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## How Cars Are Helping Americans Cope During COVID-19

**TrueCar commissioned study reveals the deep connection Americans have with their vehicles**

SANTA MONICA, Calif., Aug. 26, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [TrueCar](#), Inc., the most efficient and transparent online destination to find a car, revealed a new study commissioned by TrueCar and conducted by OnePoll about the way that cars are helping Americans cope during COVID-19 and the relationship Americans have with their vehicles.



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Americans are turning to a surprising place to get a little alone time during the pandemic – their cars.

A new study of 2,000 Americans who own or lease a vehicle found:

- Nearly three in four (73%) use their set of wheels as a private space to get away from the people they live with.
- Beyond becoming a haven for “me time,” other activities respondents are grateful to have a car for during these times include leisurely drives (56%), road trips (45%) and a way to carry home improvement supplies (37%).
- Over a third have used their vehicle as a place to take business or personal phone calls (37%) and 32% have turned their driver’s seat into a makeshift office space.

#### **Americans form emotional connections to their vehicles:**

Apparently, our cars are more to us than just a vehicle since two-thirds of Americans think of their vehicle as a friend and one in four confessed to shedding tears when it came time to part with their car.

- Seven in ten (69%) think of their car as an extension of their home and as a part of their family (68%).
- Car owners revealed that emotional attachment has led 35% of respondents to actually naming their car. Some of those creative names included Betsy, Birtha, Bumblee, Cherry, Dr. Ben, and Falcon.

The study commissioned by [TrueCar](#) and conducted by OnePoll discovered that the average lifespan of a vehicle is six years so there’s plenty of time for memorable moments.

- Within that time frame, the average person will eat 288 meals in their car and belt out songs 432 times.
- Two-thirds of respondents say they experienced some unforgettable life moments in their vehicle.
- Forty-two percent of those surveyed had their first kiss in their car while two in five say they had the “move in together” conversation with their partner while seated in their vehicle.
- Romance aside, cars were also the home of major professional decisions. Thirty-eight percent have received a job offer in their car and 37% have learned about a promotion.

Sadly, the good times can’t roll on forever as vehicles will inevitably develop problems. The average vehicle will go four years before it starts needing repairs and will get repaired three times.

- Unless your vehicle is leased or you sell your vehicle after a few years, some cash will eventually go into keeping a car on the road as the average repair job costs \$722.36 – that’s an average of \$2,167.08 in repairs before owners start to think of changing out their vehicle.
- It actually takes the average driver four months of bumps in the road to realize it’s time for an upgrade.

“The pandemic has increased our appreciation for the freedom and solitude you can get from a personal vehicle, but vehicles already hosted some of our most memorable life moments,” said Wendy McMullin, Director of Research at TrueCar. “And it makes sense, we spend a lot of time with our vehicles – about seven years on average for a new car.”

Given the length of vehicle ownership, Americans won’t jump behind the driver’s seat of just anything. The average search for a new vehicle takes three months of research. The most common methods respondents use to find their new vehicle are online and through personal recommendations.

Now due to COVID-19 health concerns, consumers are doing more and more of the car buying process remotely. Recent TrueCar research showed that two-thirds of car buyers are more likely to engage with a dealer offering vehicle sanitization, digital paperwork and vehicle delivery.

When purchasing a vehicle, consumers will also have to consider what to do with their existing vehicle.

- A third of respondents will dispose of their car by trading their previous one into the dealership to help toward the lease or purchase of their new vehicle.
- Twenty-two percent sold their car to a private party or sold it to a dealer without getting a new set of wheels there (also 22%).
- Nearly one in ten have generously given it to a family member or friend while 4% disposed of the vehicle as a total loss.

“Knowing the value of your existing vehicle will help you determine your budget for your next vehicle. It’s an important aspect of the research process that some consumers don’t consider until they’re at the dealership, and given our emotional attachment to our vehicles, we tend to overestimate their value” added McMullin. “You can use TrueCar to see how your vehicle’s unique features and condition impact its value, and you can apply that amount toward the purchase of the next vehicle in your life.”

#### **TOP ACTIVITIES THAT MADE RESPONDENTS GRATEFUL FOR THEIR VEHICLES**

- |                     |     |
|---------------------|-----|
| 1. Leisurely drives | 56% |
| 2. Road trips       | 45% |

3. Getting quiet time for myself	41%
4. Going for a day-trip	40%
5. Carrying supplies for a home improvement project	37%
6. Place for private/business calls	37%
7. Going camping	33%
8. Makeshift office	32%
9. To go somewhere I've never been before	30%
10. Going to a drive-in movie	28%
11. Going hiking	26%
12. To go off-roading	26%

#### About TrueCar

TrueCar is a leading automotive digital marketplace that enables car buyers to connect to our nationwide network of Certified Dealers. We are building the industry's most personalized and efficient car buying experience as we seek to bring more of the purchasing process online. Consumers who visit our marketplace will find a suite of vehicle discovery tools, price ratings and market context on new and used cars – all with a clear view of what's a great deal. When they are ready, TrueCar will enable them to connect with a local Certified Dealer who shares in our belief that truth, transparency and fairness are the foundation of a great car buying experience. As part of our marketplace, TrueCar powers car-buying programs for over 250 leading brands, including AARP, Sam's Club, and American Express. Nearly half of all new-car buyers engage with TrueCar powered sites, where they buy smarter and drive happier. TrueCar is headquartered in Santa Monica, California, with offices in Austin, Texas and Boston, Massachusetts.

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Source: TrueCar, Inc.