

NIELSEN ANNUAL AUTO MARKETING REPORT  
2019-2020 EDITION

# DRIVE CONNECTIONS WITH MULTICULTURAL CONSUMERS

[MarketingSolutions@nielsen.com](mailto:MarketingSolutions@nielsen.com)

# WELCOME TO THE NIELSEN ANNUAL AUTO MARKETING REPORT

## 2019-2020 EDITION

Dear Auto Marketer,

We're going through a difficult time in our nation's history. The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has exacted a terrible toll around the world, and the health crisis and resulting economic shock in the U.S. have been devastating. And recent events that have highlighted racial injustice and sparked social unrest have added to the misery. Healing and recovery will take a long time.

While some states have lifted the strict lockdowns imposed earlier this year, consumers remain cautious. With paychecks still lagging and talk of another wave of infections this winter, they're prioritizing their purchases. For their part, companies big and small are carefully managing their cash reserves and adjusting their supply chains to meet the new realities.

In this context, you might ask yourself whether continuing to spend money on marketing initiatives this year makes any sense at all.

At Nielsen, we recently pulled together resources from multiple areas of our business to help our clients understand the new normal.<sup>1</sup> Early in the pandemic, at a time when most brick-and-mortar shops were forced to close doors, you won't be surprised to hear that we saw a major shift to online shopping.

But one of our most important findings, and a little less obvious, was something we called the *pandemic paradox*: consumers in lockdown spent much more time with media, and yet most advertisers were seen cutting their ad budgets. With the long road ahead and all the uncertainties along the way, some of your colleagues are even considering suspending advertising completely for the rest of the year, or until they can see clear signs of recovery.

We believe that's a mistake. It takes years for a brand to bounce back from completely cutting their ad spend for any extended period of time, impacting both short- and long-term gains.<sup>2</sup> Today's crisis is not a period to cut down on your advertising, but rather a chance to get smarter with it. Now is the time to engage more personally with your customers through advertising, promote your values thoughtfully and demonstrate sensitivity to what we're all going through.<sup>3</sup>

Data has proven that many of the shifts in behavior we saw at the peak of the pandemic are here to stay, including connected TV adoption<sup>4</sup>, and an enhanced online shopping experience will become the norm for many more industries.

To help you transition to this new world, one of your first priorities should be to reach multicultural consumers. They're younger and more digitally connected than the general population today, and they can offer invaluable insights on what to expect from all consumers in the near future.

<sup>1</sup> Nielsen, [COVID-19: Tracking the Impact on FMCG, Retail and Media](#).

<sup>2</sup> Nielsen, [A Pandemic Dilemma: Stop Advertising or Maintain Brand Equity Through a Cause](#).

<sup>3</sup> Nielsen, [Understanding Consumer Sentiment Can Help Companies Adjust](#), June 2, 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Nielsen, [Connected TV Usage Remains Above Pre-COVID-19 Levels](#), June 4, 2020.



## TO HELP YOU TRANSITION TO THIS NEW WORLD, ONE OF YOUR FIRST PRIORITIES SHOULD BE TO REACH MULTICULTURAL CONSUMERS.

Of course, they're not just a preview of tomorrow's consumers, they are tomorrow's consumers: Already today, 40% of the U.S. population is multicultural.<sup>5</sup> Within 25 years, it will be 50%.

And when it comes to deciding to buy a new vehicle, multicultural consumers follow a unique and distinct path-to-purchase, often different from non-multicultural consumers. They have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic too, so connecting with them today is crucial to build lasting relationships. These initiatives will serve your brand well into the future.

We prepared this report to help you understand how your multicultural customers stand apart when they embark on a journey to purchase a new vehicle—and to help you spend your ad dollars as wisely as possible in these uncertain times. I hope you'll enjoy reading it and will put in practice some of its recommendations.



### PAULA SKIER

Vice President, Automotive Industry Lead  
Nielsen Media

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, [2017 National Population Projections](#), Feb. 20, 2020.

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# INTRODUCTION

For this report, we used data from the Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase series<sup>6</sup> to provide a portrait of vehicle buyers as they move along the path-to-purchase. Through this study, we also examined how shoppers from various ethnic and racial backgrounds differ from the general car-buying population in terms of brand awareness, brand consideration and recall to advertising.

The data was collected over a period of 18 months ending in June 2019—that is, pre-pandemic. At the time, the auto industry in the U.S. was already confronting growth challenges, and we were interested in learning how auto marketers could better engage multicultural consumers to help stem that tide. So, while much has changed since the study was fielded, the findings are more important for the auto industry than ever, and we've provided an overlay of insights from the current crisis to make this report even more powerful for auto marketers today.

We found that vehicle shoppers from multicultural groups tend to be aware of fewer brands at the outset but end up considering more options on the path-to-purchase than the general population. This means more opportunities for your brand to make an impact along the way.

Ad recall is a good indicator of a brand's ability to stamp its mark on its target audience. Television is still by far the No. 1 source of ad recall for automakers, and there's no question that a well-balanced advertising campaign should have television in the mix.

But omnichannel advertising is essential for reaching multicultural consumers. According to our research, Hispanic car shoppers, for instance, are young and connected, and their level of recall for ads they see digitally is unmatched. Asian Americans respond better than others to print advertising. And Black consumers are receptive to vehicle advertising across a greater variety of channels.

We'll review these differences, explore how they affect the shopping experience and how you might use them to boost your brand. As the country emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic and budgets get tighter, you need to spend your ad dollars wisely, using data and insights to inform your strategy. Multicultural consumers are showing you the way.

<sup>6</sup> The Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase series consists of quarterly online surveys with adult U.S. consumers. The data collection started in 2012, and more than 250,000 respondents have taken part in this research so far. The data used throughout this report covers the period from Q1 2018 to Q2 2019. More details about our methodology can be found at the end of the report.

# FINDINGS SUMMARY

## 1. GEAR UP: BUILD BRAND AWARENESS FIRST

Brand awareness for car manufacturers in the U.S. is healthy, but Hispanic, Black and Asian American consumers are aware of 10-20% fewer car brands than the general population. This presents an opportunity for brands to bridge the gap.

## 2. CLUTCH PLAY: REACH CONSUMERS IN THE MOMENTS THAT MATTER

Over the course of the car-shopping journey, consumers get exposed to more brands and add them to their consideration set. Hispanic and Black consumers add more than anyone else, making them more receptive to your advertising efforts even if your brand wasn't top-of-mind in the first place.

## 3. FAST LANE: TV LEADS BY FAR WITH AD RECALL

Ad recall isn't the only success metric, but it's an important piece of the puzzle to measure the success of your campaigns. There's simply no better channel than television to boost ad recall across all multicultural groups—especially now that many Americans are spending more time at home and watching plenty of television.

## 4. YOUNG AND CONNECTED: HISPANIC CAR SHOPPERS ARE TWICE AS ATTENTIVE TO DIGITAL ADS

Hispanic car shoppers are young, online and mobile, and they're twice as likely to recall seeing an ad for your brand digitally than the rest of the population. They watch a lot of digital videos and, thanks to that extra exposure, tend to consider more brands before making a purchase decision.

## 5. OMNICHANNEL HEAVEN: BLACK CONSUMERS ARE AVID MEDIA USERS AND ATTENTIVE TO ADS ACROSS ALL CHANNELS

Black consumers are avid media users and are more likely to recall seeing your ad than the rest of the population—and that holds true across most channels too. They're particularly attentive to radio advertising, even among those who don't listen to it much.

## 6. MORE IS MORE: FOR ASIAN AMERICANS, HIGHER CONSIDERATION IS TIED TO HEAVY MEDIA USAGE

Asian Americans on average consider fewer vehicle brands than their counterparts before making a purchase, but their consideration set increases if they spend a lot of time online—particularly on social media. They're also the most likely to respond to print advertising.



## FINDING #1

# GEAR UP: BUILD BRAND AWARENESS FIRST

## MARKETER'S TAKEAWAY

**Close the gap:** Hispanic, Black and Asian American consumers are aware of a shorter list of auto brands when compared to the rest of the population. In the race to win their hearts and minds, realize that you have an opportunity to improve brand awareness.

**Customize your creatives:** Don't assume that your marketing is connecting equally across all audience segments, and make sure you continue to invest in targeted outreach and creative personalization.

