



## Press Release

### **J.D. Power and Associates Reports: Panasonic Ranks Highest in Satisfying Business Customers with Copiers**

#### With Increasing Product Parity Among Copier Brands, Sales and Service Become More Important to Customers

**WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif.: 8 November 2006** —Panasonic ranks highest among copier brands in satisfying business customers, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2006 Business Copier Customer Satisfaction Study<sup>SM</sup> released today. Following Panasonic in the rankings are Kyocera, and Lanier and Konica Minolta in a tie.

The study measures the satisfaction of key business decision-makers with single and multifunction copiers based on three factors: product (46%), sales (34%) and service (20%). Panasonic receives the highest ratings for both the product and sales factors.

“Panasonic’s efforts in improving product reliability and sales/service satisfaction is showing dividends in their overall customer satisfaction,” said Steve Kirkeby, executive director of telecommunications and technology at J.D. Power and Associates. “Panasonic’s broad-based success is an example of the change in customer attitudes in the copier industry. The past several years have seen increasing product parity among copier/multifunction peripheral devices. At the same time, ‘people factors’ such as sales and service have become more important to business customers in terms of overall customer satisfaction. Decision-makers at companies are increasingly evaluating the entire experience with their copier brand, impacting whether they stay with the brand for future copier acquisitions.”

The study finds that the sales channel through which a customer obtains their copiers can have a dramatic impact on satisfaction levels. Business customers who acquired their copiers using a manufacturer’s direct source (such as a single-brand dealer, direct sales channel or manufacturer Web site) generally report higher levels of satisfaction than those who used multiple brand dealers, with one key exception. Businesses that purchase through multiple brand dealers report higher levels of satisfaction within the service factor than most other sales channels.

Product reliability continues to play a key role in the customer’s experience with a copier brand. When asked to disclose key reasons to consider a different copier brand for their next purchase, one-half of respondents—twice the incidence rate observed in 2005—state reliability.

Sixty-five percent of respondents report requiring some type of service call for their copier, ranging from scheduled maintenance to repairs needed to return the copier to working order. The study finds that among business customers who make an equipment maintenance or service call of some type, the importance of the service factor doubles, replacing the product factor as the most critical contributor to customer satisfaction. Consequently, service capabilities can be a significant advantage to a dealer, regardless of whether they are single or multiple brands.

“Needless to say, business customers will always be concerned with the costs associated with copiers, which is one of the reasons it is important for copier brands to develop a strong reputation for reliability and value for the

price paid,” said Kirkeby. “Acquisition and operating costs are the top two reasons why prospective buyers reject a particular machine, with 36 percent saying the initial cost is too high and 27 percent saying potential operating costs are unacceptable. In fact, nearly two-thirds of businesses report having rejected a particular model that cost more than the model they purchased. Ultimately, the entire price-value proposition has to be brought into sharp focus.”

The 2006 Business Copier Customer Satisfaction Study is based on responses from more than 1,500 business people and technical decision-makers at small, medium and large businesses in a variety of industries, who purchased or leased a new copier in the previous 21 months. The study is a companion to the J.D. Power and Associates Business Printer Customer Satisfaction Study,<sup>SM</sup> released in October, which focuses exclusively on business customers who have purchased or leased new printer-based products.

For more detailed ratings of copier brands, please visit the J.D. Power and Associates Consumer Center at <http://www.jdpower.com/cc/links/copier.asp>.

