



IPSOS iris **AUTOMOTIVE CATEGORY REPORT**

August 2026

Australia's digital audience measurement
currency endorsed by IAB Australia



Ipsos iris launched in Australia in January 2023. It is the IAB Australia endorsed digital measurement system delivering accurate audience measurement and competitive insights for Australia's leading digital publishers and global platforms.

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About Ipsos

In our world of rapid change, the need for reliable information to make confident decisions has never been greater.

At Ipsos we believe our clients need more than a data supplier, they need a partner who can produce accurate and relevant information and turn it into actionable truth.

This is why our passionately curious experts not only provide the most precise measurement, but shape it to provide True Understanding of Society, Markets and People.

To do this we use the best of science, technology and know-how and apply the principles of security, simplicity, speed and substance to everything we do.

So that our clients can act faster, smarter and bolder.

Ultimately, success comes down to a simple truth:
"You act better when you are sure"

Australians' digital behaviour points to a year of change in the Automotive category

Real world Automotive data and digital behavioural data both point to a year of resilience in Australians searching for automotive news.

According to the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) and the Electric Vehicle Council (EVC), new car sales jumped by 0.3% during 2025 following a strong year of new car sales in 2024, demonstrating that the industry is resilient, even in the current Australian economic climate.¹

Digital behaviour signals point to the continuation of this resilient trend. New car sales don't show the whole story, with the shift of new car buyers' towards researching into electrification like hybrids and plug in hybrids indicating further growth.²

What can the online behaviour of Australians tell us?

In the current challenging economic climate, stakeholders in the automotive sector can gain a competitive advantage by leveraging digital behavioural insights from Ipsos iris. This dataset provides a comprehensive view of Australians' online automotive preferences, including their most-used websites, apps, and levels of engagement. By applying these insights, businesses can tailor their offerings to evolving consumer needs and communicate their unique selling propositions more effectively.

What you can expect to see in this report

The category report will deep dive into the usage, behaviours and profiles of Australians seeking online content in the Automotive category, and some of its sub-categories including brands, search, dealers and general automotive websites and apps.

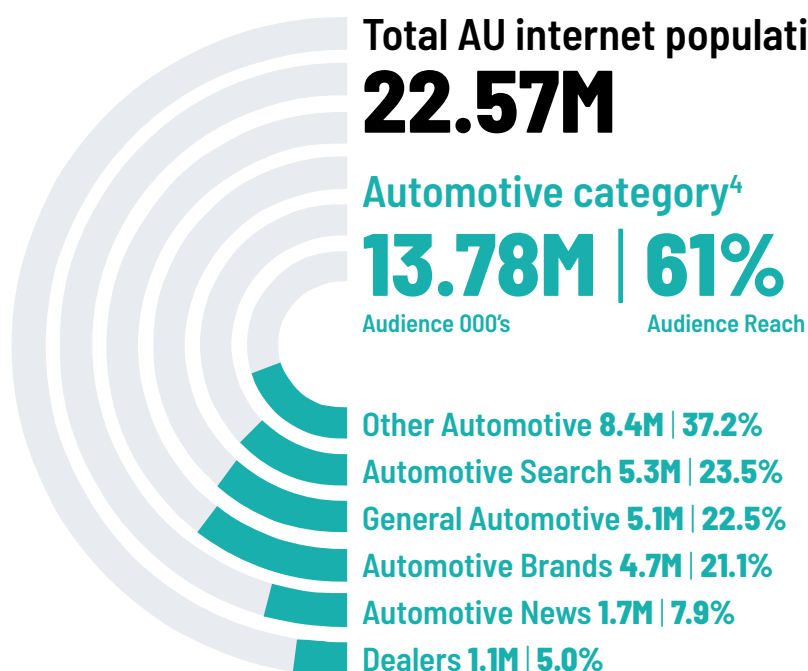
Automotive category – State of play

Australians purchased 1.24M new cars in 2025, compared with 1.23M in 2024.³

Before exploring the report's detailed findings, it's essential to establish a baseline understanding of the current automotive category and its associated sub-categories, specifically in terms of online audience usage and engagement.

Ipsos iris for March 2026 shows that over half of online Australians 14+, or 61% (13.7M people) accessed automotive websites or apps.

The largest audience subcategories are **Other Automotive**, featuring brands such as Linkt, Drive, Transurban and Ampol, followed by **Automotive Search** like Carsales, CarsGuide, Gumtree Australia Cars and Pickles. **General Automotive** includes brands like member owned groups such as NRMA, RACV and RACQ. **Automotive Brands** includes manufactures like Toyota, Tesla, Ford and Hyundai. **Automotive News** generally includes publications like Autoevolution, The Driven and Top Gear. **Dealers** includes brands like Carbuzz, EV Dealer Group BYD, Chery Motor and Manheim.



Automotive digital audience on the rise YoY

Over the past year, the automotive category tells a strong story. The audience has edged slightly higher YoY, a small but clear sign the industry is strong, even in the current economic situation globally and locally. The engagement is also stronger across this category.

