

UX Playbook

Mobile

COX AUTOMOTIVE

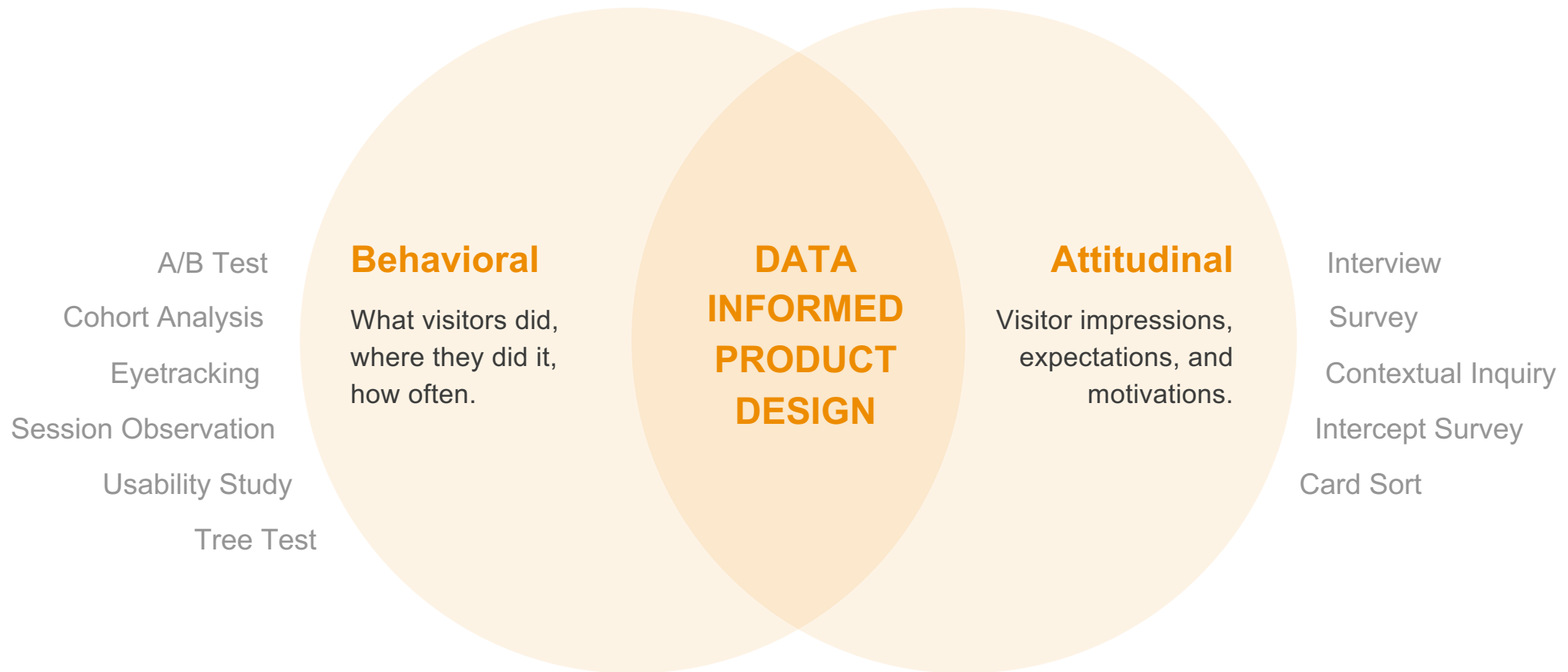
DEALER.COM 

About the UX Playbook

What is the UX Playbook?

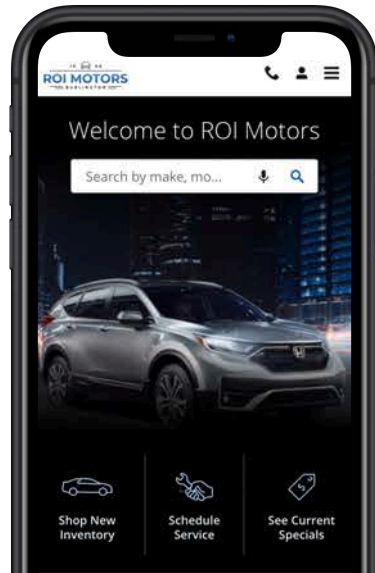
The UX Playbook is a set of **data-informed recommendations** aimed at providing a **positive experience** for the dealership website visitor.

What is “data” in UX?



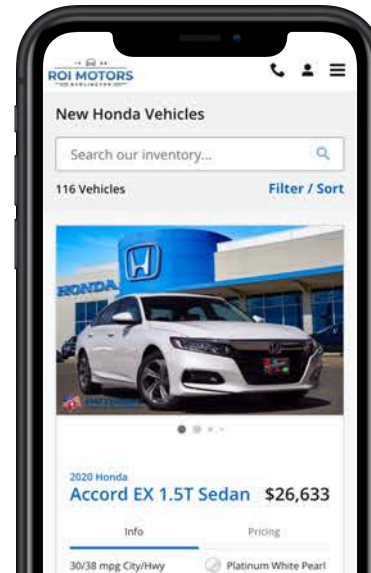
Areas of Focus: Shopper Workflow

The UX Playbook focuses on three critical paths of the dealership website: the homepage, search results page, and details page.



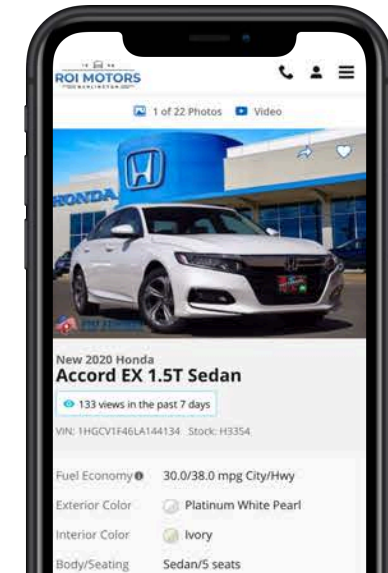
Homepage

Brand impressions and starting point for discovery.



Search Results Page

High level vehicle comparisons.

