

# The Active Consumer

## Shopping For Cars—And Information—Online

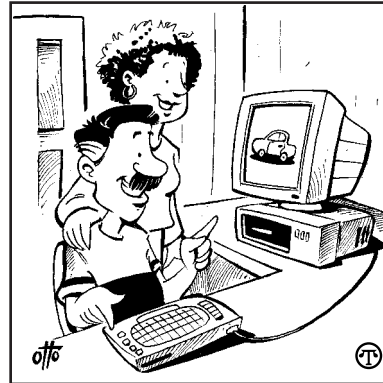
(NAPSA)—More and more Americans are taking a test drive on the information superhighway, especially when shopping for cars. Both minorities and non-minorities are going online to do research, and both give the process a high satisfaction rating.

“New vehicle buyers are more informed than ever before,” says Jim Willingham, chairman of Automotive Retailing Today. “By the time they set foot on the showroom floor, they have a very good idea of what they want and don’t want, and how much they’re prepared to pay. That’s good news for everybody.”

Of minorities who recently purchased a new car, an estimated 36 percent used the Internet as a resource. Within this category, Asian Americans were the most Web-savvy group, with 62 percent going online before going to the dealer. Roughly 39 percent of Hispanic Americans and 27 percent of African Americans did the same.

These statistics come from a survey of new car buyers, conducted by Wirthlin Worldwide on behalf of Automotive Retailing Today. The survey also found that, among minorities, the two areas where automotive Web sites could use the most improvement are by providing pricing information, in addition to more/clearer information in general.

Non-minorities and minorities generally express similar feelings about how positive or negative their car buying/leasing experi-



**More and more minorities are using the Internet as an informative resource when looking to buy or lease a car.**

ence was. According to the Wirthlin survey, 82 percent of minorities had an overall positive experience, compared to 83 percent of non-minorities. Other results of the survey include:

- 39 percent of minorities believe that the car buying experience is getting better.
- 87 percent of minorities and 90 percent of non-minorities found that the car dealership provided the most useful information.
- 70 percent of minorities rate consumer guides on vehicles and government safety ratings as useful resources when car shopping.

Automotive Retailing Today is a coalition that includes all major automobile manufacturers and dealer organizations. It works to promote a better understanding of the industry and build stronger customer relationships.