



## Press Release

### **J.D. Power and Associates Reports: The Sales Experience, Product and Cost of Ownership Help Drive Improvement in Overall Motorcycle Customer Satisfaction**

#### Owners Spending More on New Motorcycles, Including Parts and Accessories

**WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif.: 16 December 2011** — Overall motorcycle customer satisfaction has increased notably from 2010, driven by marked improvements in the sales experience, the products, and cost of ownership, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2011 U.S. Motorcycle Competitive Information Study<sup>SM</sup> released today.

The study, now in its 14<sup>th</sup> year, measures owner satisfaction with new motorcycles in six major factors of the overall ownership experience: product; build quality; cost of ownership; sales; service; and warranty.

Among the factors, satisfaction with the sales experience has improved most, increasing to 856 (on a 1,000-point scale) in 2011 from 838 in 2010. Satisfaction with the product and cost of ownership also improves significantly, compared with 2010.

The study also finds that motorcycle build quality improves to 122 problems per 100 motorcycles (PP100) from an average of 133 PP100 in 2010. One-half of owners say they have experienced zero problems with their new motorcycle, and among these owners, satisfaction with build quality averages 963. However, among owners who say they experienced two problems with their motorcycle, satisfaction with build quality declines considerably to an average 871.

Among the five problem categories examined in the study, problems with engines account for the greatest proportion of problems experienced (27%), although the incidence of engine-related problems has improved slightly in 2011—a decline of 5 PP100 from 2010. Problems with excessive heat from engine, unusual engine noises, and excessive engine vibration account for 51 percent of all engine-related problems reported.

Issues with fit/finish comprise the second-largest proportion of problems, followed by problems with braking/ride.

“The increase in overall satisfaction and the improvements in five of the six factors are very positive news for the industry, which is still trying to fully recover from the blow the economy has delivered in recent years,” said Brent Gruber, senior manager of the powersports and commercial vehicle practice at J.D. Power and Associates. “Improving the quality of motorcycles, as well as the sales and service experience, certainly positions the manufacturers and their dealerships well for market recovery.”

According to Gruber, motorcycle owners are already showing signs that they are willing to spend again. Customers spent considerably more for their motorcycle in 2011, compared with 2010. The average owner-reported price paid in 2011 is \$16,125, nearly \$2,000 higher than in 2010. On average, owners spend an additional \$1,340 on parts and accessories and \$439 on riding gear—also considerably more than in 2010.

“As satisfaction increases, so does owner loyalty and advocacy,” said Gruber. “Manufacturers that focus on delivering high quality and superior service now will experience a long-term positive financial impact from their efforts.”

The study finds that as satisfaction increases, the likelihood that an owner will repurchase their motorcycle brand and recommend their brand to others also increases. Among owners with high levels of satisfaction (scores averaging 900 or higher), 97 percent say they are willing to recommend their motorcycle brand to others and 81 percent indicate intent to repurchase the same brand for their next motorcycle. In contrast, among owners who are less satisfied (scores averaging 700 or less), only 43 percent say they are willing to recommend their brand to others and 31 percent indicate repurchase intent.

The 2011 U.S. Motorcycle Competitive Information Study is based on responses from 8,123 owners who purchased their new motorcycle between September 2010 and May 2011. The study was fielded between September and October 2011.

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