

Kelley Blue Book Announces 2018 Brand Image Award Winners

IRVINE, Calif., March 28, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- Automotive brands are among the most recognizable, most valued brands in the world. There are few products more ubiquitous in our day-to-day lives than the automobile, and capturing the hearts and minds of car shoppers could mean more sales in the long run. In fact, when asked about vehicles consumers find appealing, nearly half of respondents of a recent survey on behalf of Kelley Blue Book said they are loyal to the specific brands that they have had a good previous experience with.¹ Recognizing automakers' outstanding achievements in creating and maintaining brand attributes that capture the attention and enthusiasm of new-car buyers, Kelley Blue Book today announced the [2018 Brand Image Award winners](#), based on annual new-car buyer perception data. Award categories are calculated among luxury, non-luxury and truck shoppers.

"Building familiarity and loyalty among car shoppers has never been more important to automakers, especially as the market is flooded with all-new and redesigned models competing for market share," said Hwei-Lin Oetken, director of media strategic insights for Kelley Blue Book. "The combination of compelling product and marketing communications continues to influence purchase consideration. This year's winners have attracted car shoppers based on many attributes that are important to consumers, and motivate them toward their ultimate purchase decision."



2018 Brand Image Award Winners: Non-Luxury Brands

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

2018 Brand Image Award Winner: Truck Brand

Ford	Best Overall Truck Brand
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2018 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
Jaguar	Best Car Styling Luxury Brand

For the first time since 2015, Honda regains its Best Overall Brand title, in addition to winning Best Value Brand and Most Refined Brand. As the Best Overall Brand, Honda captured 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*. Honda's redesigned models in key segments, such as compact and mid-size car, have resonated well with consumers, boosting perceptions of the brand. Strong performances from the Accord, CR-V and Civic took Honda over-the-top and contributed to this year's brand win.

Lexus continues its reign as Best Overall Luxury Brand, earning this title for the third consecutive year. Lexus' tradition of high-quality products and its recent emphasis on style and emotion, contributed to the brand's win. The ES, NX, RX and LS consistency received high ratings among consumers for this year's study. Lexus also earned Most Trusted Luxury Brand for 2018.

For five years running, Ford is the Best Overall Truck Brand with the continued success of its light and heavy-duty trucks. Since the Brand Image Award program began in 2008, Ford has won this honor every year, except in 2013 when it was outranked by Toyota.

Mazda is another noteworthy winner for 2018 with its Best Performance Brand award win. This is the first year Mazda is being recognized in this category, nabbing the win from Subaru, which won in 2016 and 2017. Mazda also is being recognized for the second consecutive year in the Best Car Styling Brand category.

The 2018 Brand Image Awards are based on consumer automotive perception data from Kelley Blue Book Strategic Insights' Brand Watch study. Brand Watch is an online brand and model perception tracking study, which taps into more than 12,000 in-market new-vehicle shoppers annually on 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 2018 Kelley Blue Book Brand Image Awards, please visit <https://www.kbb.com/new-cars/brand-image-awards/>.

For more information and news from Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com, visit www.kbb.com/media/, follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/kelleybluebook (or @kelleybluebook), like our page on Facebook at www.facebook.com/kbb, follow us on Instagram at https://www.instagram.com/kbb_com/ (or @kbb_com), and get updates on Google+ at <https://plus.google.com/+kbb>.

* Factors listed in alphabetical order

¹ Source: Morning Consult, March 2018

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 market-reflective values on its top-rated website KBB.com, including its famous Blue Book® Trade-In Values and Kelley Blue Book® Price Advisor tool, which provides a range for what consumers can reasonably expect to pay for a vehicle in their area. Car owners looking to sell immediately can also get a redeemable, transaction-ready offer with Kelley Blue BookSM Instant Cash Offer. 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 is a Cox Automotive brand.

About Cox Automotive

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For further information: Andrew Nicolai, 949-293-5241, andrew.nicolai@coxautoinc.com; Brenna Buehler, 909-225-4643, brenna.buehler@coxautoinc.com; Nichole Mrasek, 678-429-7627, nichole.mrasek@coxautoinc.com

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