UX Playbook
Vehicle Details Page (VDP)
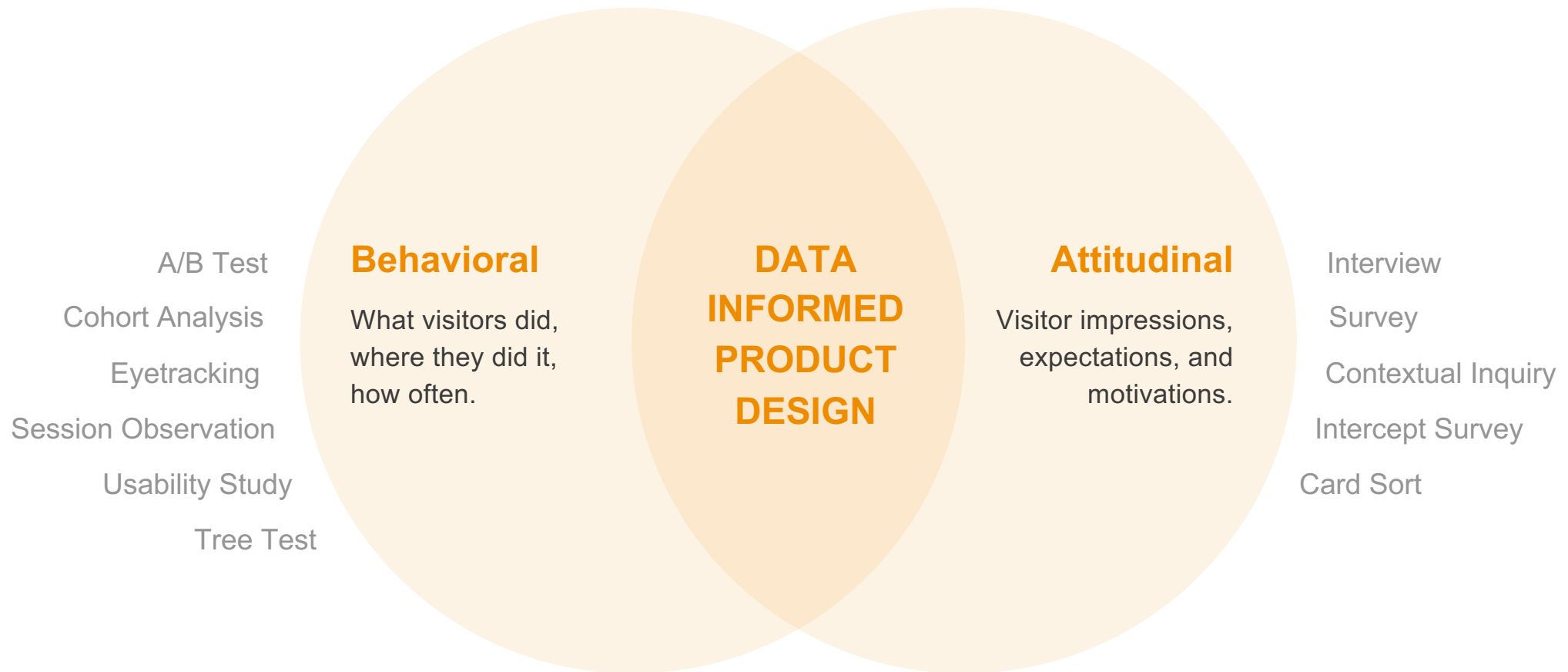
Cox Automotive

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?

A/B Test

Cohort Analysis

Eyetracking

Session Observation

Usability Study

Tree Test

Behavioral

What visitors did, where they did it, how often.

DATA INFORMED PRODUCT DESIGN

Attitudinal

Visitor impressions, expectations, and motivations.

Interview

Survey
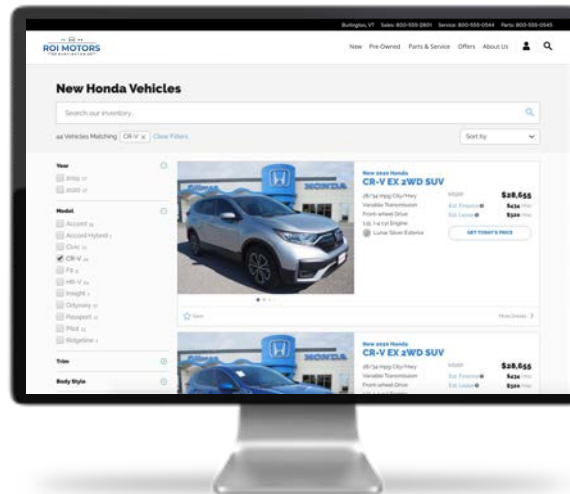
Contextual Inquiry

Intercept Survey

Card Sort

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.
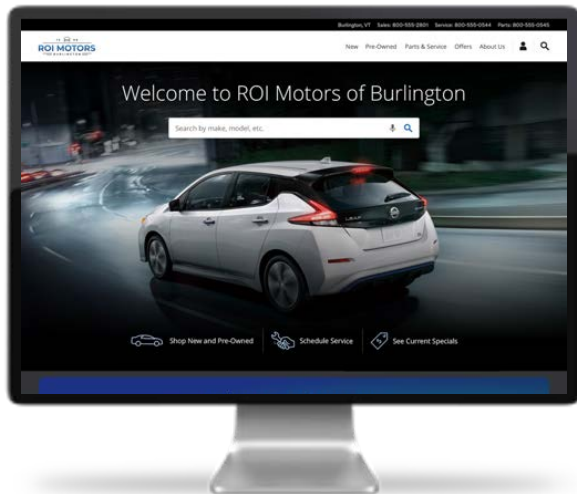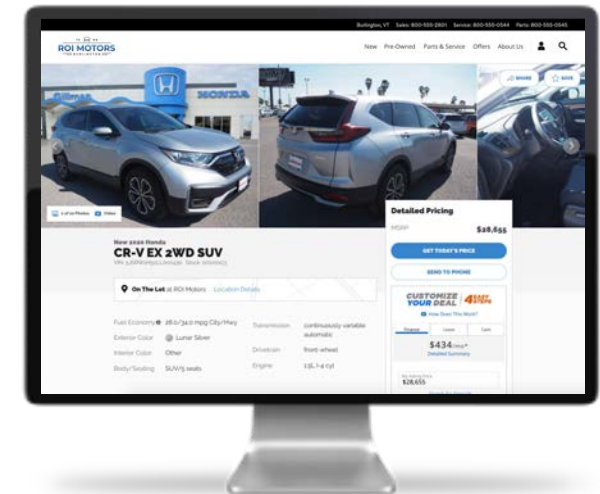

Homepage
Brand impressions and starting point for discovery.

Search Results Page
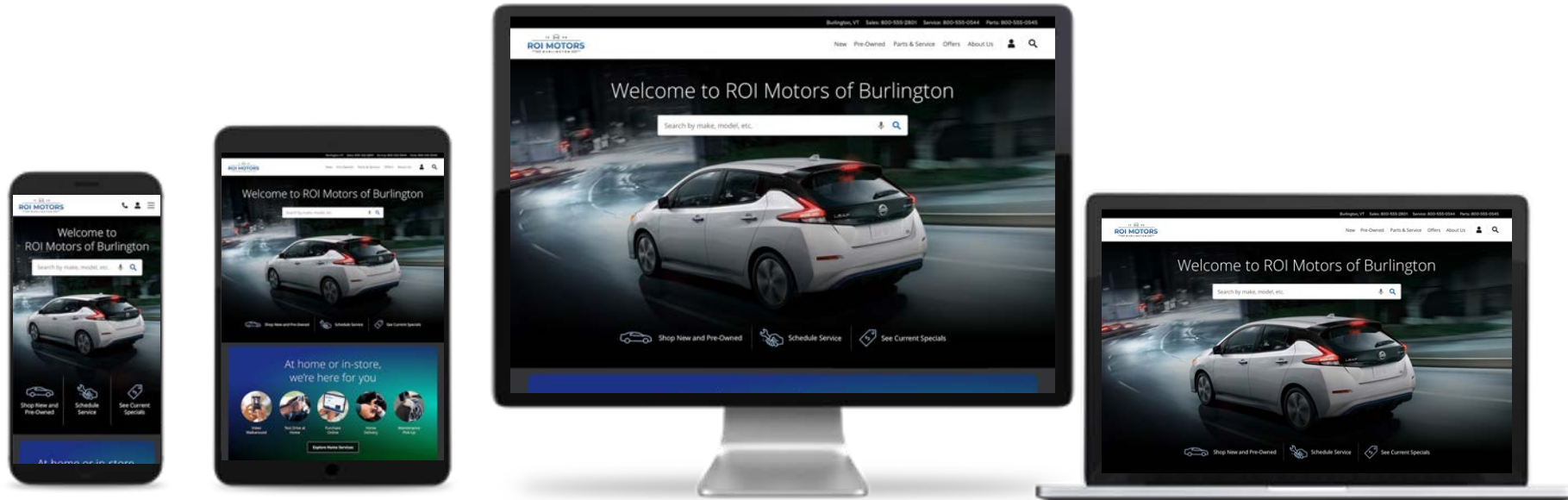High level vehicle comparisons.

