

AUTOMOTIVE

Lexus, Porsche top list of most dependable cars in the US

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The most common problem among cars is with audio or entertainment systems. Image credit: Lexus

By DANNY PARISI

Mass-market auto brands are closing the gap on luxury brands in terms of dependability and a lack of problems in cars that are three years old.

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According to a report from J.D. Power, overall vehicle dependability was up 9 percent from 2017 as more customers found themselves happy and satisfied with the performance of their vehicles. Luxury automakers topped the list of the most dependable brands, with Lexus and Porsche taking the top spots.

"For the most part, automotive manufacturers continue to meet consumers' vehicle dependability expectations," said Dave Sargent, vice president of global automotive at J.D. Power. "A 9 percent improvement is extremely impressive, and vehicle dependability is, without question, at its best level ever.

"For people looking for a new or used model, now is a good time to find that special vehicle."

Dependability ratings

Today's auto consumers are feeling increasingly confident in their purchases, as noted by J.D. Power's recent report on vehicle dependability.

The study looked at the number of problems per 100 vehicles, or PP100, as an indicator of how dependable a car is. For example, a PP100 of 12 would indicate a vehicle that highly reliable.

J.D. Power found that in 2017, the PP100 improved from 156 to 142, indicating a higher level of dependability in cars over the last year.



The Lexus F series. Image credit: Lexus

Part of this is driven by the fact that mass-market brands are catching up to luxury auto brands. While luxury auto brands are still overall the most reliable types of cars, the mass-market average is now only 7 points behind the average luxury PP100.

The main types of problems experienced by cars on both the mass-market and luxury sides are related to entertainment, audio or navigation.

As cars become more connected and make use of built-in computers and other digital tools, the chances for those tools to malfunction will also increase.

Closing the gap

Lexus took the top spot for dependability of all vehicles, thanks to its line of models and smart engineering.

Most recently, Lexus celebrated its "F" nomenclature, which distinguishes its higher performance vehicles, with special limited-editions.

Ten years ago, the luxury auto brand introduced the "F" to its cars to celebrate the unparalleled performance of its more power-focused vehicles. Coming to Lexus dealers in summer 2018, two limited edition vehicles will be on sale with unique features to celebrate the anniversary ([see story](#)).

The brand also leveraged parallels between its brand and an upcoming superhero film to appeal to a cross-market fan base during this year's Super Bowl.



Lexus hopes to capture football and Marvel fans. Image credit: Lexus.

Expanding on its existing partnership, Lexus is supporting Marvel's "Black Panther" film ahead of its release for its Super Bowl LII campaign. The automotive brand hopes to gain the attention of football, Lexus and Marvel fans all in one spot, while leaning on luxury and innovative themes seen in all franchises ([see story](#)).

A recent trend in the auto world has been an attempt to emphasize that electric vehicles and hybrids can be just as dependable and performance-driven as non-electric vehicles.

For instance, British automaker Land Rover is rolling out a new campaign meant to emphasize the power and

performance of some of its hybrid electric SUVs.

The stunt showcases the Range Rover Sport PHEV becoming the first vehicle to ascend the steep steps of the Dragon Road at China's Tianmen Mountain, a famous landmark known for a natural rock arch called Heaven's Gate. Land Rover is hoping to win over those who are skeptical of electric vehicles by emphasizing that they can perform just as well as gas-powered cars ([see story](#)).

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