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Only 5% of Russian Lada Owners Proud of Their Car

By The Moscow Times

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A traffic police officer checks documents of the driver of an AvtoVAZ Lada car, produced in Russia, on the suburbs of Krasnoyarsk, Siberia.

Russians don't like Russia's own Lada car brand, a new survey shows.

But as ruble devaluation and an approaching recession squeeze incomes, they are still buying them.

Just one in 20 Lada-owners said they would recommend the car brand to their friends or colleagues, according to a poll of 2,000 drivers by market analysts Autostat.

European carmakers scored more highly: Mercedes owners said the likelihood of a recommendation was 70 percent, Land Rover 62 percent and BMW 62 percent, according to the survey.

Korea's Daewoo brought up the back of the pack, but just ahead of Lada, with 8 percent of

owners prepared to speak positively about their vehicles.

Despite the dissatisfaction, Lada remains the most-sold brand in Russia.

Overall car sales are plummeting as the Russian economy moves toward recession, the currency plunges and consumer spending power is curbed.

In the first 10 months of this year 321,500 Ladas were sold, more than double the sales of the brands nearest competitor, Kia, according to the Association of European Businesses (AEB), which monitors car sales.

Harder economic times are pushing costumers back to the Lada, which produces cheaper cars than most of its foreign rivals. In October, the last month for which figures are available, Lada recorded a 1 percent year-on-year rise in sales, while the overall market slumped almost 10 percent, according to AEB data.

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