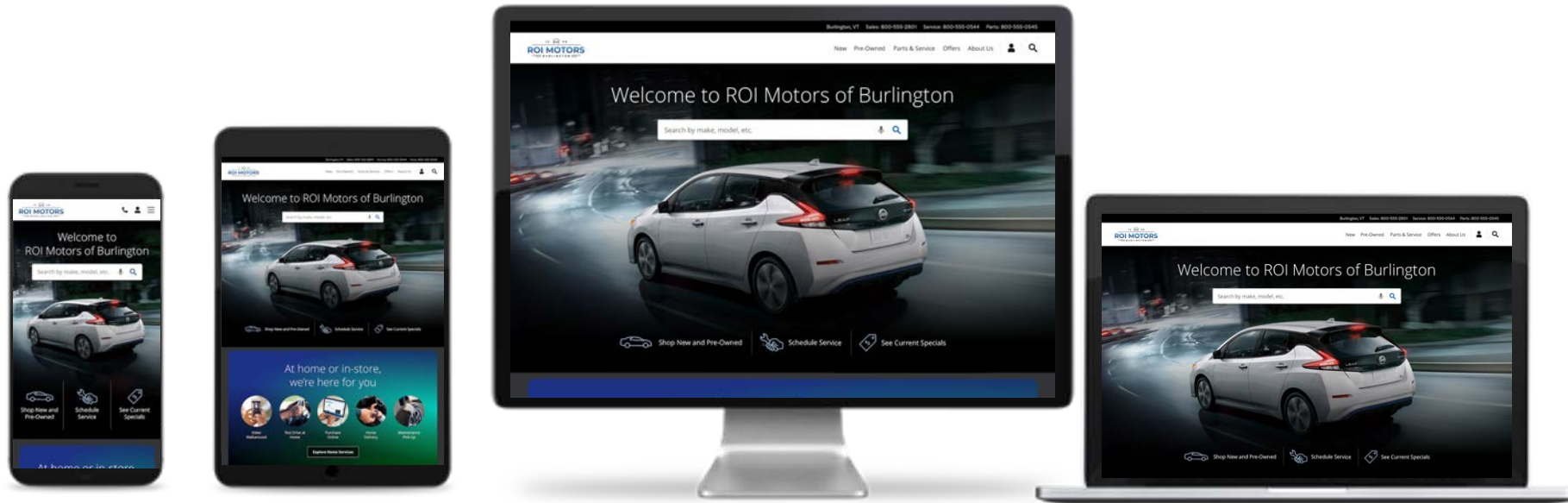


Details Page

Specific considerations and next steps.

Areas of Focus: Devices

UX Playbook recommendations apply across devices unless otherwise noted.



62%
Mobile

3%
Tablet

35%
Desktop & Laptop

Device Preference & Engagement

Preference

Consumers say...

- mobile preferred for “high funnel” activities such as browsing inventory, looking up a price, etc.
- desktop preferred for “low funnel” activities such as comparing vehicles, financial forms, multi-site research using multiple tabs, etc.

However, optimizing your site for all devices reduces the complexity of “low funnel” activities. Studying visitor engagement (what consumers *do*) shows **consumers are as comfortable performing “low funnel” activities on well designed mobile sites** as they are on desktop sites.

Engagement

Inventory Leads

of % of non-bouncing visitors

SRP Photo Engagement

of % of SRP visitors

SRP Facet

SRP Free Text Search

VDP Photo Engagement

of % of VDP visitors

DR Payment

of % of visitors who see DR

DR Trade-in

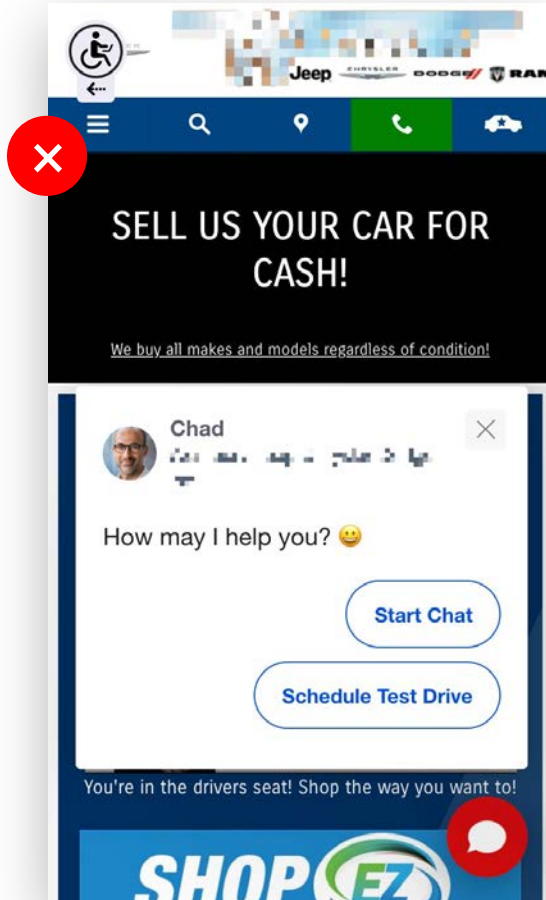
DR Finance

	Mobile	Desktop
Inventory Leads <i>of % of non-bouncing visitors</i>	.8%	.9%
SRP Photo Engagement <i>of % of SRP visitors</i>	32%	10%
SRP Facet	25%	42%
SRP Free Text Search	10%	8%
VDP Photo Engagement <i>of % of VDP visitors</i>	67%	54%
DR Payment <i>of % of visitors who see DR</i>	15%	14%
DR Trade-in	.7%	.8%
DR Finance	.1%	.1%

Source: Ongoing Website Behavior Analysis. November, 2021. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Site-wide

Negative Impact of Clutter



Brand Impact

Pages that feature a handful of calls to action, multiple sections of photos or video (including backgrounds), and many blocks of text within the screen at one time were regarded as overwhelming and cluttered. **Dealerships featuring cluttered pages were perceived as unprofessional and ranked lower in comparison to dealers with more organized, clean pages.**

