

DMMA stats show that online is preferred method of research for car buyers

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Research conducted in June 2011 by the DMMA (Digital Media & Marketing Association) South Africa and Effective Measure around the automotive industry has shown that people prefer online research when it comes to buying a new or used car. The stats have shown that car shoppers will choose online research over visits to dealerships and car lots, reading print reviews or asking friends and family for advice.

The research took place across more than 300 websites. Over 1,100 surveys were completed by South African Internet users. The survey asked what car the person drove, how often they were planning on replacing their car, and what price range their next car would be in. It also looked into what the important criteria are in selecting a vehicle and finally, how they would go about researching the purchase of a vehicle.

Responses showed that friends and family are the least likely to be asked for opinions when deciding to buy a car, with the majority of people preferring to research online by checking prices and spec's and reading unbiased reviews and opinions. Specifically, 71.77% of respondents chose online research as their preferred option.

Price topped the list of selection criteria when considering the purchase of a new vehicle at 73.72% overall, closely followed by fuel economy at 72.39%. For females, fuel economy is the single most important criteria in comparison to males who indicated that price is the most important. The list bottoms out with features at 44.78% and design at 40.35%.

The most widely driven car by men in the survey was a VW with 18.35% of the total, whilst Toyota was the most popular amongst women, with a driver base of 16.5%. Overall, VW tops the list in terms of chosen brand with 17.26%, and Toyota with 14.96% followed by Opel, Mercedes, BMW and Hyundai.

The majority of respondents indicated that they plan to replace their vehicle every 3-5 years (53.01%) and the most popular price category is under R100,000 to R200,000. As the price range of a car increases, the pool of buyers decreases, with only 5.58% of people planning to spend over half a million rand on their next car.

Head of Research for the DMMA, Andrea Mitchell, said that the DMMA and Effective Measure plan to provide quarterly research into various sectors in South Africa, which will help support the validity of advertising spend in digital. "This information will be based on insight driven research and by offering these surveys we assist our members and the digital industry to better understand the needs of the South African Internet User," she adds. Future surveys will include: Financial Services, Retail and FMCG to name but a few.

Table 1 below shows the data and questions asked. For more information on the research contact the DMMA on info@dmma.co.za.

What car brand do you currently drive? (select one only)	
Alpha Romeo	0.18%
Audi	3.63%
BMW	4.42%
Chevrolet	1.50%
Chrysler	0.53%
Citroen	0.35%
Daihatsu	0.80%
Fiat	2.21%
Ford	3.89%
GWM	0.09%
Honda	3.36%
Hyundai	4.34%
Kia	1.06%
Land Rover / Range Rover	0.62%
Lexus	0.62%
Mazda	2.30%
Mercedes	6.11%
Mini	0.27%
Mitsubishi	1.15%
Nissan	4.96%
Opel	6.46%
Peugeot	1.42%
Renault	2.04%
Subaru	0.88%
Suzuki	0.80%
TATA	0.97%
Toyota	14.96%
Volvo	0.80%
VW	17.26%
Other	12.04%
How often do you plan to replace your vehicle? (select one only)	
Every 12-24 months	2.83%
Every 2-3 years	12.57%
Every 3-5 years	53.01%
Never	31.59%
What price bracket will you be likely to be considering for your next purchase? (select one only)	
Under R100,000	26.64%
R100,001 - R200,000	31.50%
R200,001-R300,000	20.44%

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