

**Appeal of New Vehicles and Brand Loyalty Improve During Past Six Years, J.D. Power Finds**Honda is Highest-Ranked Model in two segments

**TOKYO: 17 Sept. 2020** — Improvement in new-vehicle quality has resulted in higher levels of vehicle appeal as well as brand loyalty among owners, but presents new challenges to automotive manufacturers, according to the J.D. Power 2020 Japan Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout (APEAL) Study<sup>SM</sup>, released today.

“The Japanese auto industry has improved new-vehicle quality during the past six years, and thus owners’ brand loyalty and the appeal of new vehicles have increased,” said **Koichi Urayama, senior director of the automotive division at J.D. Power Japan**. “This trend in improved quality is seen for many brands, which suggests that it has become difficult for manufacturers to differentiate themselves from their competitors in vehicle appeal. With a growing diversity of features and functions available, auto manufacturers will need to work harder to provide more appealing vehicles by identifying functions that existing and targeted customers demand in a new vehicle. As owner evaluations have become increasingly important to manufacturers, J.D. Power will substantially redesign the APEAL Study to provide even more valuable information in 2021.”

Now in its 10th year, the study examines how gratifying a new vehicle is to own and drive. Owners evaluate their new 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. These attributes are aggregated to calculate an overall APEAL index score measured on a 1,000-point scale.

Following are some of the key findings of the 2020 study:

- **New-vehicle appeal achieves the highest satisfaction since 2014:** The industry average APEAL score has increased this year by 12 points to 657, compared with 645 in 2019. This is the highest score since 2014, the first year the study was redesigned, and represents a six-year improvement of 35 points from 622.
- **Brand loyalty also increases from 2014:** Among new-vehicle owners, brand loyalty has increased by 14 percentage points since 2014, with 82% indicating that they “definitely will” or “probably will” purchase the same brand in 2020, compared with 68% who said the same in 2014.
- **Luxury brands continue to dominate:** There is still a large gap in APEAL scores between the luxury segment, which includes mainly import brands but also Lexus (average score is 739 this year vs. 711 in 2014), and the mass market brands (average of 653 vs. 619 in 2014).
- **Plug-in hybrids surpass diesel-fueled vehicles for fuel economy:** For fuel economy or driving range by engine type, satisfaction with diesel-fueled vehicles, which was highest from 2014 to 2019, has been eclipsed this year by plug-in hybrids, outperforming diesel-fueled vehicles for the first time. The APEAL score this year for plug-in hybrids in this aspect is 783, up from 701 in 2014, representing a significant increase of 82 points.

- **Electric vehicles improve in performance:** Similarly, satisfaction with driving range for electric vehicles has steadily improved by 85 points to 637 in 2020 from 552 in 2014.

### Highest-Ranked Brands

**BMW** ranks highest in overall APEAL with a score of 756. **Lexus** ranks highest among luxury brands with a score of 746. **MINI** ranks highest among mass market brands with a score of 736.

### Segment-Leading Models

- Mini-Car segment: **Daihatsu MOVE canbus** and **Honda N-BOX** (tie)
- Compact segment: **Honda FIT**
- Midsize segment: **Lexus UX**
- Minivan segment: **Toyota ALPHARD**

The 2020 Japan APEAL Study is based on responses from 19,435 purchasers of new vehicles in the first two to nine months of ownership. The study was fielded online from May through June 2020.

**J.D. Power** is a global leader in consumer insights, advisory services and data and analytics. These capabilities enable J.D. Power to help its clients drive customer satisfaction, growth and profitability. Established in 1968, J.D. Power is headquartered in Troy, Mich.

