

NADA 2024 Dealer Satisfaction Index results celebrate excellence in automotive sector

The National Automobile Dealers' Association (NADA) is proud to announce the results of the 2024 Dealer Satisfaction Index (DSI) survey. Now in its 28th year (with a pause in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic) the DSI survey continues to be a crucial benchmark for measuring dealer satisfaction across various automotive brands in South Africa.

This year's survey saw participation from 35 independently researched brands and garnered a total of 1,481 responses, with 1,298 responses from Passenger/Light Commercial Vehicles (LCV) dealerships and 183 from Commercial Vehicle dealerships.

The NADA DSI project, which has been supported by NADA Executive Members, NADA Dealer Council Chairmen, and representatives of all participating brands, provides invaluable insights into the automotive industry. The survey is segmented into 13 focus areas including Dealer Satisfaction; Communication and Relationships; Used Cars; CSI Programme; Vehicle Range; Vehicle Distribution; Parts; Policy Claims & Warranty; Franchise Compliance Audits; Dealer Support; Labour Rates and others.

Lightstone, the independent research company conducting the survey since its inception in 1996, has noted a significant increase in how manufacturers and importers utilise the insights from the DSI results.

The DSI survey results are eagerly anticipated by the industry and are celebrated annually at a gala award ceremony. This year, the ceremony was especially significant as it marked WesBank's 20th year of partnering with NADA as the sponsor of the awards. Speaking at the event, Ghana Msibi, CEO of WesBank, highlighted the importance of collaboration and resilience in the industry.

"This year is a critical one for the industry, crucial in how we position ourselves to navigate these times," said Msibi.

“Effective relationships require hard work, not luck. Tough times test the strength of these relationships. Many say that this challenging cycle has been long, and they’re right. The last boom we saw was in 2010. Since then, we have faced numerous challenges, impacting business and personal lives, and causing widespread exhaustion. But with much of the speculation behind us, we now have a clearer view of where the future might take us.”

Msibi emphasised the industry's resilience and the need to leverage feedback from the DSI results for continuous improvement. *“We have a special group of individuals deeply invested in making this industry stronger. As we celebrate the awards and excellence tonight, we should look beyond the awards themselves. Let’s view them as reflections of our current state, take the feedback seriously, and work to improve. If we don’t, we are ripe for disruption. Few industries are as ripe for disruption as ours. I urge you to use the feedback to drive positive change.”*

He concluded by reminding attendees of the importance of relationships in the industry’s success. *“Tonight is about celebration, pausing, and investing in what truly matters - the relationships that brought us here.”*

The 2024 awards were categorised into Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze based on overall DSI scores:

Passenger/LCV Awards:

- **Platinum Award (85.0 and above):** Lexus, Mini, Toyota, Suzuki
- **Gold Award (75.0 – 84.9):** BMW, Volvo, Hyundai, Mitsubishi, Chery, Kia, Mahindra
- **Silver Award (70.0 – 74.9):** 9 Manufacturers
- **Bronze Award (65.0 – 69.9):** 1 Manufacturer

Stellantis was recognised as the most improved brand in 2024.

The Commercial Vehicle survey, introduced in 2008, showed a notable improvement with an overall score increasing from 77.9 in 2023 to 78.8 in 2024, marking the highest score since the study's inception.

Hino distinguished itself by achieving a Platinum award for the sixth consecutive year and becoming the first manufacturer in the history of the NADA DSI Study to score above 90%.

Commercial Vehicle Awards:

- **Platinum Award (85.0 and above):** Hino
- **Gold Award (75.0 – 84.9):** MAN, UD Trucks, Mercedes-Benz Trucks, FAW, Isuzu Trucks
- **Silver Award (70.0 – 74.9):** 1 Manufacturer
- **Bronze Award (65.0 – 69.9):** 1 Manufacturer

“These results underscore the commitment of automotive brands to enhancing dealer satisfaction and reflect the robust engagement between dealers and manufacturers. NADA remains dedicated to supporting its members through initiatives like the DSI survey, which drive industry standards and promote excellence,” said Brandon Cohen, Chairperson of NADA.

“It is encouraging to see that, over the years, the NADA dealer survey has established itself as a reliable and respected tool for identifying any potential issues that may impact the working relationship between retailers and manufacturers. We extend our sincere appreciation to all those who have taken the time to participate in this annual initiative. Our warm congratulations go to all the award winners,” concluded Cohen.

NADA is a proud association of the Retail Motor Industry Organisation (RMI).

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