



Press Release

J.D. Power and Associates Reports: Ford Motor Company Captures Most Awards in 2007 Initial Quality Study

Product Launches Create Quality Challenges for Manufacturers

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif.: 6 June 2007 — Ford Motor Company garners five top model segment awards—more than any other automobile corporation this year, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2007 Initial Quality StudySM (IQS) released today.

In the study, Ford Motor Company earns model segment awards for the [Ford Mustang](#), [Lincoln Mark LT](#), [Lincoln MKZ](#), [Mazda MX-5 Miata](#) and [Mercury Milan](#).

“The 2007 IQS results contain some encouraging and positive news for Ford Motor Company,” said Neal Oddes, director of product research and analysis at J.D. Power and Associates. “Fourteen Ford Motor Company models place in the top three of their respective segments—an achievement unmatched by any other corporation this year—which is a testament to the improvement in quality for Ford Motor Company vehicle models and plants. In addition, their [Lincoln](#) nameplate, which receives two segment awards, improves considerably to rank third in 2007, from 12th in 2006.”

The Initial Quality Study serves as the industry benchmark for new-vehicle quality measured at 90 days of ownership and captures problems experienced by owners in two distinct categories—quality of design and quality of production (defects and malfunctions). Over the past 20 years, the automotive industry has improved in quality at the rate of 6 percent per year on average—a 20-year improvement rate of more than 120 percent. In addition, the study has found that the automotive industry has reduced problem counts by 50 percent every 7 to 8 years.

The study finds that vehicle redesigns and product launches create quality challenges for manufacturers as they continue to develop and introduce new and advanced automotive technologies. On average, a vehicle redesign increases problem counts by 10 problems per 100 (PP100) vehicles.

“Ideally, manufacturers should aim to achieve high initial quality when launching a new model, since this builds a strong foundation for future years and can become a differentiating factor relative to the competition,” said Oddes. “One year after launch, initial quality begins to improve by an average of 7 PP100. If a model launches with lower initial quality, it is more difficult for the manufacturer to keep pace with the competition over time.”

2007 IQS Ranking Highlights

Mercedes-Benz and Toyota models capture three segment awards each. Toyota models that receive awards are the [4Runner](#), [Sequoia](#) and [Tacoma](#). Mercedes-Benz models that earn awards are the [E-Class](#), [SL-Class](#), and the [S-Class](#). The S-Class ties with the [Audi A8](#) (total) for having the fewest quality problems in the industry, with just 72 problems per 100 vehicles.

“Mercedes-Benz shows dramatic improvement, particularly with its newly-redesigned S-Class, which improves 63 PP100,” said Oddes. “Overall, Mercedes-Benz improves its nameplate rank by 20 positions—the greatest rank increase of any nameplate in the study. All Mercedes-Benz models in the study improved substantially, and the breadth and speed of these improvements demonstrates the Mercedes-Benz commitment to quality.”

For the second consecutive year, [Porsche](#) tops the overall nameplate rankings, averaging 91 PP100. Following in the rankings are [Lexus](#), [Lincoln](#), [Honda](#) and [Mercedes-Benz](#), respectively. Honda, with the fewest problems per 100 among non-premium brands, improves in the ranking to fourth from sixth since the 2006 study and earns awards with the [Civic](#) and [CR-V](#). Among non-premium brands, [Kia](#) posts the largest improvement in ranking, moving from 24th in 2006 to 12th in 2007 and earning an award for the [Kia Rio/Rio5](#) for the second year in a row.

The most improved nameplates in the study are [Land Rover](#) (increasing in initial quality by 34 PP100), [Saab](#) (improving by 30 PP100) and Mercedes-Benz (increasing by 28 PP100).

Other nameplates receiving model awards in 2007 include Chevrolet ([Express](#) and [Silverado Classic HD](#)), Lexus ([RX350/RX400h](#)) Pontiac ([Grand Prix](#)) and Porsche ([Boxster](#)).

Assembly Plant Awards

For the first time since 1999, a North American assembly plant receives the Platinum Plant Quality Award for producing vehicles yielding the fewest defects. Ford Motor Company’s Wixom assembly plant in Michigan, which produced the [Lincoln Town Car](#), averages just 35 PP100. Plant awards are based solely on defect counts.

Among other North and South American plants, the General Motors Oshawa 2 plant in Ontario, Canada, which produces the [Buick LaCrosse](#) and Pontiac Grand Prix, receives the Silver Plant Quality Award. American Honda’s East Liberty, Ohio, plant, which produces the [Honda Civic Sedan](#) and [Honda Element](#), earns the Bronze Plant Quality Award.

