



Madison Direct Marketing, Ltd.
10 Glenville Street
Greenwich, CT 06831-3680
www.madisondm.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: MICHELLE BOCCUZZI, 203-532-9000 X281

Today's Growing Families Keep Buying Larger Family Cars

*40% of Parents Buy Specifically Because Child is Born
- Minivans and SUVs Lead in Popularity -*

GREENWICH, CT., May 28, 2003 - As families grow, so does the need for a new family car. According to a recent survey conducted by Madison Direct Marketing, a leading authority on life stage marketing, 40% of parents today buy new cars specifically because of the birth of a child.

The reason is simple - after children are born, parents realize they need more out of what they drive - more space, more safety and more child friendly-features.

These needs appear to be fueling SUVs, minivans, station and sport wagons' growing popularity among American families. Among young parents polled, interest in these types of automobiles appears to double with the presence of children.

And it's not just with first-time parents that needs are changing. Second-time parents also indicated increased needs for space, safety and child-friendly features.

"The presence of children changes household needs across all product categories," says Michelle Boccuzzi, Marketing Manager and author of Madison's recent Auto Insight Report. "These households have acute needs, and parents are taking advantage of innovative features and vehicles that provide added flexibility, comfort and convenience."

Parents also appear to be focused on saving money. The Madison survey found 65% of respondents ranked price as the key factor in their purchase decision. And although safety ranked high on the priority list with 43%, it fell behind other economic considerations such as mile per gallon with 48% and reliability with 44%.

When taking everything from cost to safety into consideration, parents said they are buying American brands to accommodate their needs. In the survey, Chevrolet was most popular with 47% of parents considering it for their next family car. Ford came in second with 38% and Dodge was a close third with 36%.

"The birth of a child is a transformative moment that provides a significant opportunity for auto marketers," says Boccuzzi. "All brands, particularly American ones, should focus on reaching and retaining parents as their needs change."

Results are based on an April 2003 survey of 411 households.

For information, or to speak to a Madison executive as a source on other life stage related topics, contact: Michelle Boccuzzi, Marketing Manager, Madison Direct Marketing, Ltd. tel: 203-532-9000 ext. 281 or email: mboccuzzi@madisondm.com.

ABOUT MADISON DIRECT MARKETING

Madison Direct Marketing, Ltd., a leader in life stage marketing strategy and execution for nearly 20 years, helps America's top marketers understand and reach consumers at key life stage moments when most brand, product and category decisions are made. Utilizing proprietary databases and methods, Madison's unique direct mail, database, and online solutions enable marketers to reach and maintain targeted relationships with expectant parents, new parents, young families, Hispanic families, teens, and new homeowners. Madison also offers clients state of the art lettershop and list management services. Madison Direct Marketing is headquartered in Greenwich, Connecticut.

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