

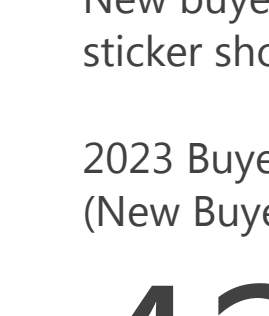
# Strategies for Shifting Trends in Car Buying

Cox Automotive 2023 Car Buyer Journey Study

Car buying trends continue to shift as we leave the pandemic in the rearview mirror. Inventory is more readily available, but affordability remains a top challenge for buyers.

Here's what your brand can focus on this year to help car buyers navigate their journey:

As more inventory is readily available, there is downward pressure on prices. However, affordability remains a top challenge for buyers, resulting in sustained heightened cross-shopping activity. Fewer new buyers start off with a specific vehicle in mind.



Invest in retention and conquest marketing campaigns that highlight vehicle features and technology that make your models stand out from the pack.

New buyers reported better selection, but continued sticker shock provides opportunity for conquering.

2023 Buyer Sentiment (New Buyers)

42%

prices higher than expected.

2022: 42% ▲ 2021: 25%

Buyer Mindset & Cross-shopping (New Buyers)

62%

did not know the exact car wanted at start of shopping.

Base: New-vehicle buyers  
Letters indicate significant difference between groups at the 95% confidence interval  
Arrows indicate significant differences from previous timeframe at the 95% confidence interval.  
Source: Cox Automotive Car Buyer Journey – 2023

Content will drive decisions. Undecided shoppers will depend on content to aid the research process.

90%

of new in-market shoppers/buyers intend to use content to research new vehicles in the future.

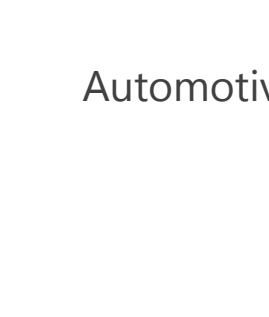
Source: Cox Automotive GfK Content Influence Study - 2023

61%

of new buyers cite content impacts their vehicle choice.

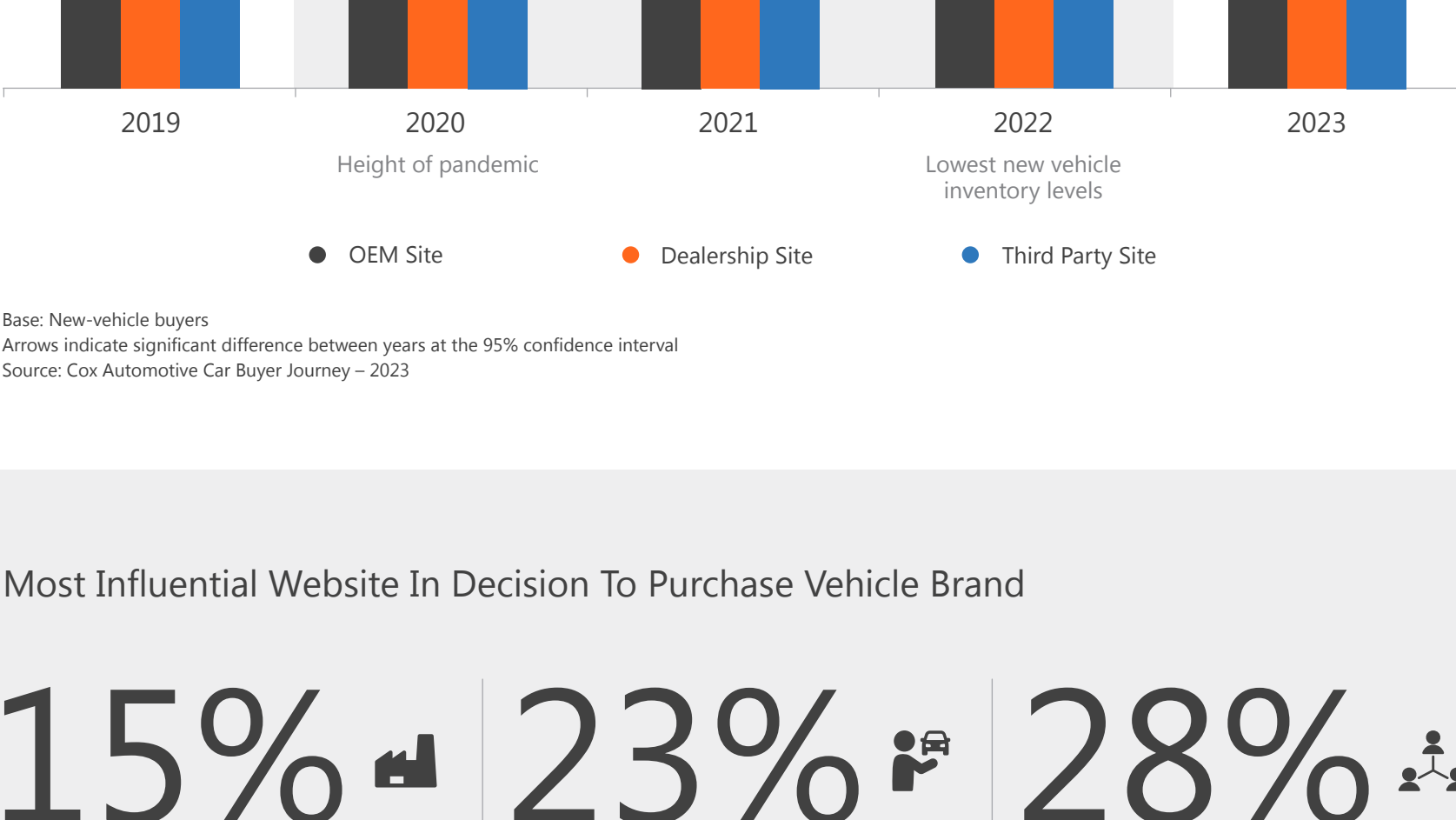
Source: Cox Automotive GfK Content Influence Study - 2023

