

# 2016 CAR BUYER JOURNEY



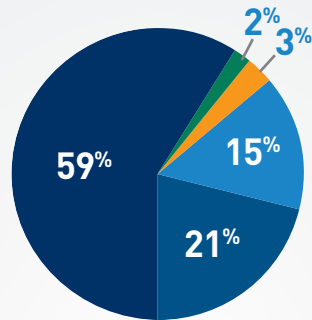
# CAR BUYERS SPEND 59% OF THEIR TIME ONLINE

(among those who shopped online)

## TIME SPENT GETTING A VEHICLE

ALL BUYERS

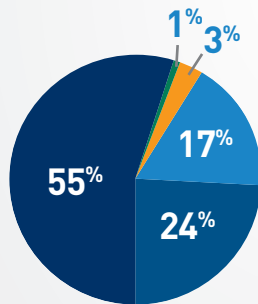
14:44 HOURS



TOTAL TIME SPENT

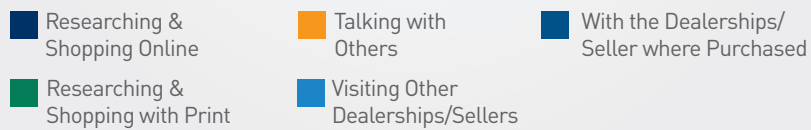
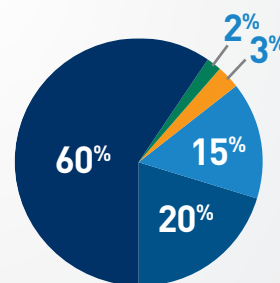
NEW BUYERS