**Show sensitivity:** Remember that multicultural consumers have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. As you build up your brand awareness among these consumers, continue to be sensitive to the realities they're facing.

Among people looking to buy a new vehicle in the U.S. today, brand awareness stands at 79%.<sup>7</sup> That high mark shouldn't come as a surprise: The auto industry is one of the most prolific advertisers around. During the current crisis, it was among the first industries to communicate its support for health care workers and offer financial assistance to its customers.

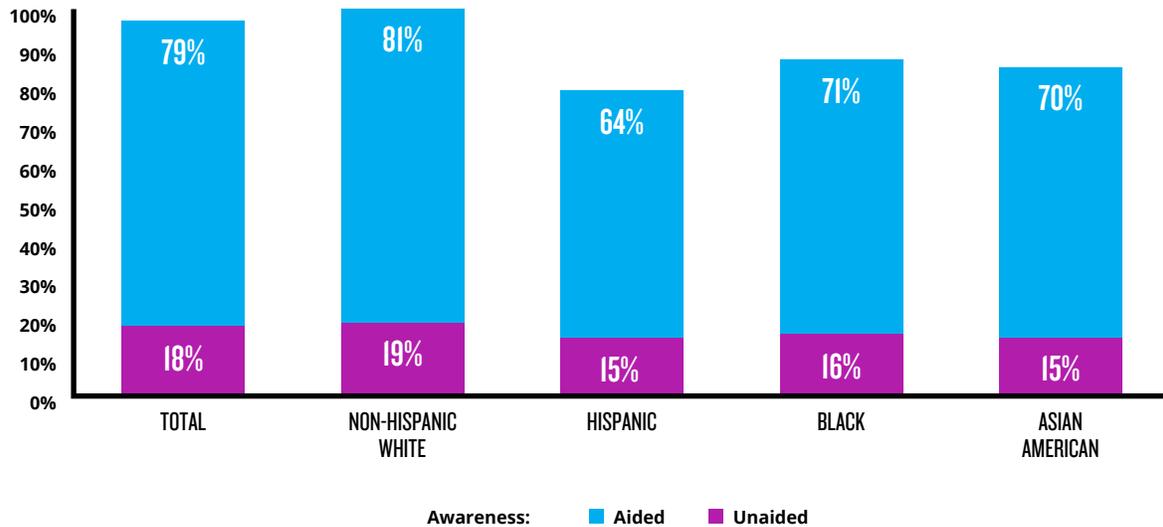
**But our analysis found that consumers from key multicultural groups—Hispanic, Black and Asian Americans—are aware of fewer brands (10-20% lower total awareness) than the general population, creating an opportunity for increased brand investment and engaging consumer dialogue.**

<sup>7</sup> In this research, we start off by asking respondents what brands they're able to think of without being prompted (top-of-mind or unaided awareness), and then ask them to identify all the other brands they know from a list of 34 carmakers (aided awareness). Total brand awareness is the sum of these two. See the Methodology and Glossary of Terms sections at the end of the report for a more detailed description.



Figure 1

## BRAND AWARENESS IS LOWER FOR MULTICULTURAL GROUPS



U.S. / 34 brands / persons 18+ / Q1 2018–Q2 2019 / 6,447 respondents

Source: Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase Quarterly Online Survey, Adult U.S. consumers, Q1 2018 to Q2 2019

Figure 1 [*BRAND AWARENESS IS LOWER FOR MULTICULTURAL GROUPS*] illustrates the disparity in brand awareness. It also highlights how that disparity applies to unaided awareness: **unaided (unprompted) awareness among multicultural car shoppers is 15-20% lower as well.**

Multicultural consumers recall a shorter set of brands off the top of their head, and there is an imperative for marketers to close that gap because most purchase decisions can be traced back to brands that consumers already have in mind before starting out on the path-to-purchase.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Nielsen, [The Nielsen Annual Auto Marketing Report, 2018-2019 Edition](#), June 16, 2018.

## FINDING #2

# CLUTCH PLAY: REACH CONSUMERS IN THE MOMENTS THAT MATTER

## MARKETER'S TAKEAWAY

**Build a solid foundation:** Consumers in general only have a couple of auto brands in mind when they start off on their path-to-purchase. You should aim to become one of those two brands. For those campaigns, the priority is not to sell, but rather to connect with your target customers. In these difficult times, they may not all go out and buy a new car right away, but you'll be first on the list when they do.

**Raise your profile along the path-to-purchase:** You need to be part of the conversation when it matters the most for your prospective customers. Even if your brand isn't at the top of the list at first, it has a real shot along the path-to-purchase and an even better chance as the purchase decision gets close. If your prospects are Black or Hispanic, they're likely to be even more receptive to those late efforts. Don't miss out.

In the previous edition of this report,<sup>9</sup> we found that the number of brands that consumers consider before making a purchase decision evolves over time, starting relatively low and climbing as the purchase gets closer.

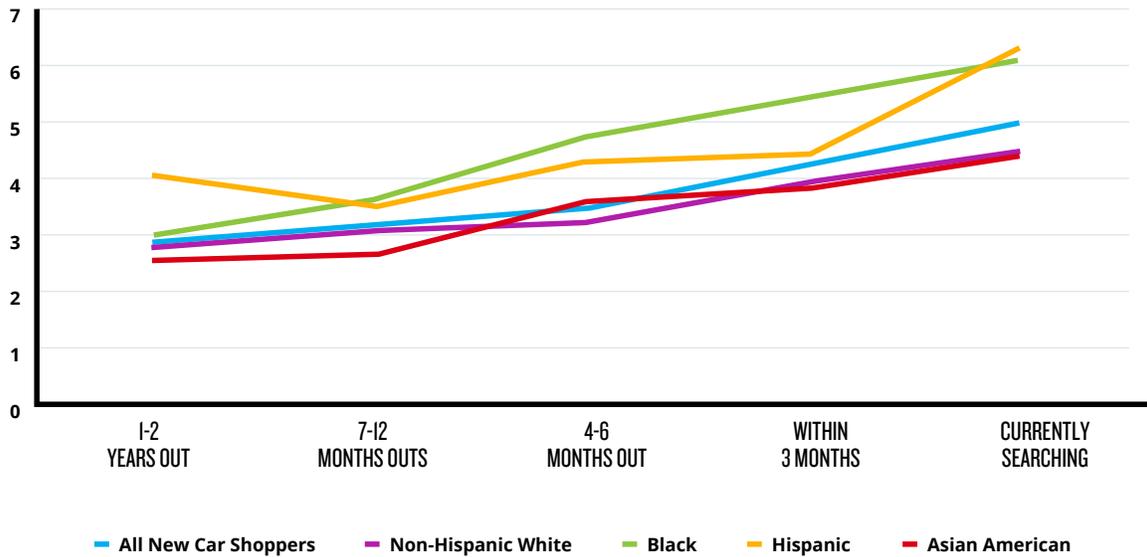
Figure 2.1 [*HISPANIC AND BLACK CONSUMERS CONSIDER MORE BRANDS THROUGHOUT THE PATH-TO-PURCHASE*] shows that consideration rises across all groups along the path-to-purchase, but Hispanic and Black consumers tend to consider more brands throughout their journey. In fact, **Hispanic and Black shoppers end up with two more brands in their consideration set** (6-7 vs. 4-5 for Asian Americans and non-Hispanic Whites) by the time they're ready to buy. And that's not just because they're younger (see callout on page 13).

<sup>9</sup> Nielsen, [The Nielsen Annual Auto Marketing Report, 2018-2019 Edition](#), June 16, 2018.



**Figure 2.1**

**HISPANIC AND BLACK CONSUMERS CONSIDER MORE BRANDS THROUGHOUT THE PATH-TO-PURCHASE**



U.S. / 34 brands / persons 18+ / Q1 2018–Q2 2019 / 6,447 respondents  
 Source: Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase Quarterly Online Survey, Adult U.S. consumers, Q1 2018 to Q2 2019

This means that there’s a silver lining for auto brands initially outside the consideration set: With fewer brands embedded in their long-term memories, Hispanic and Black car shoppers seem to have more room for other brands to make an impression along the way. That’s where aided awareness kicks in.