Time spent per person has climbed across the last 12 months, punctuated by the pronounced recent global uncertainties.

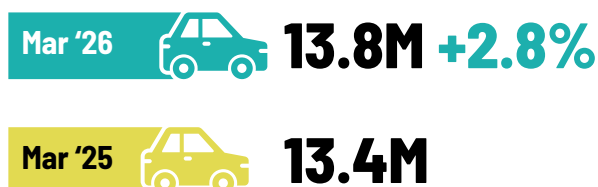
On average, Australians are now spending about 2 minutes more per month with automotive content than they did a year ago.

Heavy Automotive Category profile 18+

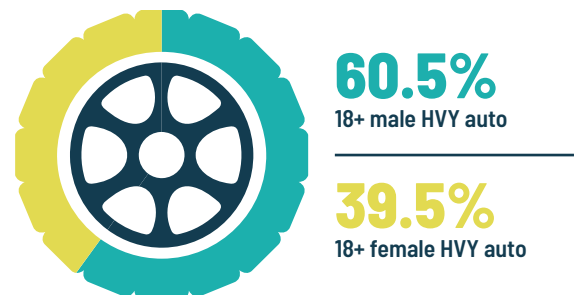
Heavy Automotive users 18 years and over make up 2.98 million users. This equates to 14% of the total online 18 plus audience.

For this analysis, 'Heavy Automotive Category users' are defined by online users who rank in the top 20% in the Auto Category by time, page views and visits in a month compared to the rest of the category audience. This report will take a deep dive into the online behaviours of this specific cohort, focusing on the 18 and over age group to provide a comprehensive overview.

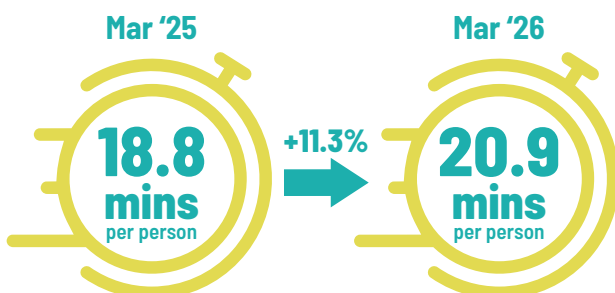
Automotive category - Total audience YoY⁵



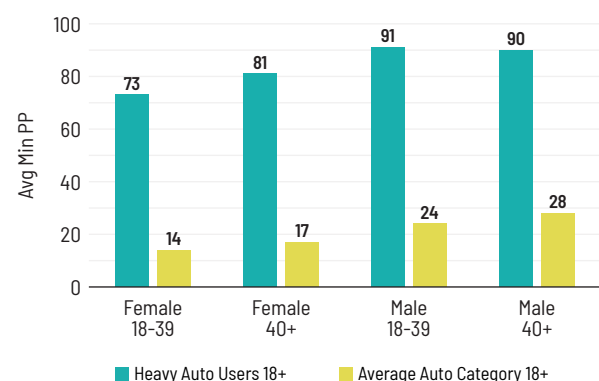
Heavy Automotive user Gender⁷



Automotive category - Average mins per person YoY 14+⁶



AVG Mins on Auto category PP per Month⁸



18 plus Heavy Auto users are skewed towards males with 60.5% split and 39.5% for females, with Heavy Auto males spending about 90 minutes per month in the Auto category. Heavy Auto females are spending about 77 minutes per month in the Auto category, where combined, Heavy Auto users spend roughly 85 minutes per month.

Average Auto category users 18+ spend roughly a quarter of the time, compared to Heavy Auto users.

Heavy users of online automotive content are also more active on the internet in general compared to the online adult population.

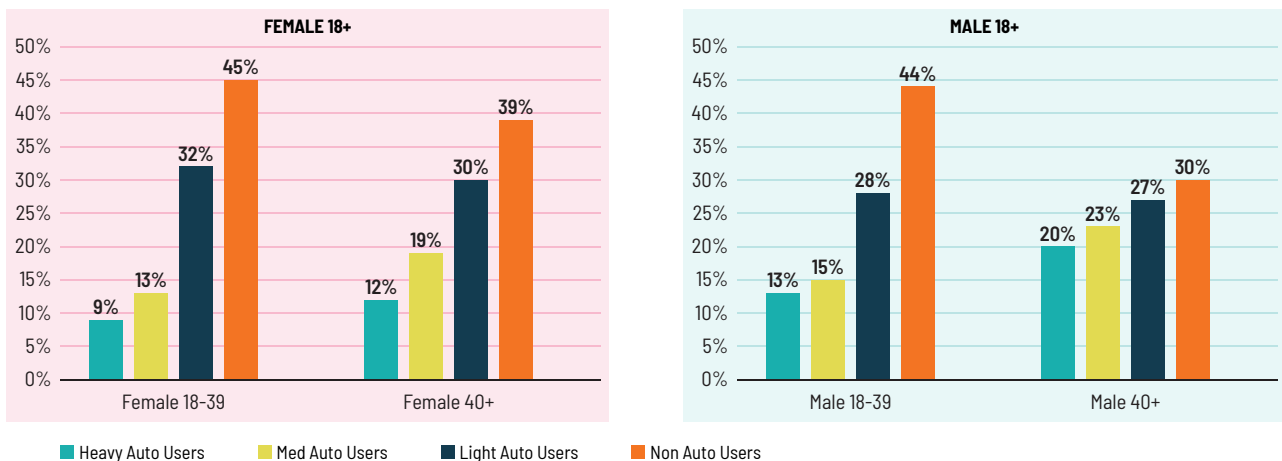
On average, Heavy Auto users aged 18 and over are online for 85.7 minutes per person per month, compared to just 21.5 minutes per person per month for the general online user in the 18 and over demographic within the Automotive category.

