

General Motors' Trucks Still Lead Way in KBB Marketing Research Brand Watch Report

Research Reveals Latest Consumer Brand Perceptions and Purchase Intent Within Truck Segment

PRNewswire
IRVINE, Calif.

Kelley Blue Book (www.kbb.com) and Kelley Blue Book Marketing Research's latest report series, Brand Watch, reveals that in the pick-up truck segment, more in-market truck shoppers are considering the purchase of a domestic truck than an import brand, with Chevrolet's consideration topping the chart at 56 percent, Ford at 44 percent and GMC at 38 percent. Brand Watch also collects data on consumer loyalty, or repurchasing the same brand of vehicle currently owned. The first wave found GMC at the top of the rankings in loyalty among truck owners. Chevrolet and Toyota tied for second place at 40 percent, while Dodge and Ford tied for third place in the loyalty rankings.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20070122/LAM043-a>
<http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20070122/LAM043-b>
<http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20070122/LAM043-c>
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Brand Watch solicits the opinions of truck intenders regarding 13 different attributes associated with choosing a vehicle and asks shoppers to not only rank them in importance, but also rate each manufacturer on that importance of that factor. As expected, truck considerers seek out strong, functional truck features such as durability/reliability, fuel efficiency and towing capacity. Durability and fuel efficiency rank as the two most important factors among truck considerers at 72 percent and 58 percent, respectively. In both categories truck shoppers claimed that the two top brands with those features are Toyota and Honda, with Toyota being perceived as the leader in durability and Honda perceived as having the best fuel efficiency. GMC comes in a close second in both of these attribute categories and is perceived as having the most new fuel system technologies.

Driving comfort, towing and driving performance are also rated as important factors for truck considerers. Among those categories Chevrolet ranks tops in driving comfort and driving performance while Ford takes the top spot for towing capacity. Chevrolet receives top recognition on the highest number of factors overall, including driving comfort, driving performance, interior layout/design, and available options.

"While Honda only has one truck in its line-up, the Honda Ridgeline and its fuel efficiency is the same as other trucks in its class, it's clear the Asian brands are seeing a halo effect from the other vehicles it sells," says Rick Wainschel, vice president of marketing research and brand communications for Kelley Blue Book. "The Asian truck manufacturers have made amazing strides including Honda's innovative Ridgeline and the newly introduced and redesigned 2008 Toyota Tundra. While these automakers have clearly changed their brand perception among passenger car buyers, they still have some work to do in the minds of truck buyers."

General Motors' products also place high for exterior styling and design among truck intenders. They are credited with having 'innovative design' that 'commands attention and stands out from the crowd' as well as having 'attractive looks and lines.'

"Chevy and GMC have led the market in U.S. truck sales for years," says Jack R. Nerad, executive editorial director and executive market analyst for Kelley Blue Book's [kbb.com](http://www.kbb.com). "The truck market is a very important sales segment and one that

the domestics really need to keep a firm grasp on over the next few years."

The truck segment of Brand Watch is made up of 273 in-market vehicle shoppers planning to buy a pick-up truck within the next 12 months. The study was fielded on Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com, the No. 1 Web site for new vehicle shoppers, with more than 12 million unique visitors each month.

For sales inquiries on any vehicle segment or brand, please contact Kelly Gim, director of marketing research services at 949-268-2756 or via e-mail at kgim@kbb.com.

About Kelley Blue Book (kbb.com)

Since 1926, Kelley Blue Book, The Trusted Resource®, has provided vehicle buyers and sellers with the new and used vehicle information they need to accomplish their goals with confidence. The company's top-rated Web site, kbb.com, provides the most up-to-date pricing and values, including the New Car Blue Book® Value, which reveals what people actually are paying for new cars. The company also reports vehicle pricing and values via products and services, including software products and the famous Blue Book® Official Guide. Kbb.com is rated the No. 1 automotive information site by Nielsen//NetRatings and the most visited auto site by J.D. Power and Associates eight years in a row. No other medium reaches more in-market vehicle shoppers than kbb.com; nearly one in every three American car buyers performs their research on kbb.com.

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