In the Asia Pacific region, Toyota’s Kyushu, Japan, plant, which produces the [Lexus ES 350](#), [Lexus IS 250/IS 350](#), Lexus RX 350, Lexus RX 400h and [Toyota Highlander](#)/Highlander Hybrid receives the Gold Plant Quality Award. Toyota’s Fujimatsu, Japan, plant, which produces the [Toyota Prius](#), earns the Silver Plant Quality Award. American Honda’s Sayama, Japan, and Suzuka, Japan, plants tie for the Bronze Plant Quality Award. The Sayama plant produces the [Acura RL](#), [Acura TSX](#), [Honda Accord Sedan](#)/Hybrid Sedan and Honda CR-V. The Suzuka plant produces the Honda Civic Sedan/Hybrid Sedan, [Fit](#) and [S2000](#).

BMW’s Regensburg, Germany, plant, which produces the [BMW 3-Series Coupe](#) and [3-Series Sedan](#), receives the Gold Plant Quality Award for Europe. Earning the Silver Quality Plant Award is the Mercedes-Benz Sindelfingen, Germany, plant, which produces the [Mercedes-Benz C-Class](#), [CL-Class](#), [CLS-Class](#), [E-Class Sedan](#), [E-Class Wagon](#), and S-Class. Audi’s Neckarsulm, Germany, plant, which produces the [Audi A6 Avant](#), [A6 Sedan](#), [A8 Sedan](#), [RS 4 Sedan](#), [S6 Sedan](#) and [S8 Sedan](#), receives the Bronze Plant Quality Award.

The 2007 Initial Quality Study is based on responses from more than 97,000 purchasers and lessees of new 2007 model-year cars and trucks surveyed after 90 days of ownership. The study is based on a 228-question battery designed to provide manufacturers with information to facilitate problem determination and drive product improvement.

Find more detailed findings on new-vehicle quality performance as well as model photos and specs by watching a [video](#), reading an [article](#) and reviewing [quality ratings](#) at [JDPower.com](#).

About J.D. Power and Associates

Headquartered in Westlake Village, Calif., J.D. Power and Associates is an ISO 9001-registered global marketing information services firm operating in key business sectors including market research, forecasting, performance improvement, training and customer satisfaction. The firm's quality and satisfaction measurements are based on responses from millions of consumers annually. For more information on [car reviews and ratings](#), [car insurance](#), [health insurance](#), [cell phone ratings](#), and more, please visit jdpower.com. J.D. Power and Associates is a business unit of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

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J.D. Power and Associates Media Relations Contacts:

John Tews
Director, Media Relations
Troy, Mich.
(248) 312-4119
john.tews@jdpa.com

Syvetril Perryman
Media Relations Specialist
Westlake Village, Calif.
(805) 418-8103
syvetril.perryman@jdpa.com

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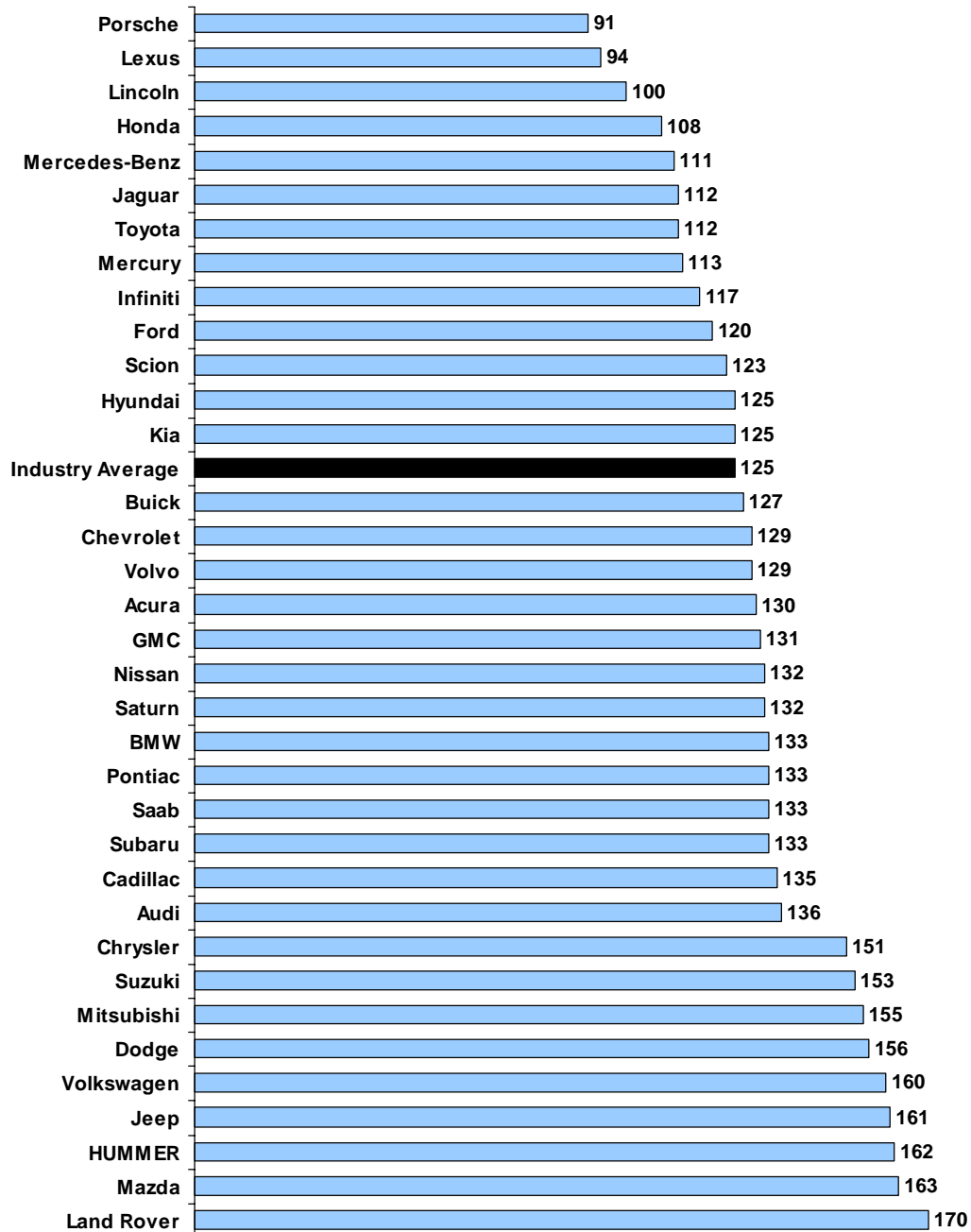
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NOTE: Four charts follow.