13:01 HOURS

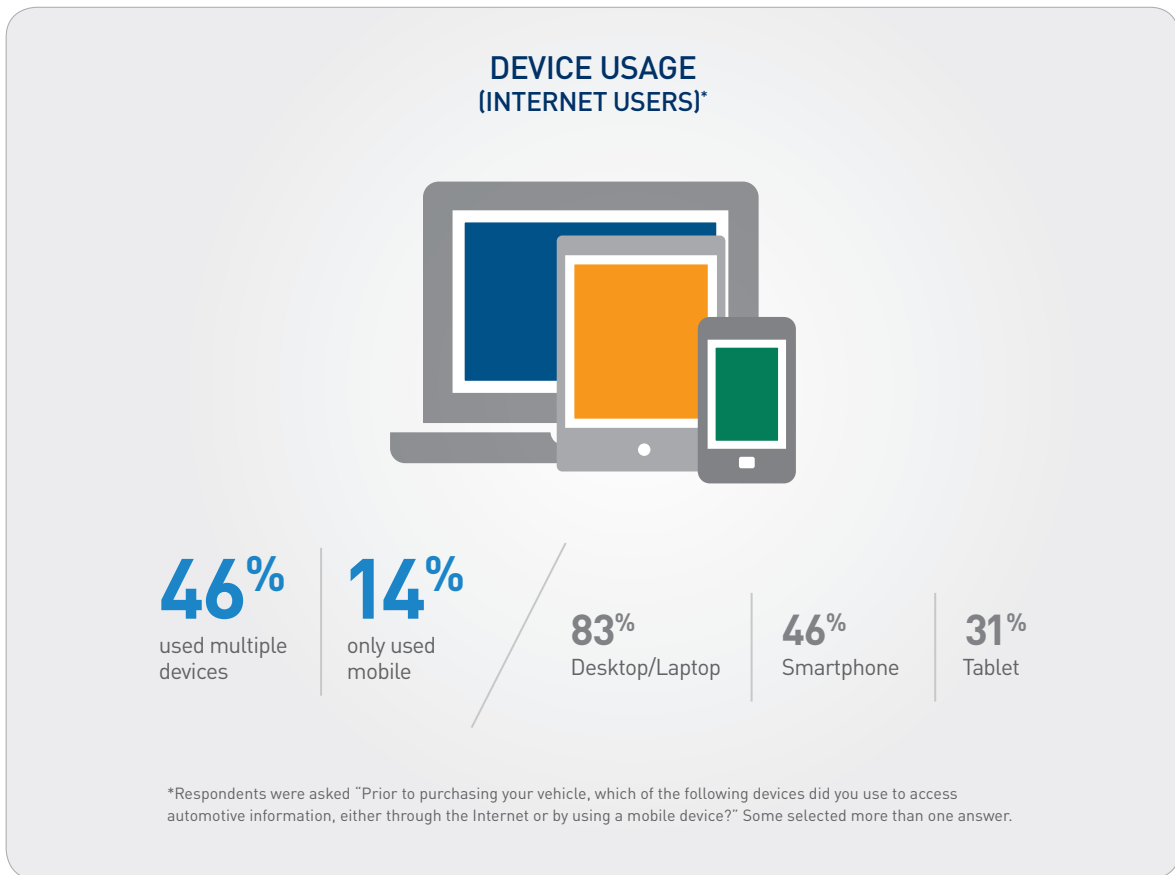
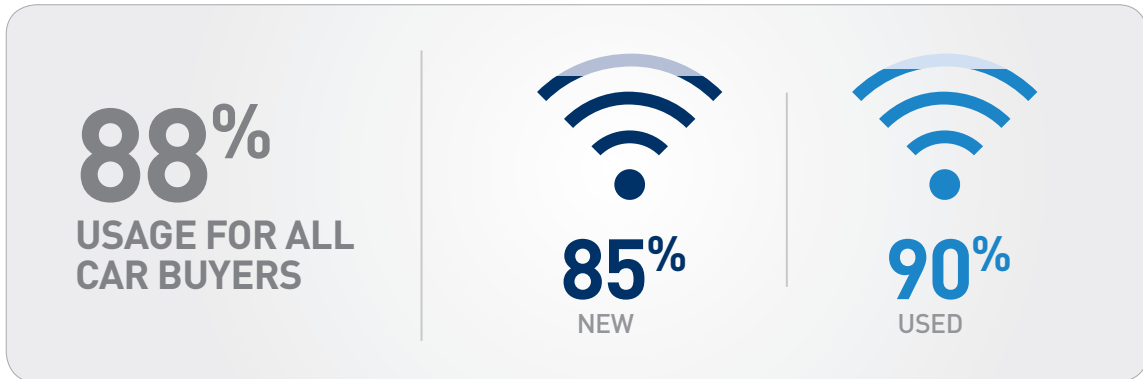


USED BUYERS

15:22 HOURS



# CAR SHOPPING ON MULTIPLE DEVICES = MULTIPLE MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES



88% of car buyers use the Internet to shop. Car buyers are also using a variety of devices to shop, including desktop and laptop computers, smartphones and tablets. According to the study, 46% use multiple devices when shopping for a car.

