

Global reports find car buying is a woman's thing

South African men, despite desperately trying to persuade their wives about the benefits of a sports car, know that when it comes to buying a car, it will ultimately be their better halves making the decision. But local men should feel alone says Des Fenner, general manager of Datsun South Africa. Global reports have shown that women control the purse strings and are less emotional than men when it comes to buying cars.



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“Men should also realise that they are likely to buy not only what their women want, but in most cases, will also lose the battle when it comes to deciding what colour the new car will be. The juries on car purchasing habits around the world have made their decisive findings and the results are that women win the contest hands-down. They are definitely in the driver’s seat.”

Fenner points to several major surveys that have delivered supporting evidence of this. They include:

- An assertion by Bloomberg, the international financial wire service, that women in the USA make nearly 85% of consumer purchases and influence nearly 95% of all buying decisions.
- An iSeeCars.com survey of pre-owned car buying habits that looked at the genders of more than 500,000 people inquiring about cars. This revealed ‘stark differences’ between the buying habits of men and women. Amongst these, their research showed that:

- Women consider prize, affordability, and practicality when buying cars.
 - Fuel efficiency, safety, and reliability ranked higher with women than men.
 - The cars men really wanted cost on average three times more than the price tag women were happy with.
 - Men made up about 90% of buyers for 'posh' European sports cars and 'fancy' SUVs.
- Other research revealed that women are more choosy when it comes to buying a car because:
 - They will take 75 days thinking about the pros and cons of buying a car, while men will take 62 days.
 - Women do more web-based research on vehicles and dealerships than their male counterparts.
 - Women favour traditional car colours, whilst men are increasingly opting for brighter, unconventional colour choices.
- Another iSeeCars study found that:
- Men are 25% more likely to choose orange as a car colour.
 - Women prefer white, gold, silver and beige.

Licence holders

"As if this isn't enough for men to absorb, a recent report in the USA, quoted in Forbes magazine, found that women with driver's licences in the USA outnumber men across all age groups above the age of 25. The same scenario is evolving in other countries across the world.

"In the UK new driver's licence applications by men are declining, and those by women are increasing. In Germany, women hold more than 40% of licences and the rate is increasing rapidly," says Fenner.

Manufacturers take note

"A limited 'dip-stick' survey' of Datsun dealers around the country underlines the international trends. It indicates that more women than men make inquiries about the fuel efficiency and practical aspects of the Datsun GO.

"Generally about 55% of purchasers entering our showrooms are female, 25% tend to visit dealerships on their own. Affordability is a major consideration by most female customers. The most popular colours for vehicles at our dealerships are white and silver.

"There is no doubt that manufacturers are becoming more aware of the importance that women play in acquiring cars for the family, or for their own driving pleasure. Perhaps we should all be taking note of the latest 'extra on offer' with many vehicles in the USA - an accelerator pedal that is specially designed to accommodate high heels," says Fenner.

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