J.D. Power and Associates 2007 Initial Quality StudySM (IQS)

2007 Nameplate IQS Ranking

Problems Per 100 Vehicles



NOTE: Not included due to small sample size are: Isuzu and MINI.

Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2007 Initial Quality StudySM

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J.D. Power and Associates 2007 Initial Quality StudySM (IQS)

Top Three Models per Segment Car Segments

<p>Sub-Compact Car</p> <p>Highest Ranked: Kia Rio/Rio5 Honda Fit Hyundai Accent (Total)</p>	<p>Large Premium Car</p> <p>Highest Ranked: Audi A8 (tie) Mercedes-Benz S-Class (tie) Lexus LS 460</p>
<p>Compact Car</p> <p>Highest Ranked: Honda Civic (Total) Toyota Corolla Hyundai Elantra Sedan</p>	<p>Premium Sporty Car</p> <p>Highest Ranked: Mercedes-Benz SL-Class Porsche 911 (Total) Lexus SC 430</p>
<p>Compact Sporty Car</p> <p>Highest Ranked: Mazda MX-5 Miata Scion tC Subaru Impreza (Total)</p>	<p>Midsized Sporty Car</p> <p>Highest Ranked: Ford Mustang Toyota Solara (Total) Chevrolet Monte Carlo</p>
<p>Compact Premium Sporty Car</p> <p>Highest Ranked: Porsche Boxster Mercedes-Benz CLK-Class Mercedes-Benz SLK-Class</p>	<p>Midsized Car</p> <p>Highest Ranked: Mercury Milan Honda Accord (Total) Ford Fusion (tie) Mitsubishi Galant (tie)</p>
<p>Entry Premium Car</p> <p>Highest Ranked: Lincoln MKZ Acura TSX Cadillac CTS</p>	<p>Large Car</p> <p>Highest Ranked: Pontiac Grand Prix Toyota Avalon Ford Five Hundred (tie) Mercury Montego (tie)</p>
<p>Midsized Premium Car</p> <p>Highest Ranked: Mercedes-Benz E-Class (Total) Lexus GS 350/GS 430/GS 450H (Total) Infiniti M-Series (tie) Volvo S80 (tie)</p>	

**For more detailed findings on new-vehicle quality performance,
visit www.jdpower.com**

NOTE: "Total" denotes the inclusion of all trim levels that were available within a model during the sample period.

Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2007 Initial Quality StudySM

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J.D. Power and Associates 2007 Initial Quality StudySM (IQS)

Top Three Models per Segment *Truck / Multi-Activity Vehicle (MAV) Segments*

Compact MAV	Large Premium MAV
Highest Ranked: Honda CR-V Nissan Xterra Hyundai Tucson	Highest Ranked: Lincoln Mark LT Lincoln Navigator HUMMER H2
Midsize MAV	Large Pickup
Highest Ranked: Toyota 4Runner Toyota Highlander (Total) Mercury Mountaineer	Highest Ranked: Chevrolet Silverado Classic HD Ford F-150 LD GMC Sierra LD
Large MAV	Midsize Pickup
Highest Ranked: Toyota Sequoia Chevrolet Suburban GMC Yukon (Total)	Highest Ranked: Toyota Tacoma Honda Ridgeline Dodge Dakota
Midsize Premium MAV	Van
Highest Ranked: Lexus RX 350/RX 400h (Total) Lincoln MKX Lexus GX 470	Highest Ranked: Chevrolet Express (Total) Kia Sedona Ford E-Series

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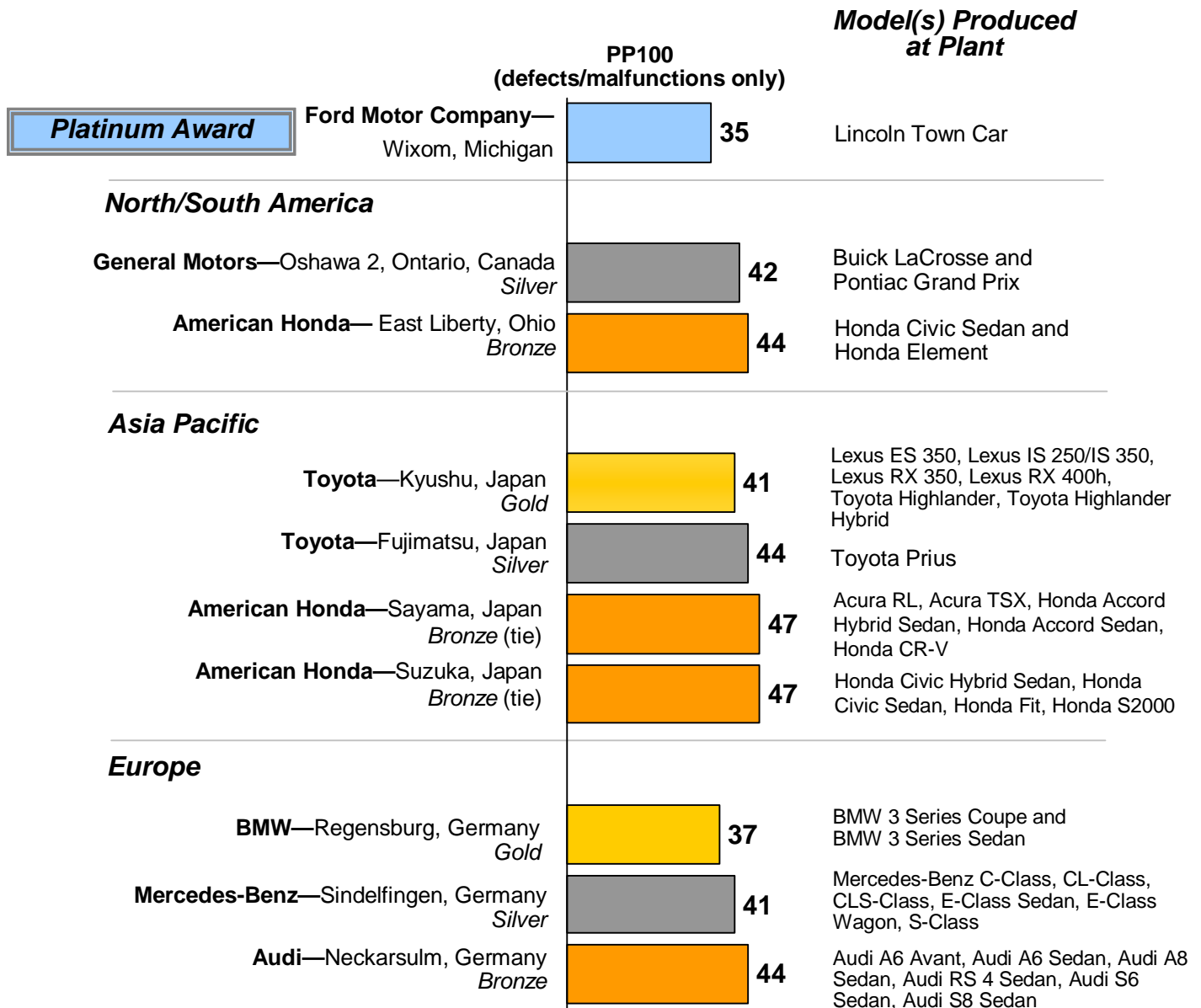
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J.D. Power and Associates 2007 Initial Quality StudySM (IQS)

2007 Assembly Plant Quality Award Recipients Based on Vehicles Produced for U.S. Market



Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2007 Initial Quality StudySM

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