Figure 2.2 [RISE IN CONSIDERATION COMES FROM AIDED AWARENESS AND IS SUBSTANTIAL FOR HISPANIC AND BLACK CONSUMERS] shows that across all multicultural groups, **the rise over time in the number of brands under consideration can largely be attributed to aided awareness** (while the number of brands coming from unaided awareness remains stable, around two, all along the path to purchase).

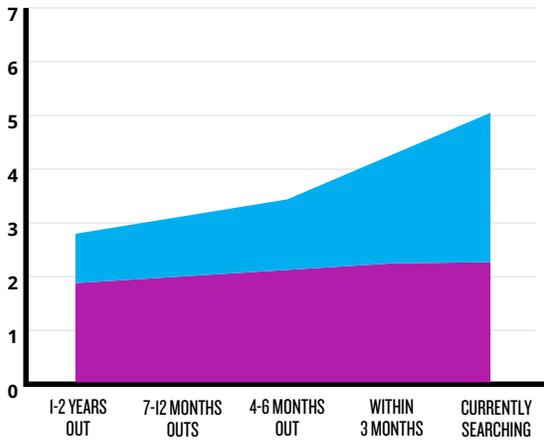
So while unaided awareness remains crucial and serves as foundation for your brand, aided awareness brings new consumers to your brand over time. **For Black and Hispanic consumers, four of the six brands they end up considering at the time of purchase are brands that they didn’t consider at the outset** but that managed to make their mark along the way.



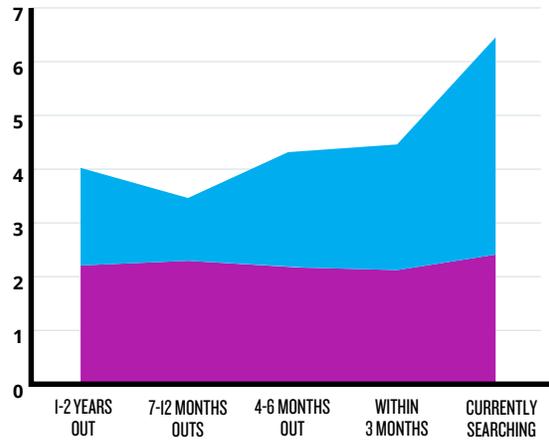
**Figure 2.2**

**RISE IN CONSIDERATION COMES FROM AIDED AWARENESS AND IS SUBSTANTIAL FOR HISPANIC AND BLACK CONSUMERS**

**ALL NEW CAR SHOPPERS**

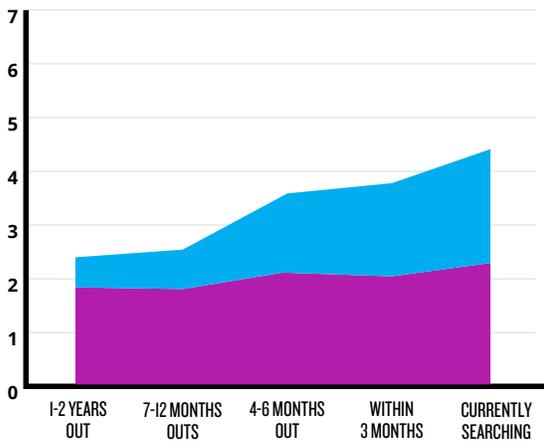


**HISPANIC**

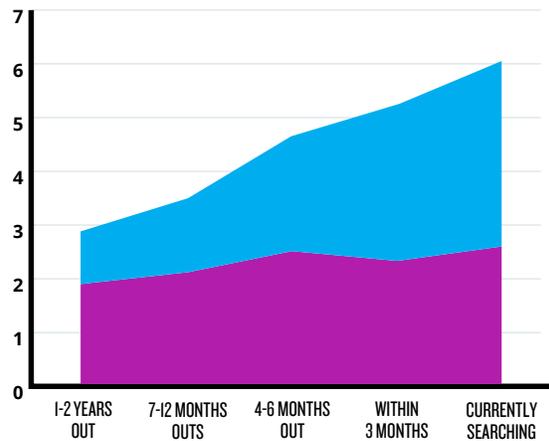


■ From Aided Awareness ■ From Unaided Awareness

**ASIAN AMERICAN**



**BLACK**



■ From Aided Awareness ■ From Unaided Awareness

Source: Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase Quarterly Online Survey, Adult U.S. consumers, Q1 2018 to Q2 2019



## BRAND CONSIDERATION IS NOT JUST A FUNCTION OF AGE

Our analysis last year showed similar patterns of low awareness and high consideration among Millennials, in sharp contrast to Gen-Xers and Baby Boomers. Is it possible that Hispanic and Black consumers behave the same way just because they're younger on average?

We cross-tabulated age with race and ethnicity to examine that possibility and found that age, while important, was only one of many factors driving higher consideration. Other factors that might come into play are income differences, media preferences, urban vs. suburban living and historical trends.

The figure shows that Millennials indeed include more brands (4.8) in their consideration set than the general population (3.6). But while non-Hispanic Whites and Asian Americans show a lower level of consideration as they age, that's not the case for Black and Hispanic consumers for whom top levels of consideration are found in their Gen-X cohorts.

Even Baby Boomers in those multicultural groups show a level of consideration that is well above that of the typical Boomer consumer.

### AVERAGE NUMBER OF BRANDS CONSIDERED BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	Non-Hispanic White	Black	Hispanic	Asian American	Total
Boomers	3.0	4.2	3.9	2.5	3.1
Gen-Xers	3.8	5.7	6.3	3.3	3.9
Millennials	4.9	4.9	5.0	4.2	4.8
Total	3.5	4.9	5.1	3.3	3.6

U.S. / 34 brands / persons 18+ / Q1 2018-Q2 2019 / 6,447 respondents

Source: Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase Quarterly Online Survey, Adult U.S. consumers, Q1 2018 to Q2 2019

## FINDING #3

# FAST LANE: TV LEADS BY FAR WITH AD RECALL

## MARKETER'S TAKEAWAY

**TV is a refuge during tough times:** At the peak of the pandemic, everyone stayed at home and found refuge in TV programming—to stay informed but also to escape from reality. TV viewership rose in all its forms (linear, streaming) and many of those changes appear to be here to stay.<sup>10</sup>

**TV is the top source of ad recall:** Although TV is broader than some other media channels for audience targeting, it more than makes up for it with scale, visual appeal and association with exciting content. Its branding power is undeniable, and it's by far the top source of ad recall for your brand. Using TV as the foundation for your multicultural advertising is important and is proven to generate a high return.

If building top-of-mind brand awareness and increasing brand consideration are key to success, what advertising channels should you use to meet those objectives?

**When consumers who saw a recent ad for an auto brand are asked to pinpoint where they saw that ad, 84% of them say they saw it on TV.** Print<sup>11</sup> is a distant second (29% of responses), followed by digital<sup>12</sup> and radio [see figure 3: TV IS THE TOP SOURCE OF RECALL FOR CAR ADS ACROSS ALL GROUPS]. TV isn't as dominant on the recall scale for Hispanic, Black and Asian American car shoppers, but it still generally **outperforms other advertising channels by at least a factor of two.**

<sup>10</sup> Nielsen, [Quarantined Consumers Are Staying Connected With TV and Social Media](#), April 28, 2020.