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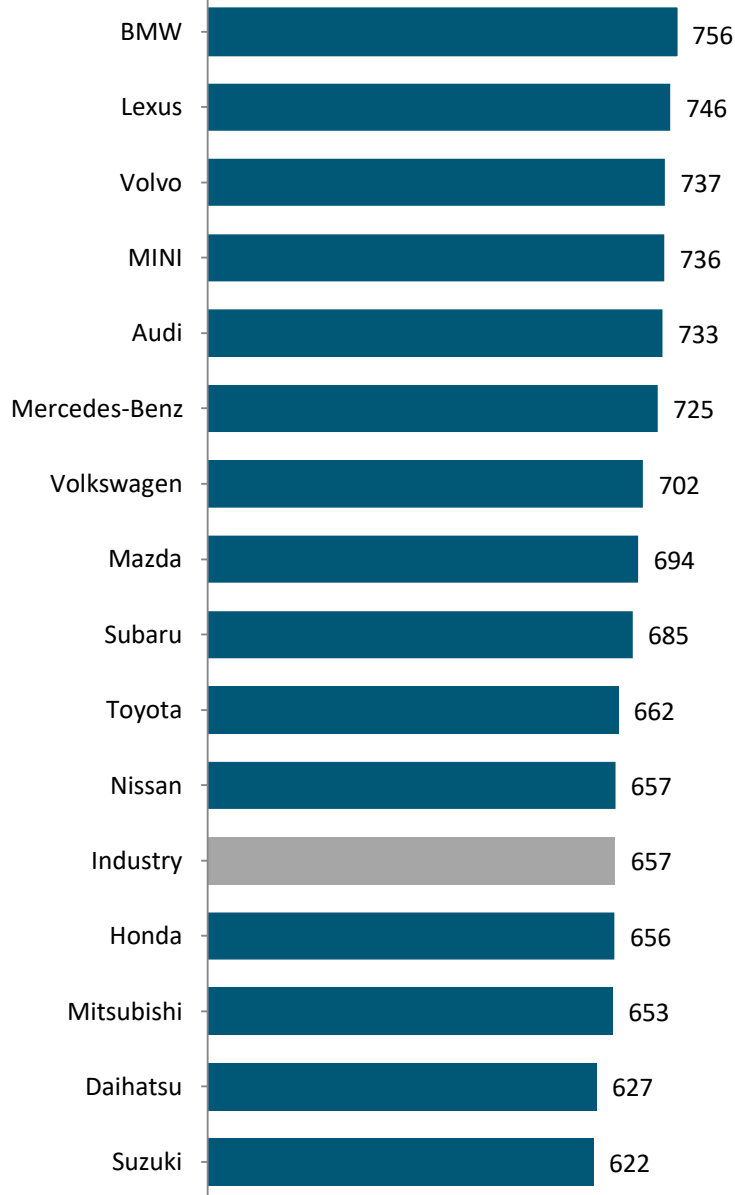
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NOTE: Two charts follow.

# J.D. Power 2020 Japan Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout (APEAL) Study<sup>SM</sup>

## 2020 APEAL Brand Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



NOTE: In alphabetical order if there are tie scores.

Brand/Segment are not eligible unless they meet study criteria by J.D. Power, including insufficient sample.

Source: J.D. Power 2020 Japan Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout (APEAL) Study<sup>SM</sup>

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## Top Three Models per Segment

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### Mini-Car

**Highest Ranked in a Tie: Daihatsu MOVE canbus**

**Highest Ranked in a Tie: Honda N-BOX**

**Suzuki Lapin**

**Daihatsu Tanto**

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### Compact Car

**Highest Ranked: Honda FIT**

**Daihatsu Rocky**

**Toyota YARIS**

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### Midsized Car

**Highest Ranked: Lexus UX**

**MINI MINI**

**Mazda CX-5**

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### Minivan

**Highest Ranked: Toyota ALPHARD**

**Toyota VELLFIRE**

**Honda ODYSSEY**

*NOTE: In alphabetical order if there are tie scores.*

*Brand/Segment are not rank eligible unless they meet study criteria by J.D. Power, including insufficient sample.*

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