

Measuring Earned Media Quality to Prove the Business Value of PR

Industry: Media & Publications Customer Success Story

About Edmunds

Edmunds guides car shoppers online from research to purchase. With in-depth reviews of every new vehicle, shopping tips from an in-house team of experts, plus a wealth of consumer and automotive market insights, Edmunds helps millions of shoppers each month select, price and buy a car with confidence. The Edmunds story is quite impressive, with its roots as a paperback newsstand publication from the 1960s that has now grown into one of the most beloved and well-known automotive resources of the 21st century. Regarded as one of America's best companies to work for by Fortune and Great Place to Work, Edmunds is based in Santa Monica, California.



Challenges

Edmunds is not just a category-leading brand in the automotive industry; it is also a top media publication that caters to both consumers and businesses. Because of this, one of the biggest challenges for Edmunds when it comes to its media relations and communications strategy is to simultaneously focus on achieving three different PR objectives:

- Raise awareness of the Edmunds brand and create more top-of-mind consideration as an authority in the automotive space.
- Drive consumer traffic back to the Edmunds website and increase engagement with reviews, articles, videos and other owned media content.
- Highlight unique market insights to key business audiences, including automakers and dealers, in order to position Edmunds as a valued business partner.

Solution

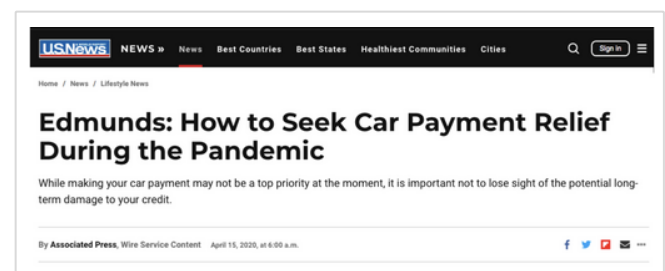
The extraordinary success Edmunds achieved during this unusual year was rooted in its proven thought-leadership strategy, which positions the brand as the authoritative source of consumer and market insights for the automotive industry. The engine that drives this is Edmunds' inhouse team of automotive experts, who have earned a reputation for being a credible resource to other media outlets by consistently sharing objective car-shopping information and advice. As a trusted third party with proprietary data and insights, Edmunds is often prominently featured in trending news and stories by top tier broadcast, online and print publications such as CNBC, the Wall Street Journal, USA Today and Detroit Free Press.

In addition, Edmunds publishes 20 vehicle-related content pieces weekly, proactively distributes its automotive industry trends to journalists and promotes all of this content on its owned media. Lastly, through its unique content partnership with the Associated Press, Edmunds syndicates out thousands of expert editorials to the AP network across the country, including hundreds of local and national print and online publications—from The New York Times to the O.C. Register.

When the COVID-19 crisis hit in March of 2020, Edmunds faced an additional challenge of quickly adjusting its strategy in response to the lockdowns and other lifestyle and economic disruptions. In this new reality, the communications team also needed to continuously monitor competitors' responses to the crisis and measure how the brand's efforts fared compared to the rest of the industry.

In response to the COVID-19 health and economic crisis, Edmunds leveraged all of these unique strengths to quickly pivot and launch the "COVID-19 Response" campaign addressing the most pressing customer needs. The campaign aimed to provide highly relevant content and advice to consumers in a way that felt like talking to an expert car shopping friend—covering topics such as financial payment relief and car price fluctuations during the pandemic.

Edmunds' PR and communication teams worked with Onclusive to measure how their "COVID-19 Response" strategy achieved their key objectives, focusing on a combination of press coverage quality and performance against competition. This included share of voice for competitive volume, Power of Voice™ for competitive quality score, social media amplification for trending coverage, and target media placements for media relations success.

