

Press Information



The multi-industrial company will utilize the data to influence interior car design and product innovation

Johnson Controls reveals ‘Stuff in Cars’ global research study results

Neuss, Germany – 14 August 2014. *Sunglasses are the most important item that need to be within easy reach of drivers according to a new global research study, “Stuff in Cars,” conducted by Johnson Controls. The study is in response to the ever growing importance of automotive interior design and the need for quality storage solutions. Johnson Controls will utilize this data to influence early product innovation and drive industrial design initiatives to meet the increasing expectations of the today’s global consumer.*

“We conducted the study in Europe, the U.S. and China to learn more about the items being brought into and stored in vehicles, the importance of being able to store those items and overall storage needs and preferences,” said Renae Pippel, director of strategic research for Johnson Controls Automotive Interiors. “From the study, we’re able to gain a better global understanding of the hierarchy of needs of stuff in cars. This end consumer insight helps make us smarter as we design global solutions for our customers.”

The results revealed overall global consistency in the top ranking items that consumers consider important to be able to easily stow, however, the storage behaviors within each region show some significant differences.

According to Pippel, participants were surveyed on storage attitudes, frequency and importance and current storage / satisfaction and needs. The results revealed the storage behavior of car drivers in the various regions. A total of nearly two thousand drivers were surveyed about how they store various items in their vehicle, from long term items like the owner’s manual to short term such as smart phones.

Sunglasses, not smart phones, globally ranked as the most important item to stow in a location that is in reach of the driver, secured and easily accessible while driving. Smart phone storage ranked second, and indicated that consumers place a slightly higher importance on storage solutions that offer

Press Information



containment of the phone over accessibility while driving. The third most important item were GPS units. With GPS units, consumers expect a storage space that is within reach of the driver. Results also showed that items which are needed from time-to-time such as travel guides or umbrellas, as well as trash are most often stored in the door.

The research showed some noticeable differences between regional preferences. While some items exist in the top 10 importance list across all regions of the world, such as sunglasses and smart phones, some items only appear in one region. For example, garage door openers only appeared in the top 10 list for the United States, eyeglass cases only appeared in the European top 10 and the emergency hammer for escaping from the vehicle in case of an accident appeared in the top 10 only in China.

On storage attitudes for both China and European countries, the most important storage solutions ensure that stuff can be fastened securely. In addition, consumers in China showed the highest demand for storage options that were designed for a specific item like a smart phone, as they generally are dissatisfied to have items simply lying around in the vehicle. The global study also showed different preferences and needs among different vehicle segments. For example, luxury segment owners placed the greatest importance on storage that is designed for a specific item, with special emphasis placed on dedicated solutions for smart phones and electronic devices. Respondents representing the SUV / CUV / MPV segment place a significantly higher value on storage that is designed for a specific item. The data also validated the belief that van owners agree that they can never have enough storage options in their vehicle.

Globally, consumers still place a high importance on the ability to store CD cases and maps within their interior (both within each region's top 20). Additionally, books and travel guides are still far more important to provide storage solutions for than eReaders and tablets. However, with the growth projections for tablet use, Johnson Controls expects to see the variance between storage needs for books and travel guides steadily shrinking in the next few years.

Press Information



In May, 2014 Johnson Controls and Yanfeng Automotive Trim Systems, Co Ltd signed a definitive agreement to form a global automotive interiors joint venture. The transaction is expected to close in the first half of calendar year 2015.

Digital images are available online from www.johnsoncontrols.co.uk/press.

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About Johnson Controls:

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