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

Vehicle Details Page

VDP by the numbers...

27M

VDP visits per month

47M

total (including bounces) VDP visits per month

45%

of visitors see a VDP

66%

see a homepage

75%

see a SRP

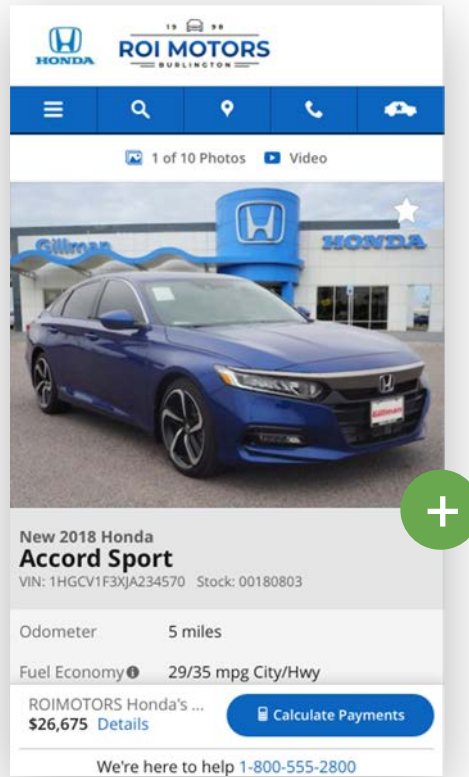**45%**

of visitors reach VDP from SRP

2.5

average number of VDPs seen per visit

Prioritize high-level vehicle information (photo, title, common specifications).

Rationale

This reiterates information found on previous page, confirming the visitor is viewing the correct vehicle.

It is common for visitors to engage the photos as a primary source of vehicle information.
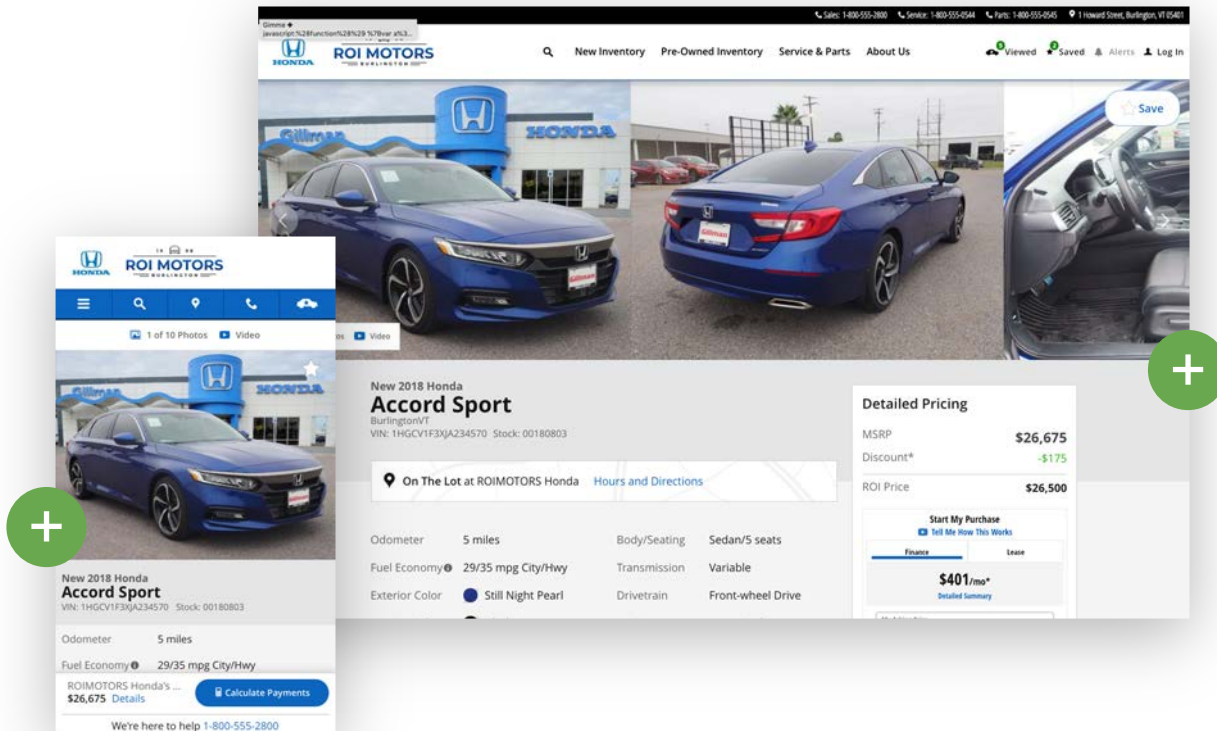
~60% of sessions interact with VDP photos.

6+ photos are seen on average when visitors interact with the VDP photo gallery.

Source: VDP Engagement Analysis. April 2018. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Prioritize high-level vehicle information (photo, title, specifications) on every device and browser size.

Rationale

Visitors view the VDP on devices of many shapes and sizes.

49% of visitors view on a mobile device

24% of visitors view <1300px desktop width

19% of visitors view >1300px desktop width

31% of desktop visitors view <660px height

Note: Breakdown based on actual browser viewport, not device resolution.

Source: Viewport Analysis. Q3 2017. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Use actual vehicle photos, not stock photos.

Rationale

Visitors visiting websites with >65% of inventory using actual photos have ~5% longer visit time, see ~20% more VDPs, see ~5% more SRPs compared to websites with stock photos.

New vehicles with actual photos were **30% more likely to receive at least one lead** in a seven day period. **Used and certified vehicles** were **40% more likely**. This suggests that used/certified vehicles are impacted more greatly by stock photography than new vehicles.

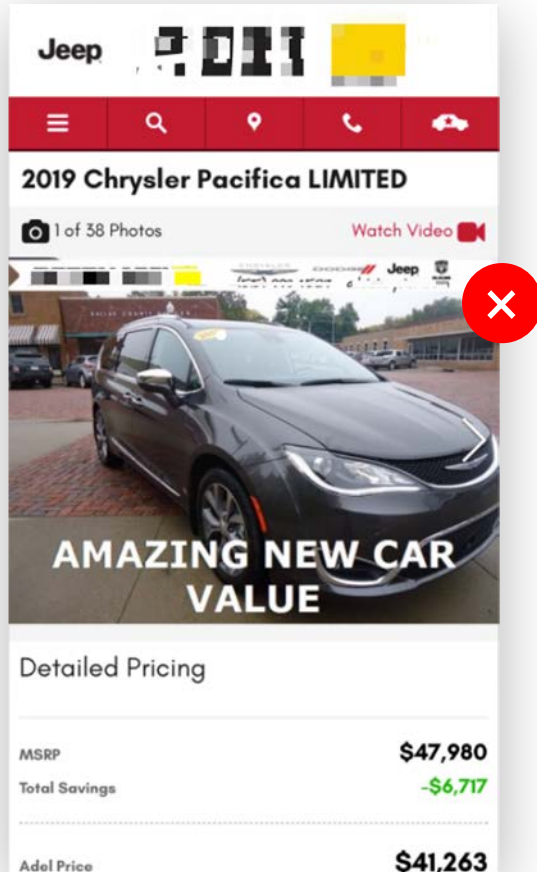Source: Stock vs. Actual Photo Comparison. June 2019. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Voice of the Customer

"So these [stock] pictures I always find really confusing, I don't feel like I need to see what the car should look like. I want to see what the car actually looks like."

