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**J.D. Power and Associates Reports:
Lincoln Ranks Highest in Customer Satisfaction with Dealer Service, Setting New CSI Record**

Industry Experiences Widespread Satisfaction Improvements

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 20, 2004

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif.—With a record-setting index score of 912, Lincoln ranks highest in satisfying its customers with dealer service, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2004 Customer Service Index (CSI) StudySM released today. The previous industry record was 903, set by Lexus in 2001. This marks the first time in the study's 24-year history that Lincoln ranks highest in CSI.

The study measures customer satisfaction among new-vehicle owners with the dealer service department during the first three years of vehicle ownership, which typically represents the majority of the vehicle warranty period. Overall satisfaction is based on six service categories: initiating service, service advisor, in-dealership experience, service delivery, service quality, and user-friendly service.

Lincoln's top ranking is driven by a 17 index-point improvement over 2003. Lincoln's improvements come in areas that have a strong impact on customer satisfaction. Among maintenance customers, who make up two-thirds of its service business, Lincoln receives significantly improved ratings in "fairness of charges" and in the areas of service initiation and service delivery. In fact, 97 percent of customers say they got the appointment date they wanted, and customers gave strong ratings on the ease of getting in and out of the dealership.

"In addition to their subsidized maintenance program, Lincoln's CSI performance was also helped by improved vehicle quality. This has translated into a 14 percent decline in the volume of

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repairs needed, meaning that more of Lincoln's work is maintenance-only, which is easier from a customer satisfaction viewpoint," said Joe Ivers, executive director of quality/customer satisfaction at J.D. Power and Associates. "Ford's domestic brands—Ford and Mercury—also showed similar effects of improved quality performance, as did Land Rover."

The industry achieved widespread improvements in customer satisfaction, gaining 11 index points over 2003. Nearly one-half of brands improved at least 10 points. Equally impressive is the fact that seven brands receive a score of 900 or higher out of a potential 1,000 in 2004—a feat previously accomplished only by Lexus and Saturn. Following Lincoln (912) in the rankings are Buick (909), Infiniti (908), Cadillac (904), Lexus (902), Saturn (901) and Acura (900).

"Not only are a lot of brands improving by a significant margin, but also we're seeing improvements in the toughest and most important areas to customers," said Ivers. "Many brands are aggressively improving in fixing vehicles right the first time, which heavily affects customer satisfaction. By focusing on what customers want and expect when they bring their vehicles in for maintenance or repair, dealerships are reaping the rewards with a more satisfied client base and, ultimately, brand loyalty and advocacy."

The biggest index-score improvements in 2004 come from Audi and Jaguar, which each improve an impressive 31 points over 2003, and Land Rover, which improves 29 points. Audi, which jumps 10 rank positions to tie with HUMMER for 10th, experiences improved ratings from both maintenance and repair customers, particularly in the consideration of a customer's time, the amount of time waiting to speak to a service advisor and the time it took to get the vehicle after service.

"This is noteworthy, considering that in the past, Audi customers have experienced some difficulty in getting an appointment," said Ivers. "That was a consequence of their popularity, which outran the dealer's capacity to service them."

Jaguar's improvement comes heavily from repair customers, primarily in the area of service quality, which includes the ability to diagnose problems, quality of work, and fulfillment of requested work.

Land Rover experiences significantly higher ratings from its repair customers, with fewer repairs needed and fewer complaints about parts availability. This trend reflects the higher quality experienced by newer launch models (e.g., 2002 Freelander and 2003 Range Rover), both of which have shown measurable improvements in J.D. Power and Associates vehicle quality measurements.

Also notable is that all of General Motors' brands scored above the industry average.

The 2004 CSI Study is based on responses from more than 97,000 new-vehicle owners and lessees.