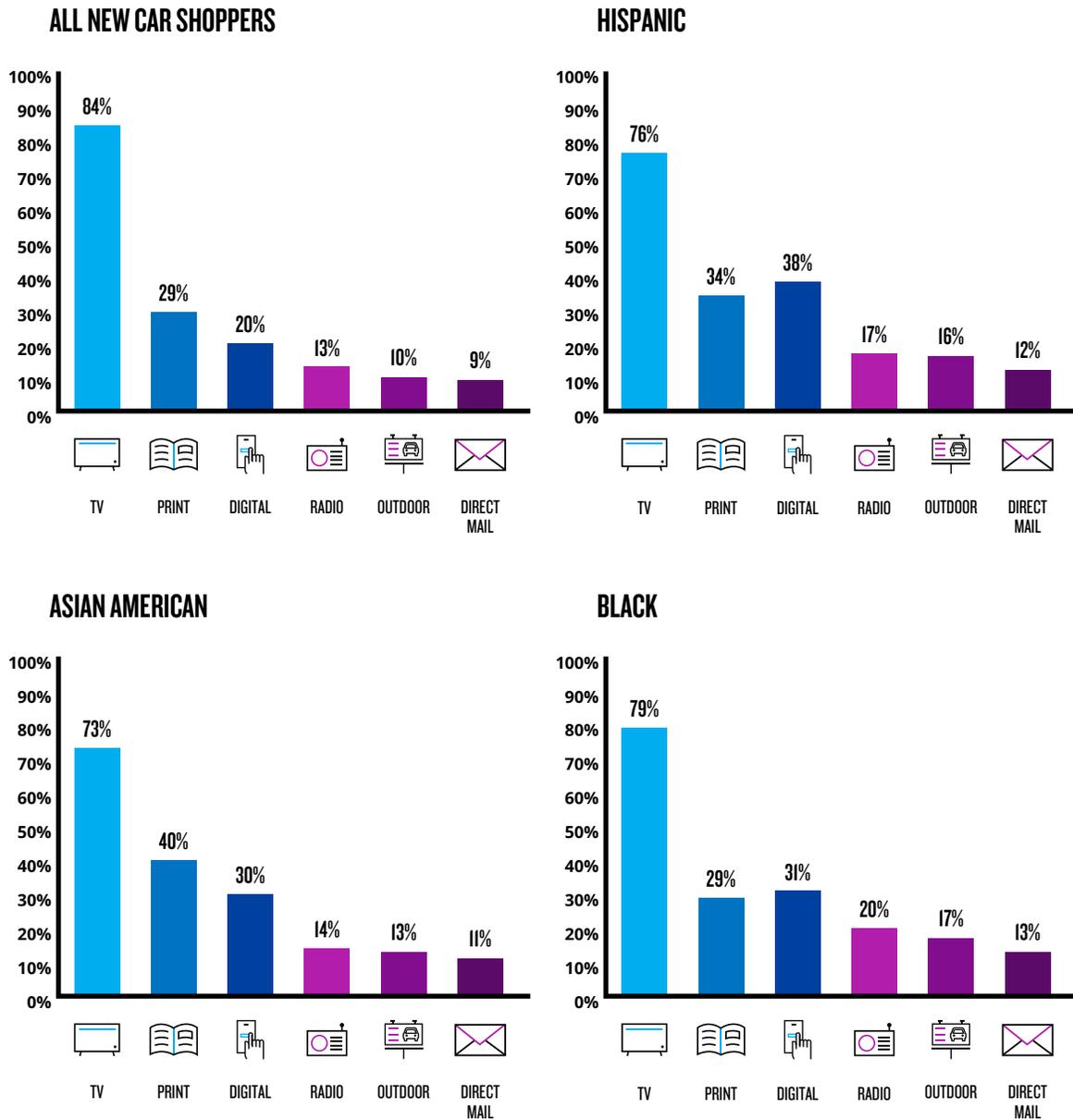
<sup>11</sup> Print includes newspapers and magazines.

<sup>12</sup> Digital includes digital advertising (banners, pop-ups, in-stream videos, etc.), mobile advertising and social media.



Figure 3

TV IS THE TOP SOURCE OF RECALL FOR AUTO ADS ACROSS ALL GROUPS



Source: Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase Quarterly Online Survey, Adult U.S. consumers, Q1 2018 to Q2 2019

**That doesn't mean, however, that your ad campaigns should be focused on TV alone. Far from it, in fact.** Hispanic shoppers, for instance, are twice as likely to recall seeing an ad for an auto manufacturer online than the general population. Read on to learn how you can better connect with Hispanic car shoppers and others by understanding media preferences.

## FINDING #4

# YOUNG AND CONNECTED: HISPANIC CAR SHOPPERS ARE TWICE AS ATTENTIVE TO DIGITAL ADS

## MARKETER'S TAKEAWAY

**A preview of things to come:** Over the next 40 years, the Hispanic population in the U.S. is projected to grow by 82% (compared to only 9% for the rest of the population)<sup>13</sup>. With all eyes on digital promotion to drive advertising growth over the next few years<sup>14</sup>, Hispanics and digital advertising are a perfect match.

**Consider investing in digital video advertising if you haven't already:** It was one of the fastest-growing channels even before the pandemic, and consumers' new media habits have only accelerated that trend. Digital video comes with much-improved targeting and measurement capabilities, and it will boost your brand's standing among Hispanic consumers who use it heavily every day.

Hispanics are young: The Hispanic population in the U.S. is 60 million strong (18.3% of the general population),<sup>15</sup> and its median age is 30 (compared to 38 for the general population and 44 for non-Hispanic Whites).<sup>16</sup> **Hispanics make up the largest ethnic or racial group in the country, and with nearly six-in-10 being Millennials or Gen-Zers, it's also the youngest.**

Hispanics are connected too: They spend **50% more time watching subscription video and listening to the radio on their phones than the general population.** They're also more likely to live in multigenerational households, play video games, and listen to others' opinions when they shop (friends, neighbors and family, but also celebrity endorsers).<sup>17</sup>

It's hardly surprising then that Hispanic consumers are nearly **2X better than others at recalling carmaker ads they see online** (which includes mobile and social media), as figure 4.1 [*DIGITAL RULES: AD RECALL AMONG HISPANICS INDEXED AGAINST ALL NEW CAR SHOPPERS*] illustrates.

<sup>13</sup> Nielsen, [Nielsen TV: The Power of Influence](#), Aug. 19, 2020.

<sup>14</sup> AdAge / GroupM, [Global Ad Growth to Slow in 2020 Due to Weakening Economy](#), Dec. 9, 2019.

<sup>15</sup> United States Census Bureau, [Quick Facts - United States](#).

<sup>16</sup> Pew Research, [The Most Common Age Among Whites in U.S. Is 58 – More Than Double That of Racial and Ethnic Minorities](#), July 30, 2019.

<sup>17</sup> Nielsen, [Diverse Intelligence Series - La Oportunidad Latinx](#), Aug. 12, 2019.

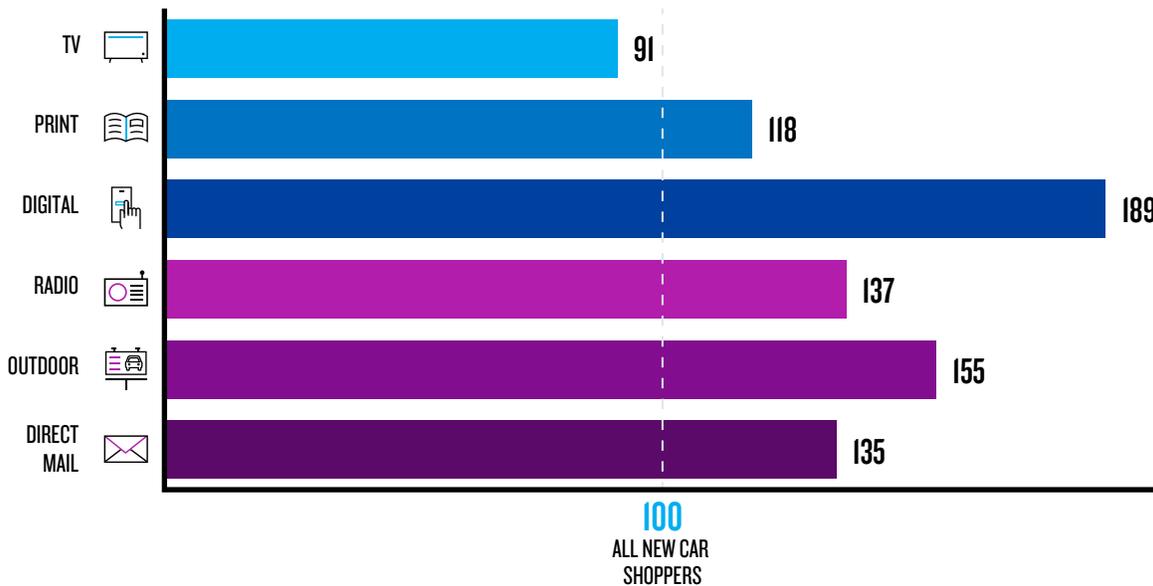
**Digital campaigns should be a big part of your advertising mix if you're trying to reach Hispanic car shoppers.** Take full advantage of the fact that the medium is tailor-made for ad personalization and message targeting.

