

Online Car Shoppers

Contributed by BMRB
Wednesday, 12 October 2005
Last Updated Wednesday, 12 October 2005

The latest Internet Monitor report from BMRB shows that amongst Britain's 25.6 million internet users (aged 15+), over 2 million (9%) used the web to help them decide on a car purchase in the first half of 2005. Cars are the fourth most popular product category (after household electricals, clothes and books) for being researched online. Around 4% of internet users (900 000 people) had actually purchased a car online during this time.

Two-thirds of the people who research cars online are male and almost three in ten are aged 35-44. They are 48% more likely than internet users as a whole to have a household pre-tax income of ?50 000 or more. This profile is reflected in the car products and brands that these people choose. BMRB's TGI.Net research shows that compared with the average for all adults, their most recent purchase is around twice as likely to have been a coupe or an off-roader. Their most recent car is also seven times more likely to be a Lexus, two and a half times more likely to be Saab and twice as likely to be Mercedes.

Online car shoppers are generally more receptive to online advertising compared to internet users as a whole. They are 60% more likely to agree with the statement "Advertising on the internet is more relevant to me than other advertising" and 46% more likely to agree with the statement "I like to receive emails from companies". Two thirds of them say that they have researched a brand that they have seen advertised online (compared to 45% for all internet users).

This group are also more likely than internet users to claim that advertising has prompted them to visit a website. What's more, they respond better than average to almost any type of advertising medium (with the notable exception of public transport and taxis). Relative to all internet users, they are especially likely to say that they've been prompted to visit a site by adverts in Sunday newspapers (48% more likely than internet users) and adverts on the web (40%).

Amongst the Sunday newspapers, online car shoppers are 82% more likely than adults as a whole to read The Observer and 76% more likely to read The Independent on Sunday.

To reach online car shoppers via websites, car related sites are the obvious choice (two-fifths of this group visited Autotrader alone in the past month). Personal finance sites may also be good value (for example, online car shoppers are almost five times more likely than web users as a whole to have visited MoneyExtra in the past month). This group also favour football sites (they are four times more likely to have visited rivals.net). Guardian Unlimited attracts a disproportionately large quantity of these people (they are two and half times more likely to visit than internet users as a whole) and ft.com is close behind.

More than two million people are using the web to inform their car purchasing decisions. This group of key prospects for car sellers are strongly influenced by web and email promotions. Campaign effectiveness can be greatly enhanced by thorough analysis of the group's media profile.

For more information please visit: <http://www.bmr.co.uk>