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Honda Races Into First and Lexus Gains Competition in Luxury, as Customer Satisfaction With Auto Industry Stays in Neutral, ACSI Data Show

ANN ARBOR, Mich., (August 24, 2021) – Satisfaction with the auto industry is stuck in neutral.

Overall customer satisfaction with automobiles and light vehicles is unchanged with a score of 78 (out of 100), according to the [American Customer Satisfaction Index \(ACSI®\) Automobile Study 2020-2021](#).

European manufacturers maintain their lead over Asian and U.S. cars with a steady ACSI score of 79. Japanese and Korean manufacturers are next at 78 (unchanged), while U.S. automakers improve for the first time in five years, gaining 1 point to 77.

Among domestic manufacturers, Ford rebounds 1% to 77, tying GM, which is unchanged. Stellantis (which comprises the Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, and Ram nameplates) sits in third place, down 1% to 76.

Satisfaction with the mass-market segment is stable with an ACSI score of 77. Luxury nameplates continue to outpace mass-market vehicles; however, that lead is dwindling following a 1% dip to 78.

“Over the last few years, luxury automakers’ satisfaction lead over mass-market manufacturers has been slowly eroding. That gap is now almost nonexistent,” says David VanAmburg, Managing Director at ACSI. “In terms of style points and cool factor, luxury vehicles may still have the edge, but if you remove all the bells and whistles, the two are more similar than not.”

Honda roars to the mass-market ACSI lead, while Mitsubishi’s satisfaction crashes

Honda surges into first place after climbing 4% to an ACSI score of 82. Subaru is second, up 3% to 81. After a brief stint at the top of the category last year, Ram finishes third with a steady score of 80.

Hyundai rises 4% to 79, tying both Mazda (up 1%) and Toyota (down 1%). Four mass-market nameplates are locked at 78 apiece, with three brands making solid gains: Dodge (up 4%), Ford (up 3%), GMC (unchanged), and Nissan (up 3%).

Buick (up 1%), Kia (unchanged), and Volkswagen (down 1%) all score 77, while Chevrolet and Jeep are unwavering at 76.

After drastic drops, two nameplates bring up the rear. Mitsubishi plummets 8% to 71, while last-place Chrysler stumbles 4% to an ACSI score of 70.

Among mass-market vehicles, customers remain the most pleased with vehicle safety (82). They also give the category high marks for dependability (81), driving performance (81), and vehicle exteriors (81). However, the former two benchmarks each decrease 1% year over year, while the latter is unchanged.

Drivers are less happy with the technology (77) of mass-market vehicles this year. Gas mileage and warranties are rated even worse, both unchanged with industry-low scores of 76.

BMW moves into a tie with Lexus atop luxury vehicles

Lexus, which topped the luxury segment for the last four years, slides 1% to an ACSI score of 81 and falls into a first-place tie with BMW, up 4% year over year. Audi (unchanged) and ACSI newcomer Tesla are next with scores of 80. The remaining luxury vehicles all suffer customer satisfaction slips.

Mercedes-Benz drops 3% to 78, followed by Cadillac and Volvo, down 4% and 1%, respectively, at 77. Acura and Lincoln each retreat 1% to 76. Infiniti sits alone at the bottom of the luxury segment after plunging 5% to an ACSI score of 75.

In terms of the driving experience, luxury vehicles are down across the board. Drivers are most pleased with comfort (82) and vehicle interiors (82), but both elements slip 2%. Customers appreciate vehicle safety (82) as well; however, it's down 1% year over year.

Four benchmarks fall below 80: Website satisfaction (down 4% to 79), mobile app quality (down 5% to 78), mobile app reliability (down 4% to 78), and warranties (down 3% to 78). According to drivers, however, gas mileage remains the biggest pain point, sliding 1% to 76.

The [ACSI Automobile Study 2020-2021](#) is based on interviews with 4,888 customers, chosen at random and contacted via email between July 6, 2020, and June 28, 2021.

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AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX: AUTOMOBILES & LIGHT VEHICLES

COMPANY	2020	2021	% CHANGE
Automobiles & Light Vehicles	78	78	0.0%
Honda	79	82	4%
BMW	78	81	4%
Lexus (Toyota)	82	81	-1%
Subaru	79	81	3%
Audi (Volkswagen)	80	80	0%
Ram (Stellantis)	80	80	0%
Tesla	NM	80	NA
Hyundai	76	79	4%
Mazda	78	79	1%
Toyota	80	79	-1%
All Others (Luxury & Mass Market)	76	78	3%
Dodge (Stellantis)	75	78	4%
Ford	76	78	3%
GMC (GM)	78	78	0%
Mercedes-Benz	80	78	-3%
Nissan	76	78	3%
Buick (GM)	76	77	1%
Cadillac (GM)	80	77	-4%
Kia	77	77	0%
Volkswagen	78	77	-1%
Volvo	78	77	-1%
Acura (Honda)	77	76	-1%
Chevrolet (GM)	76	76	0%
Jeep (Stellantis)	76	76	0%
Lincoln (Ford)	77	76	-1%
Infiniti (Nissan)	79	75	-5%
Mitsubishi	77	71	-8%
Chrysler (Stellantis)	73	70	-4%

NM = Not Measured
NA = Not Available

0-100 Scale

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The [American Customer Satisfaction Index](http://www.theacsi.org) (ACSI®) has been a national economic indicator for 25 years. It measures and analyzes customer satisfaction with more than 400 companies in 46 industries and 10 economic sectors, including various services of federal and local government agencies. Reported on a scale of 0 to 100, scores are based on data from interviews with roughly 500,000 customers annually. For more information, visit www.theacsi.org.

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