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Spokesperson Patrick Busschau – Business Unit Director

Best of vehicle quality 2013 announced.

BRYANSTON: Ipsos has announced the 2013 Ipsos Quality Awards for Product Quality. These awards have been running for over 9 years. They are the benchmark in owner's experience in the automotive industry.

The star model this year - with the absolute lowest problem count - is the Lexus IS with an incredibly low score of 11 problems per 100 vehicles.

Top performing passenger car brands this year include Mazda, Audi and Chevrolet with 1st places in more than one segment. The Light commercial vehicle (LCV) segment is dominated by Toyota and Isuzu with the leading model in LCV being the Isuzu KB Diesel Single Cab.

Best Brands

"This year marks a slight shift in the category awards for passenger vehicles as there are a few brands who have not appeared recently, or before, represented in many of the Gold categories," states Patrick Busschau, Automotive Business Unit Director at Ipsos. "There is no clear dominance by one brand across the categories." Mercedes-Benz wins Gold for best local plant, Lexus for best premium brand and Mazda for best volume brand. "This is great for the automotive industry and re-introduces some new competition. Some of the other brands have caught up to the traditional benchmarks in product quality and this bodes well for the industry as well as the consumer," comments Busschau.

LCV is dominated by Toyota in winning best overall LCV brand, best local plant and best double cab brand. Isuzu sits at the top of the Single Cab category in 2013.

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CATEGORY AWARDS

BEST LOCAL PLANT MANUFACTURING PASSENGER VEHICLES
BEST PREMIUM PASSENGER CAR BRAND OVERALL
BEST VOLUME PASSENGER CAR OVERALL
BEST ONE TON SINGLE CAB LIGHT COMMERCIAL VEHICLE OVERALL
BEST ONE TON DOUBLE CAB LIGHT COMMERCIAL VEHICLE OVERALL
BEST LOCAL PLANT MANUFACTURING LIGHT COMMERCIAL VEHICLES
BEST OVERALL LIGHT COMMERCIAL VEHICLE BRAND

MERCEDES-BENZ

LEXUS

MAZDA

ISUZU

TOYOTA

TOYOTA

TOYOTA

WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY?

AUDI
 BMW
 CHEVROLET
 CITROEN
 FORD
 INFINITI
 ISUZU
 KIA
 LEXUS
 MAZDA
 MERCEDES-BENZ
 MINI
 NISSAN
 OPEL
 PEUGEOT
 RENAULT
 TOYOTA
 VOLKSWAGEN
 VOLVO

The study is the largest survey of its kind in South Africa and forms part of Ipsos’s Syndicated Automotive Research – a study into vehicle product quality as well as sales and service transactions. The study collectively talks to over 10 000 South African vehicle owners annually. Respondents for PP100 are interviewed three months after purchasing their vehicles to ascertain which, if any, problems have been experienced in the first three months of ownership. The score is calculated as Problems per 100 vehicles which is a globally recognised approach.

Overall Quality

The overall average across the passenger vehicles has decreased slightly from 2012 – from 41 PP100 to 39 PP100. Busschau goes further to mention, “Although not a significant drop, it is an indication of the ongoing improvement trend from previous years. Yielding lower scores is proving more and more challenging as there is not as much room for further differentiation and improvement.” Busschau comments further: “The encouraging thing about this year’s results is that models that were placed in lower positions in previous years

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have now moved up and are throwing down a serious challenge to the traditional front-runners. This is an indication that manufacturers across the industry, and the overall industry at large, are improving in delivering better product quality to automotive consumers. This coupled with the ever-growing range of products available means that consumers are more spoilt for choice than ever before”

Segment Awards

The Ipsos Quality Awards recognise the top 3 performers by model segments and by brand categories. Speaking of the segment awards, Busschau believes that “In this year’s results there are far fewer ties in first place – demonstrating that brands are successfully differentiating themselves to improve product quality.”

Starting with the Passenger Vehicles, the top performer in the **Entry** segment goes to the VW Polo Vivo Sedan with a low score of 18 PP100 – especially when compared with the segment average of 34 PP100. The Polo Vivo Hatch (25 PP100), Chevrolet Spark (27 PP100) and Chevrolet Spark Lite (27 PP100) and Toyota Yaris 1 L with 28 PP100 are tied in second place. In third place are Nissan Micra, Renault Sandero and Toyota Aygo with 37 to 38 PP100.

Again there is only one player with a Gold in the **Small Hatch** segment and this goes to the Mazda 2 Hatch (13PP100). There is quite a big difference in scores between the front runner and the second place here. The Toyota Yaris Hatch >1.0L is in second place with 23 PP100. Third place is tied between three models – the Ford Fiesta Hatch (27 PP100), the VW Polo Hatch (27 PP100) and the Peugeot 207 Hatch (28 P100)

Top Hatch is led by the Audi A3 (13 PP100). The Mercedes-Benz A-Class (17 PP100), Audi A3 Sportback (17 PP100) and Toyota Auris >1.4 L (18 PP100) are tied in second place. The Audi A1 Sportback along with Ford Focus Hatch both feature in third place with scores from 24 to 25 PP100.