Online shopping behaviors normalized as inventory levels ramped up and buyers didn't have to put in as much effort as in 2022. Third party sites proved to be the most resilient and influential online source.



Include third party sites as a critical channel in your digital marketing strategy.

Automotive Website Usage (among New Buyers)



Most Influential Website In Decision To Purchase Vehicle Brand

15% OEM  
23% Dealer ▲  
28% Third Party ▲

KBB and Autotrader are top consumer destinations for make and model insights

Among new in-market shoppers/buyers

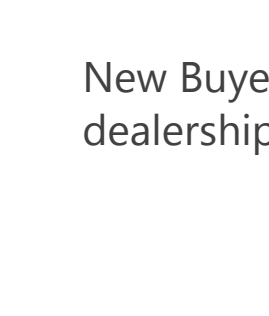


Shoppers turn to Kelley Blue Book and Autotrader for trustworthy editorial content

Top 5 most trustworthy editorial content

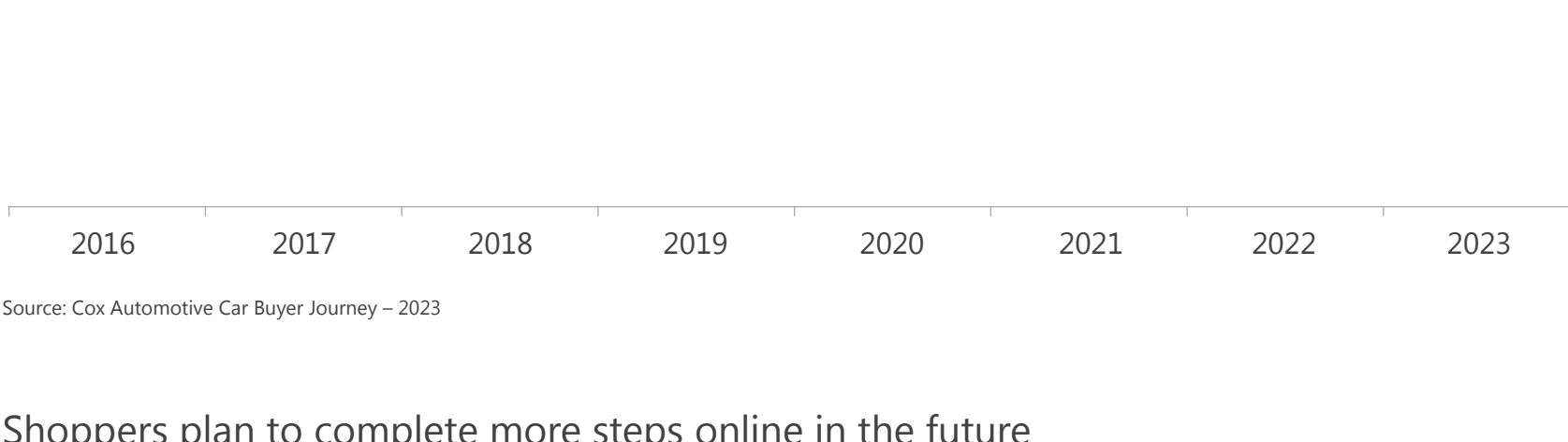


Satisfaction with the dealership remained strong through market volatility. However, satisfaction has plateaued.



