

Canadians Dream Green When Thinking About Ideal Car, Says Synovate Survey

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Leading global market research firm Synovate has released the results of a new research study showing that many Canadians would buy a green car over a dream car, even if money was no object.

Synovate surveyed more than 13,500 people across 18 markets, and 1,000 here in Canada, about 'green' versus 'dream' cars, vehicle ownership, intent to buy in the next year and attitudes towards cars, traffic, public transport and their need-for-speed.

Dream, green or in between?

Synovate asked respondents to forget about money for a moment and tell us whether they would buy green, dream or in between.

Ten years ago, Canadians might have said that their dream car was an exotic sports car or a great big pick-up.

Some would have even said that their current car was their 'dream car' no matter what they were driving.

Now, more than a quarter of all Canadians (27%) say that if money was no object they would buy a green car over their dream car, compared to 23% of Americans and 59% of people across the globe who said this.

However, 19% of both Canadians and Americans say that their dream car is a green car.

"Canadians clearly want a 'greener,' more environmentally friendly vehicle," said Stephen Popiel, senior vice president of Synovate Motoresearch. "What is less clear is how much content they are willing to forego for their green dream."

Interestingly, more Canadian women than men say that their dream car is a green car (25% women versus 19% men).

This is consistent with the American findings (20% women versus 17% men).

Love me, love my car

While many Canadians are pragmatic about cars, seeing them as a means to an end, the survey also showed that, for many, the love affair with the car remains passionate.

Many Canadians either can't live without a car (24%) or feel that it makes life easier (36%). Many also like to drive fast (22%) and want a car that can turn heads (14%).

"This means that car makers have to strike a balance between practicality and emotion," said Popiel. "A car can still be very cool while offering practicality and a lower price. Success in the auto business comes from understanding people well enough to meet their emotional needs and their rational ones."

Purchase intention: Brakes on or gearing up?

Overall, 15% of respondents across all 18 markets surveyed, including 8% of people in Canada and 9% in the US, say they will buy a new car in the next 12 months.

The new car purchase intenders were topped by India at 38% and Egypt at 24%.

A further 6% of survey respondents globally say they will buy a used car in the next year, including 7% of Canadians and Americans.

South Africa (18%) as well as the US, Malaysia and Thailand (all 15%) were tops among the households globally in which more than two cars can be found.

Other findings:

- Almost a third of Canadian households (32%) own at least two cars compared to 38% of American households and 20% of households globally
- Two thirds of Canadians feel there are too many cars on the road
- Sixty-four percent of Canadians do not think it's reasonable for car manufacturers to receive financial assistance from governments in a recession, consistent with Americans' thinking (65%)
- One in ten Canadians admits to being jealous of friends who have a better car
- Nearly half of Canadians (49%) don't mind paying more for a used car pre-approved/certified by the manufacturer or

authorized dealer if it comes with a warranty

About the Synovate global 'Dream versus green' cars survey

This car survey was conducted in March 2009 across 18 markets – Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (US).

It covered over 13,500 urban respondents.

For more information, visit www.synovate.com/insights/infact or contact infact@synovate.com

About Synovate

Synovate, the market research arm of Aegis Group plc, generates consumer insights that drive competitive marketing solutions.

The network provides clients with cohesive global support and a comprehensive suite of research solutions.

Synovate employs over 6,700 staff across 62 countries.

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