- Mobile Study Participant

# 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 add to the 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 2017. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Use high resolution photos to provide detail.
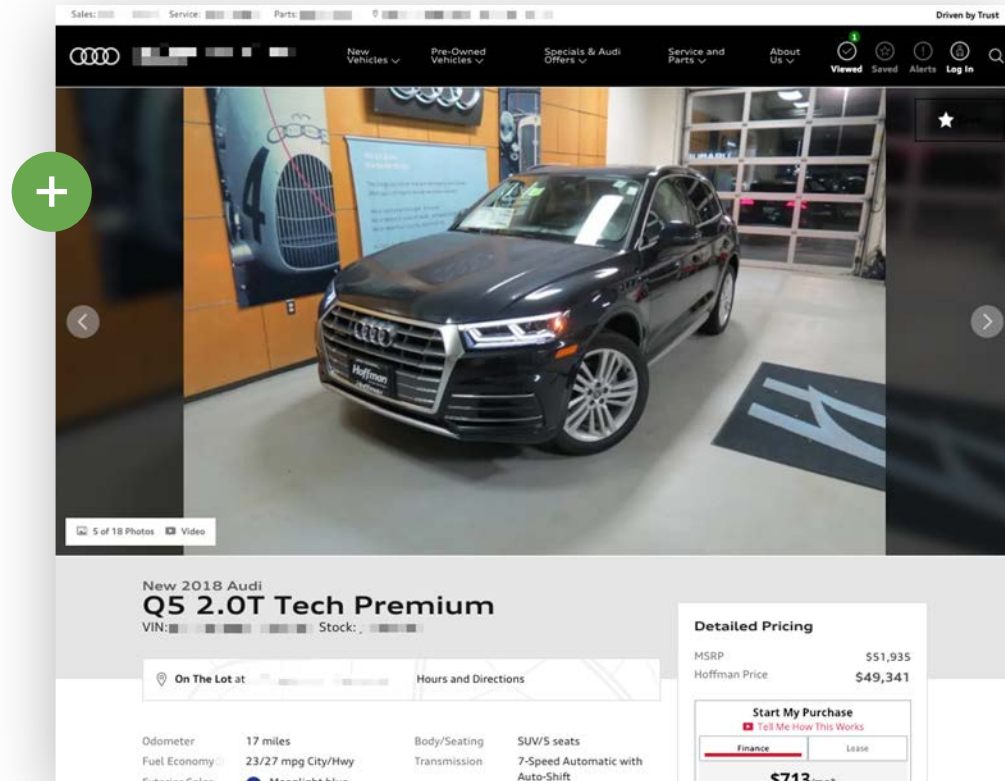
Rationale

4 out of 5 shoppers preferred the high resolution photos and full screen gallery because it allowed them to view the vehicle in more detail.

Source: VDP Usability Studies. Q3-Q4 2017. Dealer.com User Experience Team.
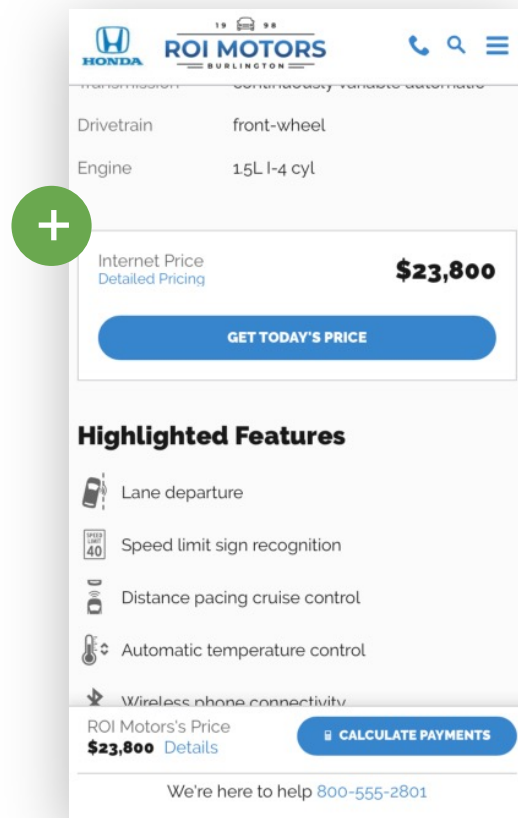
Voice of the Customer

"I like the big picture! … Smaller pictures are fine... but it's [high resolution vehicle photos] kind of nice since we have the technology."

- VDP Study Participant

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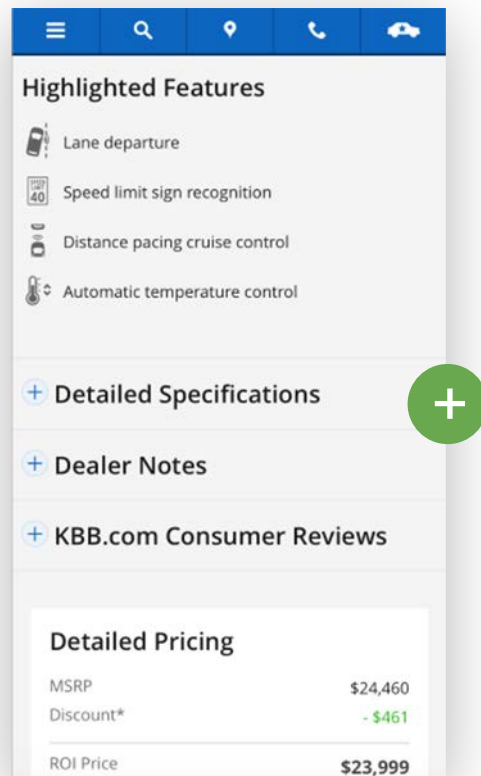
A **20% lift in CTA click through and directional positive impact to leads** were observed when this information was placed directly below vehicle specifications. This outperformed placements higher and lower on the page.

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.

On mobile devices, progressively disclose detailed vehicle information.

Highlighted Features
- Lane departure
- Speed limit sign recognition
- Distance pacing cruise control
- Automatic temperature control

+ Detailed Specifications

+ Dealer Notes

+ KBB.com Consumer Reviews

Detailed Pricing

MSRP	$24,460
Discount*	- $461
ROI Price	$23,999

Rationale

Detailed information such as Packages & Options, Detailed Specifications, Dealer Notes, and Reviews should be hidden by default on mobile devices. This keeps general vehicle information visible, simplifying scanning and scrolling.

Source: VDP Usability Studies. Q3-Q4 2017. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Voice of the Customer

"I like having the option to expand. It gives me the option to scroll down quickly."

- VDP Study Participant

On desktop, expose detailed vehicle information.

Rationale

Detailed information such as Packages & Options, Detailed Specifications, Dealer Notes, and Reviews should be exposed by default on large devices such as tablets, laptops, and desktops. Exposing detailed vehicle information simplifies access and improves discoverability.

Source: VDP Usability Studies. Q3-Q4 2017. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

# Progressively disclose detailed specifications.

Rationale

Exposing all detailed specifications can be overwhelming and make finding specific vehicle information difficult. Instead, progressively disclose categories of specifications.

Source: VDP Usability Studies. Q3-Q4 2017. Dealer.com User Experience Team.
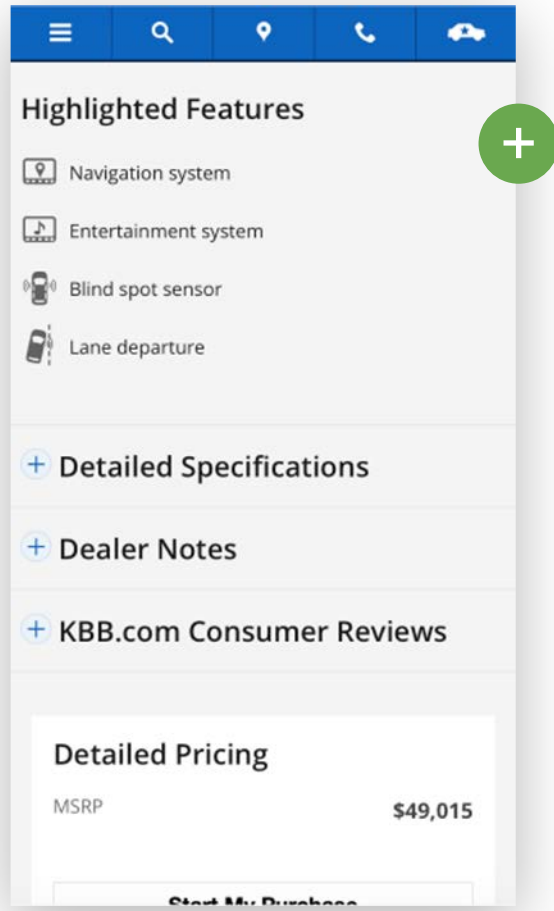
Voice of the Customer

"This area is nice… if I want to know more about it I can click on it and find out. But it's not all thrown at me, it's not like additional text to scroll and read through. I like that you can choose to read it if you want."

