



# Voice Search Q4 2020 US Automotive Industry Data

Summary for Marketing Professionals

## SUMMARY

This report illustrates how each smart speaker device (Google Home with Google Assistant, Amazon Echo with Alexa and Apple HomePod with Siri) measure up when asked specific questions about the **Automotive** industry in the US. **Over 1,500 questions** were programmatically asked to the devices, covering multiple categories including Automotive Brands, Purchase/Pricing, Reviews, Styles, Quality, and Features. Examples include:

- “Alexa, what is the safest car?”
- “Hey Google, what is the best SUV to buy?”
- “Hey Siri, what car gets the best gas mileage?”

How does your brand “sound” to your audience? Similar to SEO 20 years ago, today’s voice experiences pose a **threat to brand safety** as the devices are frequently delivering many incorrect answers or no answer at all - i.e. “Sorry, I don’t know that...” The short-term opportunity is to **own your brand**. Automotive brands need to provide the “right” answer to the questions their customers are asking. Structuring your content to deliver answers to critical questions posed in voice search could put you ahead of the competitive curve.

The long-term play is in capturing the non-branded questions that are also happening earlier in the buyer journey. Consider a hot topic like **Eco Friendly Cars**. The brand that provides the answer to those early stage queries will gain topical authority and competitive advantage.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

**Alexa answers general questions but is often confused or inaccurate, and responds with “Sorry, I don’t know that” or “This might answer your question.”**

- Alexa provided an answer 82% of the time, usually for car-value questions (“*How much is my car worth?*”) and top-of-the-funnel general interest questions (“*What is a hybrid car?*” or “*What is an SUV?*”).
- Alexa has begun suggesting options outside of the Amazon eco system, however, it is rarely correct. For example, when asked “*How can I buy a Tesla?*”, Alexa’s answer is “*Tesla is publicly traded on the NASDAQ.*” While that is true, it isn’t the intent of the question, which Google is better at.
- When asked specific questions about brands, features and financing, Alexa often does not have an answer. For example, when asked “*What is my car worth?*”, “*What is the best SUV to buy?*”, or “*Find a Chevy dealer.*” Alexa answers “*Sorry, I don’t know that.*”

**Google Assistant provides more relevant results and is better at answering questions all the way through the buyer journey.**

- Google provides accurate answers for general interest questions and provides quality answers for middle-funnel questions.
- For example, when asked “*What is the fastest car in the world?*”, Google answers “*The fastest car in the world is thrust SSC.*”

- Google is also much better at citing their sources. For example, when asked “**What is a SUV?**”, Google answers “*Here is the summary from **Wikipedia**, a sport utility vehicle or SUV is a car classification that combines elements of road-going passenger cars with features from off-road vehicles, such as raised ground clearance and four-wheel drive.*”

### **Apple Siri on the HomePod was unable to answer many of the questions.**

- **66%** of the time, Siri did not have an answer or responded “*I can’t help with that*”
- It was able to answer some general questions with web search results. For example, when asked about cars with the qualifier of either *fast* or *expensive*, Siri would often answer with a type of car and sometimes cite the source that it pulled the information from.

## **ANSWER PERFORMANCE**

### **Auto reference sites that have structured their content to deliver answers to questions in voice search are leading the pack.**

- For **non-branded** questions, the following sites stood out as having better voice performance. Below are the number of answers that each site provided:
  - MotorTrend – 41 Questions
  - Car and Driver –30 Questions
  - Consumer Reports – 28 Questions
  - CarMax– 19 Questions

## **THE OPPORTUNITY & ACTION FOR BRANDS**

Today, consumers are no longer constrained by screens and keyboards. Access to a world of information is now controlled simply by our voice. Tremendous **white space opportunities** exist today across the industry. Unlike desktop search, **there’s only one answer in voice search**, and this first mover opportunity may not exist again for quite some time.

Don’t miss the boat - WPP’s Voice Practice can help you provide relevant, accurate answers to the questions your customers are asking the voice assistants. All of this is done at Enterprise scale.

**Contact us today for a consultation:** [contact@globalstrategies.com](mailto:contact@globalstrategies.com)