

Kelley Blue Book Announces 2013 Brand Image Award Winners Based On Annual Car- Buyer Perception Ratings

Honda Takes Three of 13 Categories, Including Best Overall Brand, Most Trusted Brand, Best Value Brand; Each of Big Three Domestic Automakers Honored

IRVINE, Calif., March 25, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Automakers learn how in-market new-car shoppers view their brands as the [2013 Brand Image Award](#) winners are announced today by Kelley Blue Book, www.kbb.com, the leading provider of new and used car information. These awards, based on an entire year's worth of consumer perception data from the company's Brand Watch™ study, honor the automotive brands that have most successfully captured positive consumer attention.

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Kelley Blue Book's 2013 Brand Image Award Winners

Award-Winning Non-Luxury Brands

2013 Honda - Brand Image Awards: Best Overall Brand
2013 Honda - Most Trusted Brand
2013 Honda - Best Value Brand
2013 Chrysler - Most Refined Brand
2013 MINI - Best Performance Brand
2013 Ford - Best Car Styling Brand

Award-Winning Truck Brand

2013 Toyota - Best Overall Truck Brand

Award-Winning Luxury Brands

2013 BMW - Brand Image Awards: Best Overall Luxury Brand
2013 Lexus - Most Trusted Luxury Brand
2013 Buick - Best Value Luxury Brand
2013 Mercedes-Benz - Most Refined Luxury Brand
2013 Porsche - Best Performance Luxury Brand
2013 Porsche - Best Car Styling Luxury Brand

The 2013 Brand Image Awards, presented to the top brands in 13 categories, are based on consumer automotive perception data from Kelley Blue Book Market Intelligence's Brand Watch study. Brand Watch is an online brand and model perception tracking study tapping into 12,000+ in-market new-vehicle shoppers annually on Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com. The highly comprehensive Brand Watch study offers insight into in-market new-vehicle shoppers' perceptions of brands and models, including important factors driving their purchase decisions while they are in the midst of the shopping process. The Kelley Blue Book Brand Image Awards recognize automakers' outstanding achievements in creating and maintaining brand attributes that capture the attention and enthusiasm of the new-vehicle buying public. Award categories are calculated among luxury shoppers, non-luxury shoppers and truck shoppers.

"The Kelley Blue Book Brand Image Awards are unique because they reflect the opinions of actual in-market new-car shoppers, providing

automakers with a glimpse into what potential customers really think of their brand and showcasing their perception strengths," said Hwei-Lin Oetken, vice president of market intelligence for Kelley Blue Book. "While other awards from KBB.com are based on data calculated by Kelley Blue Book experts, the information that comprises the Brand Image Awards comes directly from the opinions of thousands of new-car shoppers over the period of an entire year. The insights gleaned from the Brand Watch study can be an invaluable tool for automaker marketing teams and their agencies."

This marks the sixth consecutive year that Kelley Blue Book has presented auto manufacturers with the Brand Image Awards, and this year, Honda takes home the most trophies. Honda is named Best Overall Brand by non-luxury shoppers, which speaks to Honda's stellar reputation and brand leadership in the minds of consumers. Furthermore, Honda is awarded Most Trusted Brand for the second year in a row, and Best Value Brand for the third year running. Receiving consecutive awards in key categories like Trust and Value underscores that the positive attributes of the Honda brand continue to resonate with the new-car buying public.

Meanwhile, among non-luxury shoppers, MINI is a standout for Performance, while Ford leads for Car Styling, and Chrysler wins for Most Refined Brand. According to truck shoppers, Toyota is the Best Overall Truck Brand.

Among luxury shoppers, BMW takes the top spot as Best Overall Luxury Brand, and Porsche brings home two trophies for Performance and Car Styling. Domestic manufacturer Buick excels among luxury shoppers for Value, while Lexus leads for Trust, and Mercedes-Benz is viewed as Most Refined Luxury Brand.

"Some will say that perception is reality, and while we concede that image isn't everything, it is more than enough to get shoppers into the store, and that's half the battle for automakers and their dealers," said Jack R. Nerad, executive editorial director and executive market analyst for Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com. "With standout vehicle lineups and positive consumer perception confirmed by empirical study, the winners of Kelley Blue Book's 2013 Brand Image Awards have secured enviable positions in the minds of car buyers."

