

Kelley Blue Book Names 2011 Brand Image Award Winners Based on Annual Car-Buyer Perception Ratings

Cadillac Garners Three Top Honors; Ford, Mercedes-Benz Both Repeat Wins

IRVINE, Calif., April 20, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Kelley Blue Book www.kbb.com, the leading provider of new car and used car information, today announces the winners of the [2011 Brand Image Awards](#). These awards, based on consumer perception data from the company's Brand Watch™ study, honor those brands that have most successfully captured positive consumer attention.

Kelley Blue Book's 2011 Brand Image Award Winners

2011 Best Value Brand: [Honda](#)

2011 Most Family-Friendly Brand: [Toyota](#)

2011 Most Rugged Truck Brand: [Ford](#)

**2011 Best Exterior Design Brand – Non-Luxury:
Ford**

2011 Best Exterior Design Brand – Luxury: [Cadillac](#)

2011 Best Interior Design Brand: Cadillac

2011 Best Comfort Brand: Cadillac

2011 Best Performance Brand: [BMW](#)

2011 Coolest Brand: BMW

2011 Best Prestige Brand: [Mercedes-Benz](#)

The 2011 Brand Image Awards, presented to the top brands in 10 categories, are based on consumer automotive perception data from Kelley Blue Book Market Intelligence's Brand Watch study. Brand Watch is an online brand 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 report provides a detailed look at in-market new-vehicle shoppers' perceptions of brands and 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.

This marks the fourth year Kelley Blue Book has awarded manufacturers the Brand Image Awards, and there are multiple repeat winners. Mercedes-Benz has captured Best Prestige Brand for the fourth year in a row, demonstrating that it has prevailed in securing a long-term perception among in-market car shoppers as the most prestigious brand. One of the most important factors among new truck buyers is "ruggedness," and for three years running Ford has claimed the Most

Rugged Truck Brand title among consumers.

This year Cadillac is bringing home the most 2011 Brand Image Awards, standing out in consumer's minds for exterior design in the luxury category, as well as both interior design and comfort. In addition to its aforementioned truck award, Ford also wins this year for exterior design in the non-luxury category. Furthermore, BMW wins two awards for 2011, capturing new-car shoppers' mindshare in the categories of performance and coolness.

"When it comes to marketing many believe that 'perception is reality,' so the winners of Kelley Blue Book's 2011 Brand Image Awards have an obvious leg up on success," said Jack R. Nerad, executive editorial director and executive market analyst for Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com. "The winners have persuaded the car-buying public of the desirability of their vehicles, and that correlates well with success in the marketplace. And since the Brand Image Awards are chosen by in-market car buyers, they are obviously reaching the right group."

Kbb.com Editorial Comments About 2011 Brand Image Award Winners

2011 Best Value Brand: Honda

What defines a good value? When it comes to new cars, we like to factor in affordability, reliability and good resale value – all of which remain Honda hallmarks. While competitors continue to push bolder designs and optimistic fuel economy figures, Honda stays the course with a strong focus on all-encompassing value.

2011 Most Family-Friendly Brand: Toyota

In 2010 the term "Swagger Wagon" helped put the revamped [Sienna minivan](#) in the minds of millions. With a lineup rich in family-friendly models – [Camry](#), [Highlander](#) and [Sequoia](#) to name but a few – Toyota is set to remain a staple in family car buying for years to come.

2011 Most Rugged Truck Brand: Ford

Who makes the toughest truck in America, according to America? That would be Ford, again. For a third year running, Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com visitors have named Ford the Most Rugged Truck Brand. Not coincidentally, the [Ford F-150](#) remains the best-selling vehicle in the country -- now for 29 years running. It's not hard to see why the F-150 is the people's choice -- pairing a go-anywhere and do-anything attitude with an enviable list of features, the F-150 is a proven work and play machine.

2011 Best Exterior Design Brand – Non-Luxury: Ford

In 2010 we wrote that Ford was the midst of a product renaissance, and the last twelve months have proven that the company's revitalization isn't over yet. From a refreshed [Edge](#), all-new [Explorer](#), more muscular [Mustang](#) and the introduction of the Euro-flavored [compact Fiesta](#), the Dearborn-based automaker has been busy redefining its look. And, as evident in Ford's increasing sales, the American public has proven that they like what they see.

2011 Best Exterior Design Brand – Luxury: Cadillac

In our opinion, the [Cadillac CTS](#) deserves at least 75 percent of the credit for securing this award. Yes, the big, bad [Escalade](#) is impossible to ignore and the [SRX crossover](#) is a nice interpretation of Cadillac's current design ethos, but the CTS Sedan is the car that put Cadillac design on the map (this time around, anyway). Recently expanded to include sporty wagon and positively outrageous coupe versions, the CTS lineup features design that's strong enough to lift an entire brand.

2011 Best Interior Design Brand: Cadillac

One of three wins for the brand this year, Cadillac's interior design award is a

complement to its award for comfort. Rich in wood and leather, with classic details like double French stitching and modern touches like excellent LCD graphics, Cadillac interiors deliver a balance of comfort, quality and performance that's in perfect harmony with the brand as a whole.

2011 Best Comfort Brand: Cadillac

The Cadillac lineup is far bolder and sportier than it was just a decade ago, but the Cadillac-comfort connection remains steadfast in the minds of car buyers. And even if its cars aren't as soft and squishy as they were the first 100 years – Cadillac's best-selling CTS is a bona-fide sports sedan -- rich materials, fancy features and world-class interior design deliver 21st-century comfort.

2011 Best Performance Brand: BMW

Anyone who's driven a BMW will understand why the team from Munich won best Performance Brand for 2011. With powerful yet increasingly efficient engines, legendary ride and handling, and aggressive looks to match, BMW's vehicles are the yardstick by which innumerable carmakers measure their products.

2011 Coolest Brand: BMW

Defining "cool" is tricky business, but BMW certainly has most of the boxes checked. Effortless performance? Avant-garde styling? A heritage worth remembering? Check, check and check. For some, cool is synonymous with desirable. If resale value and sales figures are any indication, BMW has that box checked, too.

2011 Best Prestige Brand: Mercedes-Benz

Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com visitors have named Mercedes-Benz the Best Prestige Brand four years in a row, and the office odds-makers are bullish on five. There's just something about the three-pointed star and the rich history of sophistication behind it that no competing automaker can touch right now.

For more information about the 2011 Kelley Blue Book Brand Image Awards, please visit <http://www.kbb.com/car-news/all-the-latest/2011-brand-image-awards/>.

For Brand Watch inquiries on any vehicle segment or brand, 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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