

Among New-vehicle Shoppers, SUVs Are More Frequently Considered for Body Type and Hybrids for Engine Type, J.D. Power Finds

SUVs Continue to Be Extremely Popular Body Types

TOKYO: 12 Sept. 2018 — SUVs are gaining in popularity, even among shoppers who are considering minivans for aesthetic reasons, while other shoppers are considering hybrids for economic reasons, according to the J.D. Power 2018 Japan New-Vehicle Intender StudySM (NVIS), released today.

The study, now in its fourth year, examines consumer perceptions of vehicles and the purchase behaviors of those who intend to purchase a new or used vehicle within the next 12 months. The study also measures purchase decision factors when considering a vehicle for purchase, brand recognition, favorability and impression, as well as consumer interest in new technologies.

“The results of the 2018 study show a continuing increase in the percentage of new-vehicle shoppers who consider SUVs,” said **Koichi Urayama, Director of the Automotive Division at J.D. Power**. “Moreover, the study shows that more shoppers who consider other body types are including SUVs in their consideration set. This suggests that it has become very important to support shoppers—in terms of the way they intend to use the vehicle—in their choice of a new vehicle that will be best for them by understanding their needs and comparing information about competitors’ models.”

Following are some of the key findings of the study:

- **SUV demand continues to rise:** Among all body types, SUV is the most frequently cited body type by new-vehicle shoppers for their consideration and is the only body type for which the percentage of shoppers has increased for three consecutive years. Additionally, new-vehicle shoppers who are considering other body types are increasingly considering SUVs. For instance, the percentage of shoppers who consider sedans and SUVs increases to 36% in 2018 from 29% in 2015, with increases of 6 percentage points each among shoppers whose first consideration are minivans or wagons during the same period.
- **Hybrid vehicles are increasingly popular:** More than half of shoppers who consider engine types other than gasoline-fueled vehicles prefer hybrids (57%), followed by plug-in hybrids (PHVs) (20%); diesel-fueled vehicles (18%); electric vehicles (EVs) (15%); and fuel cell vehicles (FCVs) (7%). Overall, from 2015 to 2018, the percentage of people considering hybrids people has increased the most among all engine types, while the percentages of PHVs and EVs have increased by six percentage points each.
- **Customer loyalty improving:** More than half (60%) of repeat customers for Toyota, Mercedes-Benz and BMW consider a new vehicle from the same manufacturer for their next purchase. Among major brands, customer loyalty has substantially improved from 2017 for Volvo, Volkswagen, Audi, Mitsubishi and Honda, while decreasing for MINI, Mazda and Subaru.

The 2018 Japan New-Vehicle Intender Study is based on 10,000 responses. The online survey was conducted from June through July 2018.

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