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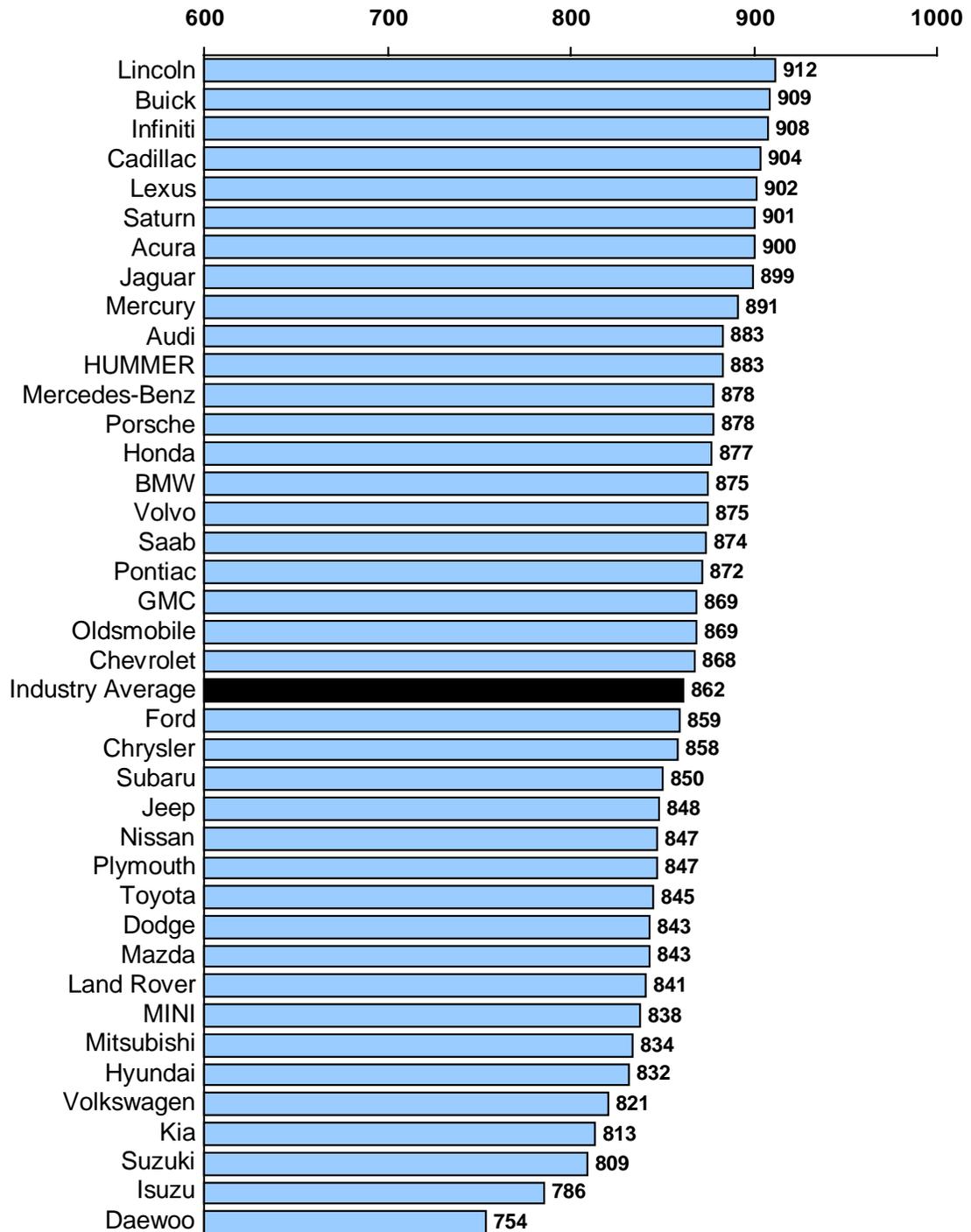
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NOTE: One chart follows.

J.D. Power and Associates 2004 Customer Service Index (CSI) StudySM

Customer Service Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2004 Customer Service Index (CSI) StudySM

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