“Three ‘podium spots’ for Audi in this segment is very impressive and they, along with the other winning brands, should be commended for their top class performance in what is one of the most competitive largest segments in the market” states Busschau.

Small Sedan yields an average score of 37 PP100. Frontrunner in this segment is the Chevrolet Sonic Sedan tied with the Toyota Corolla <1.4L with 24 to 25 PP100. The Chevrolet Aveo Sedan sits in second place with 41 PP100 and the VW Polo Sedan in third with 47 PP100.

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The Mazda 3 Sedan dominates the **Top Sedan** segment with an impressive score of 16 PP100 – this has moved up from second place last year. The Toyota Corolla >1.4L (21 PP100) and Renault Fluence (30 PP100) come in second and third places respectively.

Top Executive has three tied Gold awards – the Mercedes-Benz E-Class, the Audi A6 and the BMW 5-series with an insignificant difference across these models of 16 to 19 PP100. “Last year the E-class was the only model with an award in this segment differentiating itself from these competitors” mentions Busschau. “Here is one example of the other models starting to challenge the tradition and this presents with a new competitive edge in the segment wherein the results are statistically the same. This is beneficial to consumers in that potential customers are buying a product that is the same as far as product quality is concerned. This segment exemplifies the high expectations premium customers have and how the manufacturers have worked towards making this an even more competitive market.”

The Audi A5 retains its first place in the **Sports Coupe** segment and ties with the BMW 1-series CC this year – with scores of 14 to 15 PP100. The Mercedes-Benz C-Class Coupe and Mercedes-Benz SLK tie in second place (20 to 21 PP100). The VW Scirocco retains a podium position in third with 24 PP100.

Recreational vehicles

The **Small Recreational Vehicle** segment is led by the BMW X1 and the Kia Sportage both with a low score of 15 PP100. The Toyota RAV4, the Volkswagen Tiguan and the Audi Q5 are tied in second place again (23 to 25 PP100) this year together and the Nissan Qashquai takes third place with 28 PP100.

Frontrunner in the **Large Recreational Vehicle** segment is the Audi Q7 with the second lowest score in the survey at 12 PP100. Busschau adds, “This is setting a new standard for the large RV segment with scores typically in the 30’s, and is therefore a breakthrough in the quality of large recreational vehicles”.

Top performer in the **Multi-purpose vehicle** segment is the Chevrolet Orlando tied with the Mercedes-Benz B-Class (28 PP100). The Toyota Avanza MPV and VW Touran are in second place with 42 PP100 to 44PP100. The Toyota Verso takes third on the podium with 54 PP100.

Light Commercial Vehicles

In the segment of **Three-quarter ton**, the Nissan NP200 features at the top again this year with a score of 56 PP100. The Chevrolet Utility is in second place at 85 PP100.

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Isuzu KB dominates all but one of the rest of the segments – including the Petrol Single Cab, Diesel Single Cab and Petrol Double Cab Segments (with scores of 29 PP100, 29 PP100 and 36 PP100 respectively). The Toyota Hilux remains in front for the Diesel Double Cab segment with 33 PP100.

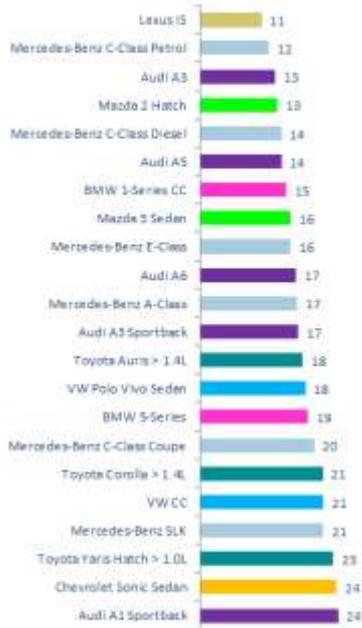
Busschau states, “We tend to find that due to the nature of the LCV market and the products themselves there are on average a slightly higher than average number of problems mentioned by new owners. The majority of these problems are noise-related issues such as squeaks and rattles or wind-noise.”

Busschau goes further to add, “The competition for product quality in the LCV segments is just as ‘hot’ as in the passenger car segments despite there being fewer LCV models available. However, there has once again been some shifting this year and this is sure to result in lower PP100 scores and happier LCV owners.”

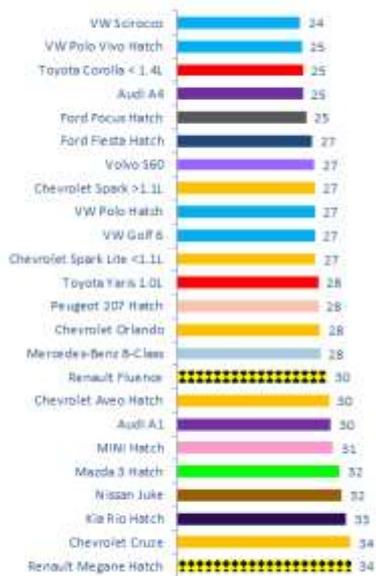
All the results can be seen below:

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Ipsos PC FULL RANKINGS 1 of 3



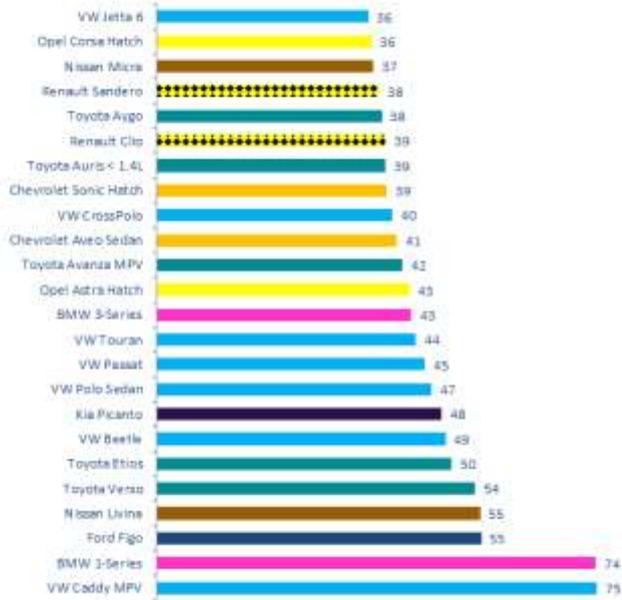
Ipsos PC FULL RANKINGS 2 of 3



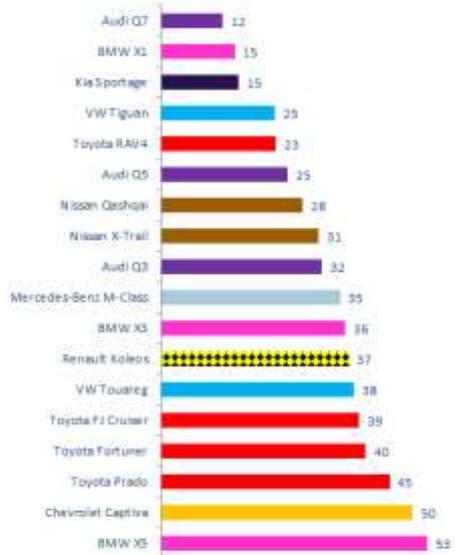
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PC FULL RANKINGS – 3 of 3

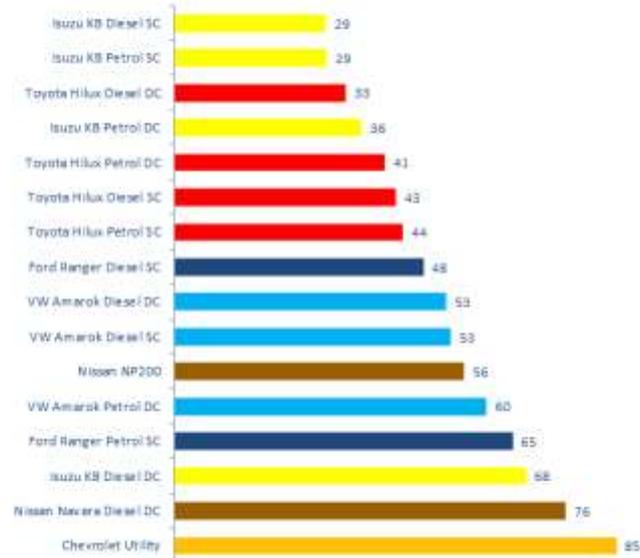


RV FULL RANKINGS



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Ipsos LCV FULL RANKINGS



More about the survey:

These rankings are based on Ipsos's Competitive Customer Experience (CCE) which has been conducted in South Africa for the past 21 years. The survey was conducted over a 12 month period between January and December 2012 and is part of a study that measures the perceptions of more than 10 000 passenger and light commercial vehicles.

Not all the brands are included in the survey for various reasons. This could be because the manufacturer chooses not to participate or because the sample that has been achieved is too small. Another reason some manufacturers do not get published is due to the length of participation in the study – a full year of participation is required before a brand can be included in the rankings.

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About Ipsos

Ipsos is the second largest global survey-based market research company, owned and managed by research professionals that assess market potential and interpret market trends for over 5,000 worldwide clients to develop and test emergent or existing products or services, build brands, test advertising and study audience responses to various media, and, measure public opinion on issues and reputation. With over 9,100 employees working in wholly owned operations in 83 countries, Ipsos conducts advertising, customer loyalty, marketing, media, and public affairs research, as well as forecasting, modeling, and consulting and a full line of custom, syndicated, omnibus, panel, and online research products and services in over 100 countries. Founded in 1975 by Jean-Marc Lech and Didier Truchot, Ipsos has been publicly traded since 1999. In 2008, Ipsos' revenues totaled €979.3 million. Listed on Eurolist by NYSE - Euronext Paris, Ipsos is part of the SBF 120 and the Mid-100 Index and is eligible to the Deferred Settlement System. Visit www.ipsos.com to learn more about Ipsos offerings and capabilities.

Ipsos acquired Synovate globally in October 2011, strengthening its position as a global research giant.