

### AUTOMOTIVE

# Local Dealers Search For Growth Online

As thousands of consumers pour into Detroit's North American International Auto Show this week to kick the tires of new models and concept cars, many will go back to their hometowns and ponder their next big purchase. They'll likely continue their research online—rather than commit to long hours browsing in car lots.

Given the shift to digital, it should come as no surprise, then, that local car dealers are steering their marketing efforts there as well. In fact, an Interactive Advertising Bureau report noted that car buyers were 71 percent more likely to be influenced by digital ads compared to other consumers.

Local dealerships are starting to behave like their deep-

pocketed corporate counterparts, according to Dealer.com, an online firm that provides interactive services to 40 percent of dealerships in the U.S., including locations for Ford, General Motors, Jaguar, Volvo and Toyota. Dealer.com gave Adweek an exclusive peek at its automotive marketing data, which show local spending rose at Google, Yahoo and Facebook.

“Search has been part of dealer budgets for a little while, but display is rapidly growing,” explained Dave Winslow, Dealer.com chief digital strategist. “We’re buying across all the ad networks and exchanges. Dealers for luxury brands [such as Jaguar] are a little more savvy about ideas like social media and Pandora Radio ads.” —**Christopher Heine**


Digital ad spend grew by **28%** from 2012 to 2013 and jumped by 85% versus three years ago.

That exceeds growth by the national and local categories combined, according to Borrell Associates, which projects a growth rate of around **19%**.

Social and video impact are growing dramatically. Comparing December 2013 year-over-year referral traffic:

 YouTube skyrocketed **202%**

 Twitter grew **129%**

 Facebook jumped **33%**

More than half of dealers have Facebook pages, but fewer than **20%** have a Twitter account.

Mobile sites doubled traffic in 2013 over '12, now accounting for **26%** of all visitors

IAB said **21%** of auto shoppers respond to digital advertising compared to only **12%** of the rest of the population.

Ads seen on tablets helped lift traffic by **22%**

**Super Bowl fact:** Dealer sites saw **22% fewer** visits on Super Bowl Sunday 2013 compared to normal, but traffic was **50% higher** than average the next day.



Local dealers saw their sites' traffic enjoy a **28%** bump in 2013.

SOURCE: DEALER.COM AND IAB, BORRELL ASSOCIATES WHERE NOTED.



2015 Chevrolet Corvette Z06