

Ipsos announces Quality Award Winners 2013

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Ipsos has announced the 2013 Ipsos Quality Awards for Sales and Service experience in the automotive industry. These awards have been awarded to the industry for the past nine years and have become the benchmark in customer experience in the automotive industry.

Ipsos measures the satisfaction with the customer experience when purchasing and servicing their vehicle and recognition is given to top achievers in the following categories:

- **Passenger Vehicle (PC) Purchasing Experience**
- **PC Servicing Experience**
- **Light Commercial Vehicle (LCV) Purchasing Experience**
- **LCV Servicing Experience**

Across both the sales and service environment, top performing passenger car brands this year include Chevrolet, Audi and Volkswagen, whilst in the Light Commercial segment; Chevrolet, Isuzu and Toyota have delivered the strongest performances.

Passenger Vehicle Purchasing

The category of **PC purchasing** enjoys the highest average score for the quality of customer experience at 93.8%. "Compliments must go to all of the Gold Award winners who all have traditionally been excellent performers, with scores in this band above 94.4%," states Patrick Busschau, Automotive Business Unit Director at Ipsos South Africa. Audi has retained a Gold Award in this segment for four consecutive years.

 PASSENGER VEHICLE PURCHASING EXPERIENCE		
GOLD: Audi, Volkswagen, Chevrolet, Toyota	SILVER: Mercedes-Benz, Opel, Renault, Volvo, Lexus, Nissan, Mazda	BRONZE: Ford, Peugeot

(Brands excluded from the Passenger Vehicle Purchasing Experience include Mitsubishi, Citroen, CJD, KIA)

"Ipsos has been measuring the satisfaction with the consumer experience for 18 years and each year the industry scores improve. On average, the PC purchasing year's scores are the highest and closest we have seen," states Busschau. "There have been significant advances in technology, facilities, systems and financing processes and these have not only made the consumer experience more pleasant but have also contributed to improvements in the product itself. The importance of human interaction cannot be underplayed though, and in many instances is the differentiating factor between brands and the choice consumers make. The manufacturers and dealerships are increasingly focusing on the interpersonal and emotional elements of the customer experience. It's become a matter of providing customers with what they want and need from a product perspective, but in order to do so, really spending time understanding the customer and who they are is becoming increasingly important. During the ordering, waiting and delivery process, keeping promises is essential. And finally, empathy and understanding throughout, especially when resolving possible issues. Importantly also in sharing in the excitement customers have on taking ownership of their new vehicle is. Customers really need to feel valued by the dealership. Those dealers that deliver will usually have a loyal customer who will use them time and again for

servicing and repeat purchases in future. It really is far more than just order-taking and delivering a product once-off."

Passenger Vehicle Servicing

The category of **PC servicing** has an average score of 85.8% (up from 84.8% in 2012). Gold award winners in this category are Audi, Chevrolet, Volkswagen and Lexus. Lexus has maintained Gold in this category for four years in a row. "It's encouraging to see a slight increase in the average in this category," states Busschau. "Servicing always yields lower scores than purchasing as it is a more challenging environment in which to delight customers. It is essentially a grudge purchase and so the results we are seeing must be extremely pleasing to the industry participants. The top performers exemplify an understanding of customer needs which in turn affirms a sense of confidence in the brand and the dealership to deliver to the customer's expectations. This all wraps up a nice little package that delivers value for money in the customer's mind, with as little hassle and sacrifice as they deem to be reasonable."

PASSENGER VEHICLE SERVICING EXPERIENCE		
GOLD: Audi, Chevrolet, Volkswagen, Lexus	SILVER: Mercedes-Benz, Nissan, Toyota, Opel	BRONZE: Mitsubishi, Renault, Mazda

(Brands excluded from the Passenger Vehicle Servicing Experience include Kia, CJD)

Light Commercial Vehicle Purchasing Experience

The category of **LCV Purchasing Experience** yields five Gold Awards and a very high category average of 92.7%, up from last year. This category has traditionally performed at a slightly lower level than the PC purchasing experience, however it is catching up to the performance of the Passenger Vehicles. "There is still opportunity to separate out the light commercial sales experience from the passenger car experience with a clear focus on the specific needs of the commercial vehicle buyer," comments Busschau.

LIGHT COMMERCIAL VEHICLE PURCHASING EXPERIENCE		
GOLD: Isuzu, Toyota, Chevrolet, Nissan, Volkswagen		

(Brands excluded from the Light Commercial Purchasing Experience include Ford, Mitsubishi, Mazda)

LCV Servicing Experience

The top achievers for the category of **LCV Servicing Experience** were Volkswagen, Toyota, Isuzu, Nissan, and Chevrolet. The average score for this category has improved again from last year to 86% in 2013 which is very similar to the passenger car service average. "The service areas of dealers have become very good at standardising processes and delivering consistently to customers. Again the zone for improvement in recent times is in the softer skills dealer staff are developing to really make the customer feel important to the dealership and that they are receiving value for money with as little inconvenience as possible," says Busschau.



The 2013 Ipsos Quality Awards are based on interviews with customers who purchased or serviced a vehicle between January and December 2012. This study makes up part of the largest survey of South African vehicle owners.

Full scores:

PASSENGER VEHICLE PURCHASING

Sales	SCORE
Audi	95.6
Volkswagen	95.4
Chevrolet	95.2
Toyota	94.4
Mercedes-Benz	93.8
Opel	93.2
Renault	92.8
Volvo	92.7
Lexus	92.6
Nissan	92.2
Mazda	91.6
Ford	90.4
Peugeot	87.0

PASSENGER VEHICLE SERVICING

Audi	89.9
Chevrolet	89.5
Volkswagen	88.8
Lexus	88.2
Mercedes-Benz	87.2
Nissan	86.4
Toyota	85.7
Opel	85.4
Mitsubishi	83.4
Renault	82.4
Mazda	81.6
Ford	78.3
Volvo	78.1
Peugeot	77.7
Citroen	75.2

LIGHT COMMERCIAL VEHICLE PURCHASING

Isuzu	93.7
Toyota	93.4
Chevrolet	92.6
Nissan	92.5
Volkswagen	92.5

LIGHT COMMERCIAL VEHICLE SERVICING

Volkswagen	88.0
Toyota	87.8
Isuzu	87.5
Nissan	86.8
Chevrolet	86.3
Mazda	84.3
Ford	81.4
Mitsubishi	81.2

More about the survey:

These rankings are based on Ipsos's Competitive Customer Experience (CCE) which has been conducted in South Africa for the past 21 years. The survey was conducted over a 12 month period between January and December 2012 and is part of a study that measures the perceptions of more than 22 000 passenger and light commercial vehicles.

The questionnaire covers all elements of both the sales and service process, from the appearance and staff at the dealership itself to the financing or pricing aspects of the sale or service and then to the post-sale or post-service follow up. Complaint resolution is also a key part of the questionnaire for customers who do report problems.

Not all the brands are included in the survey for various reasons. This could be because the manufacturer chooses not to participate or because the sample that has been achieved is too small. Another reason some manufacturers do not get published is due to the length of participation in the study - a full year of participation is required before a brand can be included in the rankings.

The Ipsos survey represents approximately 83% of all new vehicles sold in the PC market and 98% of the LCV market.

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