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ACSI: American Car Buyers Less Satisfied

More Challenges for Detroit as Domestic Cars Fail to Keep Up With International Competition

ANN ARBOR, Mich., (August 29, 2017) – Customer satisfaction with automobiles falls as domestic brands lose ground, according to the latest results of the [American Customer Satisfaction Index \(ACSI®\)](#). Driver satisfaction is down 1.2 percent to a score of 81 on the ACSI's scale of 0 to 100.

GM and no one else among Detroit's automakers gains in customer satisfaction this year, with an ACSI score of 82. Ford slides to 81, followed by Fiat Chrysler at 77. Foreign-made vehicles, however, continue to have the highest driver satisfaction and 77% of the above-average nameplates in the ACSI are imports. Overall, the gap between international and domestic manufacturers has widened because of the downturn for U.S. cars.

"Chances are that we have seen this movie before," says Claes Fornell, ACSI Chairman and founder. "There was a surge in demand and increasing customer satisfaction with foreign cars in the 1980s, mostly because the domestic auto industry had difficulty keeping up. While U.S. cars have improved much over the years, they have not been as consistent in quality and customer satisfaction compared with their international counterparts. Experience with the Great Recession shows that this movie does not have a good ending unless major steps are taken – not another Government bailout, but rather a renewed focus on how to create satisfied and loyal customers."

Toyota is the highest-scoring company in both the mass-market category (+1% to 86) and among luxury vehicles (with Lexus increasing 2% to 86). Ford's Lincoln, which held first place a year ago, falls 5 percent to 83.

Among mass-market cars, five of the top six are foreign-made, and all five move up this year. Subaru at 85 (+1%) follows Toyota in second place. Third-place GMC, the sole domestic brand in the top tier, is stable at 84 following a big gain a year ago. In fourth place, Hyundai gains 2 percent to 83, while Kia advances 4 percent to 82, alongside Mazda (+2%).

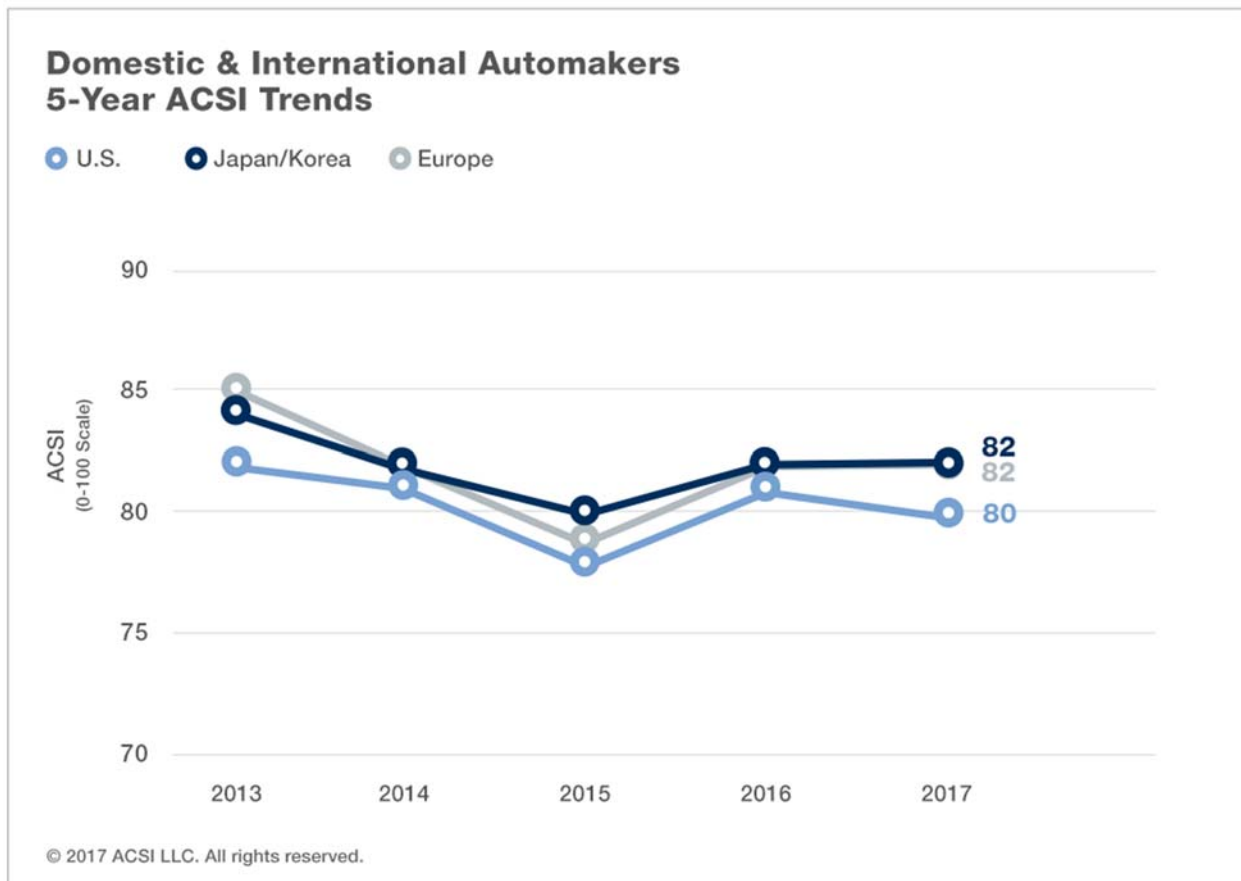
Following a slate of safety recalls, Honda drops 6 percent to tie Chevrolet (-2%) at 81. Buick and Jeep buck the downward trend for mass-market domestic cars. Buick edges up 1 percent and Jeep improves 3 percent to tie Nissan (unchanged) at 80. Buick is also the only GM brand to post rising sales in June.