Medium & Light Automotive category user 18+

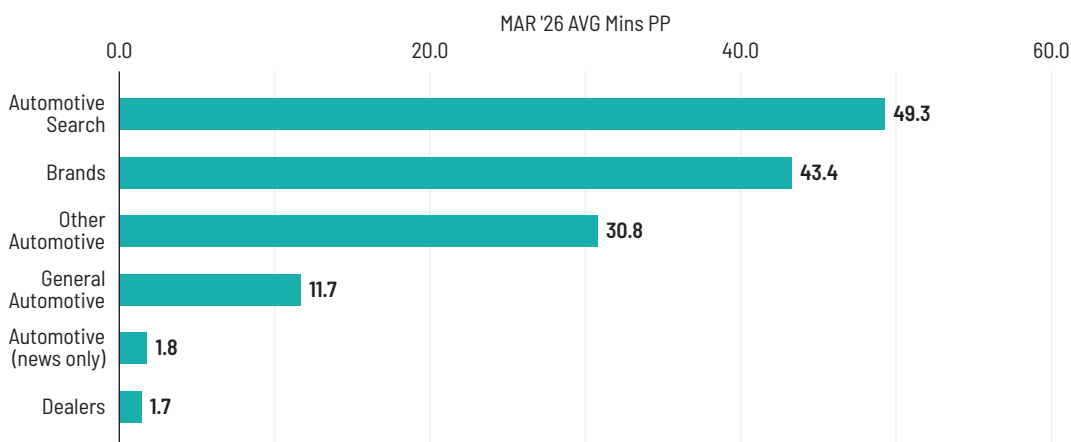
The Medium Automotive user segment, comprised of 4.1 million users aged 18 and over or 19.5% of total online 18 plus population, represents a substantial audience share.

Furthermore, the total number of Light Automotive category users aged 18 and over is 6.2 million. This figure represents nearly one-third of the entire adult online population, indicating Automotive category is a popular online topic.

Heavy, Medium, Light Automotive users vs Nonusers 18+ Audience composition (%)⁹



18+ Heavy Auto users AVG mins PP per month in Auto category¹⁰



Heavy Automotive Category user behaviour

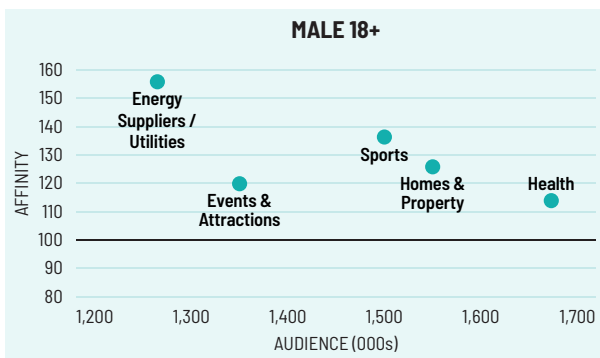
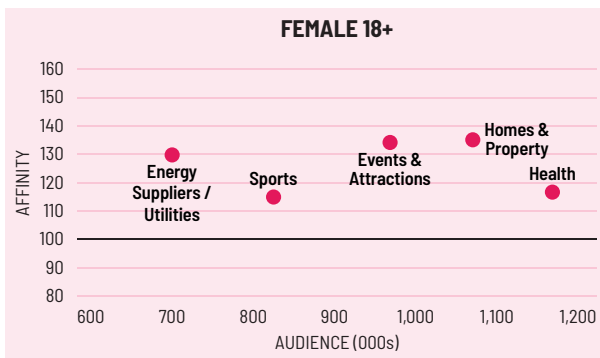
By analysing the media behaviour of 18+ Heavy Auto users, we can understand their consumption habits and the content categories that interest them. One way is looking at the Affinity index (ix) which is an index based to 100, where greater than 100 is more likely to be interested in particular content and below 100 is less likely to be interested, example where 40 and over are more likely to engage with Energy Suppliers and Utilities category.

Looking at **online category** audience for this cohort demonstrates that Energy/Utilities, Homes & Property, Events & Attractions and Sports are more likely to be engaging to the Heavy Auto audience. Homes & Property is a popular category amongst both genders, with Sports being more popular with men and Events & Attractions being more popular with women.