Note that outdoor, radio and direct marketing are also very effective channels to reach Hispanic car buyers. Outdoor advertising groups took a major hit during stay-at-home orders earlier this year and are eager to attract new advertisers as the country reopens and people start to move around again. If you can use location data to understand local restrictions and new commuting patterns region by region, you might be able to **take advantage of those capabilities and reach your customers and prospects even more cost-effectively.**



**Figure 4.1**

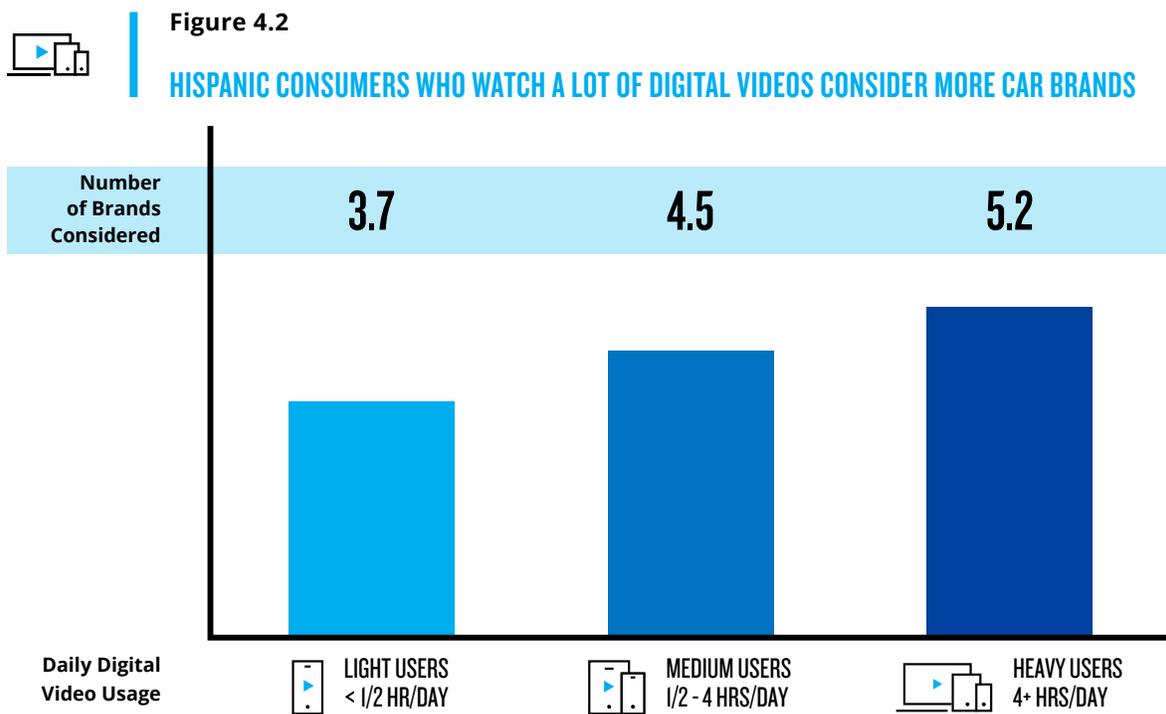
**DIGITAL RULES: AD RECALL AMONG HISPANICS INDEXED AGAINST ALL NEW CAR SHOPPERS**



Source: Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase Quarterly Online Survey, Adult U.S. consumers, Q1 2018 to Q2 2019

Can there be too much of a good thing? Heavy media users can sometimes show signs of information overload and zone out, but that’s not the case with digital Hispanic users.

Looking specifically at users of digital video—one of the fastest growing forms of digital advertising<sup>18</sup>—consideration of car brands grows significantly with media usage [see figure 4.2: *HISPANIC CONSUMERS WHO WATCH A LOT OF DIGITAL VIDEOS CONSIDER MORE CAR BRANDS*]. In fact, among Hispanic car shoppers, **heavy users of digital video end up considering 40% more brands (translating to 1-2 more brands per person) than light users before making a purchase decision.**



Source: Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase Quarterly Online Survey, Adult U.S. consumers, Q1 2018 to Q2 2019

<sup>18</sup>Nielsen, [Nielsen Annual Marketing Report: The Age of Dissonance](#), Jan. 16, 2020.

## FINDING #5

# OMNICHANNEL HEAVEN: BLACK CONSUMERS ARE AVID MEDIA USERS AND ATTENTIVE TO ADS ACROSS ALL CHANNELS

## MARKETER'S TAKEAWAY

**Balance your advertising channels:** A well-balanced omnichannel campaign should resonate well with your Black consumer base. They're avid media users and tend to react more positively to advertising than other groups.

**Appeal to cultural sensitivities:** When advertising to Black car buyers, think beyond generic, undifferentiated messaging. Appeal to their cultural sensitivities to win their heart along the path-to-purchase.

**Showcase your values:** Brands are generally wary of engaging too heavily in social and political movements, but things are changing. If you decide to show your support, remember that authenticity is paramount.<sup>19</sup>

Of the 48 million African Americans living in the U.S. today, nearly 25 million are Millennials or younger<sup>20</sup>, and their median age is 34. **Of all the groups in our analysis, Black car shoppers have the highest ad recall for automakers who advertise on radio, on billboards and through direct mail** [see figure 5.1: *BLACK CONSUMERS HAVE BETTER AD RECALL ACROSS MORE CHANNELS*].

Their level of ad recall for digital campaigns is just as good. This isn't surprising, considering that more than 55% of them can be reached today on Instagram (compared to 46% for the total population) and that they spend more time on video, audio and social media on their smartphones than the average consumer too.<sup>20</sup>

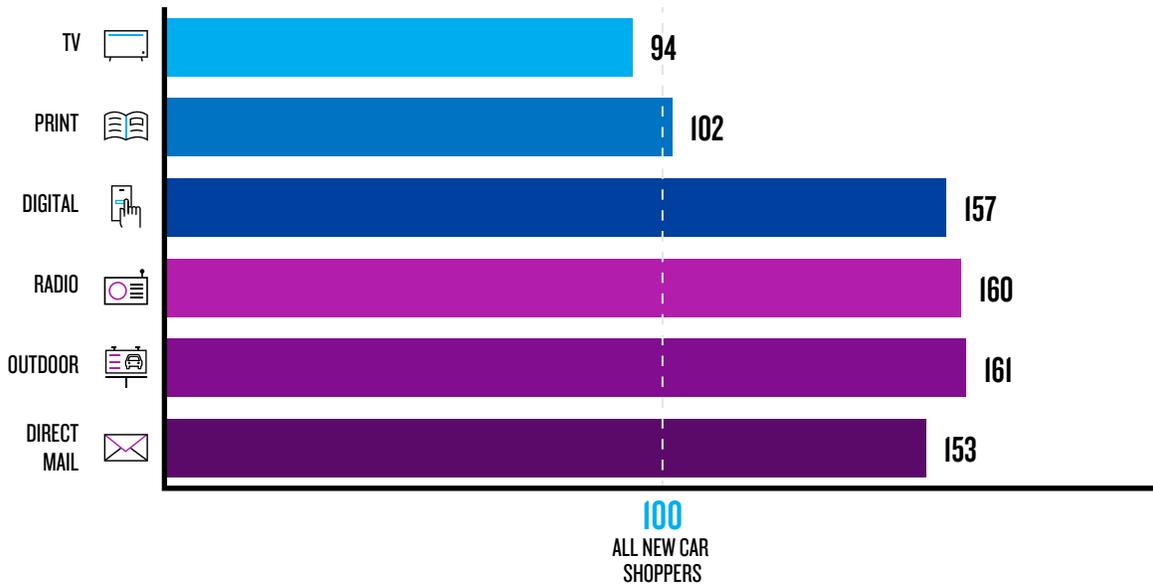
<sup>19</sup> Adweek, [Brands are increasingly supporting #BlackLivesMatter, but advocates want more than words](#).

<sup>20</sup> Nielsen, [Nielsen Diverse Intelligence Series - Black Consumers' Path to Purchase](#), Sept. 12, 2019.



