



Press Release

J.D. Power and Associates Reports:

Ashton Woods and Village Builders Rank Highest in Overall Customer Satisfaction Among New-Home Builders in Houston; J. Patrick Homes Ranks Highest in New-Home Quality

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif.: 15 September 2009 — Ashton Woods and Village Builders tie to rank highest in customer satisfaction with new-home builders in the Houston, Texas, market, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2009 New-Home Builder Customer Satisfaction StudySM released today. In addition, J. Patrick Homes ranks highest in the New-Home Quality Study also released today. J. Patrick Homes and Village Builders are headquartered in Houston.

“The tough new-home market has created a fiercely competitive environment in which only the strongest companies have survived,” said Paula Sonkin, vice president of the real estate and construction industries practice at J.D. Power and Associates. “Fortunately for buyers, this has resulted in notable improvements in customer satisfaction with home builders and new-home quality overall. This is great news for new-home buyers—particularly first-time buyers—since builders are offering unprecedented high levels of quality, value and service at relatively low prices.”

Overall Customer Satisfaction

The New-Home Builder Customer Satisfaction Study, now in its 13th year, includes [satisfaction rankings for builders in 24 markets](#). Nine factors drive overall customer satisfaction with home builders: builder’s sales staff; builder’s warranty/customer service staff; workmanship/materials; price/value; home readiness; construction manager; recreational facilities provided by the builder; builder’s design center; and location.

Ashton Woods and Village Builders achieve a score of 845 each on a 1,000-point scale in 2009. Ashton Woods performs particularly well in the [Houston market](#) in four of nine factors: builder’s design center; construction manager; workmanship/materials; and price/value. Village Builders performs particularly well in the recreational facilities provided by the builder factor. Ashton Woods improves by 38 points, while Village Builders improves by 52 points from 2008. Following Ashton Woods and Village Builders in the market rankings is Highland Homes (842). Highland Homes performs particularly well in the builder’s warranty/customer service staff; location; and recreational facilities provided by the builder factors.

The average customer satisfaction index score in the Houston market is 797—14 points below the 24-market average of 811. However, satisfaction has improved substantially in the Houston market in 2009—up 31 points from 2008.

2009 New-Home Quality Study

The J.D. Power and Associates New-Home Quality Study,SM now in its third year, measures the [occurrence and impact of construction problems experienced by new-home owners in 24 markets](#). The study utilizes an index that examines the number of problems that occur, the severity of problems and the size of the home, and covers 41 different problem categories for the following areas: bathroom; drywall; electrical/appliances; flooring/stairs; home exterior; interior paint; kitchen; windows/doors; and other significant problems.

J. Patrick Homes ranks highest in [new-home quality in the Houston market](#), followed by Ashton Woods and LGI Homes, respectively.

Home quality in the Houston market has improved considerably from 2008, averaging 832 in 2009—up by 21 points from the previous year.

The rate of customer-reported problems in the Houston market has improved to an average of 10.1 problems per home in 2009—down by nearly two problems per home from 2008. The problems reported most often in the market include landscaping issues; heating and air conditioning problems; kitchen cabinet quality and finish; and appliance problems.

“Green” Home Findings

Approximately 43 percent of new-home owners in the Houston market perceive their home to be environmentally friendly, but a large proportion of these owners—50 percent—say that their home builder did not identify the home as “green.”

“Builders that neglect to point out environmentally friendly home features to buyers are missing out on a very important opportunity,” said Sonkin. “New-home buyers are increasingly seeking out green home features and the benefits they bring in terms of energy and cost savings.”

Home owners in the Houston market indicate that the top five features a green home should have are:

- Energy efficient heating/air conditioning units
- Energy efficient home appliances
- Energy efficient insulation
- Energy-saving lighting such as compact fluorescent bulbs
- Water-saving systems (such as faucets, dual flush toilets, and sprinklers)

To be included in the studies, Houston-area builders must have closed 150 or more homes in the market in 2008. The new homes are located in the following counties: Brazoria, Ft. Bend, Galveston, Harris and Montgomery.

These two studies are based on responses from 26,231 buyers of newly built single-family homes who provided feedback after living in their homes from four to 18 months, on average. There were 2,835 respondents in the Houston market. For more comprehensive builder rankings for all 24 U.S. markets, visit www.jdpower.com/homes.

For more information, read an [article](#) or view [new-home builder customer satisfaction ratings](#) and [new-home builder quality ratings](#) on JDPower.com.

