

AUTOMOTIVE

## Lexus, Porsche top automaker dependability rankings

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*Lexus RX*

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By STAFF REPORTS

For the second year in a row, Lexus has been named the most dependable automotive brand, tying with fellow luxury automaker Porsche in a J.D. Power report.

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The 2017 J.D. Power Vehicle Dependability Study rates automakers based on problems experienced per 100 vehicles in the past 12 months with three-year-old cars. Better long-term quality can push a buyer's decision in a brand's favor and can also have an impact on loyalty to a particular automaker.

"We find buyers are increasingly avoiding models with poor reputations for dependability, so manufacturers can't afford to let quality slip, particularly on their best sellers," said Dave Sargent, vice president, global automotive at J.D. Power, in a statement. "While many expensive and niche vehicles do have excellent quality, the fact is that most consumers are shopping in the high-volume mainstream segments."

This 28th annual report is based on responses from 35,186 original owners of 2014 model year vehicles, looking at 177 problems they could have experienced.

### Stacking up

The industry average is 156 problems per 100 vehicles. Most luxury makes studied achieved results above this benchmark, including Mercedes-Benz in fourth place, BMW in sixth, Jaguar and Audi.



*2014 Porsche 911 GT3*

Land Rover, made a 20 point improvement, however, at 178 problems per 100 vehicles, it placed below average in dependability.

Along with swaying buyers towards a particular vehicle, dependability can have an impact on residual values of cars.

"In the current industry environment of record levels of leasing and long-term loans, higher residual values allow automakers to provide more competitive deals to buyers," said Jonathan Banks, vice president of vehicle analysis and analytics at J.D. Power. "This creates the opportunity to achieve higher market share and/or elevated profit margins."

Across the board, dependability decreased by 4 points. J.D. Power attributes this to a rise in technology-related problems.

One of these areas are the audio, navigation and entertainment systems, which had the most complaints with 22 percent of problems.

With luxury vehicles equipped with so many new features, automotive product specialists are becoming increasingly significant as 24 percent of owners worked with one in 2016, according to a previous J.D. Power report.

The [2016 U.S. Sales Satisfaction Index Study](#) shows that luxury automotive brands have an important role to fill as technology becomes increasingly progressive. Features in luxury vehicles are becoming so high tech that consumers need to be walked through how it all works and what they can do, which means product specialists are needed to arm customers with all the information they need ([see story](#)).