



Press Release

Intenders' Cravings for Aftersales Information Open Doors for Automotive Manufacturer Websites

Mercedes-Benz Ranks Highest in Brand Website Satisfaction in China

Shanghai: 11 September 2015 — Automotive manufacturer websites are evolving to meet the increasing demands of new-vehicle intenders—consumers in China who expect to be in the market for a new vehicle within the next 12 months—according to the J.D. Power 2015 China Brand Website Evaluation StudySM (BWES) released today.

The study, now in its third year, measures the usefulness of automotive manufacturer websites at the brand level during the new-vehicle shopping process by examining four key factors: navigation; speed; information and content; and appearance.

The 2015 study finds that the percentages of intenders seeking traditional information—such as “options, features and specifications” and “feature demonstration”—on automotive manufacturer websites declines by 8 percentage points and 9 percentage points, respectively, from 2014. Instead, more intenders are looking for service-related information, such as news updates (+6 percentage points), online Q-and-A and online consulting services (+5) and online booking (+3). Moreover, in the information and content factor, the most impactful driver of satisfaction is still “vehicle image” (28%). Whereas the newly added “search after-sales service information” attribute (19%) has surpassed “options, features and specifications” (17%) and become the second most impactful one.

However, there is still a gap between what the intenders expect and what automaker websites are offering. For example, 42 percent of intenders want to see spare parts prices and the same percentage want to see service price information from automaker websites but perceive the information provided as insufficient. Also, 73 percent of intenders indicate high purchase intention when an online tool for pricing is provided.

“The automaker’s website can serve effectively as a bridge between customers and manufacturers, especially for service-related needs. Therefore, it is essential that the website is a reliable source of information for customers,” said **Dr. Mei Songlin, vice president and managing director at J.D. Power, Shanghai**. “Increasingly, customers express the need for service-related information, but often those needs are not met. Automaker websites must distinguish themselves from other automotive websites in order entice intenders to visit their site.”

Overall satisfaction with automotive brand websites averages 769 on a 1,000-point scale in 2015.

Mercedes-Benz (836) ranks highest among brands in website satisfaction, followed by **BMW** (826) and **GAC Toyota** (783). **Great Wall** (779) ranks fourth and is the only Chinese domestic brand website scoring above industry average.

Key Findings

- Satisfaction with luxury brand websites (826) is higher than with mass market websites (760), with the largest gap between the two segments in information and content factor (72 points). The

overall index for international brand websites (773) is 17 points higher than for domestic sites (756).

- Among intenders, 81 percent use automaker websites to locate automaker or dealer contact information. When contacting an automaker or dealer, 67 percent of intenders use the telephone; 64 percent use WeChat; and 54 percent use QQ. However, only 25 percent of intenders found WeChat contact information on automaker websites and only 19 percent have found QQ contact information.
- While the study focuses on automotive manufacturer websites, it also examines other automotive websites. Vertical websites—specialized websites that serve as an entry point to automotive information—have a higher penetration rate (66%) among intenders than vehicle forums (34%). The largest gaps in satisfaction between vertical websites and vehicle forums are in ease of finding and completeness of options, features and specification information and timeliness of industry news (0.22-point gap for each, on a 10-point scale).

The 2015 China Brand Website Evaluation Study is conducted via online from 5,242 new-vehicle intenders who indicate they will be in the market for a new vehicle within the next 12 months and are invited to visit one of the 29 brand websites that presents the particular brand/ model they intend to purchase. The study was fielded in May and June 2015 in 78 major cities in China.