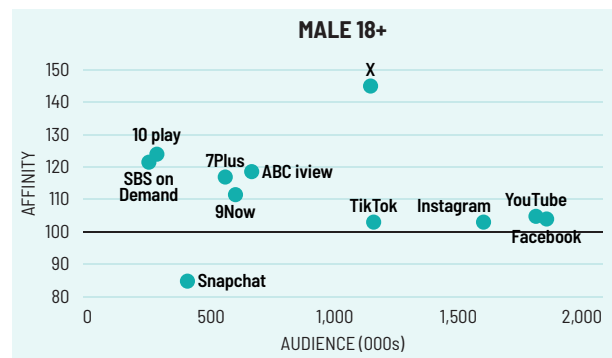
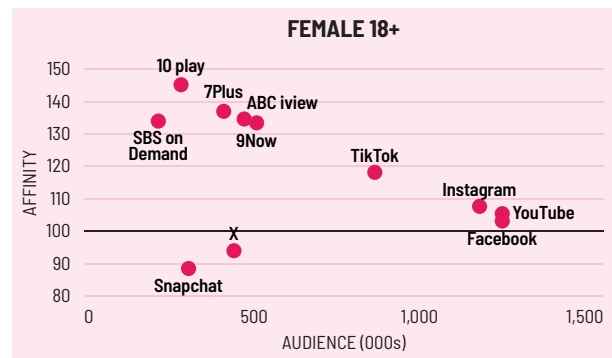
OzTAM Broadcast Video on Demand or BVOD, Female Heavy Auto users score highly on affinity index for 10play with affinity score of 146, or 46% more likely to visit compared with remaining female 18+ online users. 7Plus affinity index scored 137 or higher, or 37% more likely to visit 7Plus. Heavy Auto users have a strong affinity with BVOD channels overall.

Social Media platforms Instagram and Facebook are more popular than Snapchat for both Heavy Auto users, while TikTok is more likely to be used by females 18 plus. X, formally known as Twitter was especially popular with the male audience with affinity index of 145, compared with the female audience with 93 affinity index, or 7% less likely to visit compared with females 18 and over.

18+ Heavy Auto Online category audience affinity index¹¹



18+ Heavy Auto BVOD CTV and selected Social Network brand group audience affinity index¹²



Automotive Landscape shift

Australians change habits on digital Automotive landscape

Australia's overall automotive online audience has been growing with online behaviour shifting across different sectors.

Automotive category audience grew substantially month on month to March 2026, driven mostly by the global crisis affecting Australian consumers. All Auto subcategories grew, with Automotive News jumping 44% in reach, Dealers by 19% and Search by over 10%, signalling more in-market, decision and comparison shoppers.

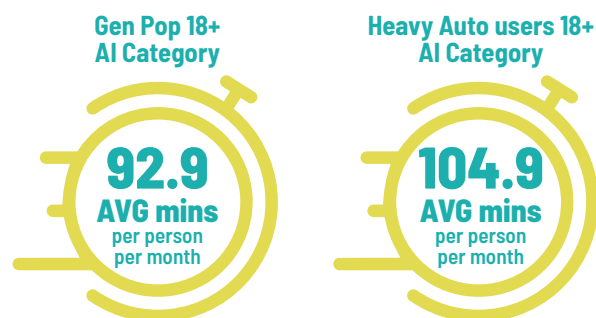
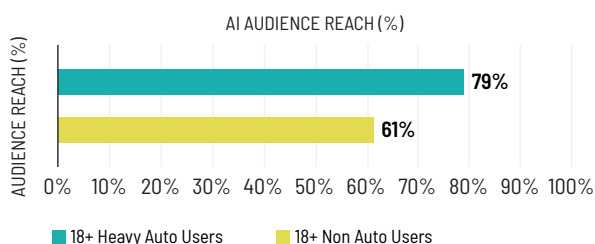
These sharp audience increases in Automotive category indicates a shift fuelled by disruption across the sector, like growing mainstream interest in EV and hybrid technology resulting in significant increases in Automotive Search audiences Month on Month.

The Adoption of AI in Car Research

Adoption of AI in Car research has made it into the top 10 influences on vehicle research according to Carsales.¹³ According to this research, the three main uses for AI in car search are comparison between models, simplifying technical industry jargons and financial options for the purchase of a new vehicles.

