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For Immediate Release
May 2010

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What Women Experience Buying Cars

Report compares the car buying experiences of Women over 40 to under 40

Overview

According to Women-Drivers.com comparing women over- and under-40 (mean age: 48 and 27 respectively), the consumer rating company found that the experience of purchasing a vehicle was less satisfactory for women under 40 than for women over 40. The top line data suggests that women over 40 are more confident, relaxed and expressed when buying a car than their younger counterpart.

Anne Fleming, President of Women-Drivers.com, shared that her company collects extensive research on what works and what doesn't at the dealership, in both retaining customers and securing first-time buyers. She says "Women visit an average of three dealerships during the process of looking for and purchasing a car. She buys from only one. Our data provides insights and trends regarding the purchase experience at car dealerships".

It's a valuable lesson for all, and goes back to the basics of human interaction. What the report concludes is that regardless of age, ethnicity or marital status, women want to be treated with respect, spoken to truthfully, and to feel included in the process. More importantly, women want to feel confident about their ability to make good decisions, in a process that may or may not be familiar to them. This report reflects the Women Satisfaction Index® scores, or WSI® as well as other data found in the reviews of women's experiences.

On Women-Drivers.com, individual dealerships are reviewed by women. The Women Satisfaction Index or WSI® scores range from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). Dealerships with a maintained score above 3.80 are recognized as *Certified Women-Drivers Friendly Dealers*, assisting women in connecting easily with dealers that already have a great reputation with these powerful buyers. The data in this report is derived from over 2,800 reviews. See chart below for details.

Personal Experience Purchasing at a Dealership

Women over 40 reported being less overwhelmed and apprehensive about the car buying experience than women under 40; in fact the older age bracket reported being excited, confident and relaxed about their approach visiting the dealership.

The top reasons for purchasing at dealerships for women over 40 are 'best price and deal, dealership's reputation and best trade-in'. The top reasons for women under 40 are 'best deal, dealership's reputation and best financing'. While both age groups are aligned in their first two purchasing indicators, they differ in the third. The reason 'best trade-in' is a higher indicator with women over 40 is because they are interested in the maximum value of the vehicle in which they want to trade. On the other hand, the third indicator for women under 40 is best financing. For women under 40 financing is important because this is usually their first car purchase, and more likely their first new car purchase.

Interestingly, the top reasons given for not purchasing a car from a dealership include: pressure from the salesperson, lack of a specific model or color, and the price or deal offered (in some cases, separate from the trade-in value).

Most women in the survey felt satisfied with the overall dealership experience (89.4% > 40 v. 87.6% < 40), with the initial greeting and felt respected (93.2% v. 85.4%), with the salesperson’s ability to listen and answer questions (93% v. 86.8%) and to the salesperson’s knowledge of the vehicle’s features and operations (89.4 % v. 85%).

In both age categories, women who purchased a vehicle, reportedly perceived the salesperson as being “knowledgeable, trustworthy, and understanding” and “likeable and respectful”. However, the scores tend to drop a bit when looking at women’s satisfaction with the pricing and negotiation process (86.4% v. 82.8%).

Almost half of the women over 40 went to the dealership by themselves, almost eight percentage points more than women under 40. Of those that brought someone with them to the dealership, both age groups were consistent in the person accompanying them was a man (78.2% v. 81%). Again the higher age group perceived that they were treated ‘equally’, or the same as a man would have been treated under the same buying circumstances (82.2% v. 76.1%). With both buying groups, approximately 8 out of 10 said they received follow up communication from the salesperson or dealership.

Conclusion

The report reflects the very real imperative of dealers and manufacturers to familiarize themselves with the individual needs and desires of women buyers. A quarter of the women in this survey indicated they plan to buy another car within one to two years. Therefore, it behooves dealers to become aware of factors that contribute to a successful purchasing experience.

Purchasing Experience	Over 40	Under 40
Visited/Went to Dealership Alone	49.5%	41.7%
Of those going with another, accompanied to Dealership by a Man	78.2%	81%
Reasons for Not Purchasing	1. High pressure salesperson 2. Price was too high 3. Model or Color unavailable 4. Price was too high 5. High pressure salesperson 6. Poor trade in offer	1. Price was too high 2. High pressure salesperson 3. Poor trade in offer
Reasons for Purchasing	1. Best Price and Deal 2. Dealership’s reputation 3. Best Trade-In 4. Location & Hours of Service 5. Best Model & Color Selection	1. Dealership’s Reputation 2. Best Price and Deal 3. Best Financing 4. Best trade in 5. Concierge Services
Experience of Visit	1. Excited 2. Confident 3. Relaxed 4. Apprehensive 5. Confused	1. Excited 2. Overwhelmed 3. Relaxed 4. Apprehensive 5. Confident
Satisfaction During Visit (Scale of 1-5 or %)		
Satisfied with way I was greeted/treated respectfully	4.66/5.0 or 93.2%	4.27/5.0 or 85.4%
Satisfied with salesperson’s ability to listen and answer questions	4.65/5.0 or 93%	4.34/5.0 or 86.8%

Satisfied with salesperson's explanations of features/ operation of vehicle	4.47/5.0 or 89.4%	4.25/5.0 or 85%
Satisfied with price and payments negotiated	4.32/5.0 or 86.4%	4.14/5.0 or 82.8%
Felt pressure by salesperson	4.27/5.0 or 85.4%	3.93/5.0 or 78.6%
Satisfied with dealership experience	4.47/5.0 or 89.4%	4.38/5.0 or 87.6%
Felt salesperson treated them same as they would treat a male customer	82.2%	76.1%
Received follow up communication from dealership	77.7%	82.8%

Women-Drivers.com connects women to Certified Women-Drivers Friendly™ car dealers. The site allows consumers to rate their Purchase, Browse and Service experience at dealerships nationwide. Dealers that are recognized as Certified Women-Drivers Friendly™ and can use this to distinguish their dealership in several ways. The company provides a number of innovative tools to assist dealers in retaining and attracting more women buyers.