Figure 5.1

BLACK CONSUMERS HAVE BETTER AD RECALL ACROSS MORE CHANNELS



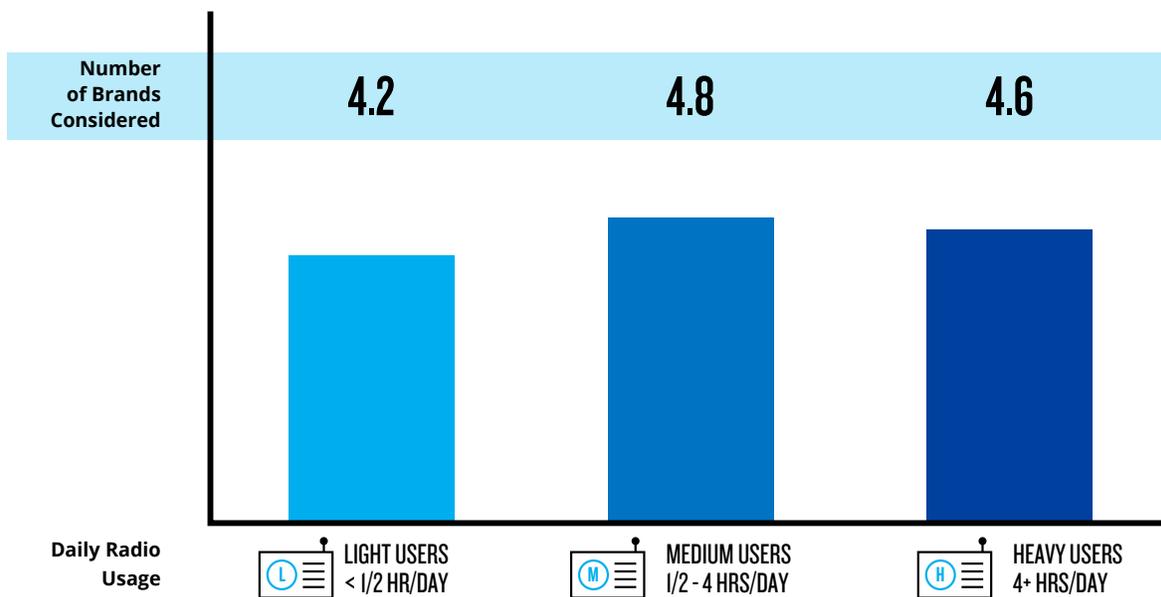
Source: Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase Quarterly Online Survey, Adult U.S. consumers, Q1 2018 to Q2 2019

Radio is a particularly useful channel to reach Black consumers with your auto campaigns: **Even light radio users (those tuning in less than 30 minutes a day) show above-average consideration levels** [figure 5.2: AMONG BLACK CONSUMERS, EVEN LIGHT RADIO USERS CONSIDER MORE BRANDS THAN AVERAGE].



Figure 5.2

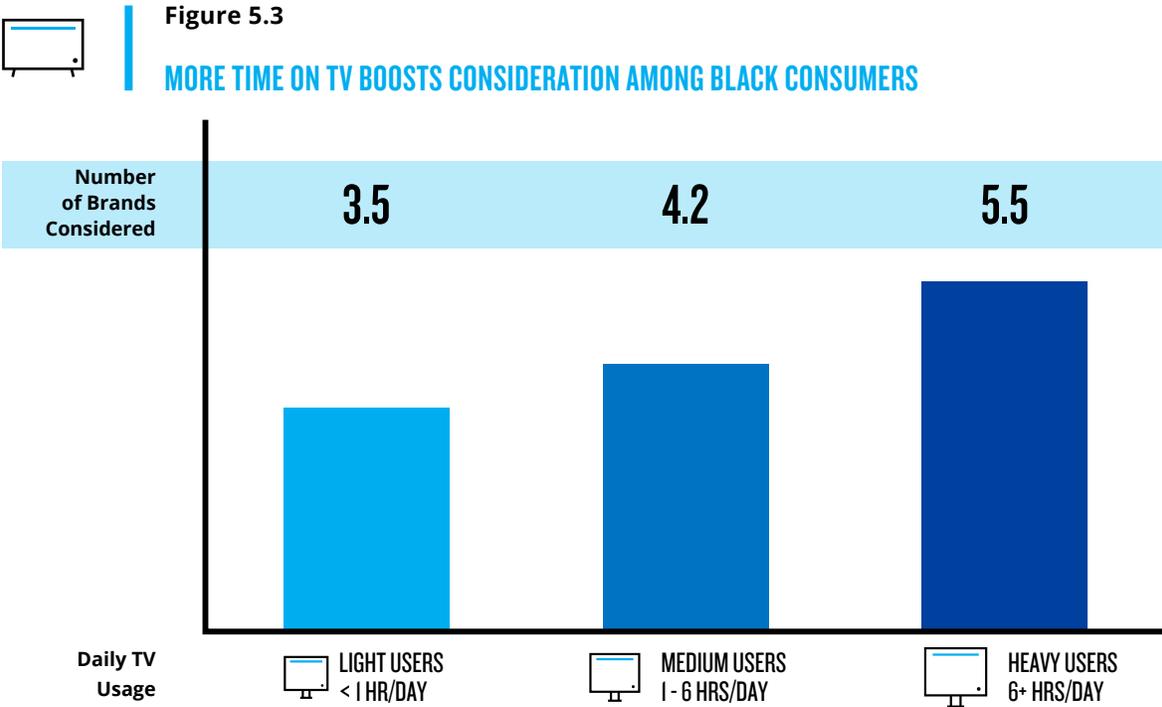
AMONG BLACK CONSUMERS, EVEN LIGHT RADIO USERS CONSIDER MORE BRANDS THAN AVERAGE



Source: Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase Quarterly Online Survey, Adult U.S. consumers, Q1 2018 to Q2 2019

What about TV? Even without stay-at-home orders, **African Americans spend more than 50 hours a week watching TV** (30% more time than the general population).<sup>21</sup> They also tend to be more positive in their interactions with advertising across channels than the rest of the population. So if you're trying to reach Black consumers, television should be in the mix.

While the level of ad recall for car ads on TV among Black consumers is slightly below average, they more than make up for it with volume—and that means more advertising time and repeat exposures for your TV campaigns. In fact, the more they watch TV, the more brands they end up considering on their car buying journey. Figure 5.3 [MORE TIME ON TV BOOSTS CONSIDERATION AMONG BLACK CONSUMERS] shows that **among Black consumers, heavy TV users have two more brands in their consideration set than light TV users do.**



Source: Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase Quarterly Online Survey, Adult U.S. consumers, Q1 2018 to Q2 2019

<sup>21</sup> Nielsen, [Nielsen Diverse Intelligence Series - Black Consumers' Path to Purchase](#), Sept. 12, 2019.

## FINDING #6

# MORE IS MORE: FOR ASIAN AMERICANS, HIGHER CONSIDERATION IS TIED TO HEAVY MEDIA USAGE

## MARKETER'S TAKEAWAY

**Target heavy media users:** Your target among Asian American car shoppers should be heavy media users. This approach involves a certain amount of overexposure, of course, but that's the price to pay to win over these consumers and earn their long-time loyalty. With today's advertising technology, you can mitigate this overexposure by controlling frequency across multiple channels rather than only focusing on a single channel.

**Customize your message:** Here again, your message should be properly targeted and personalized to the person you're trying to reach, not generic.

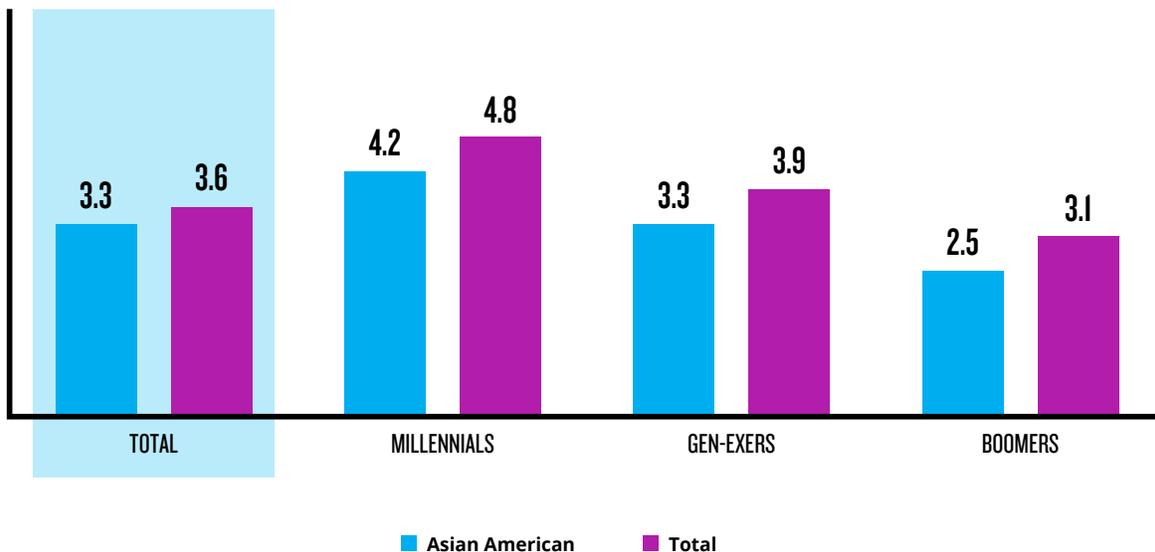
**Print is alive:** Asian Americans are more attentive to print advertising than any other group. This gives you additional levers to build your brand and drive your prospects through the customer lifecycle journey and to the point of purchase.