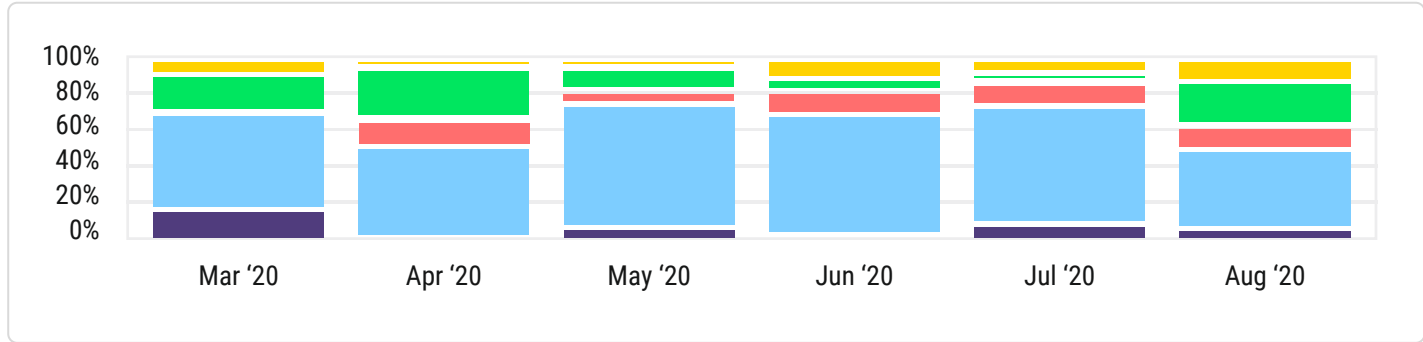
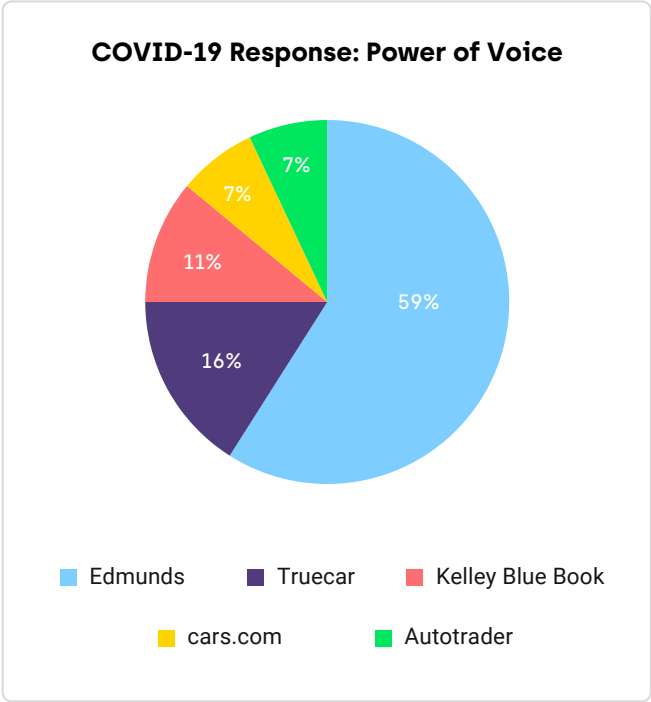


Results

Share of Voice and Power of Voice™: Industry Leader at 57% and 59%, Respectively

Edmunds was one of the first in the industry to compile a comprehensive overview of car payment relief options for consumers and consistently dominated media coverage with the biggest industry trends combined with the unique market perspective from its automotive experts and actionable advice for consumers.

An even bigger accomplishment for Edmunds was dominating the media with the highest quality coverage. The brand's Power of Voice, a comprehensive content quality metric invented by Onclusive that combines relevance, publication authority, repetition, social amplification and article sentiment into a single competitive benchmark, maintained its position as the category leader throughout the campaign.

