AutoTrader.com Recommends 12 "Want To Buy Cars" for Consumers Living in a "Need To Buy World"

Recent AutoTrader.com study shows that 71% of buyers purchase a car based on need, leading AutoTrader.com experts to recommend 12 cars based on common needs. Expert opinions and shopper reaction are explored in the first edition of the Shopper Insights Re

ATLANTA, Dec. 8, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- According to the 2011 AutoTrader.com Shopper Frame of Mind study, conducted with over 1500 recent vehicle purchasers, an overwhelming majority of respondents—71%—purchased a car based on need rather than want. In the first edition of the Shopper Insights Report, brought to you by the AutoTrader.com Trend Engine, experts at AutoTrader.com provided a list of 12 new and near-new vehicles under $30,000 that can meet various consumer needs while giving them many of the features, luxuries and conveniences they will want to have in their next vehicle. Then, AutoTrader.com fielded a new survey of over 300 site visitors in November to find out what cars on the list they were attracted to—and why.

To view the multimedia assets associated with this release, please click: http://www.multivu.com/mnr/53472-autotrader-com-trend-engine-shopper-insights-report

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Popular events that trigger a "need to buy" situation are purchasers' previous vehicles being involved in accidents or breaking down, and changes in lifestyle such as a new baby, new commute to work, new driver in the family and a new job, so AutoTrader.com experts recommended the following 12 cars based on those events:

- **Previous Vehicle Broke Down** – For consumers whose previous vehicles broke down, quality, reliability and peace of mind are some of the major factors AutoTrader.com experts considered. Their recommendations were the 2012 Hyundai Elantra and the near-new 2010 – 2011 Ford Fusion.
- **Previous Vehicle in an Accident** – Safety will likely be top of mind for consumers searching for a new car after an accident, and there are a few great vehicles that offer style and substance in addition to best-in-class safety features. AutoTrader.com experts chose the 2012 Kia Soul and the 2007 – 2009 Volvo S80 as ideal vehicles for shoppers concerned with safety.
- **New Baby in the Family** – Growing families need more room and family-friendly features such as good handling, entertainment features and fuel economy. With this in mind, AutoTrader.com experts recommended the new 2012 Dodge Journey and the near-new 2007 – 2009 GMC Acadia.
- **New Job** – Whether a shopper is looking for a work truck or simply wanting to arrive at a new job in style, there are a few great options for them to choose from. For a great truck, AutoTrader.com experts recommended the 2012 Toyota Tacoma Double-Cab PreRunner, and for those needing a little less vehicle but still great style, AutoTrader.com experts said that the 2007 – 2008 Infiniti G35 Sedan fits the bill.
- **New Driver in the Family** – Safety is generally a top concern for parents looking for a first car for their new drivers, but today's new drivers want more than safety—they want style and great features. For a new car, AutoTrader.com experts suggested the 2012 Ford Focus, and their choice for a near-new car was the 2010 – 2011 Suzuki Kizashi.
- **Longer Commute** – Taking on a new commute can be made much more enjoyable—and affordable—in a vehicle that combines great fuel efficiency with modern comforts. The 2012 Jetta SportWagen TDI was AutoTrader.com experts' top new-car choice, while the 2009 Acura TSX was their choice for a near-new vehicle.

Shopper Reactions: Used Luxury Vehicles Selected Most in Top Three Picks

To get insight into shoppers' reactions to these vehicles, analysts at AutoTrader.com polled over 300 AutoTrader.com visitors in November. Respondents picked their top three vehicles from the list and then chose descriptors that fit their view of each of those vehicles.

Rising to the top were primarily near-new luxury cars. The 2008 Infiniti G35 was selected in the top three by 37% of those surveyed, the 2009 Acura TSX was selected by 34% and the Volvo S80 was chosen by 33%. Overall, respondents in the November survey viewed the G35 and TSX as being more sexy, stylish, sporty, fun and fast than the Volvo, but the Volvo was seen as more functional, safe and versatile than the other two.

"Over the last couple of months, shoppers on AutoTrader.com have shown a notable increase in interest in luxury vehicles, particularly in the used and CPO segments," said Rick Wainschel, vice president of automotive insights at AutoTrader.com. "This is likely fueled by the trend of consumers who are shopping for new, non-luxury sedans cross shopping near-new luxury sedans, as these vehicles fulfill similar consumer desires at similar price points."

While there are a number of popular choices that get a lot of attention from consumers, there are quite a few hidden gems among the experts' recommendations. Vehicles such as the near-new Suzuki Kizashi and the new Kia Soul didn't fare as well with shoppers surveyed in November, with only 10% of respondents choosing the Kia Soul and eight percent choosing the Kizashi among their top three choices, leading AutoTrader.com analysts to characterize these vehicles as hidden gems that shoppers should consider.

Access Full Report Online

The Shopper Insights Report is a new report in the AutoTrader.com Trend Engine series—one that brings together AutoTrader.com's strengths in automotive expertise, consumer research and analysis of shopper behavior for the millions of people who visit the site each month.

The first edition of the report includes the complete list of cars recommended by AutoTrader.com experts, the reasons behind the recommendations and the insights gained from shoppers polled in November and recent site activity on AutoTrader.com. Click here to access the report online.

About AutoTrader.com

Atlanta-based AutoTrader.com, created in 1997, is the Internet's ultimate automotive marketplace and consumer information website. AutoTrader.com aggregates in a single location millions of new cars, used cars and certified pre-owned cars from thousands of auto dealers and private sellers and is a leading online resource for auto dealers, individuals and manufacturers to advertise and market their vehicles to in-market shoppers. The company also provides a robust suite of software tools for dealers and manufacturers to help them manage and market their vehicle inventory and display advertising on the Internet. AutoTrader.com continues to grow key business metrics, including revenue, profitability and site traffic. Today, AutoTrader.com attracts more than 15 million unique monthly visitors who utilize the site to review descriptions, photos and videos of vehicles for sale; research and compare vehicles; review pricing and specials; and read auto-related content like buying and selling tips and editorial coverage of major auto shows and automotive trends. AutoTrader.com operates one other auto marketing brand, AutoTraderClassics.com. AutoTrader.com also owns used vehicle management software company vAuto, Kelley Blue Book (Kbb.com), HomeNet Automotive, a leading provider of online inventory management and merchandising solutions for the automotive retail industry and VinSolutions, a leading provider of end-

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