

How brand marketers can leverage connected cars now

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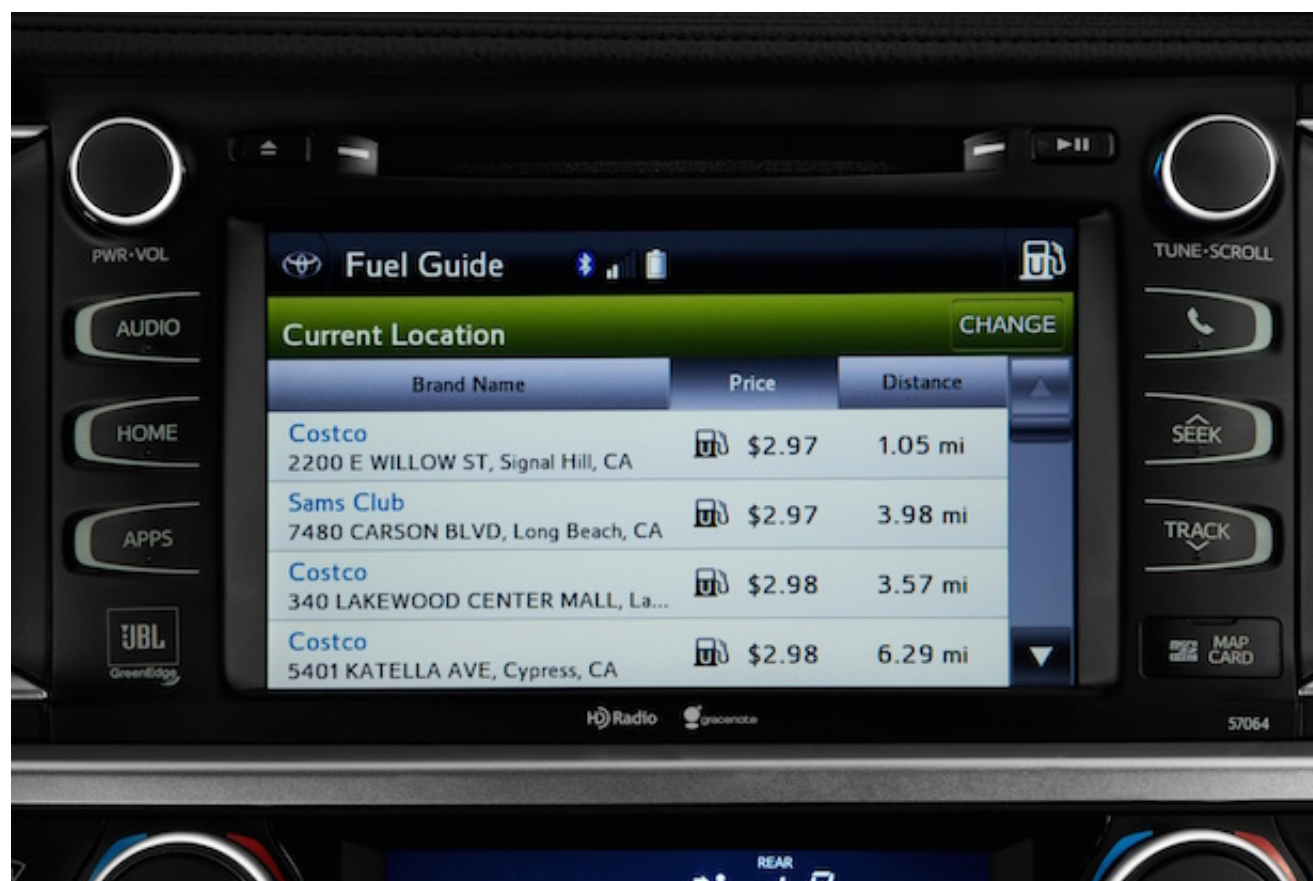


Ignore the futurist hype, connected cars offer valuable opportunities for marketing your brand today

Get in a modern car, perform a voice search on the car's infotainment system or via a synced smartphone app, does your brand come up in the search results?

If not, here's what to do.

Modern cars have sophisticated infotainment systems that allow drivers to search, using voice commands, for points of interest, restaurants, hotels etc. nearby or en route, using the vehicles navigation system or apps on a smartphone that is synced to the system.



