

The Fast and Furiously Innovative

Only handfuls of drivers very familiar with advanced vehicle intelligent sensing features

New York, N.Y. — June 23, 2010 — Familiarity with advanced vehicle intelligent sensing features is very low among American drivers¹, with fewer than one in 10 indicating they are very familiar with the following features: blind spot and cross-traffic detection systems (6% extremely/very familiar), driver recognition systems (5%) and night vision systems (6%). Additionally, though slightly higher, only about one in ten drivers are very familiar with parking assist systems (11%).

However, despite low familiarity, greater minorities of drivers indicate likelihood to purchase these features for their next new vehicle, indicating if automakers and suppliers educated consumers more about these technologies, interest may increase.

“Although these technologies are not well known today, expect many of them to become commonplace over the next few years,” says Dave Pulaski, Vice President of Automotive & Transportation for Harris Interactive. “Once consumers learn about these features and their benefits, they will clamor for them.”

This is continuing coverage from the Harris Interactive 2010 AutoTECHCAST study, an annual survey of adult vehicle owners in the United States conducted between April 6, 2010 – April 26, 2010 that studies 69 advanced automotive technologies spanning across several categories that include: *Entertainment, Exterior Comfort & Convenience, Glass, Intelligent Sensing, Interior Comfort & Convenience, Lighting, Powertrain & Alternative Fuels, Ride & Handling, Safety, and Telematics.*

Blind Spot and Cross-Traffic Detection

Though only 6% indicate they are extremely or very familiar with blind spot and cross-traffic detection systems, there is obvious interest in these features, with one-quarter (24%) of drivers said they would be extremely or very likely to purchase this for their next vehicle². Blind spot detection features identify people, other vehicles, or objects within vehicles’ blind spots and provide an instant warning to the driver. Similarly, cross-traffic detection systems can detect vehicles, people or objects in a vehicle’s path while backing out of a parking space and alert the driver.

Driver Recognition System

Despite low familiarity with driver recognition systems (5% very/extremely familiar) interest in this feature has remained constant since 2005, with 22% indicating they would be extremely or very likely to purchase for their next vehicle. This system allows multiple drivers of a vehicle the ability to program various vehicle settings including seat positions, mirror positions, and climate control & stereo settings that can all be activated when the driver enters the vehicle.

¹ U.S. adults ages 18 and over and who own or lease a vehicle, have a valid driver's license, have at least one household vehicle, own a vehicle model year 2005 or newer, and are at least 50 percent involved in the decision to buy their next household vehicle

² The data included for purchase consideration were gathered before giving respondents price information.

Night Vision System

Similar to the other advanced vehicle intelligent sensing technologies, familiarity with night vision systems is low, with only 6% who are extremely or very familiar, though nearly one quarter (24%) would consider purchasing this feature for their next vehicle. This technology provides the driver with a high-beam image of the road ahead, without distracting other drivers, using an infrared light beam that is invisible to the human eye. An on-board camera is used to capture images up to 500 feet away that are then presented on a display in the vehicle's cockpit.

Parking Assist System

Given the recent promotion of parking assist systems by car companies, it's not surprising 11% are extremely or very familiar with this technology. However, compared to the other technologies, fewer drivers are likely to consider purchasing this technology (12%). Parking assist systems help drivers park backwards or parallel park using a built-in computer and small sensors located at the rear of the vehicle. After confirming feasibility of targeted parking position, the vehicle's parking movements would be done automatically by the vehicle.

"I've seen people at auto shows crowding around the demonstrations of parking assist, and I've had friends and acquaintances drive me around just to show off their newest gadgetry," comments David Duganne. "Increased consumer education could do much to spark sales."

TABLE 1

FAMILIARITY WITH TECHNOLOGIES

"How familiar are you with [INSERT TECHNOLOGY NAME] technology?"

Base: Adults who evaluated each technology

	Blind Spot and Cross- Traffic Detection	Driver Recognition System	Night Vision System	Parking Assist System
Base	991	989	987	979
	%	%	%	%
TOP 2 BOX (NET)	6	5	6	11
Extremely Familiar	2	3	3	4
Very Familiar	4	2	3	7
Familiar	11	7	8	20
BOTTOM 2 Box (NET)	82	88	86	69
Somewhat Familiar	29	23	30	35
Not At All Familiar	53	65	56	34

(Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding).

TABLE 2

LIKELIHOOD TO PURCHASE TECHNOLOGIES BEFORE EXPOSURE TO PRICE

"Please read the following description of the [INSERT TECHNOLOGY NAME] technology. How likely would you be to purchase this technology on your next new vehicle?"

Base: Adults who evaluated each technology

	Blind Spot and Cross-Traffic Detection	Driver Recognition System	Night Vision System	Parking Assist System
Base	991	989	987	979
	%	%	%	%
TOP 2 BOX (NET)	24	22	24	12
Extremely Likely	10	11	8	5
Very Likely	14	11	15	8
Likely	19	20	19	16
BOTTOM 2 Box (NET)	57	59	57	71
Somewhat Likely	41	30	37	33
Not At All Likely	15	29	20	38

(Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding).

Methodology

The AutoTECHCAST study was conducted online within the United States by Harris Interactive between April 6, 2010 – April 26, 2010 among 12,225 U.S. adults ages 18 and over and who own or lease a vehicle, have a valid driver’s license, have at least one household vehicle, own a vehicle model year 2005 or newer, and are at least 50 percent involved in the decision to buy their next household vehicle. Results were weighted as needed for age, gender, education, region and income and to properly represent U.S. vehicle segment owners. Propensity score weighting also was used to adjust for respondents’ propensity to be online.

About Harris Interactive

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