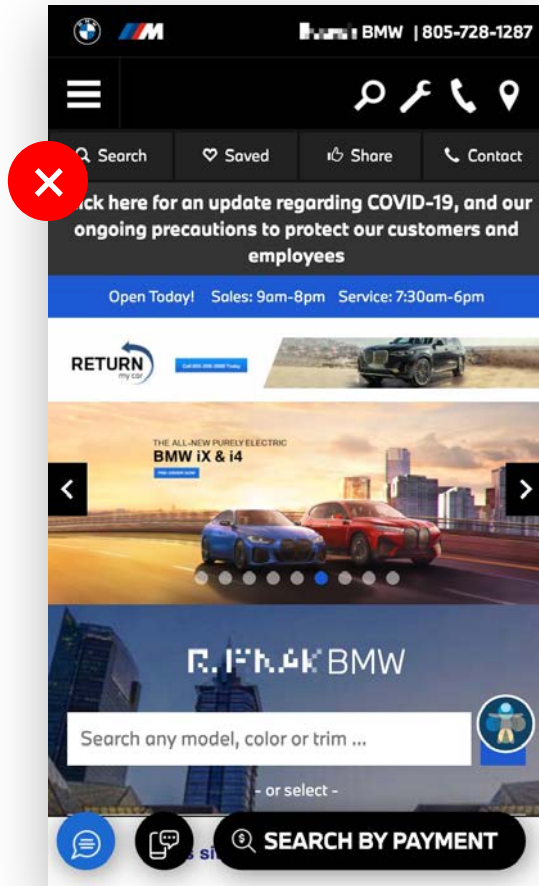
Source: Homepage Usability Studies. Q3-Q4 2018. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Voice of the Customer

"[The site] seems like it's old school and cluttered. Not a clean look at all. That would tell me the dealer is not really in touch with what the customer is looking for as far giving a message that this dealer has their act together."

- Homepage Study Participant

Negative Impact of Clutter



Behavior

On cluttered pages, visitors will often retreat to familiar places, such as the header navigation, to find content rather than attempt to traverse the clutter.

In a case study comparing homepage designs, cluttered homepages that featured a handful of calls to action, multiple sections of photos or video, and many blocks of text within the browser at one time saw *low* engagement with page content, roughly 10% click through, and *high* engagement with header navigation, ~90% click through. For comparison, **less cluttered homepages saw engagement with page content as high as 70% click through.**

Source: Homepage Clickpath Analysis. Q3-Q4 2018. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Recommendation

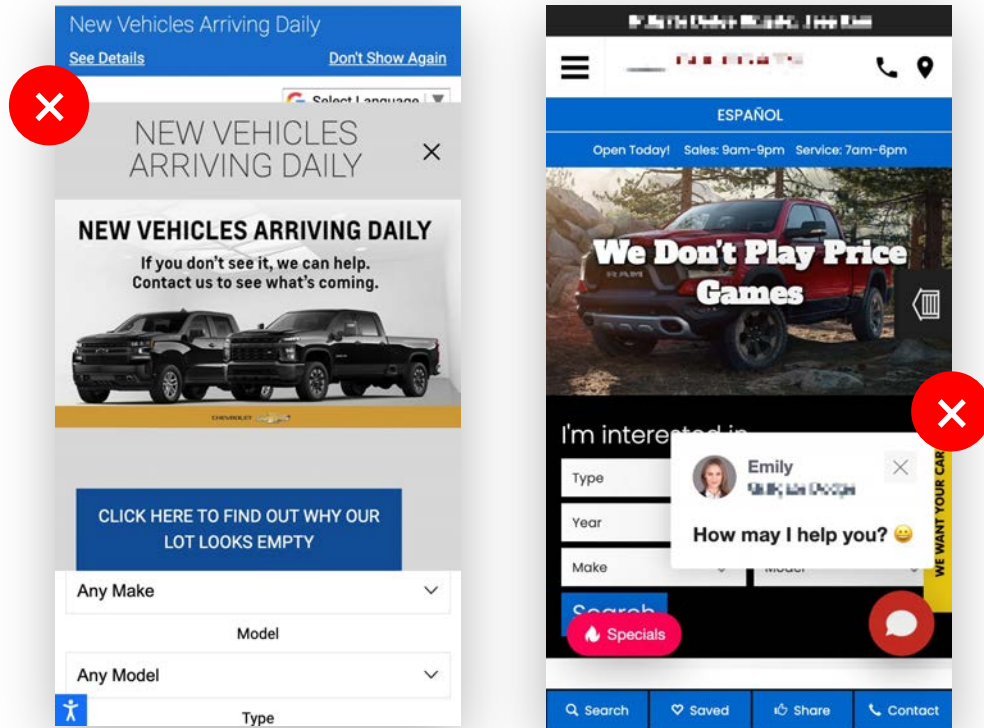
Remove unsolicited popups.

Rationale

In a survey of over 880 dealership website visitors, **16% of negative feedback received regarded unsolicited popups. This was by far the #1 feedback negative feedback item.**

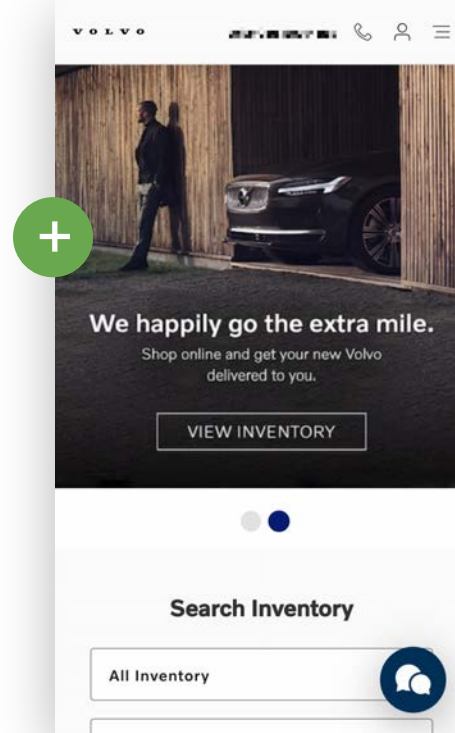
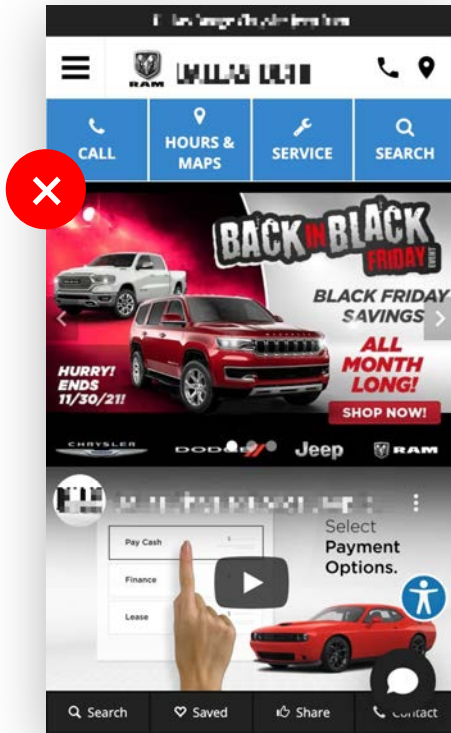
Unsolicited popups are any element of the page that appears without the visitor first interacting with the element. This distracts visitors from what they are currently looking at on the page. Examples include windows that appear over the website, chat messages (“How can I help today?”), and coupons that slide out from the edge of the browser window. It is important to note that visitors appreciate having a way to chat with the dealer, but they want to choose to interact with the chat on their own terms when the time is right. The reaction can be so negative that some visitors surveyed said they would leave the site because of the popups.

