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Volkswagen reclaims top spot in brand-loyalty stakes

Three years after the emissions reporting scandal broke worldwide, Volkswagen has regained the top spot in the non-luxury-vehicle brand-loyalty stakes in Australia, according to the latest survey data from Roy Morgan Research.

Of those planning to buy a new vehicle in the next four years, a full 61.5 per cent of VW drivers said in June that they would be looking to buy the same brand – marginally ahead of the 59.6 per cent of Toyota drivers who said they would remain brand-loyal.

As of June 2018, the next highest levels of loyalty after VW and Toyota were Mazda (57.6%), Subaru (54.4%), Honda (50.9%) and Hyundai (47.7%).

VW was leading the brand-loyalty league table when under-reporting of its cars' diesel emissions were discovered in September 2015. Its brand loyalty fell from a pre-scandal high of 66% to 49% a few months later.

Across all brands, the June quarter saw mostly minor changes in the categories sought out by those planning to buy a new car within 12 months. The biggest change was in the 'large SUV' category, where the proportion of would-be buyers increased from 11% to 13.3%.

In other categories, 5.6% of respondents plan to buy a 'light' vehicle; 20.6% a 'small vehicle'; 7.7% a 'medium' vehicle; 3.6% a 'large' vehicle; 7.1% a 'small SUV'; 16.6% a 'medium SUV'; and 1.9% an 'upper large SUV'.

The Roy Morgan *Automotive Currency Report* for the June quarter contains full brand listings, with data on loyalty, satisfaction, buying intentions, brand health, attitudes to vehicles, servicing costs, and media use for consumers researching vehicle purchases.

The report is based on data collected via Roy Morgan's unique single-source survey, which conducts more than 50,000 in-depth face-to-face, in-home interviews per year – a data collection method that allows sophisticated cross-referencing of demographic and psychographic data to build fuller profiles of customers' tastes, values, behaviours and likely future buying habits.

Michele Levine, Roy Morgan CEO, commented:

"Every CEO and marketing director in the world learned a lesson from the controversy that engulfed Volkswagen in 2015, but they can now learn another lesson – how a brand can recover from that kind of slump.

"VW has made it back to the top of the brand-loyalty stakes in June, but its major competitors are close behind – Toyota and Mazda rank second and third by a slim margin.

"Good research can help any brand steal a march on its competitors. At Roy Morgan we are constantly improving our research tools and products to ensure clients have the deep market understanding needed to build a brand – or rebuild a brand.

"Our recently updated and re-launched Helix Personas market segmentation tool can help brands target communication more precisely than ever, to make sure it is cutting through with the best customers and future customers."

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To learn more about Roy Morgan's *Automotive Currency Report* call (+61) (3) 9224 5309 or email askroymorgan@roymorgan.com.

More information on the suite of products available via the [Roy Morgan Single Source](#) and the psychographic segmentation tools provided by [Roy Morgan Helix Personas](#) is available at roymorgan.com.au or by visiting the [Roy Morgan Online Store](#).

About Roy Morgan

Roy Morgan is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in the United States, Indonesia and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan has over 70 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2

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