CarGurus Study Finds Rising Consumer Interest in Electric Vehicles as Gas Prices Spike

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Tesla still top brand among consumers, but losing market share as other brands bring EVs to market

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., May 05, 2022 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- CarGurus (Nasdaq: CARG), a multinational, online automotive platform for buying and selling vehicles, today announced its latest consumer sentiment study on electric vehicles (EVs). The CarGurus 2022 Electric Vehicle Insight Report examined consumer feedback on a variety of EV-related topics like timeline to ownership, the effects of higher gas prices, possible barriers to adoption, and preferred brands.

Since the first iteration of this study in 2018, interest in electric vehicles has risen steadily each year. In February and March of this year, though, excitement and readiness for adoption stagnated until the reality of high gas prices set in in April – 32% and 34% of consumers surveyed in February and March (respectively) expected to own an EV in five years, only a slight lift from 30% in 2021, whereas 40% of consumers surveyed in April said the same.

At the same time, as gas prices rose, so did consumer tolerance – last year, 56% of respondents said they'd be much more likely to consider an electric vehicle if gas prices reached $5 per gallon. This year, as this scenario felt like more of an actuality, only 27% of consumers said gas hitting $5 per gallon would sway them to purchase an EV.

Tesla has been the top brand choice for consumers year after year – and while this year is no different, their lead over other brands shrank as other automakers introduced their own electric vehicle models. 45% of consumers surveyed said they would consider purchasing an EV from Tesla, followed by Toyota (44%) and Honda (40%). For hybrids, consumers are most likely to consider Toyota (47%), Honda (39%), and Ford (33%).

"With high gas prices feeling like our new reality, consumers are beginning to more seriously consider investing in electric vehicles," said Ali Chapman, Senior Consumer Insights Analyst at CarGurus. "As automakers bring new EV models to the market, the pool of potential shoppers has expanded – though barriers like access to charging and high costs remain."

Additionally, the study uncovered:

- 67% of respondents believe that electric vehicles are the future, but many are not yet ready to stomach the costs – only 39% say EVs are currently worth their higher asking prices. Buyers could be convinced to go electric, though, if charging ranges improve (43%), if there were more charging bays available (43%), or if EVs cost the same as gas-powered vehicles (40%).
- Consumers began to change their behavior as gas prices rose, with 59% of respondents trying to lower their fuel consumption, 44% cutting costs elsewhere, and 30% considering a more fuel-efficient vehicle.

The full results of the study can be found here, and any questions can be sent to pr@cargurus.com.

Methodology
In 2022, CarGurus surveyed 2,176 automobile owners in the U.S. on their sentiments towards electric vehicles through an online survey. Respondents were balanced in terms of key demographics (gender, region, income) according to the U.S. census. CarGurus also surveyed owners in 2021 (n=1,097), 2019 (n=1,702), and 2018 (n=1,279) for earlier iterations of this benchmarking study.

CarGurus surveyed a first wave of respondents (n=774) on February 28th, as gas prices in the U.S had begun to climb. CarGurus then surveyed a second wave of respondents (n=843) on March 14th, as gas prices reached greater highs. And a third and final wave (n=559) on April 8th. Included in the report is a comparison of those results to show the impact of gas prices on behaviors and attitudes surrounding electric vehicles.

A modified version of this study will also be available for the Canadian and U.K. markets.

About CarGurus
CarGurus (Nasdaq: CARG) is a multinational, online automotive platform for buying and selling vehicles that is building upon its industry-leading listings marketplace with both digital retail solutions and the CarOffer online wholesale platform. The CarGurus marketplace gives consumers the confidence to purchase or sell a vehicle either online or in-person, and it gives dealerships the power to accurately price, effectively market, instantly acquire and quickly sell vehicles, all with a nationwide reach. The company uses proprietary technology, search algorithms and data analytics to bring trust, transparency, and competitive pricing to the automotive shopping experience. CarGurus is the most visited automotive shopping site in the U.S. (source: Comscore Media Metrix® Multi-Platform, Automotive – Information/Resources, Total Visits, Q4 2021, U.S.).

CarGurus also operates online marketplaces under the CarGurus brand in Canada and the United Kingdom. In the United States and the United Kingdom, CarGurus also operates the Autolist and PistonHeads online marketplaces, respectively, as independent brands.

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