

AUTOMOTIVE

Despite connectedness, autonomous driving still worries young consumers

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Image courtesy of Rolls-Royce

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While younger generations are much more likely to embrace technological advances, Ketchum has discovered that the millennial and Gen Z groups are actually wary of autonomous vehicles.

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In a new study, hacking and safety is shown to still be a real concern for the group Ketchum is labeling GenZennials in terms of driverless cars. Research is also showing that 16-to-24-year-olds are interested in ride sharing instead of vehicle owning, but many still desire the freedom of driving.

"Conventional wisdom about 16- to 24-year-olds might suggest that they would reject car ownership in favor of ride sharing or other tech-driven advancements, but our data shows it's not that simple," said Lisa Sullivan, executive vice president and director of Ketchum's North American Technology Practice, San Francisco. "While many of them are excited about future advances, this microgeneration maintains a deep passion for being in control behind the wheel and still associate driving with a spirit of independence and freedom."

Ketchum questioned 1,000 individuals aged 16 to 24 in regards to the auto industry in its [The Next-Gen Guide to the Connected Ride study](#).

Autonomous driving

Consumers may be more concerned and wary of autonomous driving than excited for the technology. Almost 40 percent expressed worry in regards to driverless cars.



2018 Audi RS5 Coupe

Malfunctions, hacking, viruses and over all safety has even the youngest of drivers on edge. GenZennials prefer to feel in control, which is in stark contrast to the autonomous driving concept.

The notion that these young consumers might jeopardize the future of the car buying industry by favoring ride sharing instead of vehicle owning is not completely backed.

More than 92 percent of the group plans on purchasing a vehicle in the near future or already owns one. The freedom and control entices these young buyers.

Ketchum defines GenZennials as the youngest millennials, aged 20 to 24, and the oldest from Gen Z, aged 16 to 19.

Almost half of respondents insisted they love driving and had no plans of giving it up.

61 percent of the group said driving makes them feel independent while 53 percent said driving is a necessary tool for adults.



Audi silvercar

As consumer behavior continues to shift, German automaker Audi is upping its investment in car rental service Silvercar as it looks to further innovate mobility for changing consumer needs.

Building on an existing relationship that dates back to 2012, Audi is acquiring the Austin, TX-based tech company that focuses on vehicle sharing. With renting and sharing replacing car ownership for many consumers, automakers are turning to alternative mobility developments to remain a part of consumers' daily lives ([see more](#)).

More information

Additional insights from Frost & Sullivan suggest that a new business model will emerge for the luxury automotive industry, focusing on data, connectivity, customer centricity and cyber security.

As part of the firm's Future of Mobility Growth Partnership Service, Frost & Sullivan is showing that spending in regards to software and solutions will reach \$82.01 billion by 2020. Original equipment manufacturers will be driven by digital initiatives from chief digital officers ([see more](#)).

"You might expect that this hugely connected microgeneration, which Ketchum calls GenZennials, would embrace the concept of driverless cars," Ms. Sullivan said. "But they remain cautious due to concerns about hacks and safety, and a desire to be in control.

"Automakers and technologists will need to build trust and prove the safety of each new advance on the road toward a self-driving future," she said.

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