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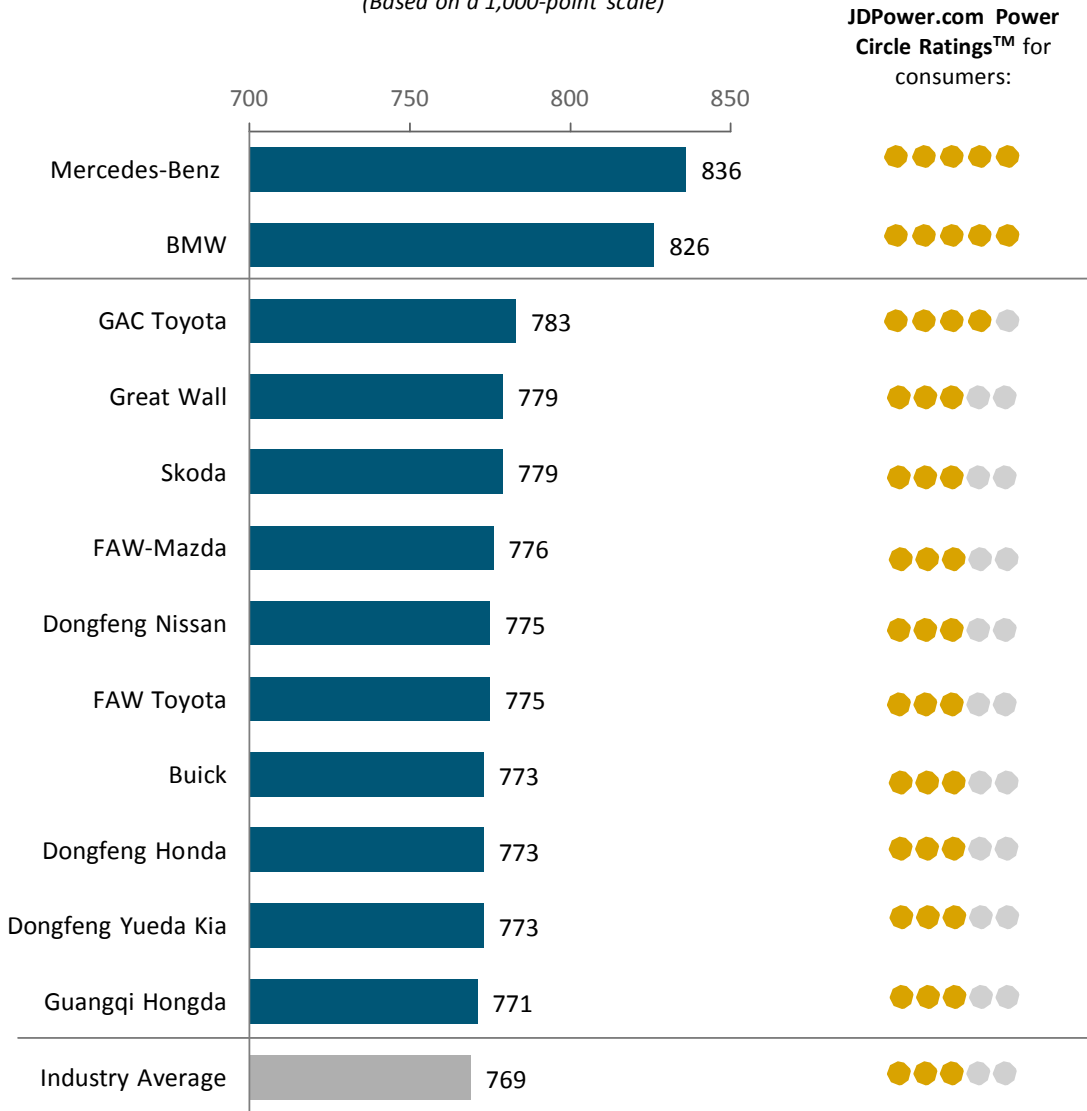
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Note: One chart follows.

J.D. Power 2015 China Brand Website Evaluation StudySM (BWES)

Brand Website Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Power Circle Ratings Legend

- Among the best
- Better than most
- About average
- The rest

Source: J.D. Power 2015 Brand Website Evaluation StudySM (BWES)

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