Ipsos iris YoY audience data for all of the AI category rose 54% reflecting increased usage of AI technology in general.¹⁴

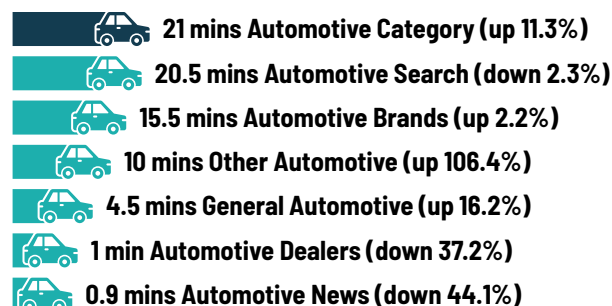
AI Audience Category 18+¹⁵



The 6 Automotive subcategories by audience growth Month-on-Month¹⁶

	Audience 000s Mar 2026	Audience Reach % Change MoM
Automotive (whole category)	13.8M	+5.1%
Other Automotive	8.4M	+9.4%
Automotive Search	5.3M	+10.4%
General Automotive	5.1M	+8.2%
Automotive Brands	4.7M	+0.8%
Automotive News	1.7M	+44.7%
Automotive Dealers	1.1M	+19.6%

Average Mins PP per month – Automotive Category 14+ YoY¹⁷



An Overview of Australia's Best-Selling Car Brands and Models in March 2026

According to the Federal Chambers of Automotive Industries and Electric Vehicle Council, the top 10 Automotive brands delivered in March 2026 mirrors the similarity with online Australians behaviour across the iris universe, especially around the automotive brands.

Toyota placed at the top, followed by Kia, BYD and Mazda which covers the top 4 brands in delivery volume in March 2026.

Fords' success in the highly popular ute segment was the key factor, ranking into 5th spot for March.

Tesla is still a popular brand amongst Australian car buyers, with the Tesla Model Y being the 3rd best delivered model in March.

The decline in year-over-year delivery figures for almost all traditional brands shows that emerging Chinese brands are becoming serious contenders in the Australian car market.

According to the FCAI and EVC data, the below make and models had the highest deliveries in March 2026.¹⁸

FCAI / EVC Top 10 Australian new car brand deliveries March 2026

	March 2026 Deliveries	Change % YOY
 Toyota	16,574	-19.3%
 Kia	7,320	+0.2%
 BYD	7,217	+50.0%
 Mazda	7,156	-10.5%
 Ford	7,149	-13.2%
 Hyundai	6,979	+2.4%
 GWM	5,680	+29.3%
 Mitsubishi-Motors	5,001	-31.2%
 MG Motor	4,218	+7.4%
 Chery	4,018	+84.1%

FCAI / VFACTS Top 10 Australian new car Model deliveries March 2026

	March 2026 Deliveries	Change % YOY
Ford Ranger	4,452	-9.7%
Toyota HiLux	4,167	+2.1%
Tesla Model Y	2,818	+63.4%
Nissan X-Trail	2,438	+25.3%
Mitsubishi Outlander	2,318	-22.9%
Hyundai Kona	2,316	+15.2%
Chery Tiggo 4	2,258	+80.4%
Isuzu D-Max	2,167	+3.8%
Hyundai Tucson	2,042	+11.5%
GWM Haval Jolion	2,013	+28.4%

The Growing Popularity of Chinese, EV, and Hybrid Models

As inflation and rising living costs continue to affect Australians, competitive, affordable and stylish Chinese brands are making their mark.

The traditional brand Toyota took the top audience spot, however the audience declined YoY by -30.5%. Tesla took the #2 spot, its audience marginally increasing by 1.4%. Hyundai took the #3 spot with a large audience increase of almost 50% increase YoY.

BYD audience growth was substantial, ranking in 4th place, almost doubling its audience YoY, whilst budget friendly MG Motor also surged in audience growth, just shy behind traditional and popular brand Ford, which also demonstrated large YoY increase with audience.

Ford placed the 5th spot, remaining popular with its in-demand Ranger utility, which delivered the most sales in March 26 with nearly 4,500 deliveries.

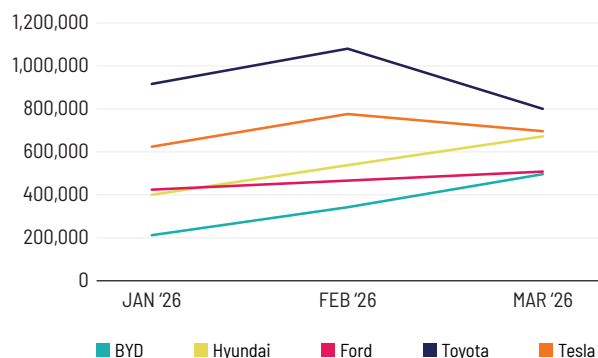
Plug-in hybrids was a strong performer during 2025, with 130% increase Year to date to November 2025, while petrol vehicle sales down 18% according to FCAI. Full electric vehicle sales also saw a large 38% rise compared with 2025.²⁰

Despite the popularity of manufacturers with diverse powertrain options, the EV-only brand Tesla maintained its significant market dominance, but BYD are closing that gap, achieving a larger audience then Ford during March.