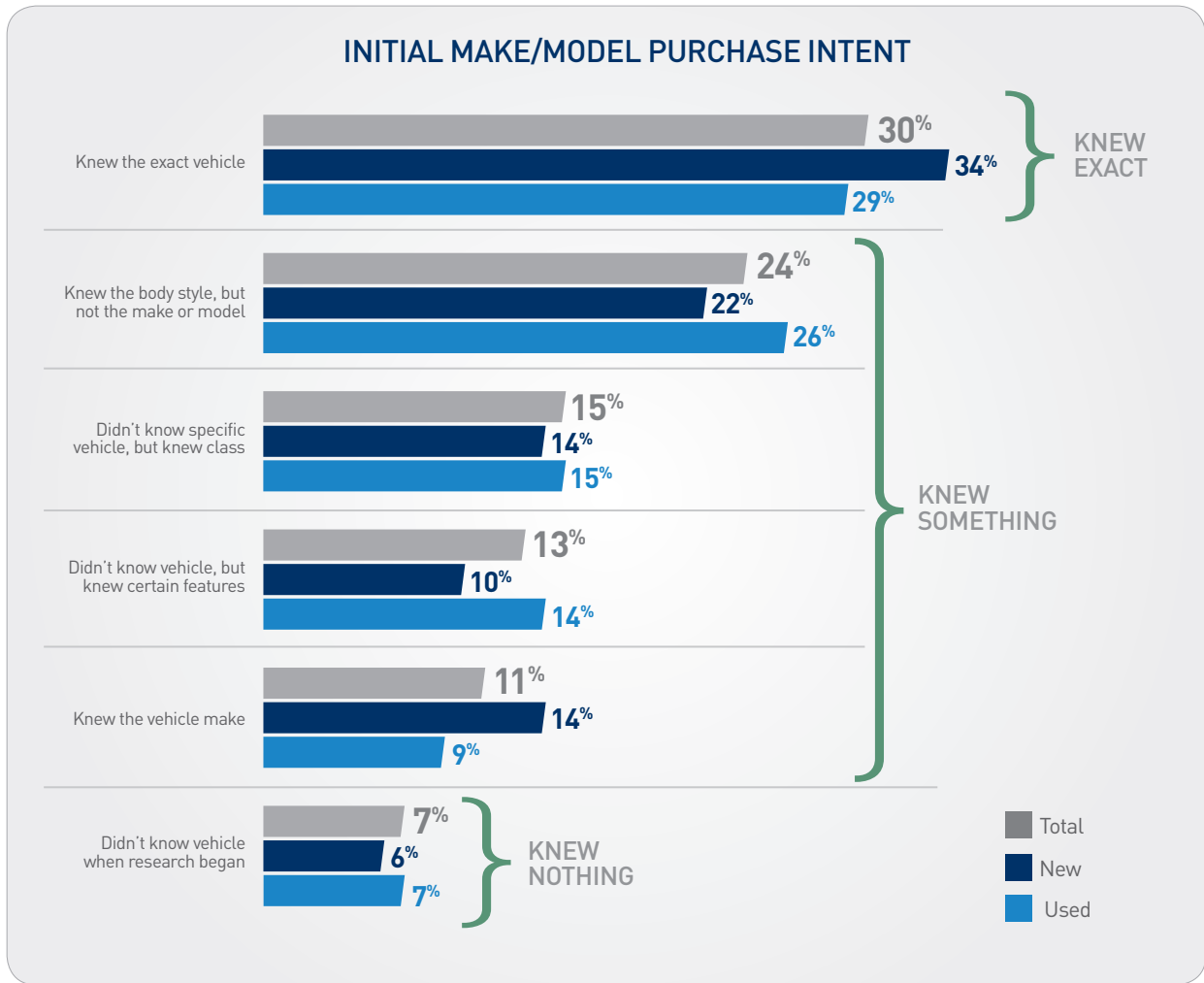
The prevalence of a multi-screen car-shopping experience gives automotive marketers and brands substantial new opportunities

to target and effectively influence shoppers at any time or any place. Dealers should focus on unique ways to deliver a consistent overall message with content designed for each specific device being used during the car-shopping process.

# MOST CAR BUYERS ARE UNDECIDED AT THE START OF THE SHOPPING PROCESS

Car buyers consider a variety of makes/models and purchase options as they move through the shopping process. When they first begin to shop, 6 out of 10 them are open to considering multiple vehicle options. Many of them are also open to both New and Used vehicles, and half of them trade in an old vehicle at the time of purchase. But by the time they actually show up to the dealership,

they already know what they want to buy. 38% of car buyers only visit one dealership, and 52% only test drive one vehicle. While car shoppers can be influenced about what to buy and who to buy from, the time to influence and convert them is online, where car buyers spend the majority of their shopping time making decisions.



