

AUTOMOTIVE

90pc of EV shoppers acted on online advertisements: report

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About half of first-time electric vehicle buyers said a brand's website increased in importance during the pandemic. Image credit: Teads

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Electric vehicle offerings continue getting into gear, as many consumers' online experiences are leading to purchases.

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According to new research from media platform Teads, 52 percent of first-time electric vehicle buyers believe the importance of brand websites increased during the pandemic. There is still room for automotive brands to expand their online presence and to educate consumers on what they must know before purchasing a vehicle.

"I think the website is a central hub to inform and engage with prospects and clients, and will become an increasingly important sales channel in the future as luxury car brands develop their ecommerce strategy," said Henner Bloemer, global senior industry director of automotive at [Teads](#).

"Luxury car brands also have to invest in digital technology, features and processes to facilitate the full consumer journey from basic information and processing of inquiries, through to actually buying a car online."

Teads joined Kantar for its first study, surveying more than 1900 auto consumers across eight countries between April and August 2021. For a supplementary survey, Teads conducted an in-platform study among 400 consumers planning to buy a car in the next two years across four markets.

A digital push

An automaker's digital presence can be a deciding factor in a consumer's purchase decision.

Digital advertisements hold immense weight, as 90 percent of consumers interested in purchasing an EV and 85 percent of overall car buyers took action resulting from online advertising.



Automakers are encouraging drivers to switch to electric vehicles. Image credit: Audi UK

Forty-nine percent of consumers looking to buy an EV in Europe, Middle East, Africa (EMEA) begin their research by visiting the brand's website, compared to only 28 percent that visited a dealer.

Eighty percent of consumers looking to buy an EV also said a website has an impact on their final decision to purchase a car.

Brands still have work to do in terms of crafting informative online presences. Forty-two percent of respondents said they were not aware of the full benefits of an EV car.

As the conversation regarding electrification expands, auto brands have an opportunity to foster websites that highlight why their offerings set them apart from competitors.

Teads' supplementary survey primarily focused on the impact of the chip shortage on consumer purchase.



Audi is prioritizing customer experience with a personalized website, improved myAudi app features and additional consultation options. Image courtesy of Audi

Nearly nine in 10 consumers looking to buy a car in the next two years, as well as those looking to buy in the next 6 months, are aware of the current chip shortage. About a third say the chip shortage will affect their plans to buy a car, and 14 percent say they will consider used cars while 9 percent will choose from available brands and 8 percent will opt to delay buying a car.

Prospective buyers are also expecting lower prices if they wait longer, with 31 percent of global consumers expecting price reductions if they put off their new car purchases, increasing to 34 percent among European car buyers.

Brand identity

Optimizing their online capabilities is absolutely crucial for brands, as several consumers turn to the internet to learn about a brand's heritage and which automobile best meet their needs and appeals to them.

German automaker Audi is prioritizing customer experience with a personalized website, improved myAudi app features and additional consultation options. The website, which was relaunched in 2020, provides information on all the automaker's models and services, and offers an interactive car configurator with high-end visualizations and detailed information ([see story](#)).

Toyota Corp.'s Lexus is encouraging drivers to work towards the things that fulfill them in a new media campaign

for its 2022 NX luxury sports utility vehicle.

In its partnership with Google, Lexus is bringing a cloud-streamed AR experience of a redesigned NX to YouTube viewers, which will also be available on the automaker's website ([see story](#)).

"Digital is crucial for the future success of luxury car brands as the car becomes more and more connected and general media usage becomes increasingly digital," Mr. Bloemer said. "Brands have to make their website a place where their brand lives in order to connect with customers beyond a dedicated carline.

"For 60 percent of global EV [shoppers], brand reputation is key."

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