#### **About J.D. Power and Associates**

Headquartered in Westlake Village, Calif., J.D. Power and Associates is an ISO 9001-registered global marketing information services firm operating in key business sectors including market research, forecasting, consulting, training and customer satisfaction. The firm’s quality and satisfaction measurements are based on responses from millions of consumers annually. J.D. Power and Associates is a business unit of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

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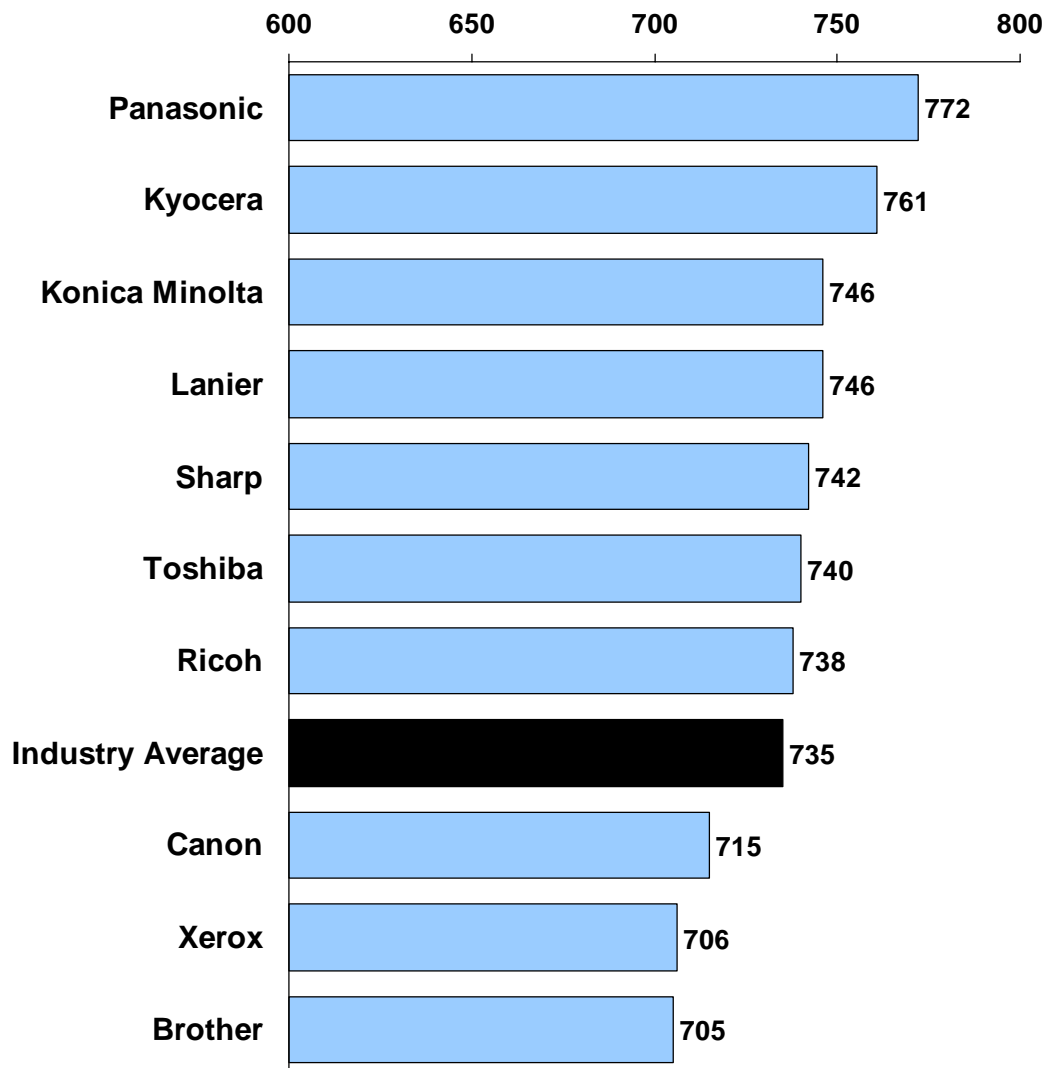
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NOTE: One chart follows.

# J.D. Power and Associates 2006 Business Copier Customer Satisfaction Study<sup>SM</sup>

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## Overall Copier Ownership Index (Based on a 1,000-point scale)



*Included in the study but not ranked due to small sample size are: Copystar, Gestetner, Océ Imagistics and Savin.*

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*Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2006 Business Copier Customer Satisfaction Study<sup>SM</sup>*

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