

Auto Shows are the Industry's Best Kept Conquest Secret

New research finds 63% of buyers switched brands after attending an auto show — and 84% say the show influenced their purchase decision

WILMINGTON, DE, UNITED STATES, May 5, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Automotive Experience Alliance](#) (AEA), a coalition of auto shows dedicated to driving innovation and standardization across the industry, today released findings from its latest consumer

survey that reveal auto shows as one of the most powerful conquest channels in automotive marketing. The follow-up study of more than 6,000 attendees from the 2024-2025 auto show season confirms that auto shows are not just building awareness: they are changing minds, switching loyalties, and closing sales.

“

Auto shows aren't just a marketing event; they're a purchase accelerator.”

*Jennifer Morand, Chairman,
AEA*

The research was conducted in partnership with Productions Plus Insights and includes responses from 6,156 auto show attendees across 16 U.S. markets. Participants were surveyed 6-9 months after attending an auto show during the 2024-2025 season. A selection of standout findings is highlighted below. To view more

specifics on the survey findings, please download the [Auto Show Insights Follow Up Survey 2024-2025](#).

Auto Shows Turn Shoppers into Buyers

Among attendees surveyed 6-9 months after the show, 38% had already purchased a vehicle with an additional 24% planning to buy within six months. Of the 42% who entered post-show with purchase intent, more than 90% followed through.

Auto Shows Shape the Final Decision



Automotive Experience Alliance

The influence extends well beyond foot traffic. Among buyers, 84% said the auto show influenced their purchase decision, rising to 91% among those still actively in-market. Attendees cited three primary drivers: reinforcing their vehicle choice (48%), comparison shopping in one place (46%), and hands-on experience with a specific make or model (36%).

A Powerful Conquest Channel

The brand-switching data is where the story gets most compelling for automakers. Among those who purchased after attending, 63% switched brands while only 34% remained loyal to their previous make.

"Auto shows are one of the few environments where consumers arrive open to something new and leave having found it. A 63% brand-switch rate doesn't happen by accident. It happens because nothing else in the marketing mix gives a consumer this kind of access to this many vehicles in a single visit," said Jennifer Morand, Chairman, AEA.

Experiential Engagement Drives Conversion

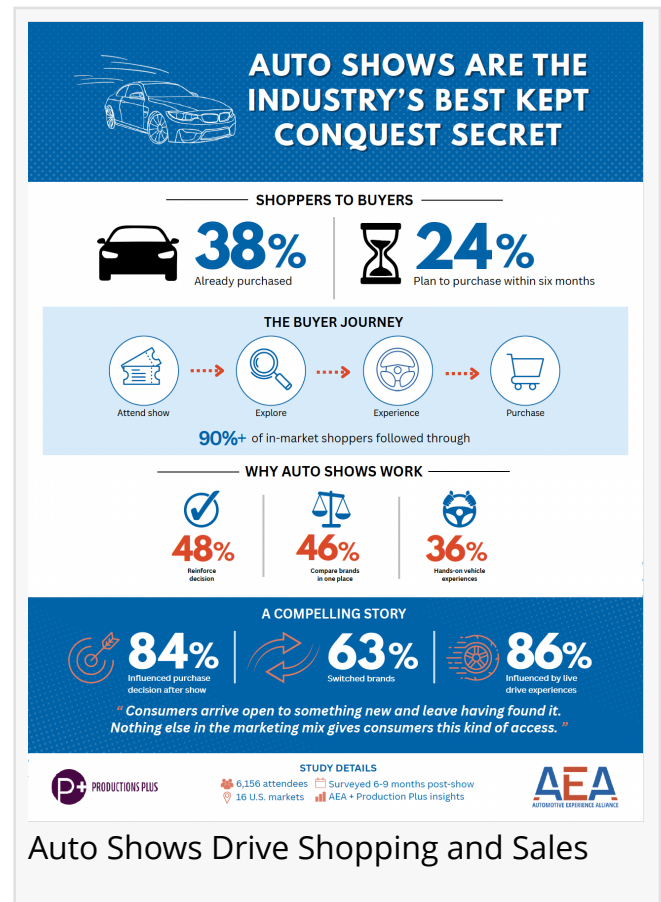
Live drive activations are proving to be a decisive factor. Among all participants, 73% said live drive experiences helped inform their purchase decision, climbing to 86% among active intenders.

"The in-vehicle experience has always been the closest thing to a guaranteed conversion tool in this industry. Auto shows have scaled that experience across every major brand under one roof. Auto shows aren't just a marketing event; they're a purchase accelerator," said Morand.

For more information about the AEA, visit AutomotiveExperienceAlliance.org, and follow the AEA on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

About Automotive Experience Alliance

The Automotive Experience Alliance is a coalition of auto shows that fosters success in the automotive industry by defining and adopting a standard set of processes, practices, methodologies, metrics, and messaging that drive more value for the entire automotive ecosystem including consumers, manufacturers, dealers, suppliers, sponsors and show producers. For more information, please visit AutomotiveExperienceAlliance.org.



About the Auto Show Insights Initiative

The Auto Show Insights Initiative is a research study executed by Productions Plus Insights in partnership with AEA. A total of 6,156 show attendees across 16 AEA member auto shows participated in the survey, which was conducted online, 6-9 months after attending an auto show. Participating auto shows include Charlotte, San Antonio, Houston, Seattle, Arizona, St. Louis, Washington, D.C., Toledo, San Diego, Utah, Chicago, Pennsylvania, Colorado, Oregon, and Philadelphia. The results can be found here.

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