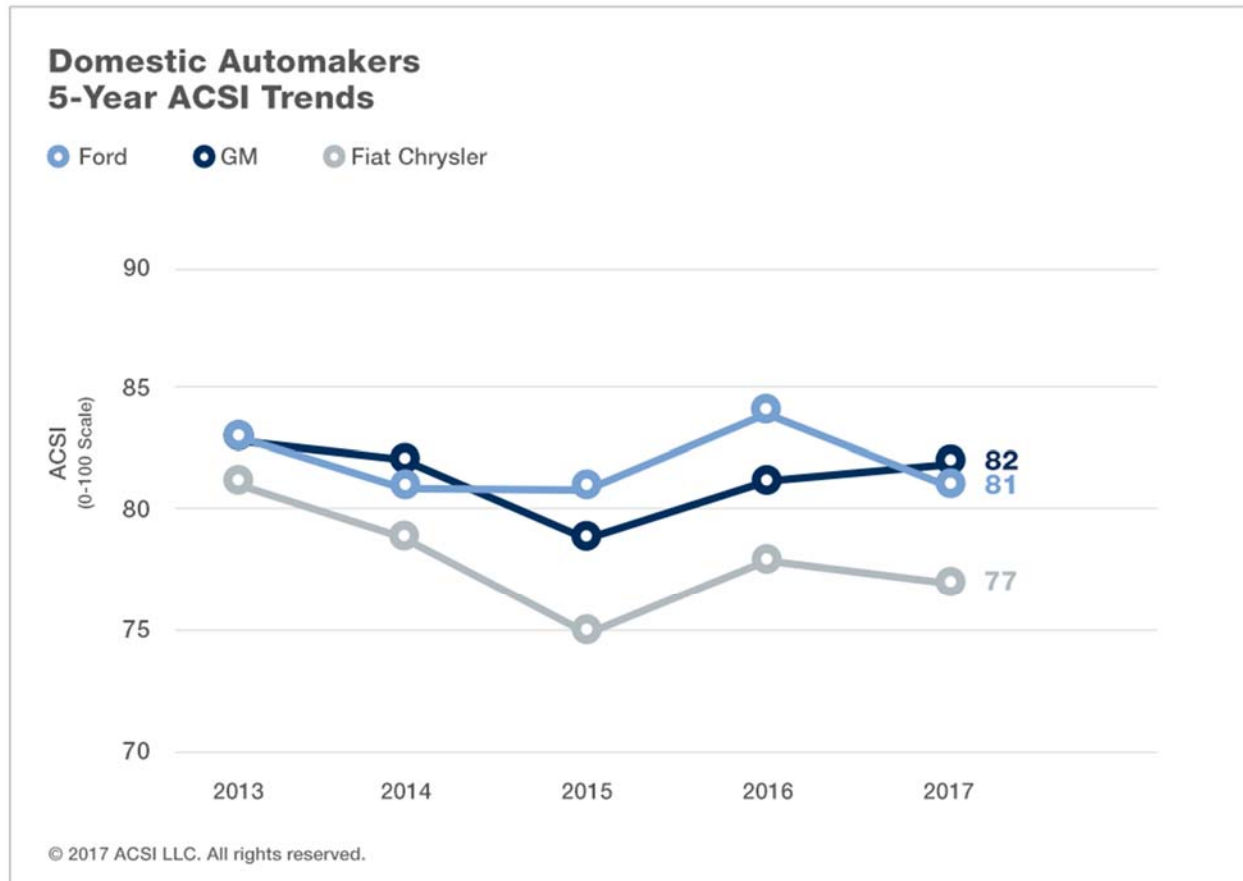
Volkswagen gains 1% to 79, suggesting that the German automaker may have recovered from the emissions scandal that slowed sales for the past two years. Meanwhile, Ford slips 2% into a

deadlock with Volkswagen and Chrysler at 79. Mitsubishi is a notch below at 78 (-1%). Two Fiat Chrysler nameplates come in last at 75: Dodge (-4%) and Fiat.

Toyota's Lexus (86) leads the luxury-vehicle segment, followed by Mercedes-Benz, up 4 percent to 84. Cadillac jumps 5 percent to tie with Lincoln (-5%) at 83. BMW (-4%) ties Audi (-1%) and Volvo at 82. Acura remains at the bottom of the segment, but with a 5-percent boost to 80, the Honda nameplate narrows the gap considerably.

The ACSI report, which is based on 3,934 customer surveys collected between July 1, 2016, and June 20, 2017, is available for free download at: <http://www.theacsi.org/news-and-resources/customer-satisfaction-reports/reports-2017/acsi-automobile-report-2017>.





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About ACSI

The [American Customer Satisfaction Index \(ACSI®\)](#) is a national economic indicator of customer evaluations of the quality of products and services available to household consumers in the United States. The ACSI uses data from interviews with roughly 180,000 customers annually as inputs to an econometric model for analyzing customer satisfaction with more than 300 companies in 43 industries and 10 economic sectors, including various services of federal and local government agencies.

ACSI results are released throughout the year, with all measures reported on a scale of 0 to 100. ACSI data have proven to be strongly related to several essential indicators of micro and macroeconomic performance. For example, firms with higher levels of customer satisfaction tend to have higher earnings and stock returns relative to competitors. Stock portfolios based on companies that show strong performance in ACSI deliver excess returns in up markets as well as

down markets. At the macro level, customer satisfaction has been shown to be predictive of both consumer spending and GDP growth.

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