

TOPICS

2002 J.D.P Supplier Quality Award Received

FUJITSU TEN TECHNICAL CENTER USA, Inc.
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J.D. Power and Associates (hereafter referred to as JDP) has honored FUJITSU TEN LIMITED with the Highest Quality AM/FM/Cassette/Single CD Player (3 in 1) supplier award. JDP is an American firm that gauges customer satisfaction for a multitude of products sold in the North American market through the use of its independent research network and interviews. Many companies use the results of JDP's research as an industry-wide product development barometer.



The aforementioned award differs from that received for cassette players in 1999 because it is for (3 in 1) players, currently the prevalent product in the North American market, which, in my opinion makes it particularly valuable. Due to the fact that it was awarded for Toyota OEMs, this award is a testament to FUJITSU TEN LIMITED's continued commitment to quality improvement in this area.



It goes without saying that this award is the fruit of 10 years of low-profile efforts. When JDP results began to receive attention and FUJITSU TEN LIMITED stepped up its improvement efforts, the quality control system at FTCA (FUJITSU TEN CORP. OF AMERICA) was still inadequate.

10 years ago the engineer responsible for local analysis were hired at the LAO (Los Angeles Operation) division, the division that handled quality in the North American Market. These engineers began their efforts through trial and error.

During continued analysis of market quality surveys and data, defect causes were not delineated. Areas that could be improved such as vague evaluation criteria were found. The local analysis the engineer entered into direct negotiations with JDP, pushing for an increase in the amount of categories contained in JDP's audio surveys. Based on results of follow-up interviews with customers, JDP eventually reevaluated and improved its audio surveys by increasing the number of categories it evaluated from 4 to 13.

As described above, FUJITSU TEN LIMITED had an effect on JDP. Efforts to implement low-profile improvements ahead of the competition led to FUJITSU TEN LIMITED receiving the award described herein.

Initially, JDP's local quality improvement efforts in North America were centered on audio quality and reception. Many surveys were conducted on high-ranking competing vehicles. In particular, improvement efforts were centered on NTF problems, the most frequently cited problems in claims. It was discovered that effects of temperature-related reception capability dete-

rioration and multipath noise effects caused some of these claims. New tuner models were introduced at the same time that temperature correction features accuracy was improved. Over 5 years were spent achieving quality stabilization.

Follow-up surveys revealed the close connection between sound quality and reception capabilities, which meant that improvements made to reception would result in an improvement in sound quality. However, complaints specifically related to sound quality and situations such as speaker effects that were not solely due to speaker effects continued to provide feedback used in design.

These efforts did not always proceed smoothly, and were only achieved through the hardships of many personnel. For example, after driving a vehicle loaded with equipment necessary to measure reception into a residential area and beginning evaluations, one employee was cautioned by police, who had been alerted to "suspicious activity" by area residents.

Just when reception and audio quality results began to improve, CD decks started to proliferate in the North American market. The launch of a wide array of car audio products, coupled with the low quality of CD decks sold in North America, drove J.D. Power ratings down. In response, Fujitsu Ten, Inc. began efforts to improve quality. Special attention was paid to solving the skipping problem in CD decks. Test units were tested on suburban roads and sent to LAO (Los Angeles Operation), MIO (Michigan Operation), and all other Fujitsu Ten, Inc. branches in the United States, where they underwent extensive analysis.

The Engineering Department prepared a variety of products for evaluation. These products were subjected to continuous testing day and night. A truly massive amount of data was generated through these analyses, prompting the General Affairs Department to comment on the extensive punishment the automobiles themselves were being forced to endure.

Passing data along to the design department enabled the implementation of effective strategies. As a result, CD deck quality was stabilized. It goes without saying that tireless effort was also made to improve areas other than reception, audio quality, and decks such as controls.

The reception of this award reaffirmed the cooperative efforts made between the head office and local branches, and increased the pride and confidence of all related personnel.