- VDP Study Participant
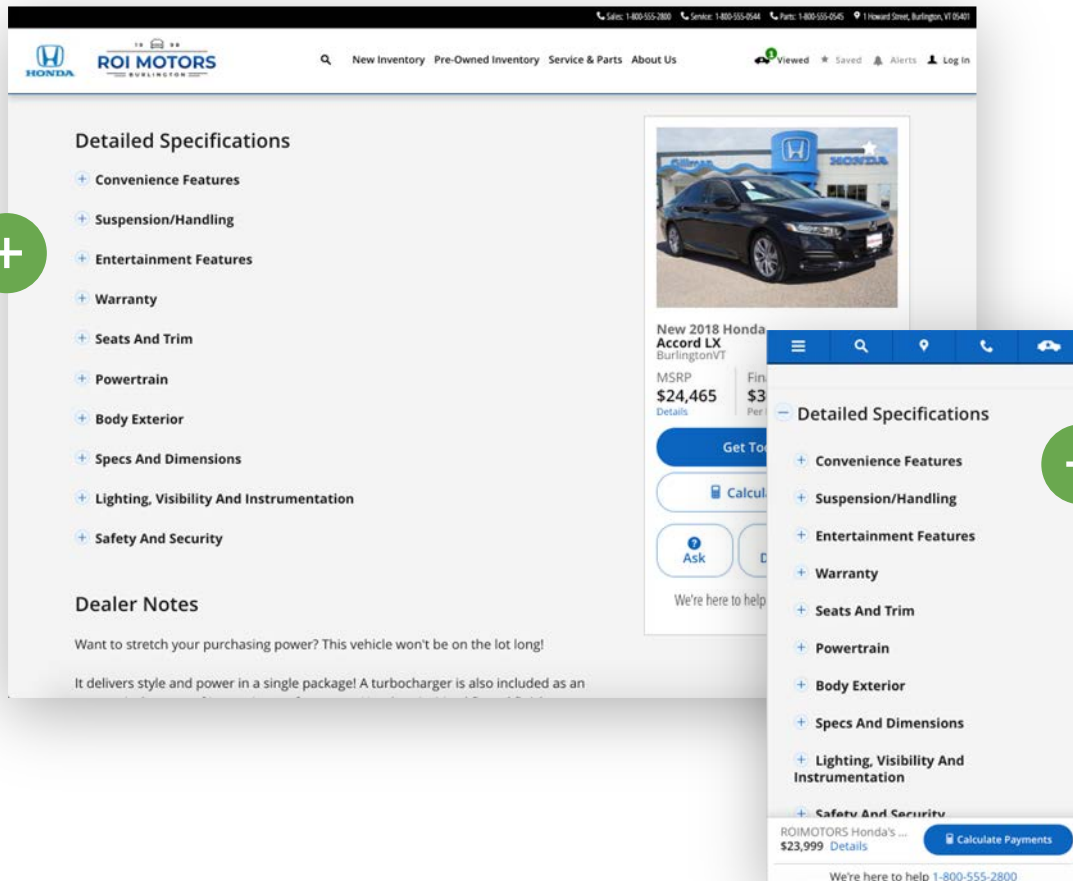
Highlight unique, non-standard features.

Rationale

Prioritizing unique features prevents visitors from having to search detailed specifications.

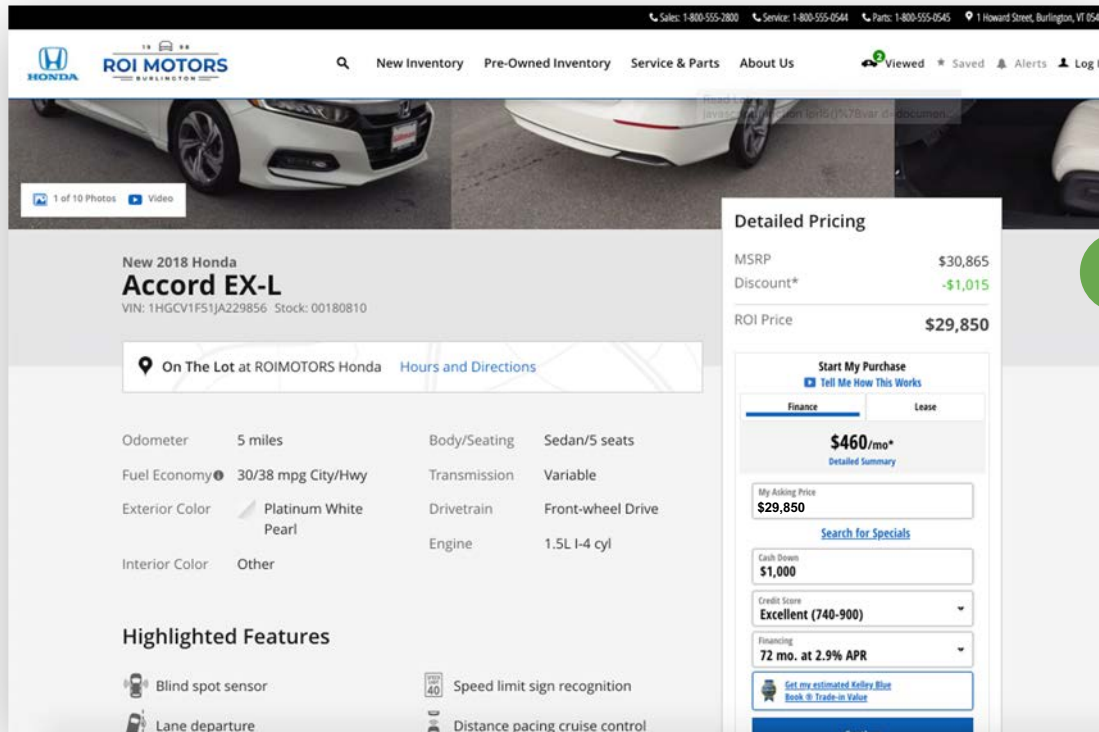Source: VDP Usability Studies. Q3-Q4 2017. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Voice of the Customer

"Because when I am shopping, I'm sort of looking at well ... does this car have a sunroof? Because I really want a sunroof…"

- Mobile Study Participant

Display detailed pricing including specials, incentives, and payments.
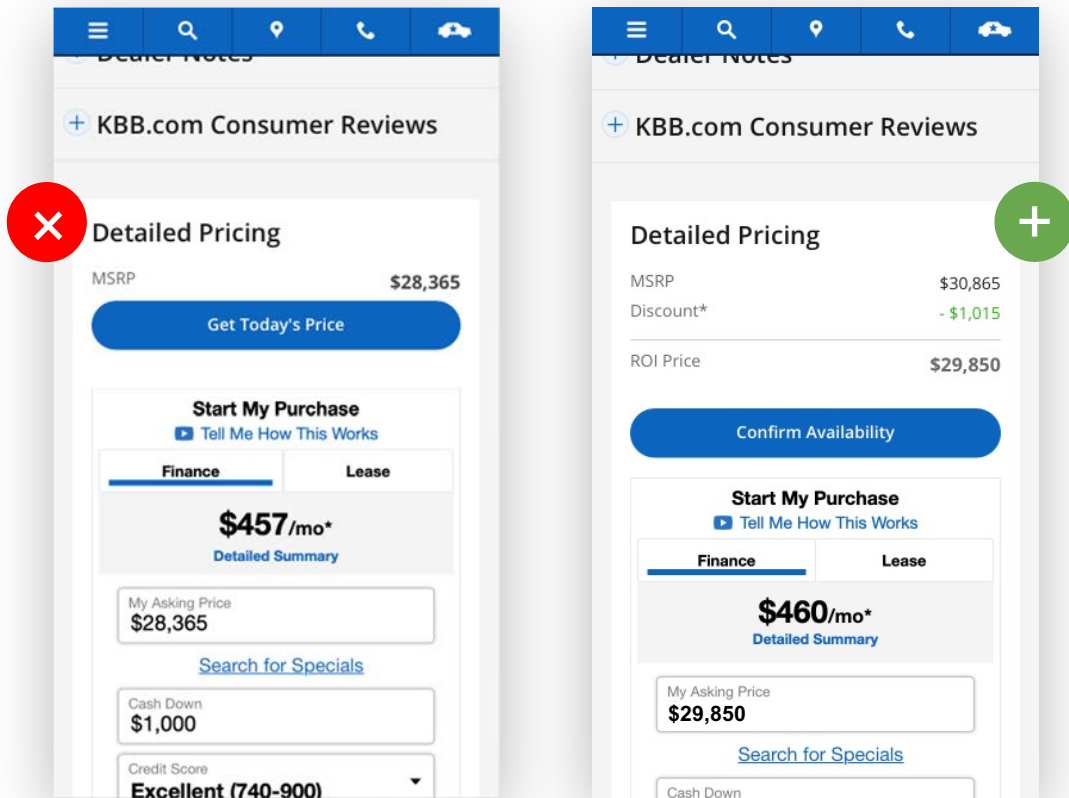

Rationale

On the SRP, detailed pricing can be overwhelming to some shoppers.

