

CAA survey

Toyota, Honda, Ford head top 10 list

Models produced by Toyota, Honda, and Ford dominate Canadians' top-10 list of cars for their next vehicle purchase, a national survey conducted by the 3.1 million member, not-for-profit Canadian Automobile Association reveals.

The Toyota Camry was chosen by 6.4 per cent of the almost 22,000 Canadian car owners, including Hamilton Automobile Club members participating in the CAA's annual Vehicle Durability Survey, narrowly edging out the Honda Accord, the choice of 6.1 per cent of respondents. Ford placed four models in the top 10 list of choices, more than any other automobile manufacturer.

The top 10 cars identified by owners as their preference for their next purchase are as follows:

1. Toyota Camry, 6.4 per cent;
2. Honda Accord, 6.1 per cent;
3. Toyota Corolla, 4.2 per cent;
4. Plymouth Voyager/Dodge Caravan, 3.3 per cent;
5. Ford Taurus/Mercury Sable, 3 per cent;
6. Ford Crown Victoria, 1.9 per cent;
7. Volkswagen Jetta, 1.9 per cent;
8. Ford Tempo/Mercury Topaz, 1.7 per cent;
9. Honda Civic/CRX, 1.6 per cent;
10. Ford Thunderbird/Mercury Cougar 1.5 per cent.

The CAA survey also reveals that owner loyalty to brands is strong. Fully 52 per cent of survey respondents indicated that when

making their next vehicle purchase, they would choose a model made by the same manufacturer as their current vehicle. Toyota, Honda/Acura and Volvo achieved the highest brand loyalty, all with over 65 per cent of owners who

would buy the same brand again. The Canadian Automobile Association is the federation of all provincial and regional not-for-profit automobile clubs in Canada, including the Hamilton Automobile Club.



Caring For TOMORROW

Provided by the University of Guelph's Ontario Agricultural College (OAC) Dr. Freeman McEwen, dean

Computers help people come to their senses

Chris Findlay is computerizing the science of sniffing.

And tasting. And touching. And listening.

A computer software package developed by a University of Guelph team led by food science graduate Findlay is being used by major multinational companies like General Foods and Avon to determine what will find its way to the supper table, snack bowl or vanity.

But its potential doesn't stop there.

"Virtually any sort of consumer preference can be measured this way," says Findlay, who developed Computer Sensory Analysis (CSA) with Consumer Studies professor Elizabeth Gullett, and Don Genner. "This product is flexible enough to assess everything from the smoothness of whiskey to the crunch of potato chips."

Sensory analysis is a prerequisite for product introduction or refinement. Because buyer demand fuels sales, manufacturers use consumer panels for important sensory measurements.

But tabulating the results has traditionally been a tiresome and exacting skill. Panelists painstakingly answered flowing sheets of questionnaires, following which a data entry operator would manually insert the results into a main computer for analysis. Misinformation due to excessive handling and human error was not uncommon.

But the CSA system takes a fraction of the time to separate winners from losers. Seated in

front of a video display terminal, panelists taste a cookie, smell some cheese or rub a facial tissue on their cheek, for example, then touch a light-sensitive pen to a point on a graduated line on the screen that parallels their preference for the product's taste, smell, texture, etc. The resulting signal is relayed electronically to a central computer source, tabulated and offered for analysis.

The CSA system's first client was Jack Daniels bourbon manufacturer Brown-Forman, which wanted a sensory assessment of a new liqueur line. Since then, 22 others have followed, including Nabisco, the Campbell Soup Co., Nutra-Sweet and the U.S. army.

The system was developed through a research contract with Findlay's Guelph-based company, Compusense Inc., and the University of Guelph. The researcher-entrepreneur plans further studies on applications for the system and a new thrust into the European market.



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