



TO BE RELEASED on July 17, 2015

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Press Release

“The Customer’s ‘Total’ Experience Defines Quality, Fiat Chrysler Scores Highest in Total Quality,” says Strategic Vision

San Diego, California: July 17, 2015 – Unknown to many, when some consumer research firms rank a car company’s quality performance they often do so by simply “counting problems.” In the past, this may have been acceptable, but in today’s modern and efficient manufacturing world the difference between the worst brand and best brand is LESS than half-a-problem per vehicle. Thus, any “quality ranking” based on this method is severely lacking in the complete picture of the “Total” Quality experience that customers actually use to judge their product ownership. Today, [Strategic Vision](#) released the results of its 20th annual Total Quality Index™ (TQI) study that not only measures problems, but also includes over 155 specific aspects of the customer’s experience. As a result, by considering the metric at the corporate level, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) has the industry’s highest score.

“In 1997, only 15% of all car brands had less than a half-a-problem per vehicle, with a few ‘delinquent’ brands having more than two problems per vehicle. In 2015, 100% of all brands had less than half-a-problem on average per vehicle. This means that simply counting problems once had a place in history, but today, knowing what creates love and that which enhances the customer’s perception of quality are key to determining what is best,” says Alexander Edwards, President of Strategic Vision. “When defining quality, we listen and measure everything the customer communicates and capture it in a calculation that is converted to a 1,000-point scale called the Total Quality Index score. It represents the future in understanding what motivates the customer,” continues Edwards.

FCA (formerly Chrysler LLC) achieved the highest corporate Total Quality score (859) for the first time since Strategic Vision’s study began in 1995. This study of over 46,000 customer responses also ranked Volkswagen Group of America (858) and General Motors Corporation (858) as (statistically tied with the industry’s highest score) leaders. At the model level, the highest 2015 Total Quality model score was achieved by the MINI Cooper Roadster, with another significant winner being the Chevrolet Colorado leading the Standard Pickup segment as the first domestic leader in over a decade. Also meaningful, was the Mazda3 Sedan being the popular Small Car Segment leader.

“FCA has incrementally risen from one (1) segment leader in 2010 to six (6) segment leaders in 2015. Though at Strategic Vision we often preach about looking forward, it’s hard to not be in admiration of the turn-around achieved by FCA (Chrysler) company employees,” says Strategic Vision Senior Vice President Christopher Chaney. “FCA is not the only story; we know customers are the smartest they’ve ever been about determining quality, and it behooves car makers to really understand what drives quality perception and loyalty—it is love for the product,” concludes Chaney.

BMW/MINI had six Total Quality winners in i3, 3-Series Wagon, X4, X5, MINI Cooper Countryman and Roadster. In looking at individual brands being the winner in Total Quality, Land Rover is the Best Luxury Brand and Ram is the

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Best Brand (Non-Luxury). Subaru WRX and Kia Optima co-lead the still popular Mid-Size Car Segment, with others like Buick Encore and Volkswagen Tiguan leading the rapidly growing Entry CUV (crossover utility vehicle) Segment. In addition to the vehicles mentioned, other manufacturers such as General Motors Corporation lead with vehicles like the Corvette Convertible, GMC Yukon XL and Cadillac Escalade and other models. Surprisingly to some, Nissan Titan leads the popular Full-Size Pickup Segment with an impressive interior design, versatility and seat comfort experience that impressed owners and helped them toward a strong emotional sense of quality ownership. As more Alternate Powertrain (APT) or hybrid vehicles become available, buyers are becoming more discriminating on this segment's quality, resulting in the high ranking of segment leaders Honda Accord Hybrid Sedan and Fiat 500e.

When looking at the country of origin with Total Quality leaders, Asians (10), Domestic (11) and Europeans (13), it seems apparent that competitive advantages will evolve towards the Total Quality experience in new, intuitive and meaningful design and technology. Strategic Vision's study of the automotive industry's future behavior centers around the 20th year New Vehicle Experience Study (NVES) of over 325,000 buyers annually, collecting over 446 variables of data, including such things as to whether the new car buyer uses an Apple iPhone vs. Android (Google), vs. Microsoft, etc., and how they want it connected to their vehicle, etc., and more importantly, what this means in terms of future deployment of systems like Android Auto and Apple Carplay, and others.

Based on Strategic Vision's quantitative NVES study of over 46,000 owners the Total Quality Index results presented contain the number one ranked vehicles in Total Quality in their segments as rated by new vehicle buyers:

Small Car	Mazda Mazda3	873
Small Multi-Function Car	Fiat 500	867
Small APT Car	Fiat 500e	856
Mid-Size Car	Subaru WRX / Kia Optima	869 / 868
Mid-Size APT Car	Honda Accord Hybrid Sedan	853
Full-Size Car	Dodge Charger	902
Near-Luxury Car	Mercedes CLA / Lincoln MKZ	892 / 891
Near-Luxury APT Car	BMW i3	879
Luxury Car	Mercedes S-Class	910
Luxury Multi-Function Car	BMW 3-Series Wagon	908
Specialty Coupe	Dodge Challenger / MINI Cooper Countryman	895 / 893
Premium Coupe	Hyundai Genesis Coupe	919
Standard Convertible	MINI Cooper Roadster	935
Premium Convertible/Roadster	Chevrolet Corvette Convertible	929

TQI – add two

Standard Pickup	Chevrolet Colorado	857
Full-Size Pickup	Nissan Titan	879
Heavy Duty Pickup	GMC Sierra 2500/3500	864
Entry SUV	Jeep Wrangler Unlimited	869
Entry CUV	Buick Encore / Volkswagen Tiguan	858 / 858
Mid-Size SUV	Dodge Durango	876
Mid-Size CUV	Nissan Murano / Ford Flex	865 / 864
Full-Size Utility	GMC Yukon XL	892
Near-Luxury Utility	BMW X4	896
Luxury SUV	Cadillac Escalade / Land Rover Range Rover Sport	909 / 907
Luxury CUV	BMW X5	885
Minivan	Honda Odyssey	852
Best Model	MINI Cooper Roadster	935
Best Brand (Non-Luxury)	Ram	865
Best Luxury Brand	Land Rover	894

Strategic Vision is a research-based consultancy with over thirty-five years of experience in understanding the consumers' and constituents' decision-making systems for a variety of Fortune 100 clients, including most automotive manufacturers. Its unique expertise is in identifying consumers' comprehensive, motivational hierarchies, including the product attributes, personal benefits, value/emotions and images that drive perceptions and behaviors, using ValueCentered® psychology. Strategic Vision also uses comprehensive algorithms and discriminating scales that measure customer love and go beyond typical outdated and ineffective satisfaction scales. ValueCentered® psychology and research methods were defined by Darrel Edwards, Ph.D. in 1968, and enhanced by co-founders J. Susan Johnson (1972) and Sharon Shedroff (1975). For further information, contact Alexander Edwards or Christopher Chaney at (858) 576-7141.