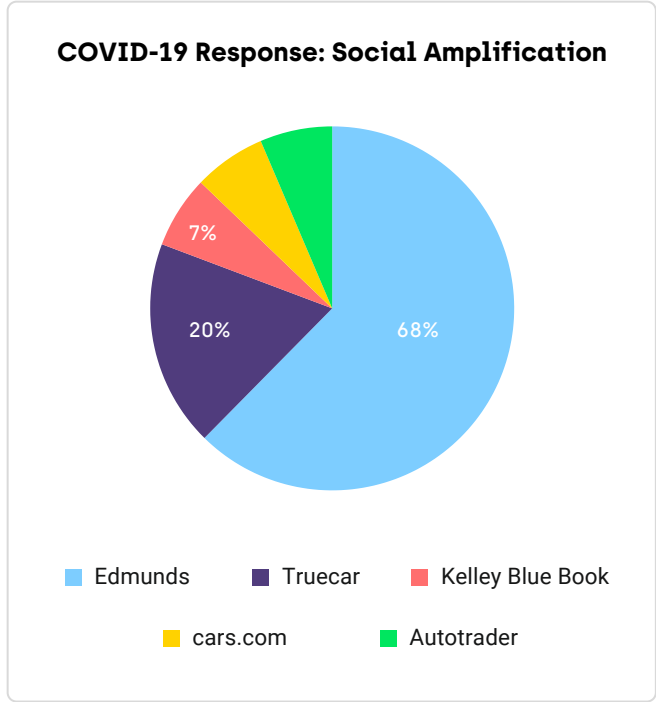


The Onclusive data also revealed which articles drove the Power of Voice for Edmunds. The top article below by The New York Times reflected a proactive media push on the topic of surging values for used cars due to increased demand during COVID-19—an unprecedented trend that generated some of the greatest interest and coverage during this time. The Washington Post article was an example of an AP bylined piece that turned this big industry trend into actionable advice for consumers to help them get more money for their vehicle at a time when they needed it most. The rest of the pieces did well because they addressed positive industry trends such as sales growth and automakers helping build ventilators during the pandemic.

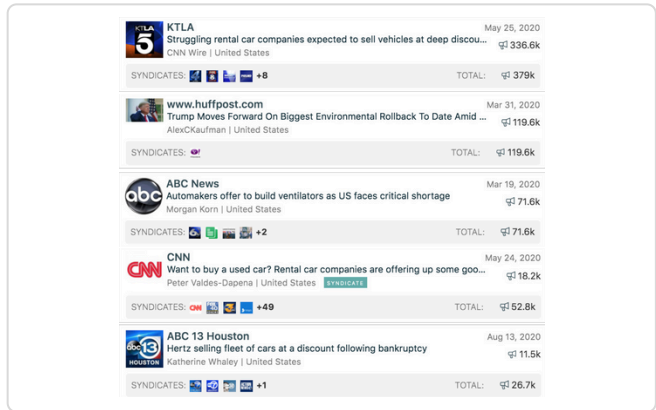
	New York Times Looking to Buy a Used Car in the Pandemic? So Is Everyone Else Neal E. Boudette United States	Sep 07, 2020 Rep H Rel H Ret M
SYNDICATES:		
	Washington Post Edmunds: Now is a great time to sell or trade in your car Ronald Montoya of Edmunds United States	Sep 02, 2020 Rep H Rel H Ret L
SYNDICATES:		
	Business Insider Spending starting to improve, some retail sales rising Associated Press T Z United States	Jun 02, 2020 Rep H Rel H Ret L
SYNDICATES: +1		
	Yahoo With unprecedented deals, auto industry lures locked-down consumers United States	May 05, 2020 Rep H Rel H Ret L
SYNDICATES: +2		
	ABC News Automakers offer to build ventilators as US faces critical shortage Morgan Korn United States	Mar 19, 2020 Rep H Rel H Ret H
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Social Amplification: Blowing Out The Competition at 68%

By using Onclusive's platform, Edmunds gained a greater understanding of their most amplified coverage, which again showed a considerable lead over the competition, albeit with a different set of stories than those that drove the Power of Voice.

