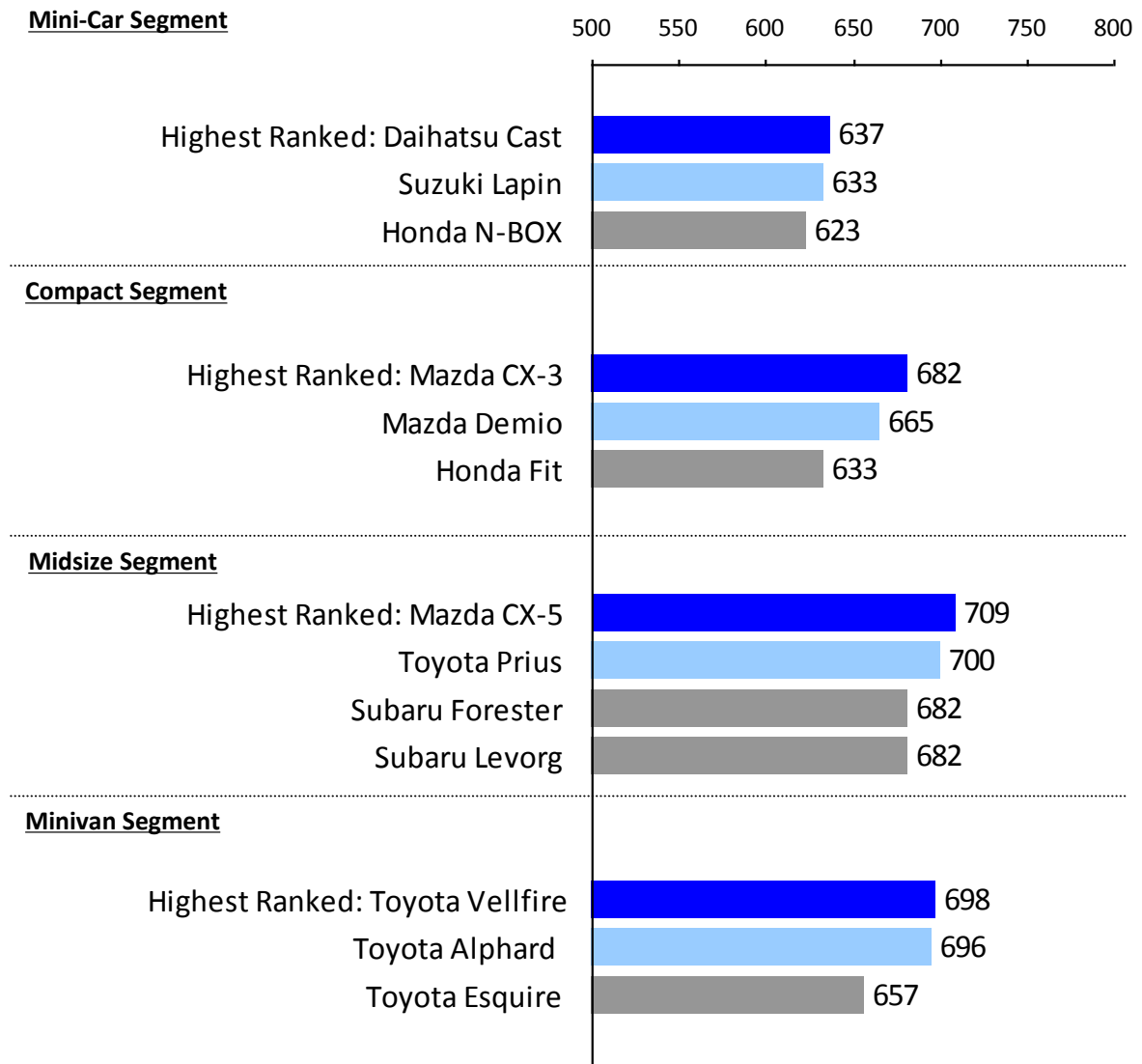
Source: J.D. Power 2016 Japan Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout (APEAL) Study<sup>SM</sup>

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# J.D. Power

## 2016 Japan Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout (APEAL) Study<sup>SM</sup>

### Top Three Models per Segment *(Based on a 1,000-point scale)*



*Note: Official rankings are published only for segments with at least three models with sufficient sample that comprise 67% of market sales within an award segment. Therefore, no official rankings are published for the large segment.*

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