**36%**  
of New car buyers considered both New & Used vehicles

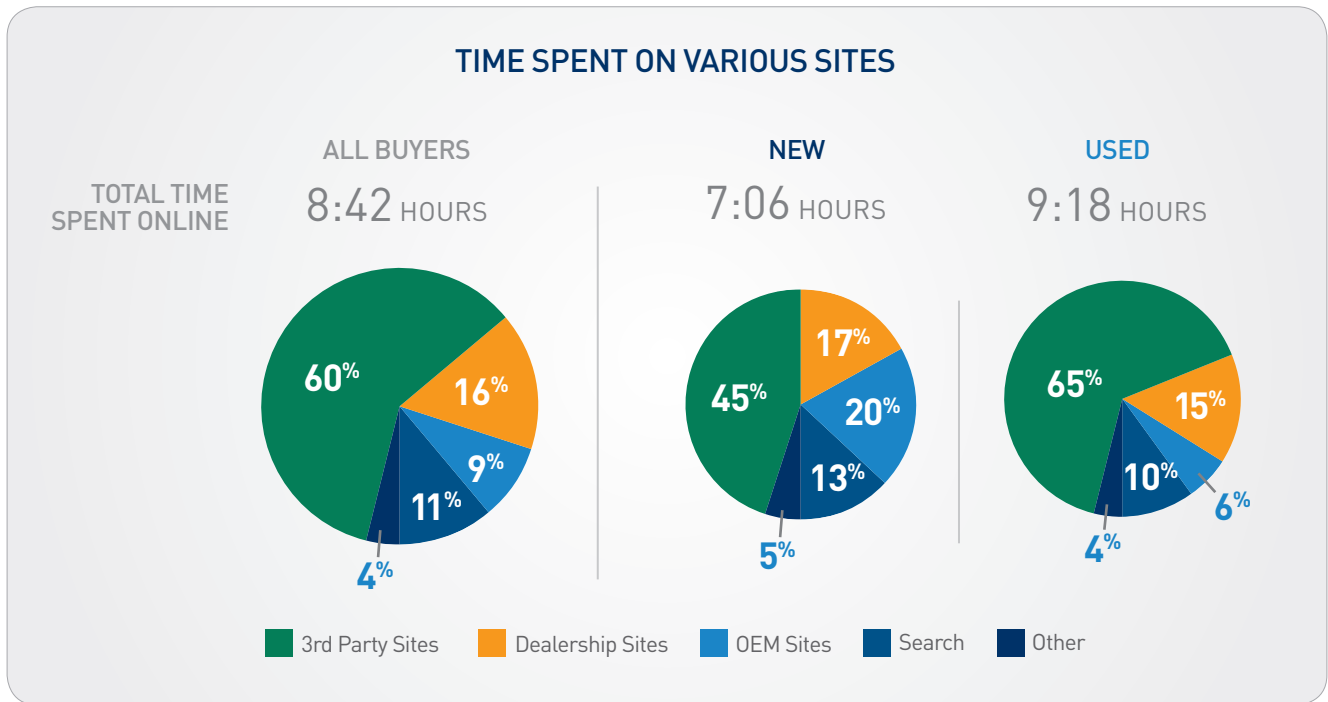
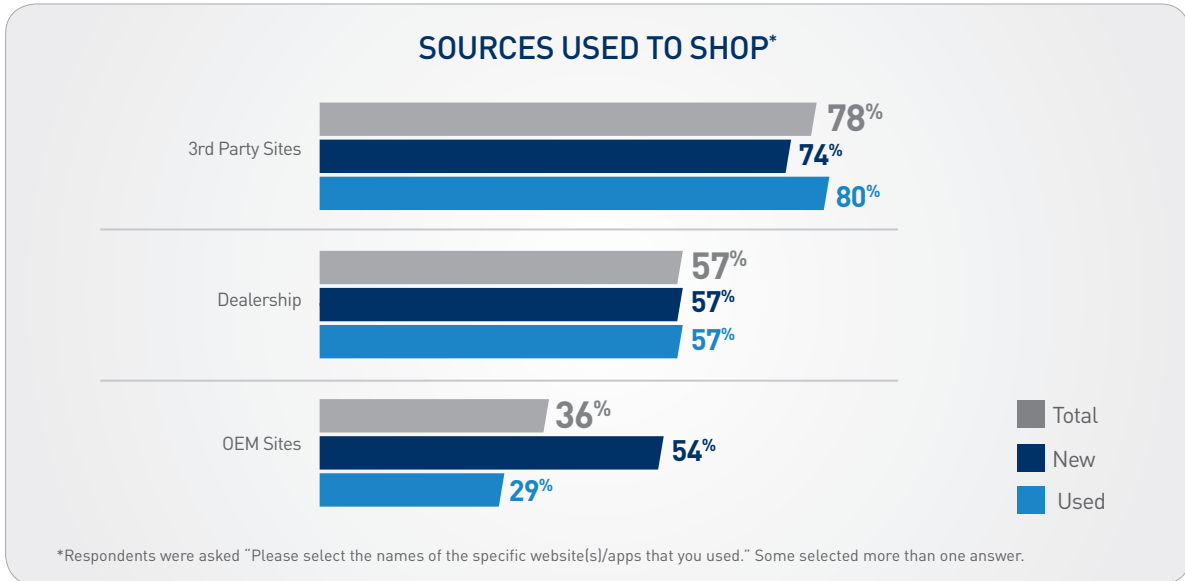
**55%**  
of Used car buyers considered both New & Used vehicles