On the VDP, granular pricing breakdowns are expected and appreciated. This pricing transparency helps assure apprehensive shoppers and can pique the interest of cost focused shoppers.

Source: Shopping Experience Studies. 2012-2021. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Be transparent with pricing.

Rationale

When a visitor sees a button promising an updated price or discount they imagine pressing that button will get them some special lower figure. Instead they are shown a contact form. This bait and switch tactic dilutes trust and reinforces the visitor's preexisting negative stereotype of car dealers. If you insist on collecting contact information before showing the final price, consider a feature like Instant ePrice that immediately shows discounted pricing for the remainder of the visit after information is submitted.

Source: Shopping Experience Studies. 2012-2021. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Display detailed pricing and next steps after vehicle information.
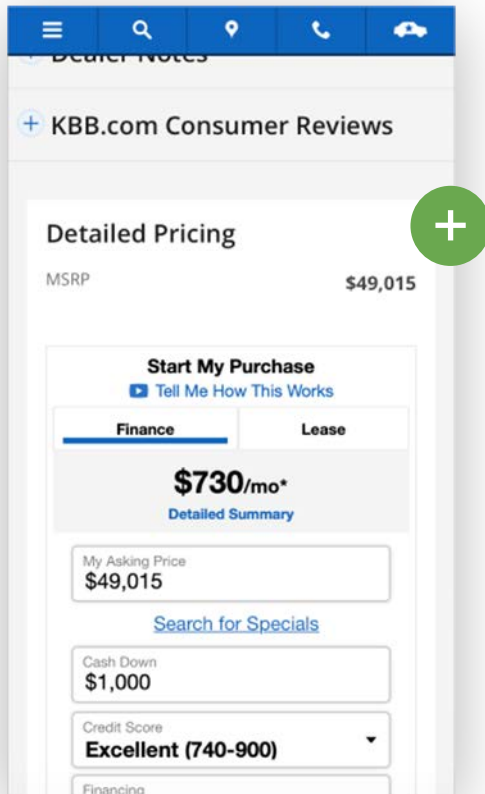
Rationale

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

Provide contextual, trusted third party information (reviews, vehicle history, pricing comparisons).

Voice of the Customer

"Having Kelley Blue Book I liked. It gives it some credibility. I would normally do my own independent research… but it's right there [on this page]."

- VDP Study Participant
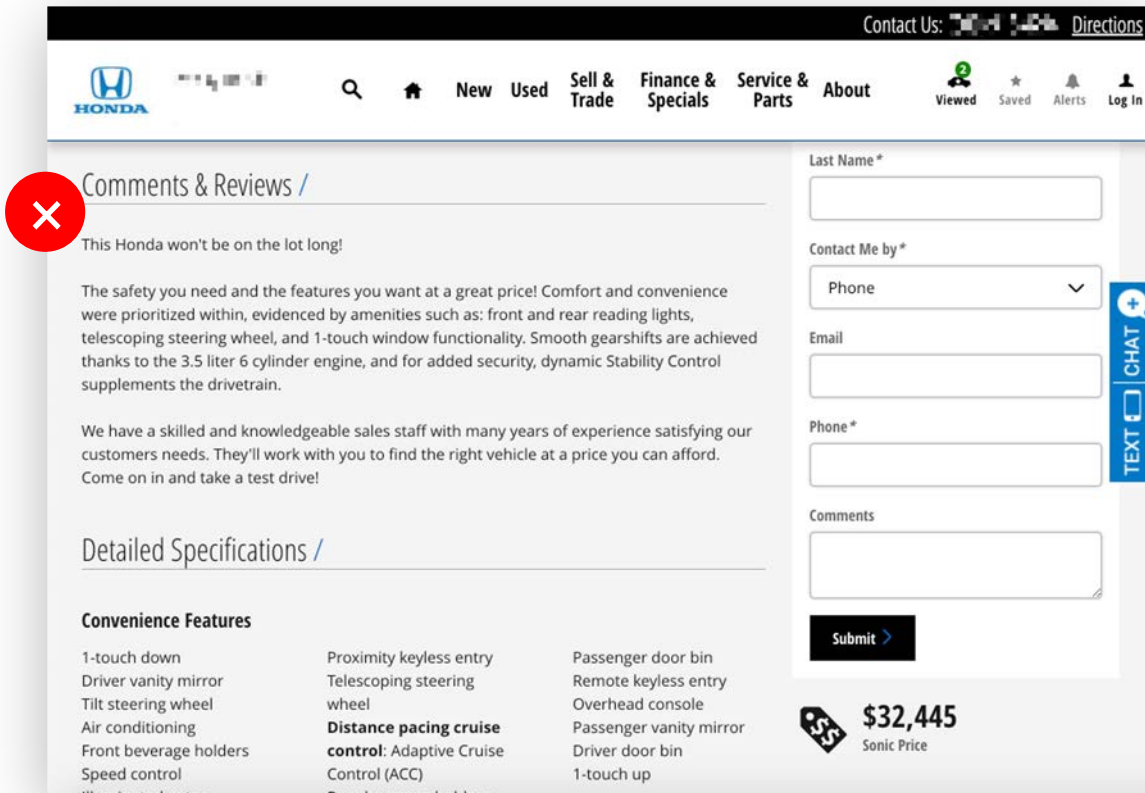
66%
of car buyers use KBB.com

Source: 2016 Car Buyer Journey Study, IHS Automotive

Kelley Blue Book is the Most Searched Auto Brand on Google.

Source: Google Insights Annual Search Terms for Vehicle Shopping

# Hide non-vehicle specific dealer notes/comments.

Rationale

Dealer entered content which includes non-specific vehicle information or vehicle information that is featured elsewhere on the VDP, such as specifications or highlighted features, is viewed as redundant and unnecessary by shoppers.