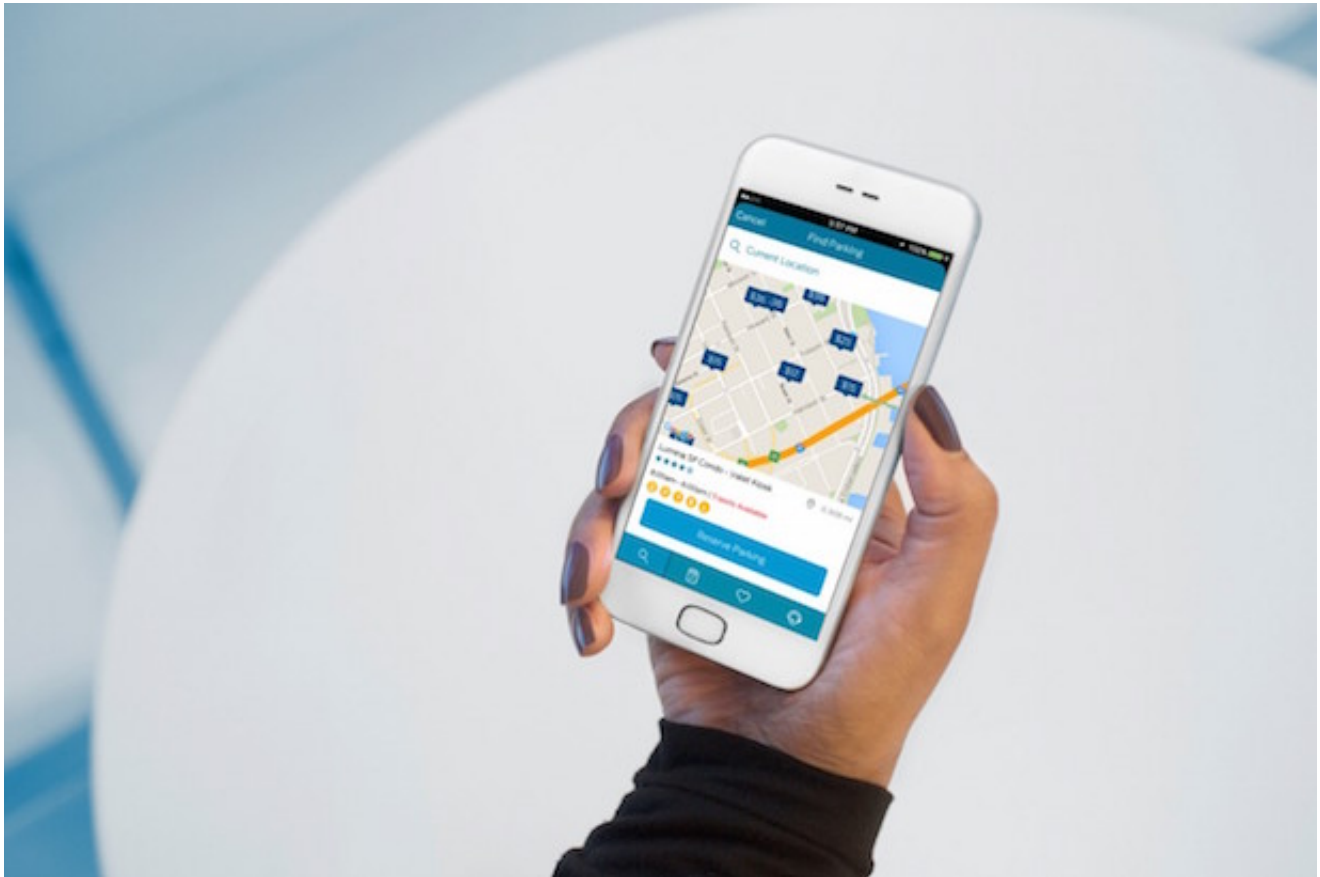
This **affords** great potential for marketers to be found by drivers just at the point when they are most likely to purchase, but it's an opportunity on which many **brands** are missing out.

When people talk about connected-cars, attention tends to focus on autonomous self-driving car, which is still too many years off for most marketers to understand their relevance today.

Instead you need to look at what is on offer in cars being sold this year. But if you get this right now, it should still be right if/when semi and fully autonomous cars go mainstream.

Take **Ford**, for example, which was parading its “mobility” wares at Mobile World Congress last month. It has an infotainment system, called [Ford Sync](#), which has a mapping service, that allows searching on points of interest; it can interact with compatible apps on the phone via **Ford's** [AppLink](#)(available open source as SmartDeviceLink), [Android Auto](#) or **Apple** CarPlaywww.apple.com/ios/carplay.

