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# Survey Report



Exploring the Impact of the 2010 Toyota Recall on Toyota Owners

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### Purpose

The purpose of our study is to evaluate the reaction of Toyota owners to the 2010 recall crisis. Through surveys we will determine the effect of the crisis on individuals and their Toyota brand loyalty.

### Objectives

The objectives of this survey project are:

- To understand why people purchase certain cars and how they feel Toyota compares to different brands.
- To determine awareness and course of action of Toyota owners during the recall.
- To determine customer satisfaction of Toyota after the recall.

### Results

#### **Understanding people's purchasing decision:**

*Participants purchased vehicles based on their individual desires. Amongst the car's make and model, people value esthetics, practicality and reliability when purchasing their vehicles.*

“Well basically, I figure out what I need the car to do. I commute to work, so I need a car that has good gas mileage. I also, want something that has low maintenance, while at the



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same time looking good. So the best combination of the three is kind of how I evaluate cars.” – Austin Pullaro

“The thing I look at is how the car looks. If I like how the car looks it doesn’t matter to me really who makes it. If it has good lines I kinda like it and when I bought my Toyota I had my mind made up that I wanted a 4-Runner, so I went ahead with that.”- Ryan Murphy

“I evaluate them by model, make, and year.”- Michel Philippe

### **Participants Awareness of Recall and Actions that were taken:**

*The participants used different mass media brackets, such as television broadcast and search engines, to research whether they were personally affected by the recall.*

“I did hear about the recall, it was probably on one of the news channels... All I did was Google ‘4-Runner recall’ and I saw nothing on a 2008 4-Runner so I assumed that I was pretty clear and I was good to go.” –Ryan Murphy

“I heard about it on the news.”- Michel Philippe

“I got on the Internet and Goggled ‘Toyota recall,’ and found that my Lexus, the hybrid, was one that had been recalled.” – Austin Pullaro

### **Attitudes towards Toyota after the Recall:**

*The participants were satisfied with Toyota overall and with their response to the crisis.*



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*Each expressed that despite the recall they would stay loyal customers and purchase another Toyota vehicle in the future.*

“Customer Service handled the situation well, helping me successfully get my car the attention it needed. I had the car back within the week, and haven’t been having any problems since. You could tell they were going to be doing a lot of these recalls, and were well organized.”- Austin Pullaro

“I’ve been a Toyota owner for twenty years, and this is the first problem Toyota has had as far as recalls related to my car. The company is solid financially, and my car, other than this one time, hasn’t had problems beyond the usual maintenance issues. I will purchase another Toyota when my current one no longer runs.”- Austin Pullaro

“I would have no problem with purchasing another Toyota. I have had nothing but great luck with mine. But as far as that goes, I would buy a Lexus or a Toyota. So basically the recall has no influence on me to not purchase a Toyota, I would totally purchase another one. “-Ryan Murphy

“I would still buy a Toyota if it’s a good car.”- Michel Philippe

### Methodology

For accurate research we each contacted a Toyota owner and explored their knowledge of and reaction to the Toyota recall. Austin Pullaro owns a 2010 Lexus HS 250h, which was recalled in February. His interview was conducted on Sunday, March 21 at 4:30 p.m. His interview lasted 2 minutes and 50 second. Our other two sources did not have vehicles that were recalled, but they were aware and able to express their opinions on the crisis. Ryan Murphay, owner of a 2008 4-Runner, was interviewed on Thursday, March



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18 at 5:00 p.m. His interview lasted 5 minutes and 14 seconds. Michel Philippe owns a 1998 Toyota Camry. His interview was recorded at 7:30 p.m. on March 23, lasting approximately 2 minutes. All of these interviews were recorded using audacity. After evaluating each response we successfully gained knowledge Toyota owner's opinions about the company's management and response during and after the recall.

