



Mercury OptiMax, Mercury MerCruiser Ranked Highest in Customer Satisfaction

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MIAMI BEACH, Fla. (February 16, 2006) – Mercury Marine was presented a pair of customer satisfaction awards today from J.D. Power and Associates for its direct-fuel-injected and sterndrive engines.

Mercury MerCruiser, Mercury's sterndrive company in Stillwater, Okla., was recognized by the highly regarded global marketing information firm as "Highest in Customer Satisfaction With Sterndrive Engines." Mercury OptiMax – the marine industry's leading direct-fuel-injected (DFI) two-stroke outboard that is built in Fond du Lac, Wis. – was recognized as "Highest in Customer Satisfaction With Two-Stroke Outboard Engines."

The awards were presented this morning at the J.D. Power and Associates awards ceremony in conjunction with the Miami International Boat Show at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

Mercury Marine President Patrick C. Mackey accepted the awards on behalf of Mercury. He was accompanied by Mercury Outboard President Mark Schwabero and MerCruiser President Kevin Grodzki. Mackey said the entire Mercury organization is gratified to receive such a strong affirmation by its customers.

"I can't begin to tell you how important these are to Mercury Marine," Mackey said. "It's great to be recognized in the industry for a job well done, but more importantly, these awards represent the voice of the consumer telling us we are building high-quality products and standing behind them the way a world-class organization should.

"Customer satisfaction is the reason behind everything we do, so this feedback is extremely pleasing. I assure you we take the rankings published by J.D. Power and Associates very seriously."

Mercury Marine is the world leader in recreational marine propulsion with a full line of outboard, sterndrive and inboard engines, plus the marine industry's most extensive line of propellers, lubricants and parts and accessories. It is the only marine manufacturer to offer outboard and sterndrive propulsion systems. The 12-member OptiMax family ranges from 75 to 300 horsepower, and is built in Mercury's headquarters city of Fond du Lac, Wis. The MerCruiser Sterndrive lineup includes a dozen models from the four-cylinder, 135 hp 3.0 liter to the 8.1 liter V-8, 425 hp, 496 MAG HO.

Mackey was named president of Mercury in 2000 and immediately set a course to improve the company's processes and products in order to better fulfill the needs and expectations of dealers, boat builders and consumers. Part of the plan called for every Mercury Marine facility to be ISO 9001-2000 Certified, a feat that was accomplished in the fall of 2003. ISO certification involves documenting and auditing virtually every process in every phase of the organization, which ensures that the company employs a sound, systematic approach to business. ISO 9001-2000 is built on eight principles, the first of which is customer focus. Mercury remains the only marine engine manufacturer to be 100 percent ISO Certified.

Mercury has also embraced the principles of Lean Six Sigma, a methodology that analyzes processes across the business in an effort to reduce variation and wasted effort. The resulting process improvements enhance the company in many ways, but most importantly they promote continuous improvement to product quality and make the business more efficient.

J.D. Power and Associates is a global marketing information entity that conducts research and offers consulting and performance improvement services that are used by a variety of industries to improve product quality and customer satisfaction. The company does not publish or incorporate the opinions of J.D. Power and Associates in rankings, but bases research solely on responses from millions of consumers and business customers worldwide. J.D. Power and Associates funds all of its own syndicated research in order to deliver unbiased results, and then uses that research to present nationally syndicated studies that serve as industry benchmarks for measuring and tracking quality and customer satisfaction.

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