

## **Autotrader Study Finds 48 Percent of Car Buyers Prioritize In-Vehicle Technology Over Brand or Body Style**

ATLANTA, Jan. 10, 2017 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- Nearly half of consumers — 48 percent — prioritize in-vehicle technology over brand or body style, according to the 2017 Autotrader Car Tech Impact Study. The annual tech study was released today at the 2017 North American International Auto Show and showed a growing number of consumers believe certain safety technologies, including blind-spot detection and forward collision warning, should be standard on all vehicles sold in the U.S. Convenience and entertainment options, such as the latest connectivity systems offered by automakers, also rank high on consumers' preferred list of technology features.

The newest study also shows that 56 percent of car shoppers have done their research and know exactly what in-vehicle technology they are interested in before they visit a dealership. Younger car buyers, 18- to 34-year-olds in particular, are generally more tech savvy and are less willing to compromise on the features they want.

"Technology has become the deciding factor for car buyers selecting a vehicle," said Michelle Krebs, Autotrader senior analyst. "Automakers must deliver innovative features or risk consumers looking elsewhere."

Consumers say they are becoming increasingly comfortable with advanced safety technology. Seventy percent of respondents noted they would consider paying more for driver-assist technology such as blind-spot monitoring or adaptive cruise control in their next vehicle purchase. However, 65 percent still have concerns over system failures with self-driving cars, roughly the same number as in 2016. In general, nearly two-thirds of respondents believe new technology has improved the way they drive.

The study also indicated experience with advanced, self-driving technologies will likely lead to quicker adoption of these features: three out of four drivers who own a vehicle with these advanced technologies (adaptive cruise, collision warning, etc.) say it helps make them a better driver and feel safer.

And yet, despite the appeal of advanced driver-assist and technology features, the study found that convenience and entertainment features such as voice commands and Wi-Fi are still more desired. Connectivity systems such as General Motors' OnStar, Ford's Sync and Toyota's EnTune; advanced, adaptive navigation systems and technology that provides

wireless device charging are all high on consumer's want list. Regardless of age or comfort with technology, 53 percent of consumers expect vehicle technology to be every bit as robust as smartphone technology.

### **Additional Findings from the 2017 Autotrader Car Tech Study:**

- **Millennials Drive Demand:** Millennial drivers (18- to 34-year-olds) are willing to pay more for the technology they want. In fact, 55 percent of millennial drivers expect to spend an additional \$2,600 to get desired tech features.
- **Parents Adopt Technology:** Parents are twice as likely to purchase advanced safety features than non-parents (51 percent vs. 22 percent) and three times more likely to own a vehicle with autonomous features.
- **Trust in Autonomous Vehicle Technology is Growing:** Compared to 2016, consumers are growing more comfortable with the idea of giving up control to a self-driving vehicle. In fact, 49 percent of respondents indicated they'd give up control in exchange for some free time not driving or watching the road (up from 35 percent in 2016); 17 percent of respondents said they would use the time to catch up on work while 16 percent said they would play games, both up significantly from last year.
- **Autonomous Technology in Unexpected Situations:** Consumers are also becoming more comfortable with how a self-driving vehicle would react in unexpected situations, such as encountering a deer in the road (42 percent of respondents are not concerned); interacting with non-self-driving vehicles (57 percent) and interacting with pedestrians or bicycles (56 percent), all up from 2016.

Autotrader experts will be available during the 2017 North American International Auto Show from Jan. 8-10 to discuss the findings from this study. Those not attending the show can contact the Autotrader Public Relations team for more information and to arrange interviews.

### **About the Research**

This study was conducted by Vital Findings on behalf of Autotrader and included 1,020 vehicle owners in the U.S. aged 18 or older who participated in an online survey during September 2016. Results were weighted as needed for age, gender and race/ethnicity; a full methodology is available.

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empowered consumer looking to find or sell the perfect new, used or certified pre-owned car. Using technology, shopper insights and local market guidance, Autotrader's comprehensive marketing solutions guide dealers to personalized digital marketing strategies that grow brand, drive traffic and connect the online and in-store shopping experience.

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