### Conclusion

After interviewing three Toyota owners, one who was affected by the recall and two who were not, the overall findings were continuous. Each person had their individual reasons for purchasing a Toyota, and none said that it was their ideal car, but in the end, the interviewees expressed an unwavering consensus that they would buy another Toyota. Ryan Murphy, purchased his Toyota for the look of the 4-Runner. He ensured that he was fully informed about the recall and was satisfied with the way that Toyota dealt with the crisis. His brand loyalty was not affected and remains the same that it was before. Austin Pullaro, purchased his Camry for the practicality and style, he utilized several avenues to be informed about the recall that his car was involved in. He was satisfied with the way that Toyota dealt with the recall and remains a loyal Toyota purchaser. Michel Philippe purchased his Camry because of the make and model of the vehicle. He expressed his awareness of the recall, but did not go to the lengths to become informed on the way Toyota was dealing with the issue due to his car's un-involvement. He remains open to purchasing another Toyota in the future. With these findings, we can only suggest to Toyota that they should continue with their crisis management strategies and tactics to secure their brand loyalty.



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### Appendices

#### Interview questions:

1. How do you evaluate different types of cars when purchasing?
2. If you could have the ideal car what would it be?
3. Describe to me how you came to the decision of buying a Toyota?
4. How do you feel Toyota compares to other car brands?
5. How did you hear about the Toyota recall?
  
6. How do you feel about Toyota's response to the recall?
7. What could Toyota have done better during the recall?
8. When you heard about the issue what course of action did you take to find out if your car had been recalled?
9. If your vehicle was recalled, what do you think about how customer service handled your situation?
10. We've heard from other people that they would not buy another Toyota, what are your feelings about purchasing another Toyota?

### Renee's Interview with Ryan Murphy

Renee: How do you evaluate different types of cars when purchasing?

Ryan: I really don't evaluate the make or the model as much as... Wait I should start that over- that is what I evaluate.

Renee: You evaluate the make and the model?



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**Ryan:** The thing I look at is how the car looks. If I like how the car looks it doesn't matter to me really who makes it. If it has good lines I kinda like it and when I bought my Toyota I had my mind made up that I wanted a 4-Runner, so I went ahead with that.

**Renee:** If you could have the ideal car what would it be?

**Ryan:** The ideal car for me right now would be a black range rover, with black 22-inch rims, with black tint-just blacked out.

**Renee:** Describe to me how you came to the decision of buying a Toyota?

**Ryan:** It really wasn't a decision of buying a Toyota, as much as it was the look of the car. If I thought that a Tahoe was a good-looking car I would have bought that. So basically, it was all looks and style to me. It really wasn't a Toyota-type thing.

**Renee:** So when it came to buying a car you had made up your mind.

**Ryan:** I had my mind set on a 4-Runner, so that's why I went with a Toyota. I didn't know what color I wanted. But I did know what make and model I wanted.

**Renee:** How do you feel Toyota compares to other car brands?

**Ryan:** To tell you the truth I really don't really know, because I have never owned another car. I owned a Ford, but it wasn't new. So Toyota is the only dealership that I have dealt with. They have backed up the navigation that had an issue and also there was some kind of leak when the car was new and they fixed it, so I have now issue with Toyota at all.

**Renee:** How did you hear about the Toyota recall?



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**Ryan:** I did hear about the recall, it was probably on one of the news channels. Fortunately, the 4-Runner was never, to my knowledge, recalled. I thought it was mainly a Camry or a Prius. But, yes I am aware of the recall.

**Renee:** How do you feel about Toyota's response to the recall?

**Ryan:** I think that their response was pretty good. Their CEO initially wasn't originally going to appear in court to defend the company, but he changed his mind and did appear to defend his company, and there was an apology as well. So I think they handled it the correct way.

**Renee:** What could Toyota have done better during the recall?

**Ryan:** I think they could have explained the problems and what was causing the problems a little bit better than they did. Maybe they did, but to my knowledge I still don't know what was going on other than a frozen stuck accelerator pedal. So maybe a little bit better job of explanation.

**Renee:** When you heard about the issue what course of action did you take to find out if your car had been recalled?

**Ryan:** All I did was Google "4-Runner recall" and I saw nothing on a 2008 4-Runner so I assumed that I was pretty clear and I was good to go.

**Renee:** If your vehicle was recalled, what do you think about how customer service handled your situation?

(The surveyed person's vehicle was not recalled)



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**Renee:** We've heard from other people that they would not buy another Toyota, what are your feelings about purchasing another Toyota?

**Ryan:** I would have no problem with purchasing another Toyota. I have had nothing but great luck with mine. But as far as that goes, I would buy a Lexus or a Toyota. So basically the recall has no influence on me to not purchase a Toyota, I would totally purchase another one.