Source: Website User Experience Survey, Q2 2021. Dealer.com User Experience Team.



Recommendation

Use consistent, on-brand styles.



Rationale

Inconsistent styling can also lead to clutter. We recommend limiting font selection to no more than 2-3 fonts (this also helps with performance), use no more than 10 different font sizes, use similar sizes for similar content, and choose a small palette of colors appropriate for your brand.

Dealerships with consistent font, color, and spacing choices were perceived as modern and professional.

Source: Homepage Usability Studies. Q3-Q4 2018. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Voice of the Customer

"It was a clean site. It was easy to read everything. Everything was organized and laid out and nicely spaced. It was easy to concentrate and take in the information on the page."

- Homepage Study Participant

Homepage

Common Question

What homepage performs the best?

We have yet to observe a strong correlation between homepage design and common performance metrics such as leads or VDP views.

We have, however, observed a correlation between homepage design and brand perception.

That is, the homepage makes the first impression. It is the most valuable place to establish the dealership brand.

The following recommendations focus on optimizing for brand perception and creating clear paths to desired content for the visitor.

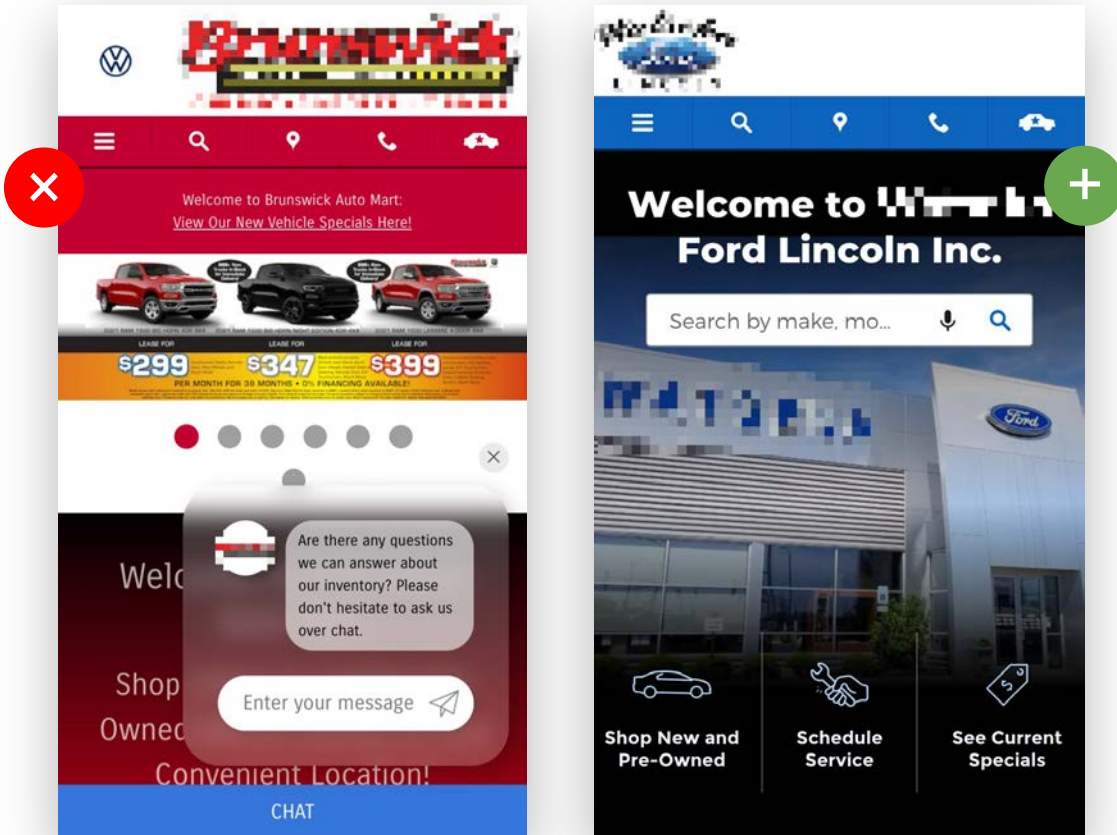
Voice of Customer

“When I’m looking at a website... it really is associated with the legitimacy of what I think the actual organization has to offer. So if your website is bad, what it portrays to me is that you don’t put effort into all sections of your business and therefore don’t care about it fully. If you have a good website, it adds to the legitimacy and the quality of customer care because you care how the customer feels when using the site.”

- Homepage Study Participant

Recommendation

Prioritize value statement, hero photo, and inventory search.



Rationale

The time needed to establish your brand is limited.

Visitors spend <16s on the homepage over their entire website visit.

~90% of clicks are on navigation or inventory/facet search.

