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Brand Keys — a brand and customer loyalty and engagement consultancy out of New York — recently released its 2011 Customer Loyalty Engagement Index, which honored companies in 79 categories, including automakers.

The index once again awarded the top automotive ranking to Hyundai, which celebrated its second straight year of winning in the category.

"The Brand Keys data paints a detailed picture of the category drivers that engage customers, engender loyalty and drive real profits," the firm said on its website.

"These drivers not only define how the consumer will view the category, compare offerings, and, ultimately, buy, but also identify the expectations the consumer holds for each driver," it continued. "The brand whose drivers come closest to meeting (or even exceeding) those of the category Ideal is

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always the one whose customers will demonstrate the highest levels of engagement and loyalty over the next 12 to 18 months."

Hyundai was followed by Ford in the No. 2 spot, with Honda and Nissan in a tie for third. Mercedes-Benz and BMW were tied for the next spot,. Those automakers were followed by Kia and General Motors, which tied for the No. 5 position.

"Hyundai has been able to best meet customer expectations and has, again, scored the highest levels of loyalty when it comes to the Automotive category, taking the No. 1 spot in our Customer Loyalty Engagement Index," stated Robert Passikoff, founder and president Brand Keys.

"Of course, the true test of loyalty and engagement always shows up in the marketplace, so we weren't surprised to see their sales are up again over last year. We congratulate them on another win," Passikoff added.

Offering some feedback from the automaker, Hyundai Motor America national manager of dealer marketing and resource management Trea Reedy noted: "Hyundai is completely committed to our customers with Hyundai Assurance, the industry's most comprehensive consumer protection plan.

"And, with our strong new lineup filled with stylish, fuel efficient and affordable vehicles, both new and returning customers are keeping Hyundai at the top of their shopping lists," Reedy added.

The complete list of automotive rankings is as follows:

- 1. Hyundai
- 2. Ford
- 3. Honda/Nissan (tie)
- 4. Mercedes/BMW (tie)
- 5. Kia/GM (tie)
- 6. Subaru
- 7. Jeep/Toyota (tie)
- 8. Mazda/Mitsubishi/Volkswagen (tie)
- 9. Chrysler
- 10. Audi/Chevrolet/Volvo (tie)
- 11. Saab

HMA Chairman Receives Honor

In other news from the automaker, HMA announced Wednesday that its president and CEO John Krafcik was given the Chairman's Award for 2010 by *Global Auto News*.

The panel of judges for the publication's award included journalists throughout the U.S.

"John Krafcik defines what we mean by 'go-to' executive, appearing at auto shows, press events and public automotive events across America," *Global Auto News* publisher Bill McCallum.

"John and his team have put Hyundai on the fast-track for success with increased sales and market

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share for a number of years," McCallum added. "Under John's leadership in 2010, Hyundai reached many milestones, including record sales, record market share and more than 200,000 Hyundai Sonata units sold."

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- [1] http://www.autoremarketing.com/rss.xml
- [2] http://www.autoremarketing.com/content/trends/automakers-rated-customer-loyalty-levels

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