**52%**  
of all buyers test drive only one vehicle

**38%**  
of all buyers only went to the dealership where they purchased

# THIRD-PARTY SITES ARE THE MOST-USED SITES FOR ONLINE CAR SHOPPING

While car buyers use a variety of sites to shop, **third-party sites** are the most-used site of any online resource.



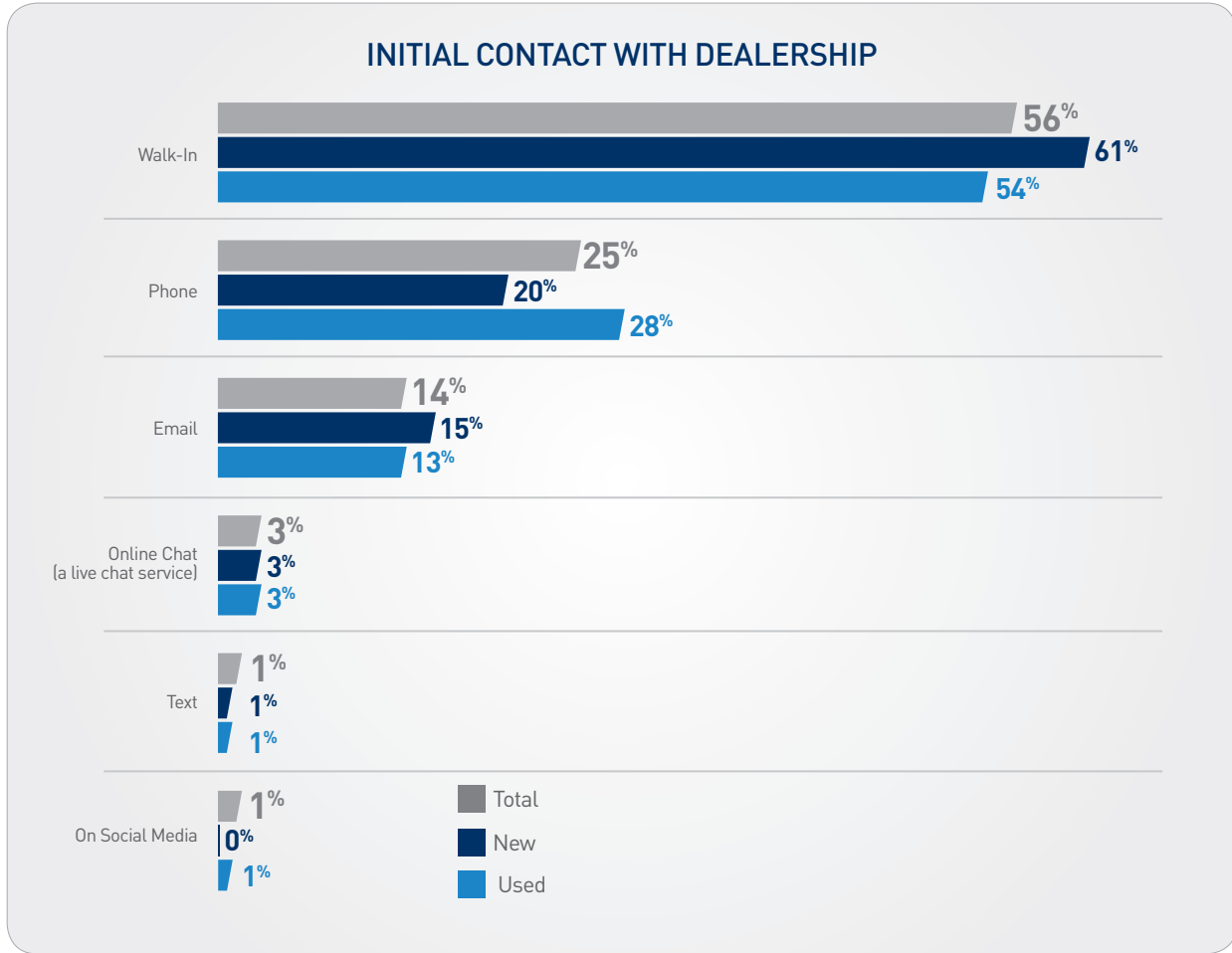
While car buyers use a variety of sites to shop, more of them use third-party sites than any other site, and 56% of car buyers say that third-party sites are the most useful sites. Third-party sites, manufacturer sites, dealer sites and search engines complement each other

