

Cars.com Launches First AI Matchmaking Experience in Automotive and New Ad Campaign to Help Consumers Fall in Love With Finding Their Perfect Car

"We Met on Cars.com" Brand Campaign and Online Matchmaking Experience Feels More Like a Dating App, Bringing Joy to Car Shopping

CHICAGO, Aug. 6, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- Americans love their cars – but they would rather go to the DMV, clean toilets, have an extended phone conversation with their mother-in-law and go to jury duty than shop for one.¹ Cars.com (NYSE: CARS) intends to change that perception by launching the automotive industry's first online matchmaking experience powered by machine learning, which makes car shopping more personal and fun. Cars.com also unveiled a new brand campaign, "We Met on Cars.com," to showcase how the company is transforming car shopping and selling.

Try the Matchmaking Experience by going to the [Cars.com homepage](#) or [app](#), then watch the new [30-second commercial](#) from the "We Met on Cars.com" campaign.

"Tinder" for Car Shopping

Cars.com's new Matchmaking Experience offers a simpler way for people to find their perfect car in an increasingly complex market by helping them navigate the more than 40 automotive brands, 460 models currently on the market and tens of thousands of trim options that too often make choosing a car overwhelming. The site uses a proprietary machine-learning algorithm to make personalized car recommendations based on shoppers' lifestyle preferences.

Here's how it works:

- Users share their feedback on up to 15 different lifestyle preferences.
- Cars.com delivers up to 20 recommended matches based on user preferences and sentiment analysis.
- Users "like" or "don't like" the recommendations offered.
- Experience delivers perfect vehicle matches nearest to the user's location.

"We're treating people like human beings with distinct emotional nuances, not just site users, as we build a more relevant, personalized car-shopping experience," said Tony Zolla, Cars.com chief product officer. "Early-stage car shoppers don't know what they're looking for. In fact, an overwhelming majority are undecided on make and model, yet nearly all online car search experiences force people to select make or model as the first step in their journey. Our new site intelligence is built from our comprehensive amount of vehicle data combined with user preferences and sentiment analysis to deliver a Matchmaking Experience that gives people a better way to shop for cars."

A pilot of Matchmaking Experience has resulted in a 752 percent increase in profile creation on the site, 87 percent increase in return visitors, 225 percent increase in email leads and two times the number of page views per visitor versus the traditional search experience.²

"We Met on Cars.com" Brings Matchmaking Experience to Life

Cars.com's reimagined brand campaign "We Met on Cars.com" inspires shoppers to fall in love with finding their perfect car and brings to life the new Matchmaking Experience. The campaign's core creative, entitled "How We Met," portrays relatable scenarios where people with varying interests and passions find their perfect vehicle match.

The campaign highlights how everyone has the ability to be swept off their feet by a car: A cowgirl falls in love with a pickup truck's horsepower, a labradoodle owner connects with a hybrid, and sparks fly between a crew team and an SUV with a third row.

"Our new omni-channel campaign tells the story of how Cars.com creates chemistry that endures long after shoppers find the car of their dreams," said Brooke Skinner Ricketts, Cars.com's chief marketing officer. "We're rekindling the emotional connection that sometimes gets lost between the dream and the drive, and we're injecting fun back into car shopping."

Skinner Ricketts added that the experience and campaign will set apart Cars.com in the commoditized auto marketplace category.

"The Matchmaking Experience and new campaign differentiates our brand in a sea of sameness," she said. "Cars.com is not brokering transactions – we're creating relationships between people and dealers and people and cars."

The new brand campaign, created in partnership with R/GA Chicago, debuts today, Aug. 6, with a 30-second, 15-second and 6-second multi-channel creative effort across network TV, digital, program integrations and social, as well as a range of digital and online video executions. Custom content partnerships, with companies like Tinder, further solidify the connection between matchmaking and car shopping.

Matchmaking is central to Cars.com's strategy to transform car shopping and selling through personalization. The new experience and campaign is just one piece of a larger plan. Once consumers find their perfect vehicle match using the new Matchmaking Experience, the journey continues on Cars.com with tools, rich editorial content and six million unbiased consumer and expert reviews that help cars shoppers decide what car to buy, where to buy it, how much to pay and who to buy it from.

Within the last year, Cars.com launched [Salesperson Connect](#), a feature that allows shoppers to choose a salesperson before ever visiting a dealership; [Hot Car](#), a new technology that offers highly curated indicators so consumers do not miss out on their perfect car; and [Best Match](#), a sorting feature that gives shoppers relevant vehicle search recommendations. All these features, can help anyone find their perfect vehicle match on Cars.com.

¹ *Cars.com Gen Pop Survey, July 2018*

² *Cars.com Internal Data, Matchmaking Pilot scaled to 50 percent audience, July 5-July 19, 2018*

ABOUT CARS.COM

Cars.com™ is a leading two-sided digital automotive marketplace that creates meaningful connections between buyers and sellers. Launched in 1998 and headquartered in Chicago, the company empowers consumers with resources and information to make informed buying decisions and enables advertising partners with innovative digital solutions and data-driven intelligence to increase inventory turn and gain market share. A pioneer in online automotive classifieds, the company has evolved into one of the largest digital automotive platforms, connecting thousands of local dealers across the country with millions of consumers. In 2018, Cars.com acquired Dealer Inspire®, a company that builds technology that helps future-proof dealerships for changing consumer behaviors and makes the car buying process faster and easier.

Cars.com properties include DealerRater®, Dealer Inspire®, Auto.com™, PickupTrucks.com® and NewCars.com®. For more information, visit www.Cars.com.

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For further information: Marita Thomas, 312.601-5692, mthomas@cars.com

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