About J.D. Power and Associates

Headquartered in Westlake Village, Calif., J.D. Power and Associates is a global marketing information services company operating in key business sectors including market research, forecasting, performance improvement, Web intelligence and customer satisfaction. The company’s quality and satisfaction measurements are based on responses from millions of consumers annually. For more information on [home building and home improvement](#), [car reviews and ratings](#), [car insurance](#), [health insurance](#), [cell phone ratings](#), and more, please visit JDPower.com. J.D. Power and Associates is a business unit of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

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NOTE: Two charts follow.

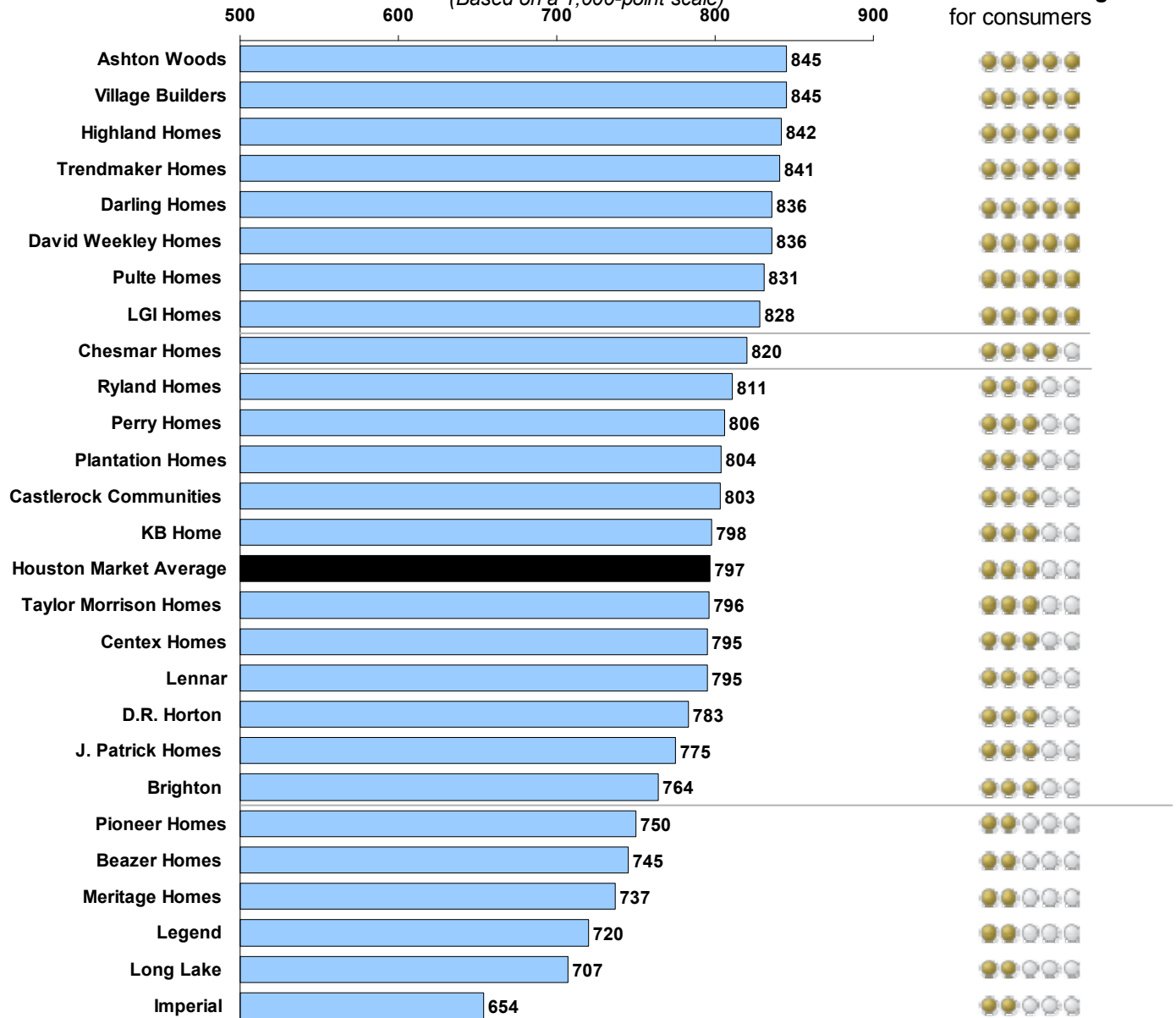
J.D. Power and Associates 2009 New-Home Builder Customer Satisfaction StudySM