KBB.com Editorial Comments About 2013 Brand Image Award Winners

2013 Porsche - Best Performance Luxury Brand

BMW wrested this trophy from Porsche a couple times, but this is essentially Stuttgart's award. Even when Porsche's entry isn't the fastest car in the class, it's always the winner in driving feel. And feel equals fun, which is the purest point of performance.

2013 Mercedes-Benz - Most Refined Luxury Brand

KBB.com visitors who identify themselves as luxury-car shoppers -- the group who determined all our Luxury Brand awards -- have voted Mercedes-Benz as this year's Most Refined Luxury Brand. Refinement is harder to measure than performance or value, but you know it when you see it. And you really know it when you drive it.

2013 Porsche - Best Car Styling Luxury Brand

This is a fitting award for the maker of arguably the most iconic and enduring car design of all time, the 911. Even the newest Porsche, the Panamera, sports a unique but recognizable design that at once reinforces and expands Porsche's legendary mystique.

2013 Buick - Best Value Luxury Brand

With a brand and lineup that transcend mainstream without reaching all

the way into the traditional luxury stratosphere, Buick is a nice way to step up in comfort and refinement while remaining mindful of the family budget.

2013 Lexus - Most Trusted Luxury Brand

With the most proven and celebrated record of dependability and reliability in the entire industry, it would only be a surprise if Lexus didn't win the award for Most Trusted Luxury Brand.

2013 BMW - Brand Image Awards: Best Overall Luxury Brand

BMW didn't win any of the individual Luxury Brand awards, but it takes home the title of Best Overall Luxury Brand on the strength of a well-rounded image that appeals to young and old, sporty and showy alike.

2013 Toyota - Best Overall Truck Brand

KBB.com visitors who identify themselves as truck shoppers have named Toyota this year's Best Overall Truck Brand. Cars can get you to work, but people depend on trucks to actually do the work. When livelihood is on the line, any brand synonymous with dependability and reliability has a real advantage.

2013 MINI - Best Performance Brand

When every car you make can be described as small and sporty, you have the inside track to our Best Performance Brand award. MINI keeps pumping out new variations on a theme, but never wavers one degree from its laser-like focus on fun.

2013 Chrysler - Most Refined Brand

The traditional luxury brand of non-luxury brands, Chrysler combines an air of confidence with a sense of flair. The result is a lineup and a brand that feels a class above their competitors.

2013 Ford - Best Car Styling Brand

Ford's new design language seems to work on every new vehicle that gets the treatment, and if anyone wants to call the Fiesta, Focus, Fusion and Escape the best-looking vehicles in their respective categories, we wouldn't argue. The gorgeous new Fusion, in fact, is our Best Redesigned Vehicle of 2013.

2013 Honda - Best Value Brand

Affordability, reliability and good resale value are key facets of new-car value, and Honda scores at or near the top in all three, earning from KBB.com visitors another Best Value Brand award.

2013 Honda - Most Trusted Brand

This is the second year we've asked visitors to name their Most Trusted Brand, and it's the second year in a row they've named Honda. With a reputation that precedes it and vehicles that seemingly never fail to deliver on the promise, Honda is like the perpetual motion machine of brand trust.

2013 Honda - Brand Image Awards: Best Overall Brand

We saved the biggest award for last, but after its wins in the Best Value Brand and Most Trusted Brand categories, Honda's win as Best Overall Brand among non-luxury shoppers hardly comes as a surprise. We admire the refined and reliable vehicles, but also the manner in which Honda promotes itself. You do too, apparently.

For more information about the 2013 Kelley Blue Book Brand Image Awards, please visit

<http://www.kbb.com/car-reviews-and-news/top-10/2013-brand-image-awards/>.

For Brand Watch inquiries on any vehicle segment, brand or model, please contact Hwei-Lin Oetken, vice president of market intelligence for Kelley Blue Book, at 949-267-4460 or hoetken@kbb.com.

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Founded in 1926, Kelley Blue Book, The Trusted Resource®, is the only vehicle valuation and information source trusted and relied upon by both consumers and the industry. Each week the company provides the most market-reflective values in the industry on its top-rated website www.kbb.com, including its famous Blue Book® Trade-In and Suggested Retail Values and Fair Purchase Price, which reports what others are paying for new cars this week. The company also provides vehicle pricing and values through various products and services available to car dealers, auto manufacturers, finance and insurance companies as well as governmental agencies. KBB.com provides consumer pricing and information on cars for sale, minivans, pickup trucks, sedan, hybrids, electric cars, and SUVs. Kelley Blue Book Co., Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of AutoTrader Group.

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