

Kelley Blue Book Announces 2016 Brand Image Award Winners

Subaru Dominates Non-Luxury Winners, Including Best Overall, Most Trusted, Best Performance Brand; Lexus Tops Luxury Brand Winners; Ford Continues Reign as Best Overall Truck Brand

IRVINE, Calif., March 22, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- The [2016 Brand Image Award winners](#), based on annual new-car buyer perception data, are announced today by Kelley Blue Book, www.kbb.com, the vehicle valuation and information source trusted and relied upon by both consumers and the automotive industry. 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, non-luxury and truck shoppers.

"The classic saying 'perception is reality' rings true with the Kelley Blue Book Brand Image Awards, as more than 12,000 in-market new-car shoppers have voiced their opinions about today's automakers to determine this year's award winners," said Hwei-Lin Oetken, vice president of strategic insights for Kelley Blue Book.



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"With strong product lineups and compelling marketing communications coming from auto manufacturers, consumers are more influenced than ever to take interest in a brand, ultimately affecting their vehicle purchase decisions. We've seen an interesting shift in consumer perception of Subaru over the last few years. They won their first-ever Brand Image Awards last year, and now this year they swept the major categories of Best Overall Brand, Most Trusted Brand and Best Performance Brand. Consumers undoubtedly are taking serious notice of Subaru."

2016 Brand Image Award Winners: Non-Luxury Brands

Subaru	Best Overall Brand
Subaru	Most Trusted Brand
Honda	Best Value Brand
GMC	Most Refined Brand
Subaru	Best Performance Brand
Chrysler	Best Car Styling Brand

2016 Brand Image Award Winner: Truck Brand

Ford	Best Overall Truck Brand
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2016 Brand Image Award Winners: Luxury Brands

Lexus	Best Overall Luxury Brand
Lexus	Most Trusted Luxury Brand
Buick	Best Value Luxury Brand
Mercedes-Benz	Most Refined Luxury Brand
Porsche	Best Performance Luxury Brand

After Honda previously dominated the category from 2013 – 2015, this year Subaru has been named the Best Overall Brand for 2016, securing the highest average scores among all 12 Brand Watch factors, including affordability, driving comfort, driving performance, durability/reliability, exterior styling, fuel efficiency, interior layout, prestige/sophistication, reputation, ruggedness, safety and technology (factors listed in alphabetical order). Strong consumer perception of the Outback and Forester helped drive Subaru's success in earning the top honor among all automakers. In addition to its Best Overall Brand win, this year Subaru once again claimed Most Trusted Brand and Best Performance Brand for 2016, after winning both accolades last year in 2015.

For 2016, Lexus captured the Best Overall Luxury Brand title from last year's winner Porsche by obtaining the top average Brand Watch factor scores among all luxury makes and being highly regarded with its strong lineup, driven primarily by its popular ES and RX models. In addition, Lexus reclaimed its Most Trusted Luxury Brand award for 2016, after Mercedes-Benz won the award last year in 2015. Lexus also previously won Most Trusted Luxury Brand in 2013 – 2014.

Claiming the top spot among truck shoppers for the third year in a row, Ford won the Best Overall Truck Brand category. Ford has won seven out of the eight times Kelley Blue Book has announced this award, with only Toyota outranking them in 2013. The F-150 helped the manufacturer earn the award for 2016, as truck shoppers ranked the brand highest among all other truck brands.

Among non-luxury automakers, Honda once again won Best Value Brand for 2016, after previously winning the award in 2015, as well as from 2011 – 2013. Chrysler won 2016 Best Car Styling Brand, driven by the 300. Benefiting from its upscale Denali trim models, GMC won its third Brand Image Award in a row as this year's Most Refined Brand, with high ratings for comfort, interior layout, technology and prestige/sophistication.

Meanwhile, among luxury automakers, Porsche held on to its Best Performance Luxury Brand award for the sixth year on the strength of above-average ratings for its entire lineup. Jaguar won Best Car Styling Luxury Brand for 2016, after previously winning the award in 2014. Mercedes-Benz once again reclaimed the Most Refined Luxury Brand award, after previously winning the award from 2013 – 2014. Mercedes-Benz has won a Brand Image Award every year since the inception of the program in 2008. Buick now is a four-time repeat winner for the Best Value Luxury Brand (winning the award 2013 – 2016), and the manufacturer's entire lineup has positively influenced car shoppers' perceptions.

The 2016 Brand Image Awards are based on consumer automotive perception data from Kelley Blue Book Strategic Insights' (previously 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 study offers insight into how shoppers perceive important factors driving their purchase decisions, and captures brand/model familiarity and loyalty among new-car shoppers.

For more information about the 2016 Kelley Blue Book Brand Image Awards, please visit <http://www.kbb.com/new-cars/brand-image-awards/>.

To discuss this topic or any other automotive-related information with a Kelley Blue Book analyst on-camera via the company's on-site studio, please contact a member of the Public Relations team to book an

interview.

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About Kelley Blue Book (www.kbb.com)

Founded in 1926, Kelley Blue Book, *The Trusted Resource*®, is the vehicle valuation and information source trusted and relied upon by both consumers and the automotive industry. Each week the company provides the most market-reflective values in the industry on its top-rated website KBB.com, including its famous Blue Book® Trade-In Values and Fair Purchase Price, which reports what others are paying for new and used 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, and governmental agencies. Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com ranked highest in its category for brand equity by the 2015 Harris Poll EquiTrend® study and has been named Online Auto Shopping Brand of the Year for four consecutive years. Kelley Blue Book Co., Inc. is a Cox Automotive company.

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