Kbb.com: Ford Back on Top for Most-Considered Auto Brand, Gains Significant Lead Over Competition

Latest Market Intelligence Data Shows Toyota Consideration Continues to Fluctuate as Company Rebuilds Brand

IRVINE, Calif., March 10, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- According to the latest Kelley Blue Book www.kbb.com Market Intelligence Brand Watch™ study, Ford is back on top as the most-considered auto brand among new-car shoppers. Ford consistently captured the most-considered auto brand title from Q4 2009 through Q2 2010, but momentarily fell to the No. 2 spot for Q3 2010 when Toyota re-captured its previously held most-considered brand status for that quarter. However, as Toyota works to rebuild its brand following last year's recall crisis, it continues to see fluctuating consideration and currently resides back at No. 2. As of Q4 2010, Ford regained its No. 1 spot on new-car shoppers' consideration lists.

In addition to being the most-considered auto brand overall (regardless of segment) for Q4 2010, Ford has been the highest-considered brand within the truck segment for nine consecutive quarters. Currently, Ford is the most-considered brand in the non-luxury SUV/CUV segment, and continues to gain ground quarter-over-quarter in the non-luxury sedan/coupe/hatchback segment.

Kbb.com Brand Watch Q4 2010 Study
Most-Considered Auto Brands Overall (Regardless of Segment)

Ford	29%
Chevrolet	22%
Toyota	22%
Honda	21%
Nissan	13%
Hyundai	11%
BMW	11%

For the latest Q4 2010 Brand Watch study data, Ford is back on top with a significant lead over the competition, while Toyota and Chevrolet tie for second place and Honda finishes third. Rounding out the top most-considered among the 37 new-vehicle brands tracked in the Kelley Blue Book Market Intelligence study include Nissan at fourth, Hyundai and BMW tying for fifth place.

"Ford's revamped product offering, strong business strategy and clever marketing have helped to lead it back to a position of prominence in the minds of new-car shoppers," said Jack R. Nerad, executive editorial director and executive market analyst for Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com. "With enticing products offered in nearly every new-car segment, and an emphasis on forward-thinking technology like SYNC and MyFord Touch, Ford is dominating the shopping lists of many new-car buyers and has a real opportunity to turn this consideration into more dollar-signs. Kbb.com shoppers' opinions and behaviors are leading indicators of future new-car sales patterns, so with the latest Brand Watch study results, we expect to see continued good news for Ford throughout the year."

Overall for Q4 2010, new-car shoppers continue to rank durability/reliability, fuel efficiency, driving comfort, driving performance and safety (respectively) as the top five importance factors while shopping for their next new vehicle (regardless of

segment).

Specific to the non-luxury sedan/coupe/hatchback category, Honda received the highest consideration, followed closely by Toyota in second place and Ford in third place. In addition, Ford continues to improve in this segment each quarter. Following Ford are Chevrolet, Hyundai and Nissan (respectively). From Q3 2010 to Q4 2010, Hyundai's consideration dampened slightly among non-luxury sedan/coupe/hatchback shoppers.

In the non-luxury SUV/CUV segment, Ford has regained the highest consideration within this category and has a good lead over the next competitor Toyota, followed by Honda and Chevrolet (respectively).

Specific to the luxury sedan/coupe/hatchback segment, BMW continues to maintain the top spot for consideration in Q4 2010, followed by Mercedes-Benz, Lexus, Audi and Cadillac (respectively). Lexus consideration within this segment has been on a gradual decline since Q4 2009.

In contrast, Lexus remains the most-considered brand in the luxury SUV/CUV segment for Q4 2010. Following Lexus for top consideration of luxury SUV/CUVs are Cadillac, Acura, Lincoln and BMW (respectively).

Honda continues to remain the most-considered minivan brand for the past 12 quarters, followed by Toyota, which also held the No. 2 spot for the past 12 quarters.

As previously mentioned, Ford continues to remain the most-considered truck brand for nine consecutive quarters, followed by Chevrolet, which has held the No. 2 spot for the same amount of time.

The Q4 2010 Kelley Blue Book Market Intelligence Brand Watch Study was fielded to more than 3,200 in-market new-car shoppers on Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com from October 19, 2010, to December 13, 2010. Kelley Blue Book's Brand Watch is an ongoing study tracking and trending consumer perceptions, detailing strengths and weaknesses of makes within each segment. Brand Watch primarily tracks brand consideration, segment consideration, important consideration factors for new-car shoppers, and how brands perform on those important factors. Kelley Blue Book Market Intelligence has been tracking Brand Watch since 2007. For Market Intelligence inquiries on any segment or brand, please contact Hwei-Lin Oetken, vice president of market intelligence services for Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com, at 949-267-4460 or hoetken@kbb.com.

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