



CBS NEWS POLL
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THE PUBLIC REACTS TO TOYOTA'S PROBLEMS

February 26-March 1, 2010

Americans are divided over how Toyota has handled the recent recall and problems with braking and acceleration in some of its vehicles, and half now say they are less likely to buy a Toyota. Toyota owners are generally more positive than Americans overall about the company and its cars, but a third of them are reluctant to buy another Toyota now. Still, most are confident the company will fix its vehicles.

39% of Americans think Toyota has done a good job so far in handling the problems with its vehicles, while 34% think the car company has done a bad job. One in four doesn't have an opinion.

Those who own a Toyota rate the company's reaction more positively - 54% think Toyota has done a good job handling the problems.

TOYOTA'S HANDLING OF CAR PROBLEMS

	All	Toyota Owners
Good job	39%	54%
Bad job	34	27
Don't know	27	19

The poll shows evidence of some distrust. While 27% of Americans think Toyota is mostly telling the truth about the problems with some of their automobiles, almost half think Toyota management is mostly telling the truth but hiding something.

More Toyota drivers (43%) say the company's management is being truthful, but the same number says the company is hiding something. Few Americans, and Toyota owners, think Toyota management is lying about the problems with some of its cars.

TOYOTA MANAGEMENT AND CAR PROBLEMS

	All	Toyota Owners
Telling the truth	27%	43%
Hiding something	49	43
Mostly lying	11	5

The poll suggests Toyota's sales may suffer as a result. The recent problems have led 49% of Americans to say they are less likely to buy a Toyota right now. About a third says the problems have made no difference in their likelihood to buy a car made by Toyota. 16% say they are more likely to buy a Toyota.

IMPACT OF RECENT PROBLEMS ON BUYING A TOYOTA

	All	Toyota Owners
More likely	16%	22%
Less likely	49	35
No difference	32	37

35% of those who currently have a Toyota say they are less likely to buy another one right now, but 37% say the problems would not impact whether or not they buy a Toyota again.

Despite the reluctance of some Americans to buy a Toyota now, more than four in five think the company will be able to fix all the problems so the cars are safe to drive again. Toyota drivers are also confident.

WILL TOYOTA BE ABLE TO FIX PROBLEMS?

	All	Toyota Owners
Yes	81%	89%
No	11	5

Regardless of the car they drive, few Americans - or Toyota drivers - say they feel less safe driving with Toyotas on the road. Most say the recent problems have had no effect on how safe they feel.

FEEL LESS SAFE DRIVING DUE TO TOYOTA PROBLEMS?

	All	Toyota owners
Yes	15%	11%
No	78	85

The Toyota story has captured the attention of the American public. Most have heard or read about the trouble with Toyota vehicles, including 64% who have heard a lot about it. Toyota drivers have paid even more attention.

HOW MUCH HAVE YOU HEARD OR READ ABOUT TOYOTA PROBLEMS?

	All	Toyota owners
A lot	64%	80%
Some	27	18
Not much/nothing	8	2

In the wake of the issues with Toyota, the percentage of Americans who say U.S. automakers produce better-quality cars than foreign car makers has risen since last year. 41% now say American-made cars are better, compared to 29% last January, soon after struggling U.S. automakers received government bailouts.

WHICH AUTOMAKERS MAKE BETTER-QUALITY CARS?

	Now	1/2009
United States	41%	29%
Foreign	43	55

As expected, those who own an American car are more likely to say U.S. automakers make better cars, while foreign car owners take the opposite view.

WHICH AUTOMAKERS MAKE BETTER-QUALITY CARS?

	Kind of Car Own:		
	All	American	Foreign
United States	41%	55%	13%
Foreign	43	27	70

This poll was conducted among a random sample of 967 adults nationwide, interviewed by telephone February 26-March 1, 2010. Phone numbers were dialed from random digit dial samples of both standard land-line and cell phones. The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus three percentage points. The error for subgroups is higher. This poll release conforms to the Standards of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

Total respondents: 967, Margin of error: 3 pts.

Toyota owners: 148, Margin of error: 8 pts.

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q1 Generally speaking, do you think U.S. automakers or foreign automakers produce better-quality cars?

	* TOTAL RESPONDENTS *		
	Total	Toyota Owners	Jan09a
	%	%	%
US automakers	41	17	29%
Foreign automakers	43	68	55
Both (Vol.)	7	9	8
DK/NA	9	6	8

q2 How much have you heard or read about the recent problems with some Toyota automobiles involving problems with their gas pedals and brakes -- a lot, some, not much, or nothing at all?

A lot	64	80
Some	27	18
Not much	6	1
Nothing at all	2	1
DK/NA	1	0

q3 So far, do you think Toyota has done a good job or a bad job handling the problems with some of their automobiles?

Good job	39	54
Bad job	34	27
DK/NA	27	19

q4 Do you think Toyota management is telling the truth about those problems, mostly telling the truth but hiding something, or are they mostly lying?

Telling the truth	27	43
Hiding something	49	43
Mostly lying	11	5
DK/NA	13	9

q5 If you were in the market to buy a new car right now, would the recent problems experienced by Toyota affect whether or not you buy a car made by Toyota? IF YES, ASK: Would you be more likely or less likely to buy a Toyota?

Yes, more likely	16	22
Yes, less likely	49	35
No, no difference	32	37
DK/NA	3	6

q6 Do you think Toyota will be able to fix all the problems so that their cars are safe to drive again, or not?

Will	81	89
Will not	11	5
DK/NA	8	6

q7 Regardless of the kind of car you drive, have the problems with Toyota automobiles made you feel less safe while you're driving, or hasn't it affected how safe you feel?

	* TOTAL RESPONDENTS *	
	Total	Toyota Owners
	%	%
Less Safe	15	11
Not less safe	78	85
Don't drive (vol.)	3	1
DK/NA	4	3

q8 Do you have a car, or don't you?

Yes	90
No	10

q9 What kind of car do you have--American, Japanese or some other foreign car?

	* CAR OWNERS *	
American	58	0
Japanese	26	88
Other foreign	8	0
American and Japanese	4	11
American and other foreign	2	0
Japanese and other foreign	0	1
DK/NA	2	0

q10 Do you currently have a Toyota, or not?

	* THOSE WHO OWN A JAPANESE CAR *	
Yes	50	
No	50	

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