Source: VDP Usability Studies. Q3-Q4 2017. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Prioritize next steps both visually and hierarchically.
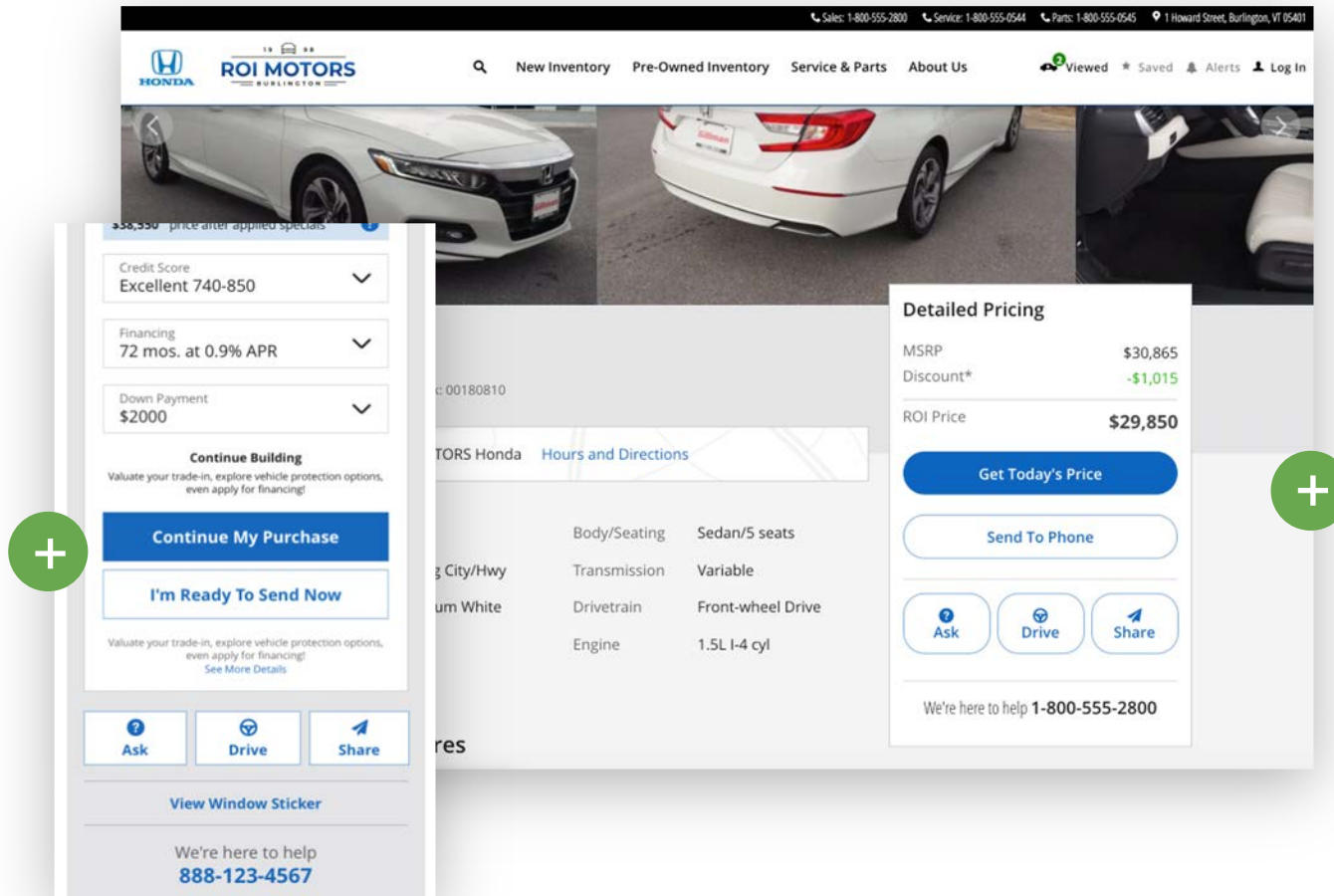
Rationale

Clear next steps provide value beyond improved lead rates, they can also help create a positive brand perception.
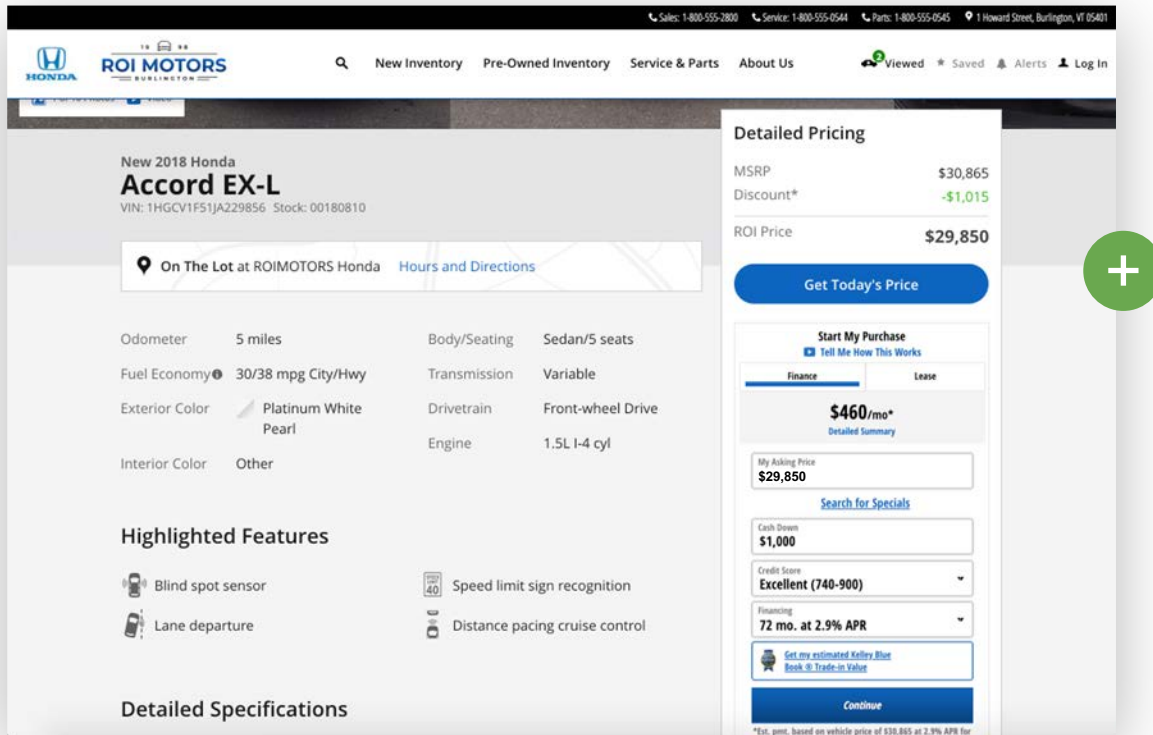
To create clear calls to action (CTA):

- Place calls to action in context to content. For example, place pricing CTAs next to the final price.

- Order CTAs on the page by engagement.

- Style CTAs by engagement (see following recommendations).

# Use a high contrast button style to indicate the one or two primary next steps.

Rationale

Higher performing lead generating next steps like **Price Request and Check Availability (5-8% user click through rate) should use high contrast buttons**.

More than two high contrast buttons can be overwhelming and cause shoppers to ignore important calls to action.

Source: CTA Analysis. July 2018. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

Optimize the primary next step.
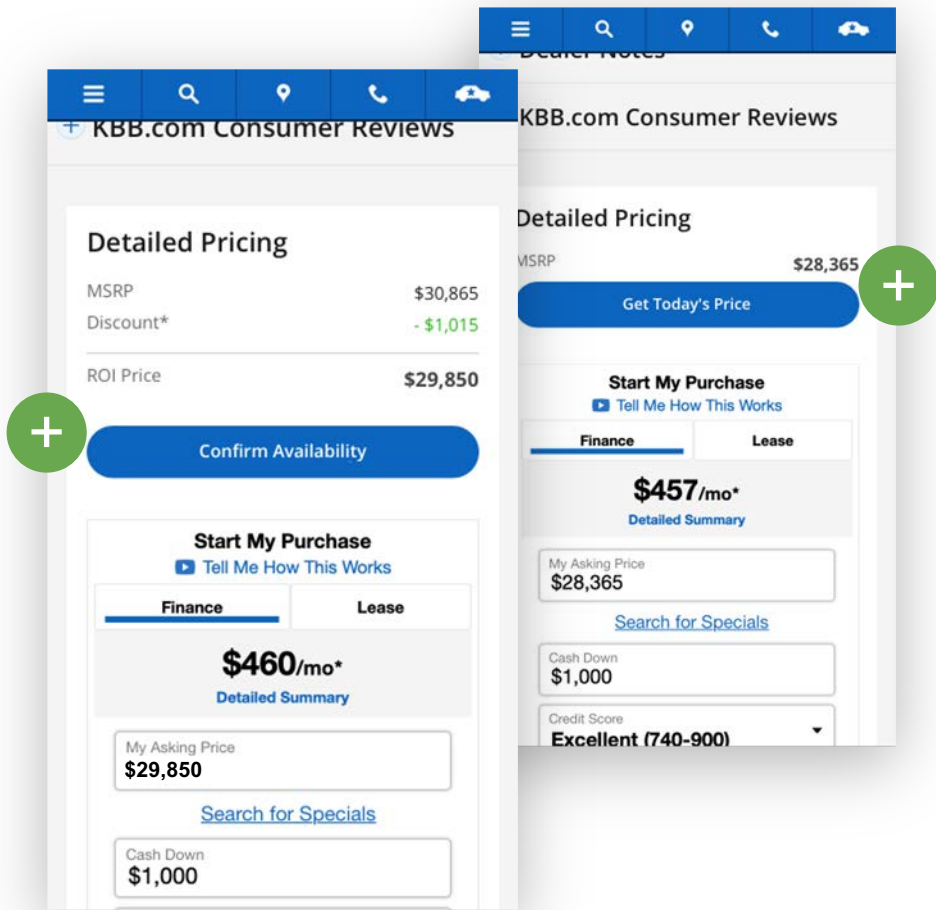
Rationale

Several A/B tests were conducted to understand the performance of the primary vehicle call to action.