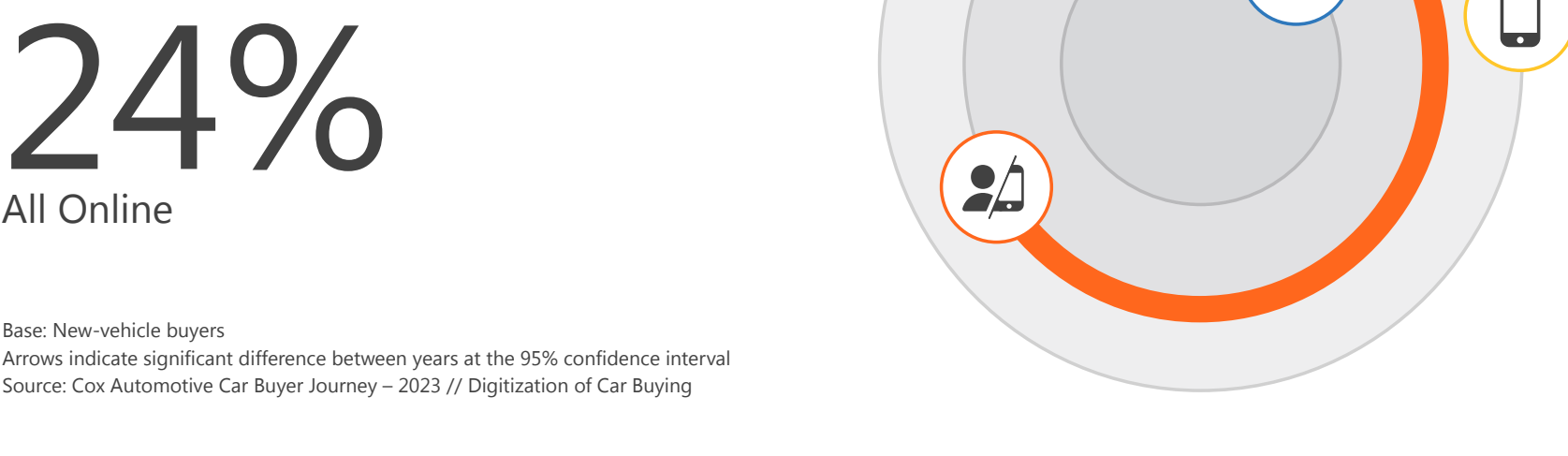
Provide more personalization and digitization of the purchase process to take customer satisfaction to new heights.

New Buyer overall satisfaction with experience at dealership/retailer of purchase (% 8-10)+



Shoppers plan to complete more steps online in the future

How shoppers will likely complete their next purchase



New vehicles are gaining ground with new audiences. Multicultural buyers are accounting for a higher percentage of new vehicle sales across all categories – import, domestic and especially luxury. In addition, the Millennial generation dominates the luxury vehicle segment. Content marketing holds the key to shaping their preferred vehicle.



Target multicultural audiences and the Millennial generation with customized content marketing strategies.

	Total New	Non-Luxury Import (A)	Non-Luxury Domestic (B)	Luxury (C)
Average Age	52	54 <sup>BC</sup> ▲	51 <sup>C</sup>	45
Gen Z	3%	4%	2%	3%
Millennial	29%	21%	29% <sup>A</sup>	51% <sup>AB</sup> ▲
Gen X	33%	33%	36% <sup>C</sup>	28%
Baby Boomer	29%	36% <sup>BC</sup>	28% <sup>C</sup>	14%
Female	41%	46% <sup>BC</sup>	38%	36%
Multicultural	29% ▲	26% ▲	26% ▲	39% <sup>AB</sup> ▲
Average Pre-tax Annual Household Income	\$114,523 ▲	\$103,063	\$108,657	\$154,688 <sup>AB</sup>
Super Prime Credit (750+)	58%	61% <sup>8</sup>	53%	57%

Source: Cox Automotive Car Buyer Journey – 2023 // Digitization of Car Buying

Content Marketing sources influence on vehicle choice Among Multi-Cultural New Shoppers/Buyers (% high influence)

- 1 Consumer ratings and reviews
- 2 Online video reviews from an expert
- 3 Online test drive videos from an expert
- 4 Official expert car ratings and awards
- 5 Published side-by-side comparisons of vehicle models
- 6 Published 'top' lists of best vehicle models (e.g., Top 10 Midsize SUVs in the US)
- 7 Articles about vehicles, new tech and features, etc.

Source: Cox Automotive GfK Content Influence Study 2023

These tactics will help you continue to reach and influence car shoppers in 2024 and beyond. To learn more implications from the 2023 Car Buyer Journey and other Cox Automotive studies, contact your Cox Automotive representative or visit [kbb-autotrader-oem.com](http://kbb-autotrader-oem.com).