Top 10 Automotive brand subcategory 14+ audience¹⁹

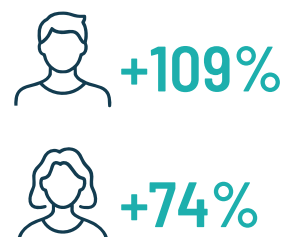
		Audience 000s Mar 2026	Audience Change % YOY
	Toyota	752k	-30.5%
	Tesla	684k	+1.4%
	Hyundai	661k	+49.2%
	BYD	505k	+99.2%
	Ford	500k	+39.4%
	MG Motor	475k	+23.0%
	Kia	437k	-16.3%
	Mazda	391k	+12.3%
	Mitsubishi-Motors	233k	-23.2%
	Honda	220k	-31.2%

Q1 2026 Auto Brand Audience (000s)²¹



BYD

If we look closer at the audience growth of the BYD brand, female audience grew by +74% YoY vs. male audience grew by 109%. Even though audience declined YoY for most brands, BYD is attracting more audience from both genders.²²



Auto Brand engagement under the lens

MG #1 with average time spent, but traditional brands prevalent...

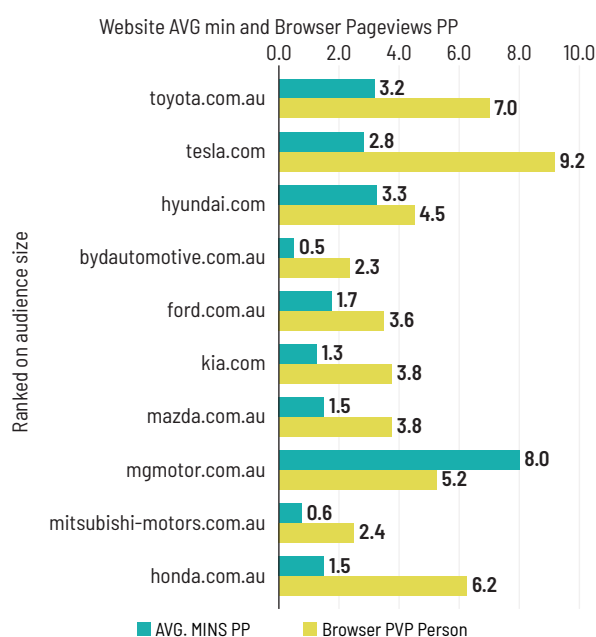
Toyota.com.au with the largest audience spent roughly 3.2 minutes per person, with an average browser pageview of 7 per person, or about 2 browser pageviews per minute.

Tesla.com achieved an average 2.8 minutes per person, with just over 9 browser pageviews. This means an average of just over 3 browser pageviews per minute on tesla website.

Mgmotor.com.au had acquired 8 average minutes per person, with just over 5 browser pageviews, equating to less than 1 browser pageview per minute.

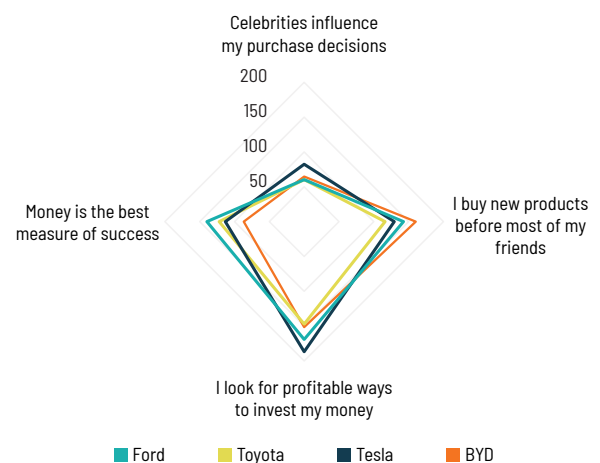
The chart below illustrates the average minutes spent and browser pageviews per person on each auto brand websites.

Automotive brand subcategory Website Average Mins & Browser PV PP March 26²³



Ipsos iris can reveal how the attitudes of different automotive brand users vary. Here are some key affinity scores for users of two traditional brands and two new EV brands.

Auto Brands – Audience affinities Net Agree index Mar 25 to Mar 26²⁴



The affinity index above shows characteristics of potential seekers or buyers for each brand. The audience for the 4 brands all are likely to be early adopters, with BYD presenting the highest affinity score of ix157, or 57% more likely than the general online population to do so.

In contrast, Celebrity endorsements are not likely to play a key part in the decision-making process for the 4 brands. Tesla audience tends to look for profitable ways to invest their money with index of 174, or 74% more likely than general population.

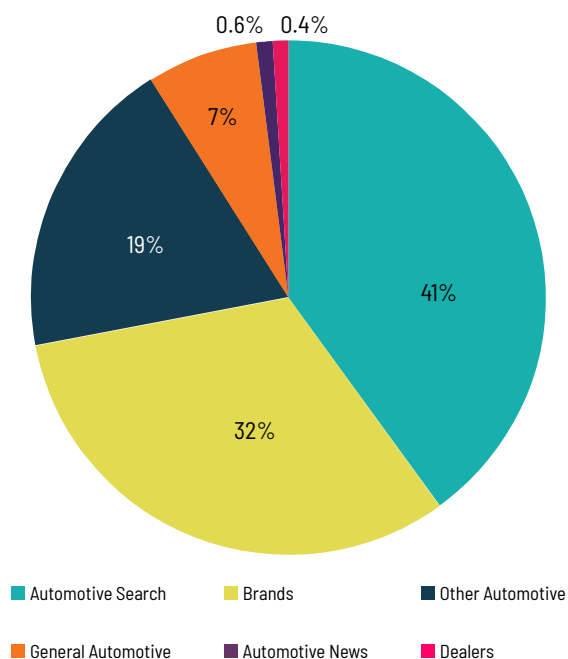
Automotive Search subcategory

The Automotive Search subcategory made up the second largest audience in the automotive category during March. Month on Month saw a large increase in Search subcategory audience, up by over 10%, from 4.8M to 5.3M.

