

New AutoTrader.com White Paper Shows Direct Connection Between Online Advertising And Distance Buyers Travel To Make A Vehicle Purchase

Geo-distance analysis provides key insights into what dealers can do to reach outside of their immediate market to attract more buyers.

ATLANTA, Oct. 25, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- AutoTrader.com has released a new white paper which quantifies for the first time ever how much influence online advertising has on the distance that buyers are willing to travel to purchase a vehicle. The white paper, entitled "[Have Internet, Will Travel: Research Shows Online Car Shoppers Travel Farther to Make Vehicle Purchase](#)," provides insights that will be particularly beneficial to dealers, as it will help them better understand—and in some cases redefine—what geographic market they should be targeting and what they can do to extend their reach.

The analysis revealed that significantly more car buyers who used the Internet during the shopping process traveled farther to make a vehicle purchase. Out of the 67,000+ new and used car buyers who were surveyed, two-and-a-half times more buyers who traveled distances of 30+ miles used the Internet during the shopping process versus those who didn't use the Internet.

Additionally, the success of dealerships in attracting car buyers from farther away varied widely relative to the merchandising applied to their listings on AutoTrader.com. Merchandising factors that contributed to their success included: multiple custom photos (not stock) of the actual vehicle, video, vehicle comments and dealership merchandising/value proposition.

In particular, the research showed that 30 percent more new and used car buyers traveled 30+ miles to dealerships that used multiple custom vehicle photos (not stock) versus dealerships that did not use custom photos. And when it comes to vehicle comments, 26 percent more car buyers traveled 30+ miles to dealerships that used comments versus dealerships that did not.

"The Internet offers an unparalleled opportunity for dealers to reach farther and wider than ever before, and it's stunning to see how much of an effect some of the most basic tenets in online advertising have on influencing shoppers," said Kevin Filan, vice president of customer marketing at AutoTrader.com. "We hope that by sharing this information with our dealer customers, and the industry at large, we can continue to help dealers make the most of their investments in online advertising."

To garner these insights, AutoTrader.com used proprietary technology and data as well as survey research, conducting a geo-distance analysis of more than 67,000 new and used car buyers from July 2011 through August 2012.

Turn Insights into Actions:

So ultimately, what does all of this mean for dealers? Here are four tips from the AutoTrader.com experts:

1. To reach the most shoppers, leverage online resources and automotive shopping sites where car buyers spend the majority of their time online.
2. Having the right inventory is key, so dealers should employ an inventory-based marketing strategy that enables them to put the most in-demand

vehicles online in front of as many in-market shoppers as possible.

3. Embrace the tools and technologies available to help in selecting the right inventory, pricing it correctly and getting it front of the right audience.
4. Effective merchandising is crucial to attracting shoppers—both inside and outside of the immediate geographic market. Multiple custom photos, vehicle comments and walk-around videos will help shoppers connect with vehicles.

This is the second in a series of white papers that AutoTrader.com will be making available to the industry this year. To access the full "Have Internet, Will Travel" white paper, please visit the AutoTrader.com [Dealer Learning Center](#) or click [this link](#).

For more industry insights, tips and information, follow the AutoTrader.com Dealer Connect Facebook page at www.facebook.com/dealerconnect.

About AutoTrader.com

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