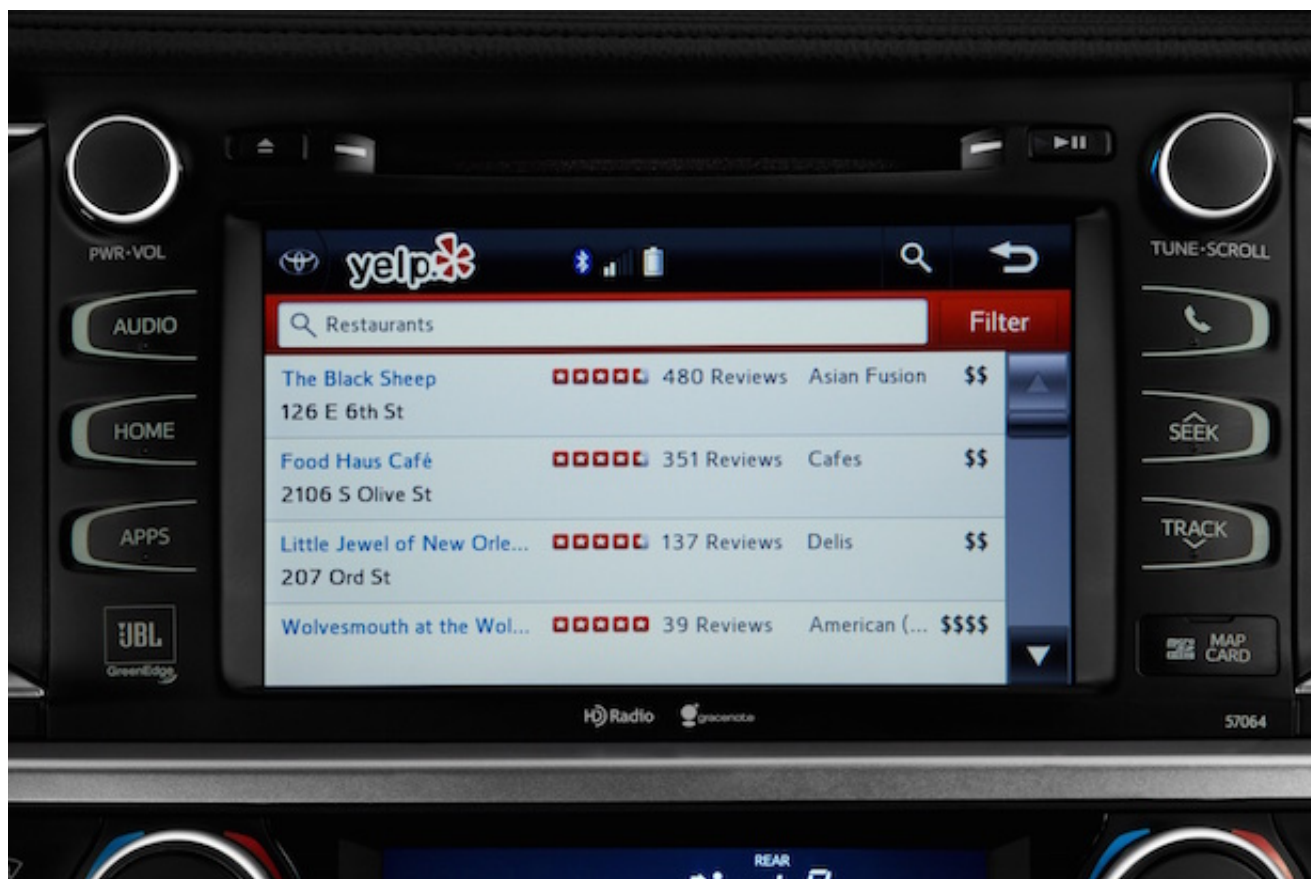
Ford also has a smartphone app called [FordPass](#) which aggregates third-party services, such as parking and car sharing). Overall, it's as good a story as any car manufacturer.



The number of compatible apps are few, but they include Google Maps, **Apple** Maps – currently only the **Apple**'s and Google's own products are allowed, rival directories and mapping are excluded.

Car manufacturers are much more open, trying to recruit all popular apps, relevant to drivers, to their platforms.

Yelp and Facebook Places are available on [Toyota's Entune](#) platform.