Looking at the total time spent across the year spent in the Automotive category, Search subcategory took 41%, easily making it the most consumed subcategory, followed by Brands with 32% of total time spent. This illustrates that Search is one of the most popular Automotive categories.

Share of mins spent within Automotive category²⁵

Mar 25-Mar 26 (AVG) Total Mins 18+

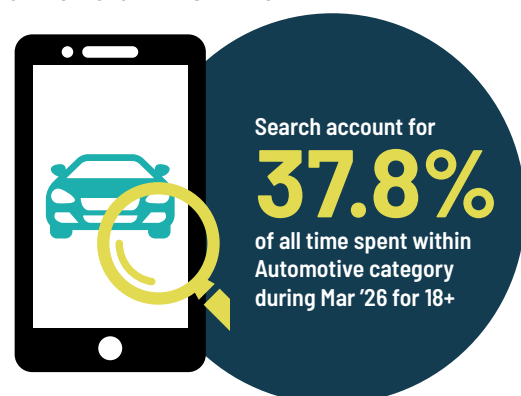


Automotive Search 14+ subcategory Brand Group Ranking March 2026 MoM²⁶

		Audience 000s Mar 2026	Audience Change % MoM
Total Selection		5.3M	+10.3%
	Carsales.com.au	4.1M	+5.0%
	CarsGuide*	1.57M	+5.0%
	Gumtree Australia - Cars	445k	-17.0%
	Oly.^	291k	-
	Pickles	287k	+19.1%

CarsGuide* from December 2025, brand group includes Autotrader website, ^Oly. First reported in March 2026

Mar 26 Total Mins PP 18+



Automotive Brand - Topline user profiling

Brand group profiling provides valuable insights into predicting user engagement with different Automotive brand websites and apps.

Toyota, tend to attract an older demographic aged 40-54 and tends to be equally popular with both men and women.

In contrast, Ford are more likely to appeal to a broader male age group, who are likely to adopt new products.

BYD audience are also popular with men who are also likely to be early adopters of new products, in white collar occupations.

Tesla profiles tend to be heavily skewed towards males, with high household income brackets who are likely to look for profitable ways of investing their money. This audience also are likely to be heavy sports category users.

GWM demographic is similar with Ford, males under the age of 40, and more likely to appeal to those who makes a conscious effort to recycle.

Automotive Brand sub-category

 Toyota	Examples:			
		RAV4	Hilux	Landcruiser
 Tesla	Examples:			
		Model Y	Model 3	Model S
 Ford	Examples:			
		Ranger	Everest	Mustang
 BYD	Examples:			
		Atto 3	Shark	Seal
 GWM	Examples:			
		Haval	Tank	Cannon

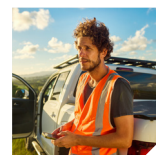
Who is more likely to use these Auto brand sites and apps?²⁷



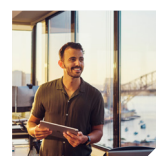
- Age 40-54 skew for both genders
- High household income skew (100k+)
- Employed full time or part time
- Heavy health, home & property sector users
- Very UNLIKELY to be influenced by celebrities around purchasing decisions ix72



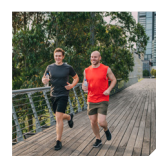
- Heavy 18+ male skew, especially with 55-64s
- High household income skew (100k+)
- Tertiary educated
- Heavy Energy/utility sector and Sports users
- Likely to "I look for profitable ways to invest my money" ix174



- Likely to be males 18-54
- Likely to be Parent or Guardian
- Likely in blue collar occupation
- Heavy Education, Sports and Energy/utility sector users
- Likely to value "Money is the best measure of success" ix140 and "purchase new products before their peers" ix144



- Male skew
- Employed full time or part time
- Likely in white collar occupation
- Heavy Energy/utilities and Directories sector users
- Likely to "buy new products before most of my friends" ix157, and "I look for profitable ways to invest my money" ix137



- Strong younger male skew 18-39s
- Appeals to all household income brackets
- Likely in white collar occupation
- Heavy Energy/utility sector, Business and Social Network users
- Likely to "make conscious effort to recycle" ix114 or "I make more purchases online than I do in store" ix114

Key Takeaways

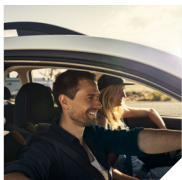


13.78 million or over half of online Australians aged 14+ engaged with the Automotive category in March 2026.

