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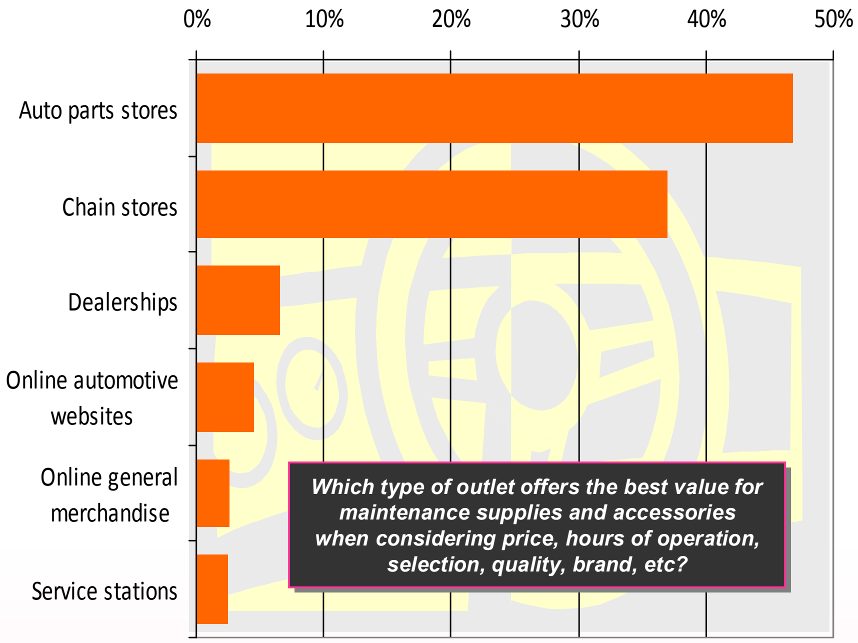
Auto Parts Stores the Best Perceived Value

The recession has encouraged consumers to **maintain and accessorize** their current vehicles in lieu of buying new ones. This creates a **business opportunity** for parts and accessory providers. TNS asked a nationally-representative sample of 2,500 adults about which type of outlet offers the **best value** for these when considering price, hours of operation, selection, quality, and brand.



Respondents reported that **auto parts stores offer the best value**, with 47% choosing that option. Chain stores was the second choice at 37%. Both of these offer the benefit of **in-person customer assistance** and offer **immediate gratification** (no need to wait for shipping for parts in stock).

Dealerships and service stations **fared poorly,** possibly because while they may offer in-person support, they may offer a more limited selection.

Online sources did poorer than might be expected given that they are "open" 24 hours and one of the value criteria was "hours of operation." This research did not specifically assess the **online channels of auto parts stores**; showing that element separately could increase the relative performance of online sources in the results.

Follow-up investigations should compare "value" results with **"likelihood to purchase"** results to reveal the extent to which there are discrepancies between value and purchase intent that can be leveraged to drive sales. Note, for example, the value criteria did not include **customer service** and did not differentiate between **brand of purchase location and brand of parts/accessories offered.** Results are for the US population overall; opinions and market opportunities are likely to differ among **subsets of the population**, such as do-it-yourself (DIY) consumers and do-it-for-me (DIFM) consumers, making these groups good candidates for additional research.

TNS is the world's foremost provider of custom research and analysis, combining in-depth industry sector understanding with world-class expertise in the areas of innovation, communication, customer acquisition, and satisfaction & loyalty. For more on these results contact Lincoln Merrihew of TNS Business Solutions (Lincoln.Merrihew@tns-global.com) or Melanie Mumper of TNS Marketing (Melanie.Mumper@tns-global.com).