during the shopping process. Therefore, automotive marketers need to have a broad yet integrated marketing strategy, including a strong presence in the online inventory marketplace, to effectively reach and influence shoppers wherever they are shopping online.

# “WALKING IN” REMAINS MOST-COMMON INITIAL POINT OF CONTACT WITH DEALERS

More than half of car buyers do not contact the dealership prior to their first visit. It is therefore crucial for dealers to have effective sourcing and CRM processes in place to help understand initial contacts and walk-in traffic.

Knowing what influenced a shopper to contact the dealership, regardless of method, can help dealers determine the value of their advertising and understand where to most successfully invest marketing dollars.



## TOP 5 ACTIVITIES ONLINE DURING THE SHOPPING PROCESS

- 1 Research car pricing **71%**
- 2 Find actual vehicles listed for sale **68%**
- 3 Compare different models **64%**
- 4 Find out what current car is worth **63%**
- 5 Locate a dealer or get dealer info **46%**

Understanding what car buyers are looking for can help ensure you are delivering the right marketing message and content to the right shopper at the right time to help influence their decisions about what to buy and whom to buy from.

# BUYERS ARE LEAST SATISFIED WITH LONG PURCHASE PROCESS

When asked to rate their satisfaction on a scale of 1-10, 81% of car buyers gave the test-driving process an 8-10 rating. However, satisfaction declined to 67% when interactions with the F&I department were factored in. Of the 3-hours average time spent at the dealer during the purchase process, more

than half of that time is spent negotiating or doing paperwork, resulting in a 56% satisfaction rate for the process.

Dealers should strive to shorten the purchase process in order to enhance customer satisfaction and improve loyalty and retention rates.



## ABOUT THIS STUDY

The 2016 Car Buyer Journey, commissioned by Cox Automotive through IHS Automotive, was conducted to gain an understanding of consumer car-shopping behavior and perception of the dealer experience. A total of 2,131 car buyers (1,283 New and 848 Used) who purchased a vehicle within the 3 months between March and May of 2015 completed a survey.

IHS AUTOMOTIVE  
driven by POLK





COX AUTOMOTIVE BRANDS