### Sydney's Interview with Austin Pullaro

**Sydney:** How do you evaluate different types of cars when purchasing

**Austin:** Well basically, I figure out what I need the car to do. I commute to work, so I need a car that has good gas mileage. I also, want something that has low maintenance, while at the same time looking good. So the best combination of the three is kind of how I evaluate cars.

**Sydney:** If you could have the ideal car what would it be?

**Austin:** The ideal car for me is a car that only required yearly maintenance, and ran off of a fuel cheaper than gasoline.

**Sydney:** Describe to me how you came to the decision of buying a Toyota?

**Austin:** Foreign automakers are known for being more reliable than American ones. And out of the foreign automakers, Toyota and Honda are the two best. I enjoy luxury vehicles and Toyota produces Lexus, which are some of the finest cars on the market, so I went with Toyota.



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**Sydney:** How do you feel Toyota compares to other car brands?

**Austin:** Like I said earlier, Toyota has the best reliability ratings according to most reports, and at the same time, have cars that look sleek and stylish. I feel that Toyota compares pretty good in the car world, fairly low price in comparison for how reliable they are.

**Sydney:** How did you hear about the Toyota recall?

**Austin:** I was watching the news, and I saw that in California, the police had to help a Prius safely stop, because the brakes failed. Then I heard that Toyota was doing an investigation and that it wasn't just the Prius with brake problems, that a Lexus line also had problems.

**Sydney:** How do you feel about Toyota's response to the recall?

**Austin:** I feel like they are doing the best they can. They haven't turned away anyone, and have handled the situation pretty tactfully and diplomatically.

**Sydney:** What could Toyota have done better during the recall?

**Austin:** Obviously, the recall is because the cars are doing something wrong, so Toyota could have done better in that there would be no recall at all. However, given that they did make a mistake in the production of their cars, Toyota could have really done nothing more. Maybe not blamed that guy in California, and taken his word that the car just lost control.

**Sydney:** When you heard about the issue what course of action did you take to find out if your car had been recalled?



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**Austin:** I got on the internet and googled “Toyota recall,” and found that my Lexus, the hybrid, was one that had been recalled.

**Sydney:** If your vehicle was recalled, what do you think about how customer service handled your situation?

**Austin:** Customer Service handled the situation well, helping me successfully get my car the attention it needed. I had the car back within the week, and haven’t been having any problems since. You could tell they were going to be doing a lot of these recalls, and were well organized.

**Sydney:** We’ve heard from other people that they would not buy another Toyota, what are your feelings about purchasing another Toyota?

**Austin:** I’ve been a Toyota owner for twenty years, and this is the first problem Toyota has had as far as recalls related to my car. The company is solid financially, and my car, other than this one time, hasn’t had problems beyond the usual maintenance issues. I will purchase another Toyota when my current one no longer runs.

### Nikita’s Interview with Michel Philippe

**Nikita:** Hi this is Nikita Cheron can you please state your name.

**Michel:** My name is Michel Philippe.

**Nikita:** Thank you.

**Nikita:** How do you evaluate different types of cars when purchasing?

**Michel:** I evaluate them by model, make, and year.



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**Nikita:** If you could have the ideal car what would it be?

**Michel:** A 2010 Cadillac.

**Nikita:** Describe to me how you came to the decision of buying a Toyota?

**Michel:** I bought it from my sister.

**Nikita:** How do you feel Toyota compares to other cars?

**Michel:** I think it's one of the best brands out there.

**Nikita:** How did you hear about the Toyota recall?

**Michel:** I heard about it on the news.

**Nikita:** How do you feel about Toyota's response to the recall?

**Michel:** I don't know because I wasn't affected by it.

**Nikita:** What could Toyota have done better during the recall?

**Michel:** Because I wasn't affected by it, I don't know what they had done wrong.

**Nikita:** When you heard about the issue what course of action did you take to find out if your car had been recalled?

**Michel:** I knew it wasn't recalled because my car was an older model and only the newer model was recalled.

**Nikita:** We've heard from other people that they would not buy another Toyota, what are your feelings about purchasing another Toyota?



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**Michel:** I would still buy a Toyota if it's a good car.