Asian American car shoppers do not exhibit the 'low awareness, high consideration' dynamic that we see with Hispanic and Black consumers. Similar to these other consumer groups, Asian Americans are aware of fewer car brands than the general population, but they don't seem to be making up for it by considering more options along the path-to-purchase. Figure 6.1 [*ASIAN AMERICAN CAR SHOPPERS CONSIDER FEWER OPTIONS THAN THE GENERAL POPULATION*] shows that **Asian Americans actually consider fewer options than the general population across all age groups.**



Figure 6.1

ASIAN AMERICAN CAR SHOPPERS CONSIDER FEWER OPTIONS THAN THE GENERAL POPULATION



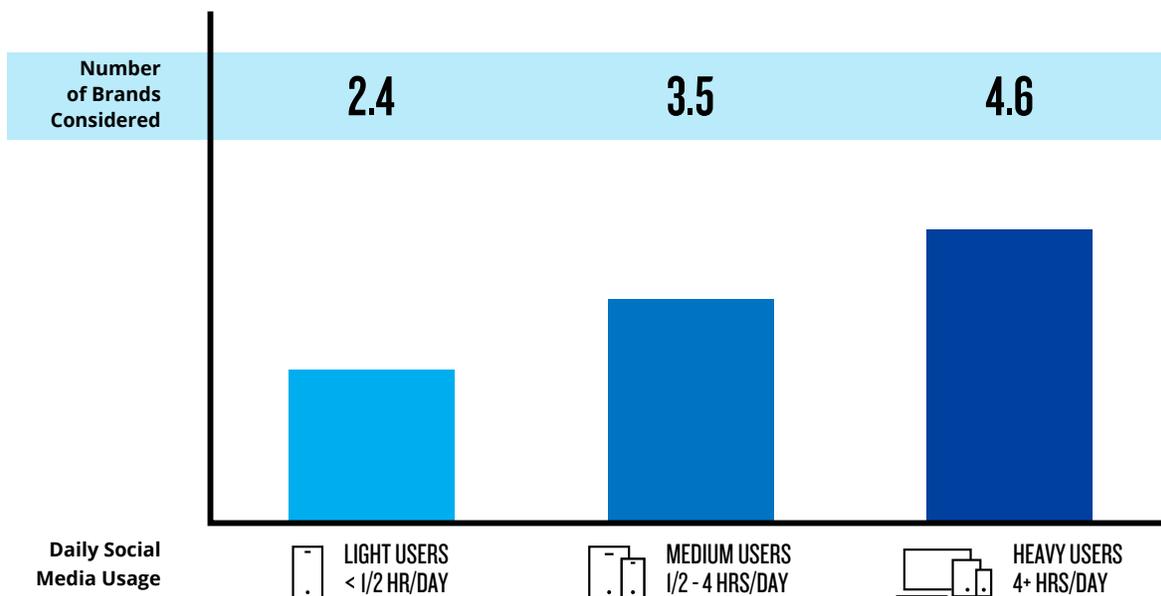
Source: Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase Quarterly Online Survey, Adult U.S. consumers, Q1 2018 to Q2 2019

However, if you're able to orchestrate your media buys to focus on heavy media users, your prospects with that group are actually really good. Figure 6.2 [MORE TIME ON SOCIAL MEDIA BOOSTS CONSIDERATION AMONG ASIAN AMERICANS] shows that **Asian Americans who are heavy users of social media consider almost 2X as many brands as light users do.**



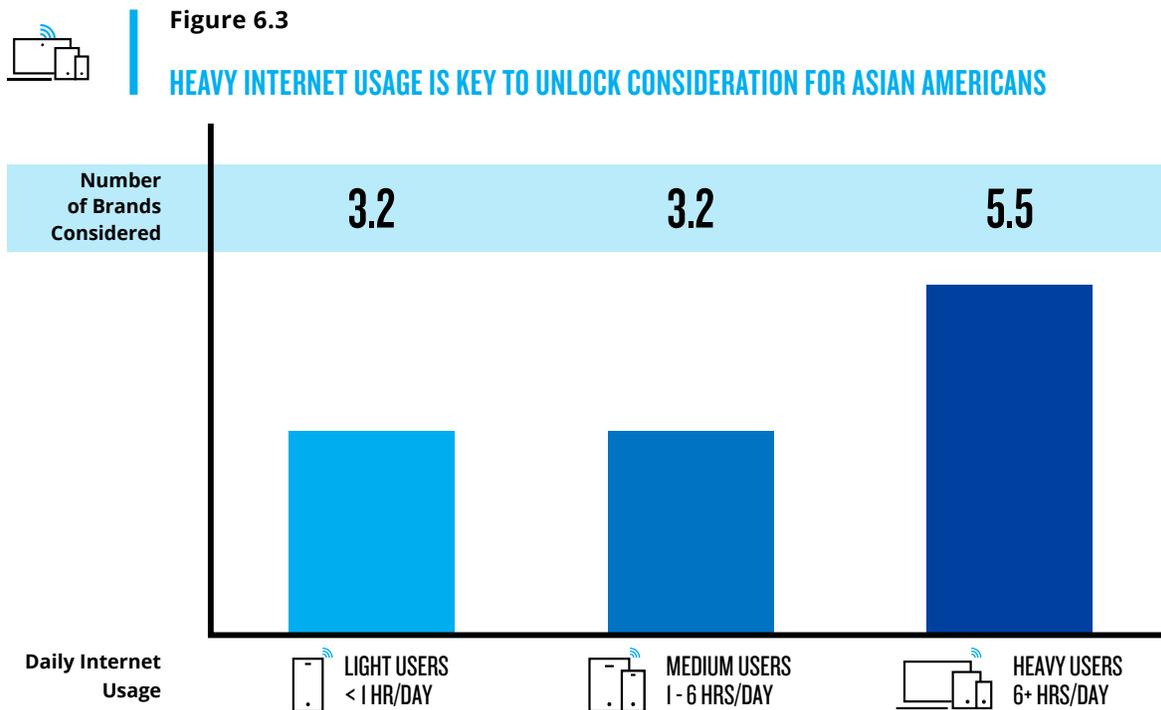
Figure 6.2

MORE TIME ON SOCIAL MEDIA BOOSTS CONSIDERATION AMONG ASIAN AMERICANS



Source: Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase Quarterly Online Survey, Adult U.S. consumers, Q1 2018 to Q2 2019

Even beyond social media, heavy media usage is key for engaging with Asian American car buyers. Figure 6.3 [HEAVY INTERNET USAGE IS KEY TO UNLOCK CONSIDERATION FOR ASIAN AMERICANS] shows that **brand consideration among Asian Americans doesn't start to improve until they spend at least six hours a day online.**



Source: Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase Quarterly Online Survey, Adult U.S. consumers, Q1 2018 to Q2 2019

While Asian Americans are a smaller consumer base than Black and Hispanic consumers, they have been the fastest growing immigrant group in the U.S. in recent years. And they're an incredibly diverse group with more first-generation consumers in their midst. Chinese, Indian, Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants are the four largest groups of Asian Americans in the U.S. today.<sup>22</sup> Focusing on heavy media users among this group of consumers is key to unlock its potential.