For dealers featuring transparent pricing, "Confirm Availability" received the highest click through rate (4%).

For dealers not featuring transparent pricing, "Get Today's Price" received the highest click through rate (8.2%).

Source: CTA Analysis. July 2018. Dealer.com User Experience Team.

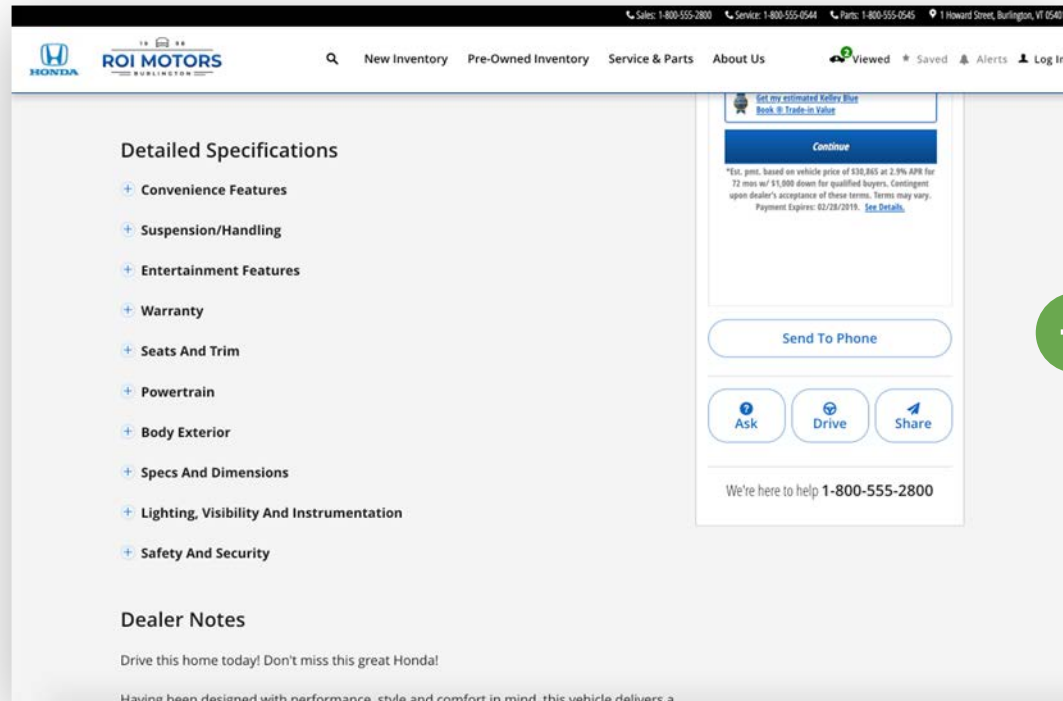| CTA Copy	Click Rate % of non-bouncing VDP visits
Get Today's Price	8.2%
Get Our Price	7.3%
Get Your Price	6.0%
Get ePrice	5.7%
Confirm Availability	4.0%

Use a lower contrast button style for secondary next steps.

Rationale

Lower performing and non-lead generating next steps like window stickers, asking a question, and scheduling a test drive should use low contrast buttons.
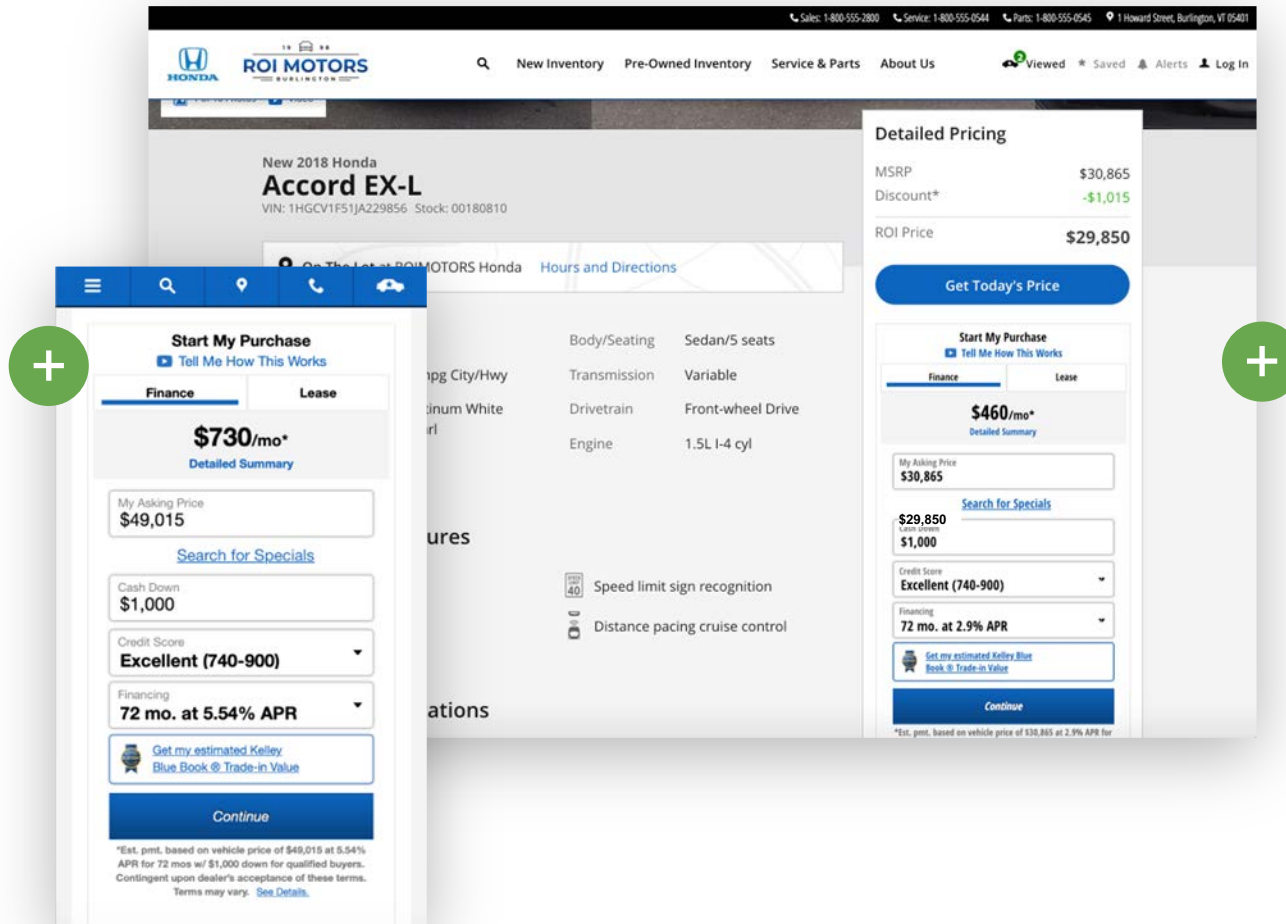
Voice of the Customer

*"To me, this just suggests access.
There's lots of ways to access [the dealership]."*

- VDP Study Participant

Recommendation

Include a digital retailing feature.

Rationale

Payment calculation, trade-in valuation, and finance approval are common next steps for shoppers.

14.6% of visitors configure payments from the VDP.

Furthermore, exposing the payment calculation form improves discoverability.