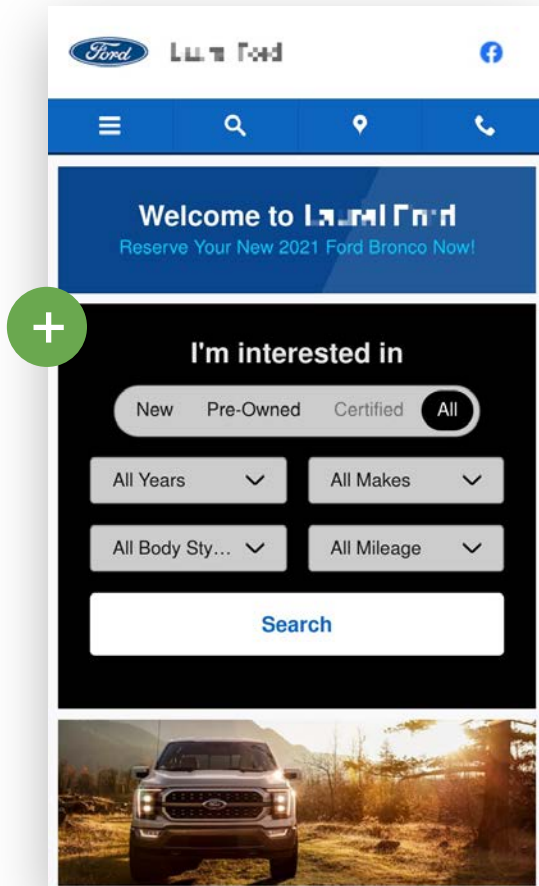
Only 1 out of every 3 visitors scrolls beyond 1000px.

Prioritizing a value statement, dealership hero photo, and inventory search creates a positive brand impression and offers visitors a clear path to their next step.

Source: Homepage Adhoc Analysis. Q3 2018. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Recommendation

Prioritize facet search as primary inventory search.



Behavior

40-60% of inventory visits go through facet search when it is prioritized near top of homepage.

When facet search and free-text search are featured side-by-side, **facet search is preferred 4:1**.

Feature the most used facets:

75% Make

59% Model

35% Year

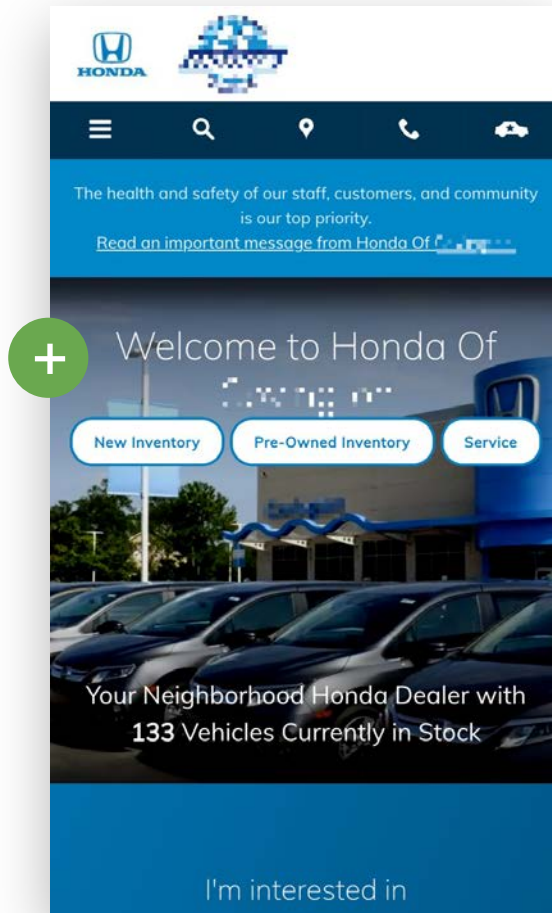
18% Body Style

9% Price

All other facets accommodate for <3% of visitor engagement on homepage.

Source: Homepage Facet Search Audit. November 2018. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Alternatively, prioritize CTAs to popular content.



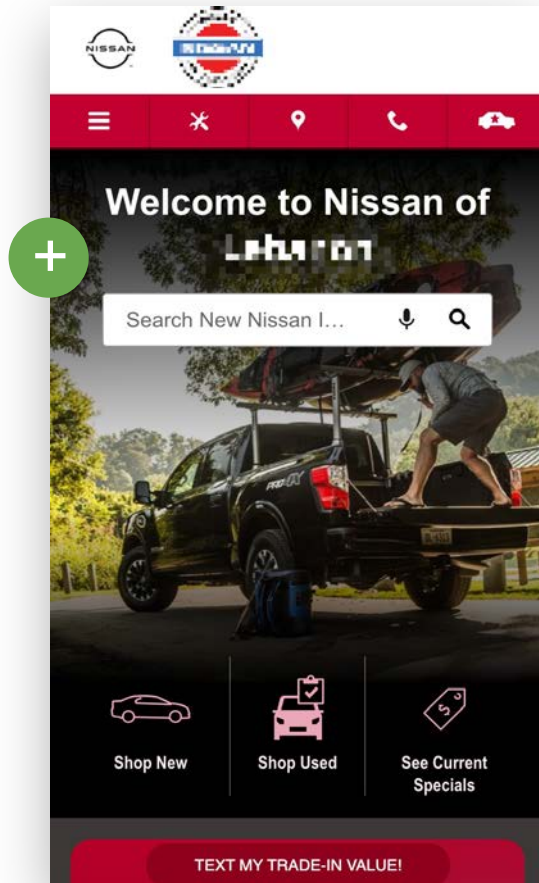
Rationale

An acceptable alternative to facet search is to feature 2-3 calls to action for popular content such as “New Inventory”, “Used Inventory”, “Schedule Service”, “Specials”, etc.

Replacing facet search with CTAs does not allow the visitor to refine inventory before visiting the SRP, but it does provide a way of prioritizing inventory and non-inventory content equally on the homepage which can be desirable depending on the situation (ex. driving visitors to other profit centers).

Prioritizing CTAs saw the highest engagement (~50%) over prioritizing facets. However, visitors remarked they preferred using facets when they had a specific make/model in mind.

Alternatively, prioritize free text with CTAs to popular content.