Having demoed the **Ford** suite, it quickly becomes clear that there are good opportunities for **brands** to get their services in front of the drivers of these new vehicles.

There are three methods of in-car interaction between **brand** and driver.

1. Found in search performed on the car's native navigational system or freestanding satnav.
2. Found in search performed on original equipment manufacturer (OEM) or third-party app on smartphone that is synced to the in-car system.
3. Interaction via **brands** own smartphone app that is synced to the in-car system.

However on closer inspection it soon becomes clear that marketers aren't taking advantage of this new media.

A search on near-by hotels on the in-car navigation brings up less than 20 establishments while only a minute fraction of the apps available in apps stores are compatible with SmartDeviceLink, Android Auto or **Apple** CarPlay.

This article will look economical and relatively straight-forward steps one and two – ensuring presence on navigational systems and third party apps.

We will take an in-depth look at the pros and cons and best-practice of developing your own car-

compatible app in the next article.

Putting your business on the map: built in navigational systems

Pick a new mid to high-spec model of any popular car and conduct a search (use voice search as a driver would) relevant to your business, be that nearby restaurants, hotels, shops or other point of interest (POI).

Is your business included in the search results and are the details correct?

Consider how many businesses are listed compared to how many there actually are in the area – clearly this is a big advantage for any company that comes up in search results.

Repeat the test on other popular cars and on standalone satellite navigation systems. Chances are, if your business is absent from one auto **brand** it will be absent from all.

[Anthony Novak](#), Toyota Entune / in-cabin technology educator:

***Brands** can approach us or they can approach our navigation system supplier or map provider. We show several business logos in our vehicles' navigation system, and for that experience and in most cases, our navigation supplier and map provider have actually reached out to these major businesses to get their logos so that the navigation can provide a richer navigation experience.*

*My understanding is they prioritize which **brands**/businesses/chains they approach to include in our vehicles by those **brands**' geographic coverage and the total number of locations for that **brand**.*

The natural assumption is that marketers should contact the car manufacturer, to rectify their absence.

This might work, but in reality OEMs licence their infotainment system from a third party, and often these will licence the mapping from another company. In any manufacturer few people will actually know, or want to tell you, who provides the mapping.

[Greg Basich](#), senior analyst, Strategy Analytics Automotive Practice:

*Automakers do not create their own maps. They use maps from third-party suppliers. If a **brand** wants to have their business information included in the point-of-interest (POI) data that's used in an OEM's infotainment system then they would need to work with the map suppliers and not the automakers. Automakers are not directly responsible for the POI content available via in-vehicle infotainment system navigation applications.*

The main providers of embedded (i.e. pre-loaded in the vehicle's infotainment system) automotive-grade maps used in in-vehicle infotainment systems include HERE and

TomTom, at least for the U.S./North American market. Note that other regions often have different map suppliers as well, e.g. China and India.



Go to the source and the source's source

The best place to start is with HERE, the mapping provider that was purchased by BMW, Audi and Daimler's from Nokia [for \\$3.1 billion](#) in August 2015.

When you trace the supply chain, back from the vehicle, it often ends up with HERE. For example, the infotainment system of Hyundai and Kia in the US is provided by [MnSOFT](#), when you click on Map Error Reporter (which is where you submit your business) you end up at [HERE](#).

[Dr. Sebastian Kurme](#), head of media relations, HERE:

In one way or another we are working with every major car OEM. We currently provide maps for four out of five cars with integrated in-dash navigation in North America and Europe.

We use thousands of different sources to keep not only our maps, but also our data base for so-called "points of interest/POIS" like restaurants up to date. For instance, in many countries we have local teams sourcing that kind information, and we are also working with third parties like yellow pages companies to integrate their information about POIs into our maps.

Individuals can also add places to our maps via our [Map Creator](#) tool. Owners of places do not have to pay to have their places added to our map. How to do that is explained in this tutorial [video series](#). Before publishing all edits done with the Map Creator tool are

checked internally by our team.

This underscores the importance of doing regular checks to ensure that your business is included and up-to-date on all mapping services and the directories they access.

N.B. Even if you don't care about car navigation systems, these sources are used by innumerable websites and apps.

Updating maps and directories is usually easy and normally free. You'd be nuts not to:

- [Add your business to TomTom.](#)
- [Google Maps.](#)
- [Bing \(Microsoft\).](#)
- [Apple Maps.](#)
- [Here.](#)
- [Yelp \(US\).](#)
- [Yell \(UK\).](#)
- [Foursquare.](#)
- [Facebook Places.](#)

Do this for all mapping providers and directories in your geographies.

