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Connected customers now in the driving seat for innovation and the future of the automotive industry

Capgemini's 15th issue of Cars Online report reveals: Car industry acutely influenced by social and digital shopping habits plus consumer desire for connectivity

Paris, 14 May, 2014 – A study of more than 10,000 consumers by [Capgemini](#), one of the world's foremost providers of consulting, technology and outsourcing services, has revealed that the new generation of connected customer is now exerting a substantial influence on innovation within the automotive industry. The [2014 Cars Online 'Generation Connected'](#)* report highlights an intensifying desire for connectivity, and the snowballing influence of social and digital shopping habits. It also examines how Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) and dealers must now adapt their approach to shaping the customer experience to remain competitive and offer a new combination of connected car features and services.

The Cars Online study, based on a survey conducted across consumers covering 10 countries: Germany, France, UK, USA, Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Korea and Indonesia, provides insights into how the role of the dealership and the car manufacturer within the customer journey, evolving digital demands and consumer expectations about connectivity technologies, are set to transform the automotive industry. This results in a variety of implications for OEMs and dealers, who must meet today's consumer's growing needs for a more holistic experience across shopping channels and in multiple spaces and places - be it online or at a location of their choosing for a test drive.

Although over half (55%) of the survey respondents said the dealer is still the "most important" information source, the report highlights how online sales and the digitally savvy consumer have become a driving force in the automotive sales journey. The majority of consumers (97%) use the internet for researching vehicle features, drivers' satisfaction levels and ratings, and checking OEM and dealer reputations for fairness and customer care.

The report also found that overall 44% of consumers are willing to buy a car online and that this increased to 50% with Generation Y customers (aged 18 – 34). Social media has also become a key factor in vehicle research – 85% of consumers expect OEMs and dealers to interact with them on social media and 73% are influenced by positive social commentary in their purchase decision.

The study also contains evidence that communication between car, driver, OEM and dealer will be vital going forward, as it provides a mutually beneficial opportunity for post-sale interactions, centred on the consumer desires that matter most: safety and driving experience (83%), vehicle management (79%) and real-time customer care and service (74%). Additionally, the connected car era offers a strong opportunity for manufacturers to gain a deeper understanding of their customers, as the vast majority (80%) of automotive customers are more willing than ever to share data with automotive OEMs or dealers – as long as there is a benefit in return.

“Connected consumers are now very much in charge. The new breed of vehicle consumer is confident about what they want and how they want it. They are also using technology to increase their power as both car shoppers and owners. Consequently, we are already seeing dealers and OEMs taking note of the evolving car purchase process, by looking beyond the bricks and mortar dealership and engaging with and responding to customers through a multitude of channels,” comments Nick Gill, Chairman of the global automotive council at Capgemini. *“This new dynamic opens up a variety of opportunities to create an ongoing conversation with customers in order to learn more about them throughout the vehicle purchase and ownership journey.”*

For more information:

View the full [*Cars Online – Generation Connected 2014](#) report along with assets including executive summary, infographic and videos.

About Capgemini

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