Rationale

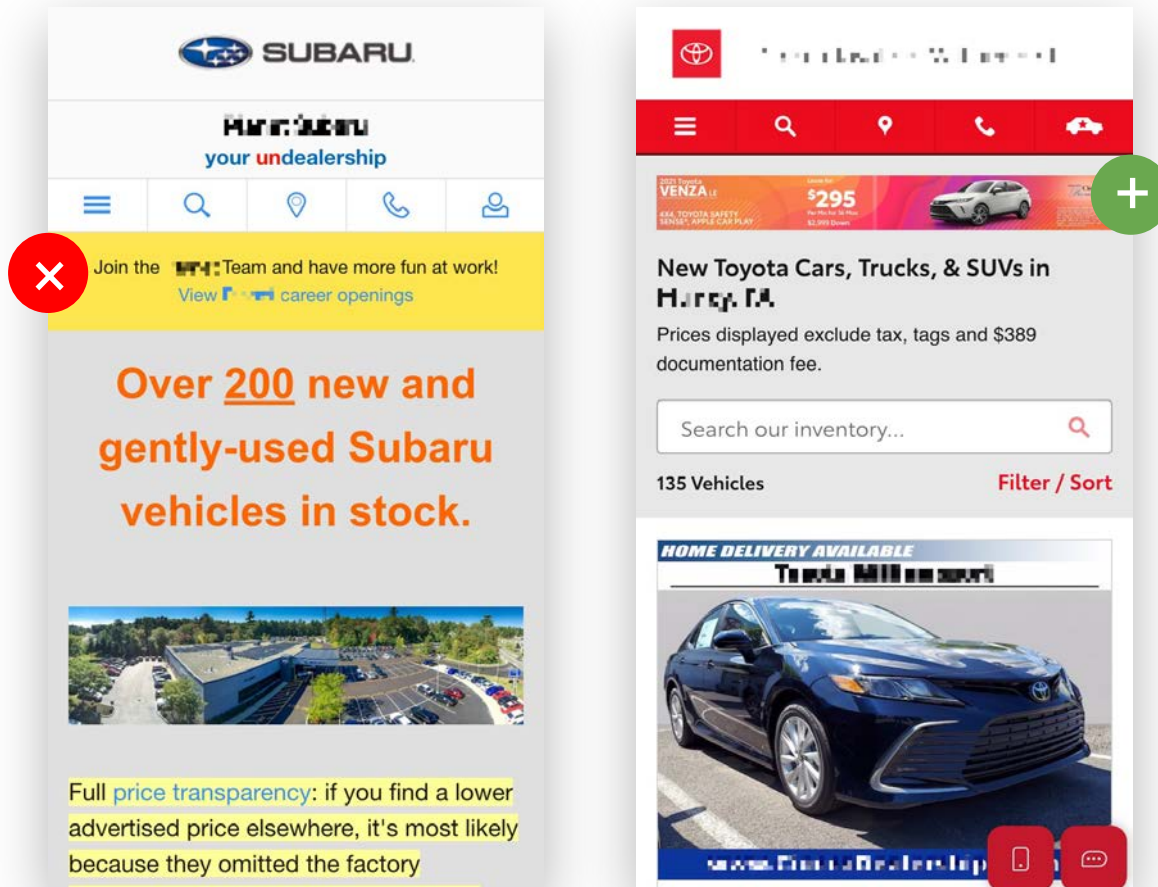
Though facet search and direct CTAs are more frequently engaged paths to inventory, free text search provides a path to inventory in a more compact design element. This helps to create a “cleaner” homepage style and allows the photo and value statement to be more prominent. It also benefits smaller devices where facet search can take up significant vertical space.

When featuring free text search we recommend also including CTAs to popular content. This offers a “best of both worlds” approach: visitors preferring flexibility can use free text search while visitors preferring clear, direct paths can use the CTAs.

Search Results Page

Recommendation

Reduce content above listings as much as possible.



Rationale

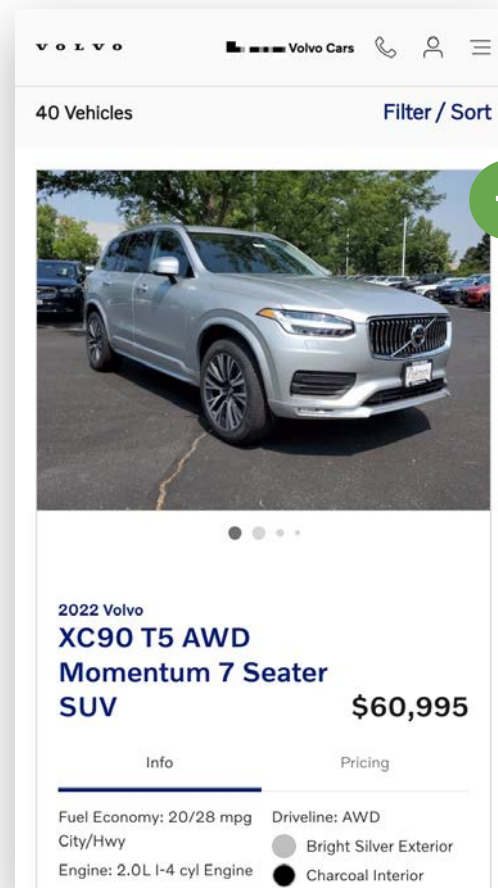
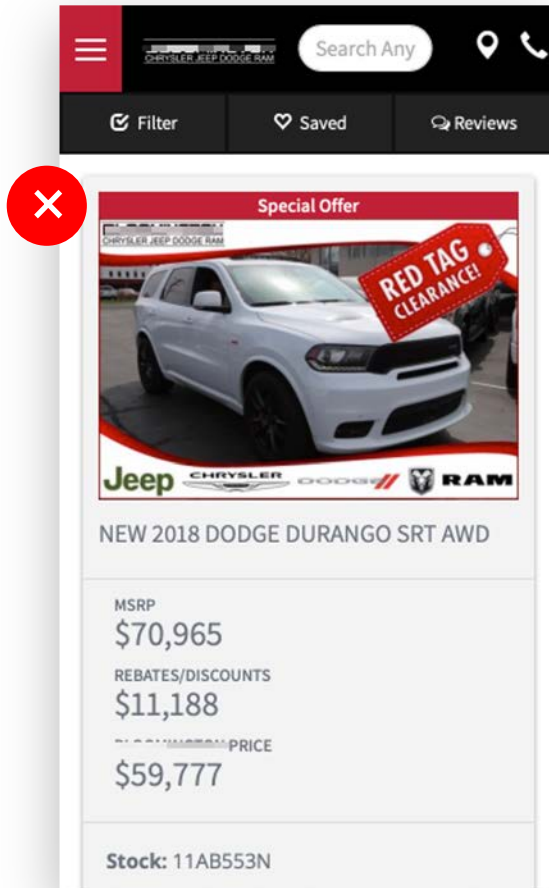
When entering a search results page, visitors expect to see facets and listings featured prominently. Consider that most visitors are viewing on a mobile device and, of desktop visitors, half are viewing on a browser size <800px height. Adding content above the facets and listings can push the primary content out of view, creating confusion. Use discretion when adding content above the listings, paying close attention to the vertical height.

