

AUTOMOTIVE

Porsche tops in driver satisfaction as automakers improve: J.D. Power

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The Porsche Cayenne was the highest ranked midsize premium SUV. Image credit: Porsche

By SARAH RAMIREZ

German automaker Porsche ranks highest in overall driver satisfaction as carmakers continue to meet drivers' expectations, according to a new report from J.D. Power.

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Up from second place last year, Porsche topped J.D. Power's 2019 U.S. Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout (APEAL) study with a score of 891 on a 1,000-point scale. Fellow German automaker BMW tied with Hyundai's Genesis for second, while Audi ranked third overall.

J.D. Power evaluated responses gathered from February 2019 through May 2019 from nearly 68,000 purchasers and lessees of new 2019 model-year vehicles who were surveyed after 90 days of ownership. It measures owners' emotional attachment and level of excitement across 10 categories, which are combined into an overall APEAL index score.

Driver appeal

J.D. Power's APEAL rankings look at more than 70 attributes across 10 categories, including driving dynamics, fuel economy and safety.

Luxury and premium automakers averaged a score of 853, up two points from 2018 and eight points from 2017.

The average mass-market APEAL score also improved a modest three points from last year to 818. The divide between mass and premium APEAL scores narrowed one point to 35.

Similarly, the satisfaction gap between cars and sport utility vehicles shrank as SUVs improved by seven points overall. While cars still have better fuel economy, automakers have enhanced SUVs' driving dynamics, storage and visibility and safety features.

Visibility and safety is one of the most improved vehicle categories, earning six more points in 2019. With an increase of 10 points, drivers considered infotainment the most improved category.

According to the J.D. Power 2019 Initial Quality Study, new vehicle owners have seen improvements in infotainment

systems, reporting less problems with Bluetooth and voice recognition ([see story](#)).

Jaguar and Land Rover were the most improved luxury brands, with satisfaction growing 16 and 15 points, respectively. Audi followed, with its satisfaction score jumping 14 points.

Porsche, the overall brand winner, also improved eight points.

In the evaluation of individual models, the Audi A7 was named the top overall model. The BMW 2 Series and Mercedes-Benz C-Class were the highest ranked small and compact premium cars.

U.S. automaker Lincoln's Navigator was ranked the best large premium SUV, while the Porsche Cayenne and BMW X4 won the midsize and compact premium SUV categories.

Porsche power

Porsche drivers remain pleased with the automaker even as its strategy evolves to keep up with the industry's electrified future.

Recently, Porsche has created marketing content focused on its hybrid sedan and teasing its upcoming all-electric model.

For a campaign centered on the Panamera Turbo S E-Hybrid, Porsche enlisted a dancer to show how silent strength can still make a strong impression. Misconceptions continue to surround hybrid and electric vehicles, particularly from automakers with a reputation for high speed and performance ([see story](#)).

In another effort, Porsche's #ElectricityTalks series is building anticipation ahead of the launch of the Taycan, the sedan that will be the marque's first all-electric vehicle. The films are set alongside famous landmarks that demonstrate the immense power of electricity, a response to skeptics who do not believe electric engines can coexist with Porsche's sports cars ([see story](#)).

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