



## MICRO-MOMENTS & MOBILE

5 Steps You Can Take  
to Capitalize on Today's Top Trends

In the next 10 years, 40% of new cars will be purchased by Millennials, the generation aged 16 -32 that has rapidly emerged as the most sought-after consumer group in marketing history.

As OEMs and retailers alike scramble to appeal to this tech-driven generation from a design and image standpoint, there are five actions you can take today on the retail end to spur engagement with Millennials and drive conversions . . . all while maintaining and reinforcing a positive relationship with your current base.



## 5 Steps to Capitalize on Today's Top Trends

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### UNDERSTAND THE KEY MICRO-MOMENTS THAT LEAD UP TO A PURCHASE

Millennials do not rush into a car purchase. They recognize the gravity of their investment and do an average of **17 hours of research**—broken up into hundreds, if not thousands, of digital interactions—on their car purchase before showing up at a dealership.

Eight in 10 Millennials surveyed viewed cars as the one big-ticket item people of their generation purchase.”

*(Source: MTV'S 'MILLENNIALS HAVE DRIVE' RESEARCH STUDY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, 2015)*

Winning their business at the end of their shopping journey means engaging with them at the very beginning of their research process. What areas matter most to these often first-time buyers, and how can you anticipate, and answer their questions at exactly the right time?

**Answer: Follow the trail of micro-moments.**



## MICRO-MOMENTS & MOBILE

Google has defined micro-moments as the rapid, real-time steps consumers take on the digital road on their way to a purchase decision. Micro-moments echo the staccato-like desires a mobile-user will pursue throughout the day . . .  
**I-want-to-know . . . I-want-to-go . . . I-want-to-buy . . . I-want-to-do.**

Translated to the automotive sphere, these micro-moments might sound more like: which car is best for me? Where should I buy it? Am I getting the best deal?

The key to unlocking the power of micro-moments is adjusting your marketing strategy to provide information at the very outset of their journey, to answer their questions, earn their loyalty, and build the foundation for a future sale.

**65%** of smartphone users agree that when conducting a search on their smartphones, they look for the most relevant information, regardless of the company providing that information.

*(Source: Google APIs, 'Micro-Moments: Your Guide to Winning the Shift to Mobile' 2015)*

Suppose a millennial shopper experiences this micro-moment: "I need a car that's totally connected – which one can I afford?" Once they turn to their phone for an answer, you have approximately one minute and ten seconds to provide one. **Is your website, your text ad campaign, and your video arsenal set up to answer this question – quickly and relevantly?**

A mercenary mentality abounds in these micro-moments, making them a prime opportunity to gain an edge on the competition. A Millennial car shopper wants to know all of their options, and are less concerned with who is providing the information they seek, than the information itself. **If you can be there first, concisely and visibly, there is an excellent chance you will own that mobile session and capture their attention for future reference.**

Using micro-moments as a map to subtly shift your approach from car salesman to car expert in your digital interaction with Millennials is proven to bear fruit in the short and long-term.



Companies that take steps toward becoming moment-ready reap higher ROIs in both mobile and overall marketing investment.

*(Source: ThinkwithGoogle, 'A Mobile Moments Mindset: New Research Details the Benefits for Brands' 2015)*



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### RATE YOUR MOBILE GAME & IMPROVE SPEED . . . IMMEDIATELY

Mobile interaction is a crucial link to the modern consumer, and even more so, the Millennial consumer. Google reports that in the U.S., more searches take place on mobile devices than on computers. Not surprising, given that 87% of Millennials keep their phones on them at all times, even when sleeping.

Nearly half of all visitors will leave a mobile site if the pages don't load within 3 seconds.

*(Source: Google APIs, 'Micro-Moments: Your Guide to Winning the Shift to Mobile' 2015)*

Once you've identified the key micro-moments your target customer is experiencing, your response to their search needs to be immediate. Millennial mobile users expect rapid information flow and the ability to locate places quickly. Your website and any related collateral must be available, fast, and easy-to-navigate on a mobile device 24/7, or you risk losing a lead, maybe permanently.

Avoid costly delays by checking how your site performs on mobile using this test:

<https://testmysite.thinkwithgoogle.com/>.

It measures two key areas of mobile compatibility: whether the design converts well to a smaller screen and how quickly your site loads on mobile versus a desktop. Even better, Google will provide you a free report with suggested changes.



Is your site not as fast as it could be? Don't despair, speed problems are often a simple fix, like leveraging browser caching, optimizing images, or eliminating render-blocking JavaScript and CSS in above-the-fold content . . . issues your webmaster can navigate with relative ease.