New car sales reached 1.24 million vehicles in 2025, compared with 1.23 million vehicles sold in 2024, a slight increase of 0.3%.



Automotive category user audience increased by almost 800k on average between 2024 versus 2025, an increase of over 6%, showcasing that 2025 was a strong year, despite 2024 also being a robust year for Auto industry.



The Automotive category continues to grow with increase year-on-year, as of March 2025 versus March 2026, by 2.8%.

Year on Year to March 2026, the Automotive category average time spent per person increased from 18.8 mins to 20.9 mins per person per month, showing stronger engagement.



Average time spent per person in March 2026 within the Automotive categories illustrates that Search is most engaging at 20.5 mins, followed by Brands at 15.5 mins, then Other Automotive with 9.6 mins.



Automotive News and Dealer subcategories both saw a large rise in audience growth YoY for March, indicating that research was the key growth in the crowded automotive sector in Australia, up 38.5% and 23.7% respectively.



Over one third of total time spent within the Automotive categories in March 2026 was Search at 37.7% and Other Automotive subcategories with 27.9%, cementing these subcategories to be most engaging for online Australians, most likely due to the current market conditions favouring buyers.



Australia's top 10 car brands are shifting: established names like Toyota, Tesla and Ford remain popular but an influx of Chinese brands like BYD, MG Motor and GWM are gaining audience as buyers seek competitively priced, hybrids or EVs, with BYD audience up 99.2% YoY and MG Motor audience up 23% YoY.

Research scope and methodology

Why Ipsos iris?

A level playing field for digital content owners and advertisers

IAB endorsement validates the rigor of the operating system, methodology and a nationally representative panel (demos, geosplits etc.).

A measure of audiences for digital content

Huge pool of data on digital behaviour collected every second from 8,000 devices, stemming from a single source passive panel, which allows for de-duplicated cross device consumption analysis.

Second-by-second monitoring of usage of all apps and websites

More effective ad placement and communications strategy from greater understanding of content consumption across different devices and genres.

Demographic, media usage and behavioural profiling

Better audience targeting from enhanced granularity on age, location, socio-economic characteristics as well as purchase and lifestyle interests and offline media use.

Advanced attitudinal and lifestyle profiling

Deep audience profiling on key attitudes and interests including:

- Ambition; balance; spontaneity; adventure; environmental, charitable; money; appearance; active; fashion conscious; premium shopper; early adopter
- Cosmetics; health conscious; designer brands; tech adopter; home décor; travel fan; credit user; cultural diversity; price conscious; carefree; SVOD / BVOD fan; online shopper
- Ethical; celebrity follower; eco-friendly

Rich demographic and media usage profile

Age	Grocery Buyer Status	State
Gender	Children under 18	Metro vs Regional
Ethnicity	Parent or Guardian	FTA TV Last 7 days
Personal Income	Grandparent	Radio Last 7 days
Household Income	Work Status	Newspaper Last 7 days
Occupation	Education	Magazine Last 7 days

Robust methodology: 4 key inputs



1. Establishment survey



2. Mobile first single source panel



3. Site centric measurement



4. Data integration

Metrics and Sources

Ipsos iris digital metrics

- **Total online AU population Age 14+:** Total online population of Australians who are aged 14 years or older, this number is set and will not change in this report. See below for AU online population as of Mar'26:
-Total AU internet population (Age 14+): 22.57M
- **Audience 000s:** The number of people in a target audience, who visited the selected media, i.e. 13.78M Australians 14+ visited the Automotive category in the month of Mar'26.
- **Audience reach %:** The percentage of people in a target audience, who visited the selected media, i.e. 61% of online Australians 14+ visited the Automotive category in the month of Mar'26
- **Audience affinity Index ("ix" or "index"):** The ratio of audience composition to the target audience composition (from the selected universe), e.g. 40 and over age groups are more likely to use Automotive apps vs. the average online Australian 14+.
- **Average Mins PP:** Average amount of time spent (minutes) by a person
- **Total Mins (MM):** The total time spent (minutes) from the selected media, by the selected target audience. Active time spent is measured for all visits without being inactive for longer than 30 mins.
- **Category:** Category Groups offer a consistent comparison of grouped data across different media owners by Content Category. Ipsos has made available Content Categories simplified from the IAB Global Taxonomy 2.0 that tagging media owners may assign to their Website Sections, Section Groups, or apps.
- **Sub-category:** Groupings that fall under the category, e.g. Brands sub-category will fall under the Automotive category

Sources

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- 4 Source: Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Services, Mar 26, People 14+, PC/Laptop/smartphones/ Tablet, Automotive Category, Tier 1 and Tier 2, Audience (000s), Audience reach (%)
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- 7 Source: Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, Mar 26, People 18+, PC/laptop/smartphone/ tablet, Text only, Heavy Automotive category users, Gender profile, Audience (000s)
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