We recommend at most just one banner and no SEO text content above the listings.

Source: Viewport Analysis. November 2019. Dealer.com User Experience Team.
Source: SRP Usability Studies. Q3-Q4 2019. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Recommendation

Do not embed branding in vehicle photos.



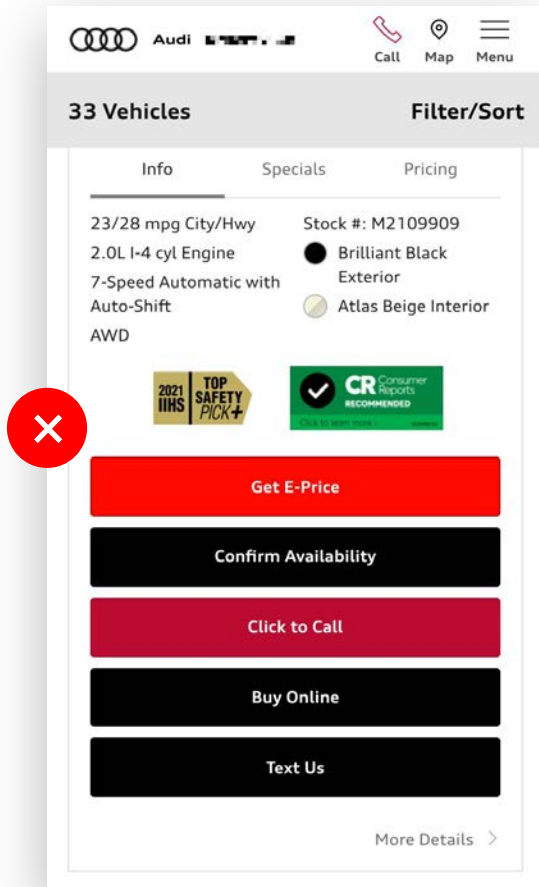
Rationale

There are several disadvantages to embedded or overlay content in vehicle photos:

- On mobile devices, text embedded in the photo can be hard to read.
- When multiple vehicles containing overlays are side-by-side on a page, as in vehicle recommendations on the homepage or the SRP, the page can become harder to scan and creates a perception of clutter.
- Overlays featuring the dealership name and contact information are redundant with information found in the website header and on the page.

Source: VDP Usability Studies. Q3-Q4 2018. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Minimize number of button calls to action in listing.



Rationale

There are three disadvantages to vehicle listings CTAs that are styled as buttons:

- They add clutter (especially on mobile devices) thereby increasing the difficulty of making high-level vehicle comparisons.
- They typically ask for contact information which reinforces the negative stereotype of aggressive sales tactics dealers use.
- They link to other pages, taking the visitor further away from a VDP where detailed information is disclosed, commitment to buy increases, and contacting the dealer is described as a logical next step.

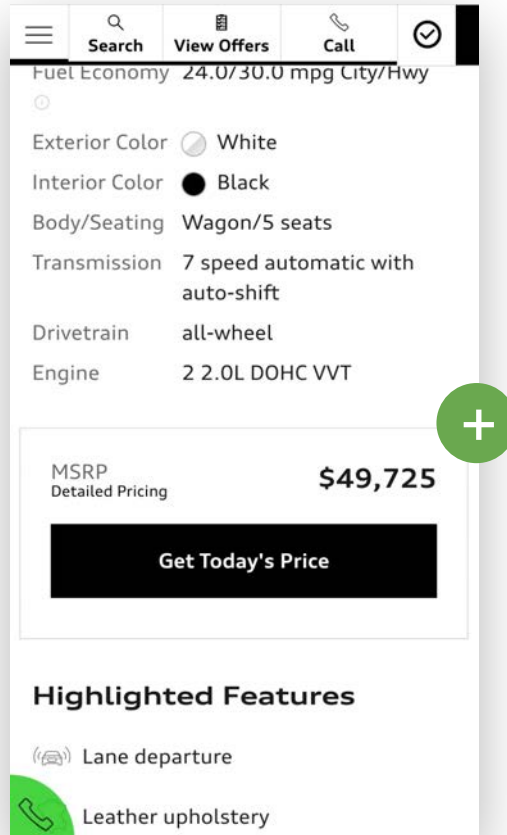
We recommend at most two CTA buttons in the listing.

See VDP playbook for additional CTA recommendations.

Vehicle Details Page

Recommendation

Feature the final price and primary CTA below vehicle specifications.



Rationale

Include just the final price (price minus discounts) and one call to action (CTA) for the primary next step below the standard vehicle specifications (fuel efficiency, engine, transmission, etc).