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### KNOW THEIR FINANCIAL SITUATION BETTER THAN THEY DO

The average Millennial shopping for a car may have done thorough research on the features they want and the vehicles that offer those features, but **that doesn't guarantee they have an equally thorough understanding of their ability to finance a vehicle.**

Last year, Credit Karma performed a study of its 35 million users, discovering that 46% of those aged 25 -34 had at least one open student loan. A separate Citizens Bank survey of Millennials with student loans found that 45% of respondents didn't actually know what percentage of their salary went to paying off their loans.



In Boston, Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Durham, and Atlanta, the average student loan debt is a minimum of \$37,945.66.

*(Source: Forbes.com, 'The Cities Where The Average Student Debt Load Is The Highest, Do You Live In One?' 2015)*



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Virtually any city in the country that serves as home to one or more universities exhibits similar, if not as high, trends. **In spite of these hefty financial obligations, Millennials are still purchasing cars, or intend to within the next year.** In fact, TransUnion data reports that Millennials are the fastest-growing segment of auto loan consumers.

As a dealer, understanding the financial obligations carried by the average millennial in addition to a car payment, can help you get out in front of a key micro-moment like: “how do I finance a car when I have student loan debt?” What can you offer a Millennial customer with a substantial student loan debt, or one coming out of debt or unemployment who is seeking a financially responsible investment?



We are seeing that people in [the 26-35] age group are starting to enter some of their prime borrowing years. They've graduated from college, developed their careers and now are starting families . . . they're stepping up into the next bracket and making meaningful purchases for first or second time in their lives.

*(Source: AutoneWS.com, 'Millennials' appetite for auto loans rising' 2015)*



Considering the holistic picture of a Millennial's lifestyle is a crucial part of the sales process. Positioning yourself to be able to provide financial information, alternative payment structures, or incentives that address real-time concerns is just another way of galvanizing your reputation as a car buying expert and paving the way to a conversion.

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## USE VIDEO TO EDUCATE AND LEVERAGE CUSTOMER TESTIMONIALS

Whether researching cars on mobile or on their laptop, 82% of Millennials are using third-party sources like blogs and review sites to get information, instead of OEMs or dealers. Bringing searches back to your website is a matter of providing content that the shopper can trust, in a format that's fast, easily-assimilated, and mobile.

**In other words, video.**

Auto review videos on YouTube were watched more than 3M hours in the first 9 months of 2015, of which more than 1.2M were on mobile, more than 2X as many as 2014.

*(Source: ThinkwithGoogle, 'The 5 Auto Shopping Moments Every Brand Must Own' 2015)*



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Google found that 60% of people who used YouTube while buying a car were influenced by it, more than TV, newspapers or magazines. Showcasing models with walk-through videos, test drives, 360 degree tours, and side-by-side comparisons serves the dual purpose of providing your visitor the information they are seeking with positive brand recognition that's easily shareable.

While they place a high value on individualism, Millennials like to remain hyper-connected, and deeply trust the experience of others. So why not speak to them in their own language?

Consider posting videos in which Millennials are conducting the vehicle tour and pointing out which features matter most to them and why. Leverage your current happy customers to attract new ones in a format that lends itself to word-of-mouth and social media integration. Keep the messaging honest and focus on the experience more than the sale to build trust with your Millennial shopper and bring them one step closer to purchasing a vehicle from you.



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### GIVE THEM WHAT THEY WANT THE MOST . . . THE WAY THEY WANT IT

When the digital portion of your target Millennial shopper's research comes to a close and they walk through your door, expect them to have questions. They are going to want to experience everything they've read about, watched, or heard from others.

It's important that your sales staff is well-versed in the technical and infotainment features of your vehicles, as well as those of competitor vehicles, and aftermarket components. If it doesn't come standard, what are the options for adding it on?



AutoTrader.com has identified five key features that Millennials consider “must-haves” in their car. Not surprisingly, they are all tech-related.

1. Navigation system
2. Satellite radio
3. Bluetooth
4. MP3 player
5. Mobile integration

(Source: AutoTrader.com, 'Millennials: The Next Generation Car Buyer'. 2013)



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Providing specific, up-to-date information and being prepared with a variety of options for them to get the features they want is key in illustrating that you are attuned to their needs and budget.

Transparency is key in the paperwork process. After a Millennial has decided on the car they will purchase, they want to feel in control during the buying routine. They expect a breakdown of costs upfront and want to know that they are receiving fair pricing.

*(Source: AFSAcceptance.com, 'Millennial Car Buyers: The Top 5 Things You Need to Know in 2015')*

**Finally, be clear and straightforward at the moment of purchase.**

Slowing down the sales process to the point where the customer feels that all of their questions have been answered satisfactorily plays an important role in bringing the micro-moment journey to a successful close and earning you a customer for life . . . a customer that won't be shy about sharing his or her positive experience with others.



To learn more about developing your automotive micro-moment strategy for increased ROI, be sure to check out our presentation at:

**DIGITAL  
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Can't wait? Contact us today to learn more about our cutting-edge digital marketing platforms that are revolutionizing the way cars are sold.