Overall Satisfaction Index Scores

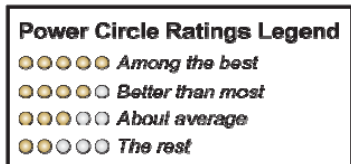
Houston, Texas

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)

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Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2009 New-Home Builder Customer Satisfaction StudySM



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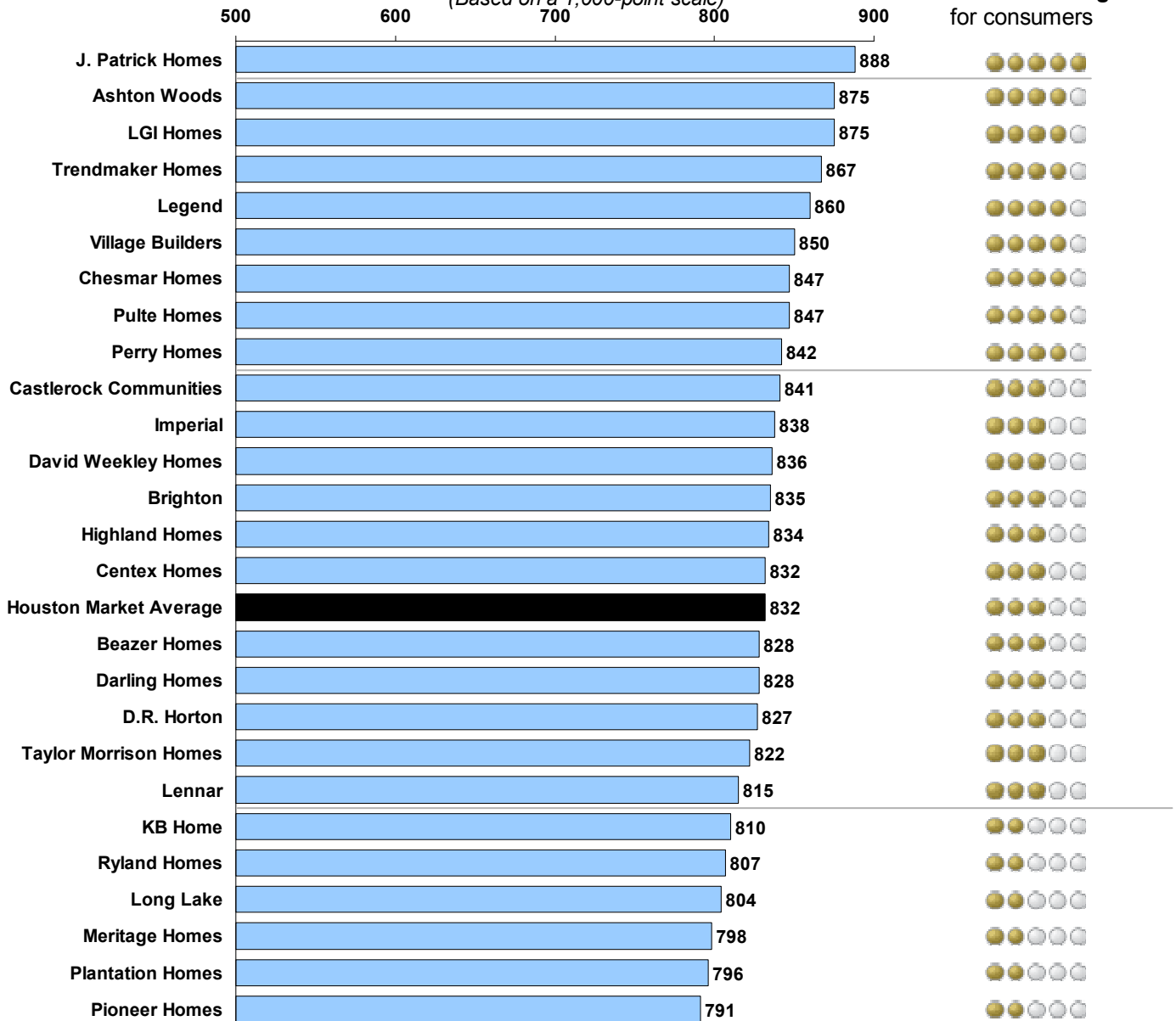
J.D. Power and Associates 2009 New-Home Quality StudySM

Overall Satisfaction Index Scores

Houston, Texas

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)

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Power Circle Ratings Legend

- Among the best
- Better than most
- About average
- The rest

Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2009 New-Home Quality StudySM

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