Putting your business on the map: GPS/sat navs

The market for standalone personal navigation device (PND) – GPS or satellite navigation systems – has been corroded by free mapping on smartphones and the growth of built in systems in the car dashboard.

But standalone sat navs from TomTom and Garmin are still widely used and the manufacturers are now major suppliers to the auto industry.

Kip Dondlinger, product manager and user experience, Automotive OEM, Garmin:

*Major customers for our OEM navigation solutions include: Daimler (several Mercedes models and more launching in the future), Honda (multiple models and growing), Fiat Chrysler, **Toyota** (in Asian markets today) and more.*

Garmin typically uses HERE map data. In some OEM programs Points of Interest (POI) data from HERE is supplemented with other sources such as Foursquare. This would apply to Garmin PND devices.

Our comparisons show that the combination of HERE plus Foursquare in our products has the same and in some cases better coverage than Google. I do not know if there is any data that proves the potential to generate revenue, but it stands to reason that with millions of our products in use that having a business listed in the search results would

help direct new customers to it.

Putting your business on the map: third-party apps

Increasingly in-car infotainment systems are able to sync with smartphones and allow access to compatible apps on the handset, through the in-dash system.

As will be discussed in detail in the next column, most car manufacturers have their own (or rather their infotainment suppliers) proprietary system for syncing phone apps, but increasingly also allow drivers to use Google's [Android Auto](#) and **Apple's** [CarPlay](#) to connect to their phone apps.

The number of compatible apps are few, but they include Google Maps, **Apple** Maps – currently only the **Apple's** and Google's own products are allowed, rival directories and mapping are excluded.

Car manufacturers are more open than **Apple** and Google, trying to recruit all popular apps, assuming their relevance to drivers, to their platforms.

For example, Yelp and Facebook Places are available on **Toyota's** Entune platform, while **Ford** Sync offers third-party mapping and navigation in some Asian countries, including the market leading Baidu Maps in China

As above, your course of action is to ensure your business is included and up-to-date on all mapping and directory services.

Putting your business on the map: auto brand apps

All auto manufacturers are developing mobile apps that not only allow owners to interact with their vehicle, but also to access travel and vehicle related services, most commonly car sharing and parking, that will also appeal to non-owners.

Some apps are more closely integrated with the in-car system than others.

These services often aggregate a number of third-party services, which could open up a new sales channel for partnering **brands** as the auto **brands** expand their offering.

[Jorg Ullrich](#), Advanced Consumer Experience Marketing, **Ford**:

*As the **FordPass** <https://www.myfordpass.com/> app will be growing over time to include multiple mobility solutions, including different transportation modes, we are always eager to learn about new development in the marketplace.*

*For now [interested parties] should contact the regional **FordPass** market leads or our Global Mobility Solution lead, Jamie Allison, we are considering a dedicated e-mail as a link for app developers moving forward.*

As part of its Blue Link platform, Hyundai offers a clever Destination Search powered by Google which taps Google search to find the best Sushi or Coffee nearby.

<https://youtu.be/WaiHh630618>

Out of the car this can be done via the mobile phone, which will send directions to the car navigation system, or when in the car tapping a button on the rear-view mirror and then performing a voice search.

The beauty of such systems for marketers is as long as your [business details are up-to-date on Google](#) and your website is easily found when users search, then you will also be found by the Hyundai driver.

Planning ahead

The auto companies expect the connected car to eventually grow into the semi and then fully autonomous car.

Their love affair with **digital** “mobility” in various forms is partly about their planning ahead for the self-driving car and gradually helping customers become accustomed to the convergence of **digital** and physical mobility.

The navigation systems that assist drivers today will be the systems that drive owners in the future. That is why the German auto **brands** paid \$3.1 billion for HERE, so aren't beholden to a third-party mapping company.

Strategy Analytics' Greg Basich:

The German automakers did not just acquire HERE for infotainment-oriented maps – that's part of it, but only a small part. A big reason for acquiring HERE was to ensure the continued development of, and access to, high-resolution maps for use in semi- and fully autonomous vehicles.

If/when drivers stop driving they can concentrate more closely on other things – like media.

So while the connected car might look like a nascent channel today – compared with smartphones – marketers need to get on-board today. And how better to get started than with the cheap and effective methods outline above.

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