

# Putting Technology In The Driving Seat

Category: Automobiles

---

## Background

In a category where technological superiority is perceived to be the deciding factor for fate of the brand, where lack of innovations/modifications can often cause an untimely death, what are the real technology associations? And how does a new brand make technology relevant and put in the driving seat for differentiated brand imagery.

## The Research Objective

Deep dive into consumer's perceptions, association & real understanding of technology w.r.t. automobiles and where do they fit various brands in, based on all this.

## The Challenge

How to 'un - cage' the respondents, so as to scrape past the surface responses and unearth their real attitude, apprehensions and delights with technology.

## The Research Methodology

- Extended diads/triads of friends (instead of groups of unknowns), each owning a different brand of car – Scorpio / Ikon / City...
- Engaging them in "casual chats" amongst themselves, in the comfort of their own environment - at homes, relaxing in clubs, on a holiday, even accompanying them while driving

## Key Findings

- Better technology is taken as implied in newer products, and this hooks-on well with Prestige, which drives the craving to own the latest. (e.g. Santro v/s Zen). But it has a very short life span if limited to only 'prestige' cues without performance support (e.g. Ford Escort, Classic SL)

- Technology can often overwhelm. Frequent 'technology value additions' add to the complexity, causing confusion and anxiety of either being 'led-on' or 'left-behind'. Result: cynicism & disbelief in the jargon & the gimmickry
- Technology is not necessarily what is under the bonnet, but what you feel when you ride the vehicle - consumer relates better to the tangible and emotional benefits that technology provides. This mindset is reflected in their attitude towards driving itself
  - It boosts self-esteem and helps you get ahead...and stay ahead – whether be the first in the neighborhood or be the first off a red light
  - It gets the adrenaline pumping – it excites the senses & uplifts the mood. Driving a superior vehicle shakes off inhibitions and brings out the 'real' you

## **The Results**

Insights from this study proved effective in designing the launch strategy for the product - Real v/s superficial associations with technology? How & what to say about technology? Points of contradiction between the socially acceptable vs. the way they actually feel...

## **Sum up**

A challenging yet intriguing research objective, tackled through innovative methodology helped us gain valuable insights on the key issue.