

Ford's quality in statistical dead heat with Toyota and Honda for 2008 model year

Contributed by Johnathan Bodily

Ford Motor Company's surging domestic quality is now equal to the best in the industry for the 2008 model year, according to the latest U.S. Global Quality Research System (GQRS) study.

Ford, Lincoln and Mercury vehicles collectively reduced "things gone wrong" (TGW) by 7.7 percent compared to last year and are now statistically equivalent with Honda (including Acura) and Toyota (including Lexus and Scion) atop the list of seven major automakers in the survey.

From 2004 to 2008, Ford, Lincoln and Mercury vehicle quality, as measured by a reduction in TGW, has improved by 33 percent.

"This is One Ford at its best. It's taken thousands of people continuously working together with laser-like focus every day to boost vehicle quality for our customers to the top of the pack," said Bennie Fowler, Ford group vice president, Global Quality. "But this is a never-ending journey. The goal now is to distance ourselves from our top competitors. We want to be the sole quality leader."

The 2008-launched Ford F-Series Super Duty and the Lincoln Mark LT ranked first in their respective segments in both TGW and customer satisfaction. Ford Mustang GT 500 topped the sports car category in TGW.

Overall, 18 of 24 Ford, Lincoln and Mercury vehicles recorded TGW improvements. Ford's newly launched Focus improved significantly in TGW and customer satisfaction, now equaling the Toyota Corolla in both categories. The Ford Fusion and Mercury Milan are significantly better in TGW than the Toyota Camry, which they tied in customer satisfaction.

"We are consistently delivering improved quality by following standardized, disciplined processes throughout Ford," said Fowler. "This is particularly impressive considering the difficult challenges we've had to overcome."

Ford also ranked best in class for TGW performance in the functional areas of Vehicle Engineering and Electrical among major manufacturers. Ford, Lincoln and Mercury vehicles averaged 1,287 TGW per 1,000 vehicles, a reduction of 108 versus a year ago. Customer satisfaction with the company's vehicles reached its highest level ever, improving one point to 77 percent.

The 2008 model-year GQRS survey, conducted for Ford by RDA Group of Bloomfield Hills, Mich., solicits feedback on vehicle trouble and customer satisfaction from owners of all major makes and models after three months in service.