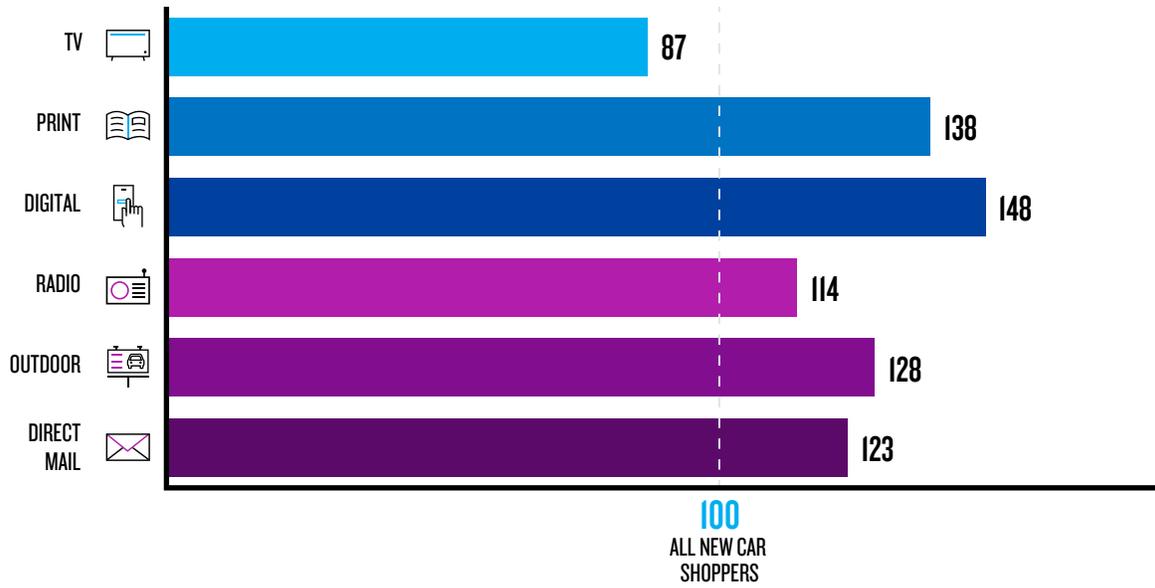
Figure 6.4 [ASIAN AMERICANS ARE A GREAT TARGET FOR YOUR PRINT AND DIGITAL CAMPAIGNS] shows that Asian Americans can be incredibly receptive to multi-channel advertising. In particular, **they recall more car ads in print publications than any other multicultural group**, and their level of digital recall is on par with Black consumers. If you reach them with your campaign, they're going to pay attention.

<sup>22</sup> Pew Research Center, [Income Inequality in the U.S. Is Rising Most Rapidly Among Asians](#), July 12, 2018.



**Figure 6.4**

**ASIAN AMERICANS ARE A GREAT TARGET FOR YOUR PRINT AND DIGITAL CAMPAIGNS**



Source: Nielsen Auto Path-to-Purchase Quarterly Online Survey, Adult U.S. consumers, Q1 2018 to Q2 2019

# IMPLICATIONS FOR MARKETERS

Your media budgets are under scrutiny even on a good day. In the current landscape, that pressure has increased dramatically. Rather than recoiling and waiting for better days to spend again, we think that investing in your multicultural customers today offers a unique opportunity to prepare for the new normal—and get a head start when broad economic activity picks up again. Cutting ad spend can be detrimental to your business. On average, it takes three to five years to recover equity losses from going dark for an extended period of time.

To get the most value from your marketing investments, keep these best practices in mind:



**Be sensitive to the new realities:** Nothing can hurt your chances more than appearing tone-deaf in the current climate. Recognize that your customers are living through difficult times and adjust your communication to show your support. They will remember that you stood by them in their time of need.



**Make the most of media preferences:** For multicultural consumers, there is a solid correlation between their likelihood to shortlist your brand and how they use their favorite media channels. You'll need to understand the media preferences outlined in this report to make the most of your campaigns and boost your chances to make a lasting impression.



**Capitalize on digital's targeting capabilities:** Digital media channels are well suited for social distancing, and multicultural car shoppers are particularly receptive to the ads they see online. You should take advantage of digital targeting and personalization capabilities to introduce your brand to them, building lasting connections and eventually conversions.



**Don't neglect TV:** In the rush to use new technology to target consumers, it's easy to neglect television. And yet, television is essential to establish your brand as top-of-mind. It's also shown incredible resilience and consumption increases during the COVID-19 pandemic. Your campaigns should definitely cut across multiple channels to be most effective, but television is a necessary foundation.



**Measure ad effectiveness:** Understand how your campaigns are performing to measure and then use that data to inform your strategy and adjust your media mix along the way. In today's fragmented advertising space, omnichannel is certainly the most effective way to engage consumers, but it pays to know which channels work best for your particular target audience at every point of their car shopping journey.



**Learn from the data:** Despite current setbacks, Black, Hispanic and Asian American consumers are at the peak of their purchasing power. They're less entrenched in their car preferences than anyone else, and they will consider your brand even late in the game. Learn from the data to make sure you don't miss out on opportunities to make connections.

# ABOUT THIS REPORT

The *Nielsen Annual Auto Marketing Report* is produced each year to help marketers and brands understand the behavior of U.S. car buyers.

## MISSION

This report is aimed at helping automotive marketing executives capture the voice of the car buyer by taking a deep dive into the consumer path to purchase, media's impact on brand awareness and purchase intent, and buying behaviors across consumer groups. The report is an objective source of information dedicated to the field of auto marketing.

## METHODOLOGY

The insights discussed in this paper are based on online surveys conducted by Nielsen every quarter since 2012 to understand the behavior of car buyers in the U.S. This is not a longitudinal survey.

### Survey Administration and Sample

- Nielsen surveyed people ages 18+ who plan to purchase a car in the next two years, using new car purchasers' demographics as the benchmark for sample composition.
- To date, more than 250,000 surveys have been completed with prospective auto buyers as part of this research.
- Approximately 9,000 new respondents are recruited every quarter. Their answers are statistically weighted so that Nielsen may compare results from quarter to quarter.
- The margin of error follows a bell curve distribution, with a maximum value of +/- 1.2 percentage points at 6,447 survey completes.
- The questionnaire takes approximately 25 minutes to fill out and captures general as well as brand-level variables pertinent to auto shopping—all the way down to personal preferences for subjective car attributes like style, perceived value or prestige.
- It also captures media habits and recent exposure to automotive advertising, making it possible to correlate media consumption with buyer behavior.
- The questions explored in this report correspond to concepts that, based on decades of academic and industry research, have emerged as critical to understanding the path to purchase, not just for cars but for any type of consumer product.

Interested in learning more about data and insights to drive your business forward?

Contact Nielsen at [MarketingSolutions@nielsen.com](mailto:MarketingSolutions@nielsen.com)

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**AD RECALL**

The percentage of respondents who recall an ad for a specific brand within a specific media channel.

**AWARENESS: AIDED**

The percentage of respondents that are aware of a car brand only when explicitly asked or prompted with the name of the brand.

**AWARENESS: UNAIDED**

The percentage of respondents that are aware of a car brand without assistance (or prompts) of any kind.

**PURCHASE CONSIDERATION**

The percentage of respondents who would consider purchasing a specific car brand (respondents may choose multiple brands).

**PURCHASE INTENT**

The percentage of respondents who intend to purchase a specific car brand (respondents may choose only one brand).

## ABOUT NIELSEN

Nielsen Holdings plc (NYSE: NLSN) is a global measurement and data analytics company that provides the most complete and trusted view available of consumers and markets worldwide. Nielsen is divided into two business units. Nielsen Global Media, the arbiter of truth for media markets, provides media and advertising industries with unbiased and reliable metrics that create a shared understanding of the industry required for markets to function. Nielsen Global Connect provides consumer packaged goods manufacturers and retailers with accurate, actionable information and insights and a complete picture of the complex and changing marketplace that companies need to innovate and grow.

Our approach marries proprietary Nielsen data with other data sources to help clients around the world understand what's happening now, what's happening next, and how to best act on this knowledge.

An S&P 500 company, Nielsen has operations in over 100 countries, covering more than 90% of the world's population. For more information, visit [www.nielsen.com](http://www.nielsen.com).





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