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

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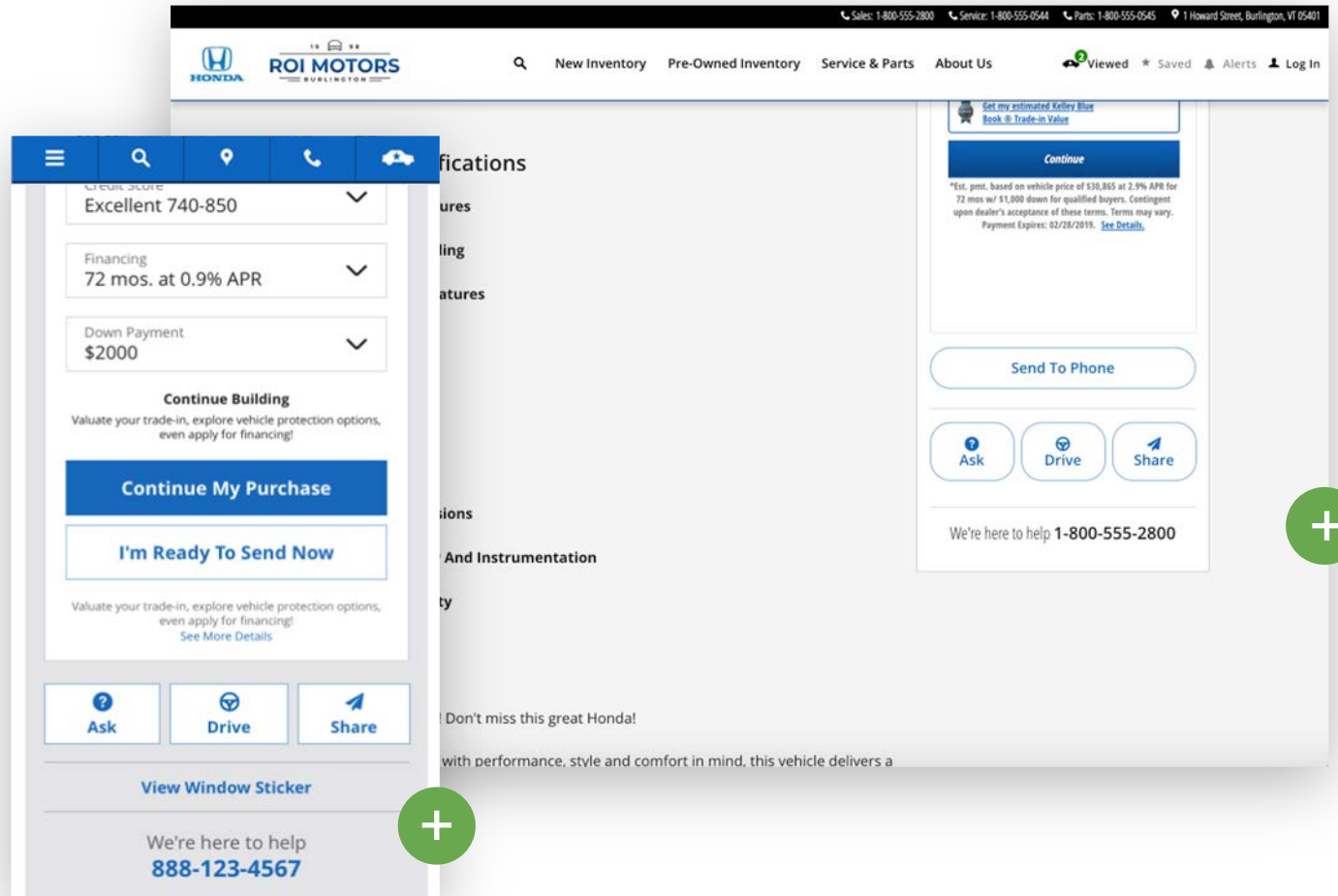
Rationale

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.

Leverage "sticky" or fixed content areas for quick reference of vehicle information and calls to action.

Voice of the Customer

"I like how this follows so that you can keep seeing what the price was. I often have multiple tabs open so if I'm going back and forth or I come back to the page later, being reminded by having this on the side is really good."

- VDP Study Participant

Recommend alternative vehicles based on shopping behavior.
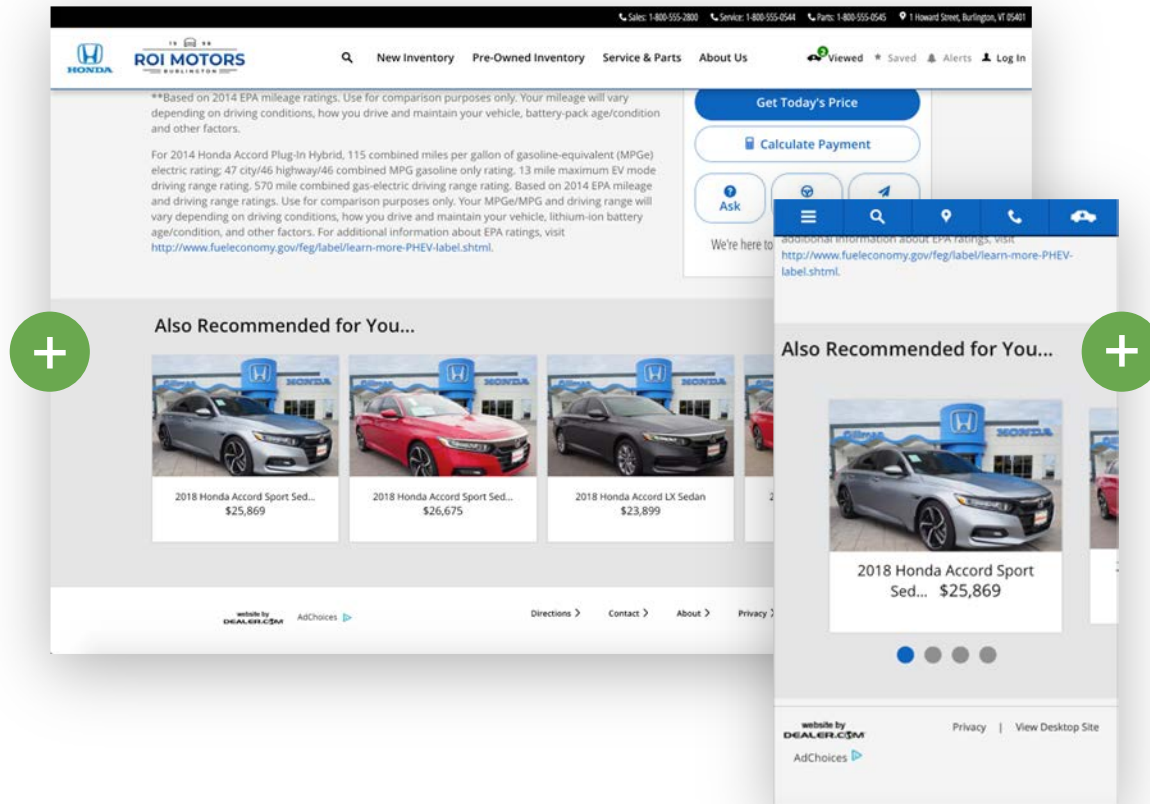
Rationale

3.5% of VDP visitors explore alternate vehicles based on the recommendations.

To increase relevance, recommendations should be based on previous searches, VDP views, and behavior from related third party websites such as Kelley Blue Book, Autotrader, and manufacturer websites.

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

VDP Recommendations

Recommendation	Impact	Metric of Interest
Prioritize high-level vehicle information (title, photo, final price)	High	Visit time
Use actual vehicle photos, not stock photos	High	Visit time, VDP view rate, SRP view rate, photos viewed
Do not embed branding in vehicle photos	Medium	Brand perception
Use high resolution vehicle photos	Medium	Visit time
On mobile, feature the final price and primary CTA below vehicle specifications	High	Click through rate
On mobile, progressively disclose detailed vehicle information (package info, detailed specs)	Medium	Visit time
On desktop, expose detailed vehicle information (package info, dealer notes, detailed specs)	Medium	Visit time
Progressively disclose detailed specification categories	Medium	Visit time
Highlight unique, non-standard features	Medium	Brand perception
Display detailed pricing including specials, incentives, and monthly payment	High	Brand perception
Be transparent with pricing	High	Brand perception
Display detailed pricing and next steps after vehicle information	Medium	Brand perception
Provide contextual, trusted third party information (reviews, vehicle history, pricing comparisons)	Low	Brand perception

VDP Recommendations

Recommendation	Impact	Metric of Interest
Hide non-vehicle specific dealer notes/comments	Low	Brand perception
Prioritize next steps both visually and hierarchically	High	Click through rate, lead rate
Use a high contrast button style to indicate the one or two primary next steps	High	Click through rate
Optimize the primary next step ("Confirm Availability" or "Get Today's Price")	High	Click through rate
Use a lower contrast button style for secondary next steps	High	Click through rate, lead rate
Include a digital retailing feature	High	Visit time, lead rate
Include phone number with other next steps	Medium	Lead rate, visit time
Leverage "sticky" or fixed content areas for quick reference of vehicle information and keeps high engagement features a touch away	Low	Visit time
Recommend alternative vehicles based on shopping behavior	Low	VDP view rate

Thank You

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