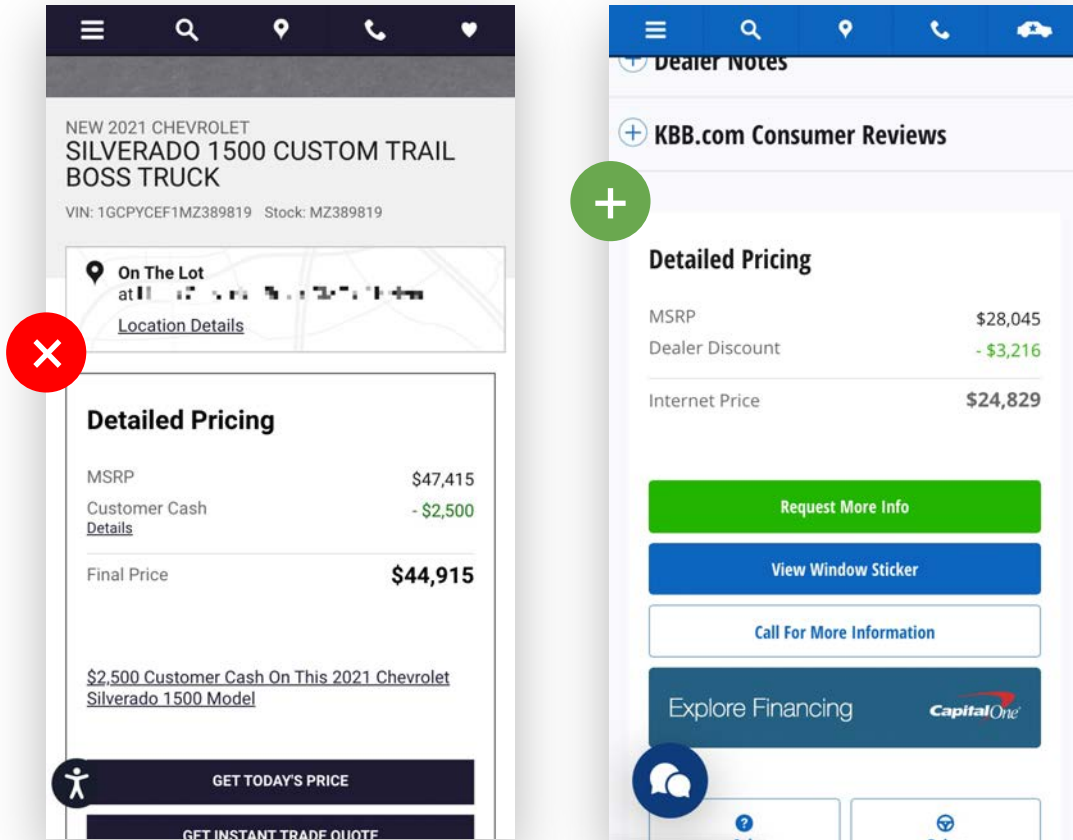
A **20% lift in CTA click through and directional positive impact to leads** were observed when this information was placed directly below vehicle specifications. This outperformed placements higher and lower on the page.

Detailed pricing, payment information, specials, and all calls to action should be included on the page after detailed vehicle specifications, dealer notes, and KBB reviews.

Source: Pricing Summary A/B Test. May 2019. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Recommendation

Display detailed pricing and next steps after vehicle information.



Rationale

Shoppers expect to see detailed pricing, payment information, specials, and contact calls to action after they've determined the vehicle matches their criteria.

When just the final price and one primary CTA were included higher on the page and detailed pricing was included after all vehicle information we observed a **20% lift in CTA click through and directional positive impact to leads.**

Source: Pricing Summary A/B Test. May 2019. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

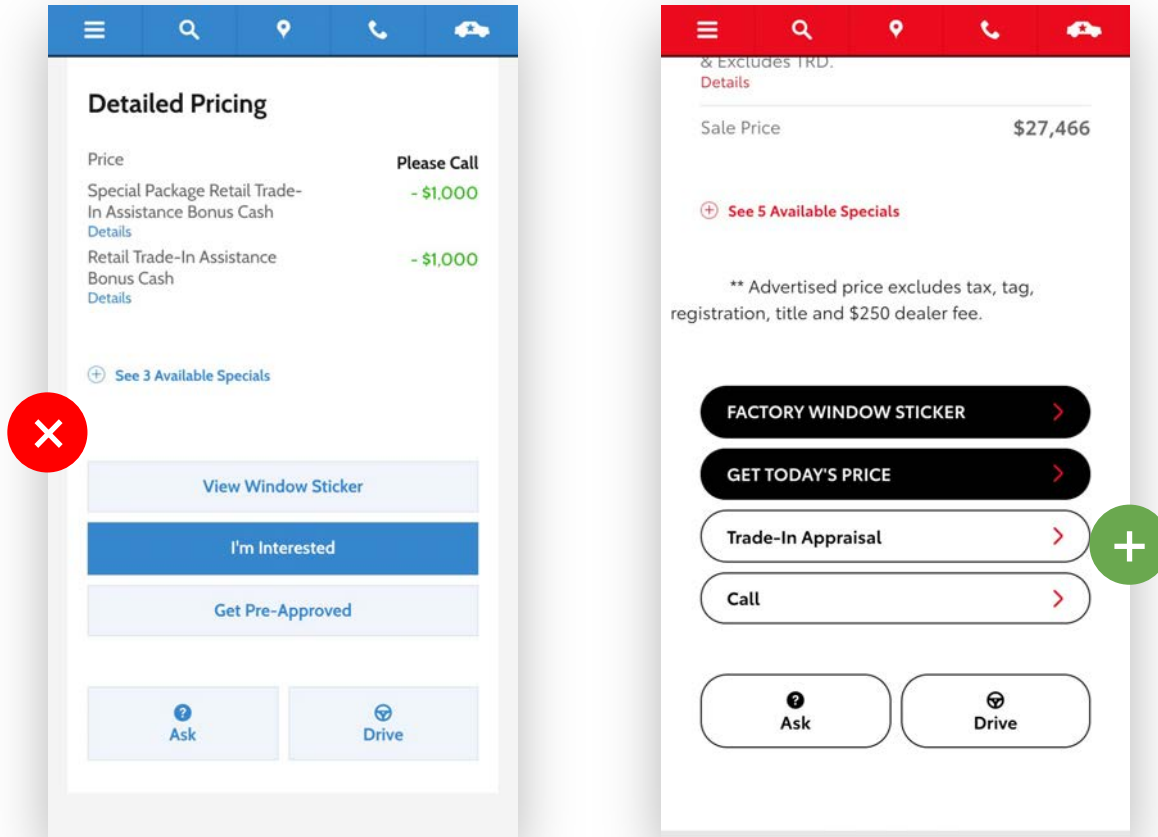
Voice of the Customer

"I would rather know about the car before I try to buy the car."

- Mobile Study Participant

Recommendation

Include a path to call or phone number with other next steps.



Rationale

A common next step for shoppers is to make a phone call or stop by the dealership in person.

3.5:1 average ratio of phone leads to website form leads.

Looking for more recommendations?

Full UX Playbooks are available for..

Site-wide

Homepage

Search Results Page

Vehicle Details Page

Thank You

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