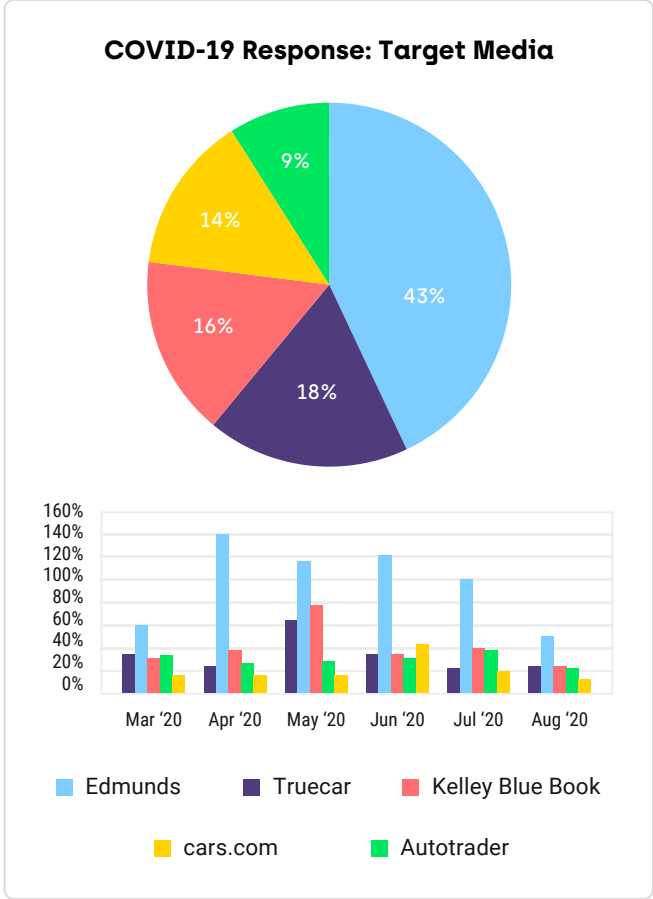


Three of the top social amplification drivers focused on how struggling rental businesses like Hertz could mean big deals for shoppers in the used market. Another article touched on a hot political topic pertaining to fuel emissions standards in the current administration. The ABC “ventilators” article was the one exception that fared well for both Power of Voice and Share of Amplification. Thanks to these unexpected insights from Onclusive, Edmunds discovered which strategies were likely to drive future social engagement.

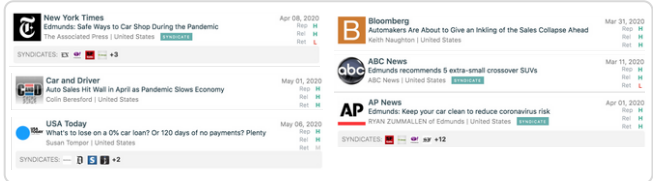


Target Media: #1 Most Successful Brand With 43% Competitive Share

According to the Onclusive data, Edmunds captured the largest competitive share with its target media placements and was the #1 most successful brand in the category during the campaign.



One of the highlights of the brand's success was that it achieved a strong mix of general consumer media with outlets like The New York Times, USA Today, and ABC, automotive publications like Car and Driver, business publications like Bloomberg, and, of course, its content partner Associated Press. In addition, Edmunds specifically targeted broadcast media and was featured in two exclusive back-to-back earned segments on “Good Morning America” with the used car value story and helpful consumer advice.



Key Takeaways

- A robust thought leadership strategy that leverages unique data and insights can not only position your brand as a trusted authority for the media, but also ultimately help you win when it comes to media coverage, even in times of crisis and uncertainty.
- Using metrics like Power of Voice, social media amplification and target media placements can help you uncover powerful and unexpected insights about the stories, publications, and authors that actually drive business impact, enabling you to optimize your strategy based on tangible results.
- While content quality can be measured in a number of different ways, at the end of the day it needs to be based on your specific campaign objectives, such as dominating stories on a particular topic, trending on social media or targeting specific media outlets.

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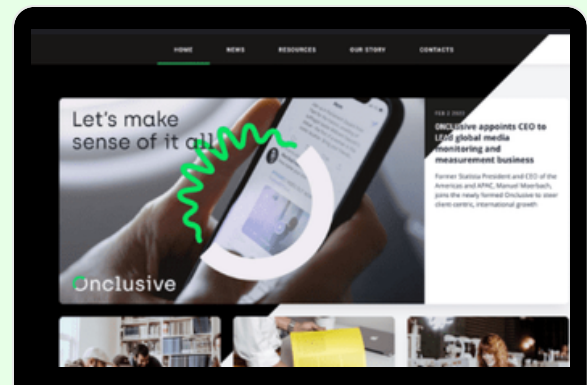
"With the Onclusive platform, we are able to track the metrics that matter. Our communications metrics are integrated into our overall marketing performance measurement framework, and we can show our C-Suite executives how earned media KPIs like Power of Voice tie into the company's business objectives. We've been using Onclusive since 2016, and being able to look back at historical data year-over-year is also highly valuable to our leadership and particularly important in unusual times like these.."

TALIA JAMES-ARMAND, Associate Director of PR and Communications, Edmunds

Ready to build a single source of truth for your organization's reputation? Onclusive's team of dedicated insights experts transform disparate data sources into actionable intelligence.

- Track and measure stakeholder sentiment effectively
- Make evidence-based communications decisions
- Benchmark against peers and prove communications value

Speak with our reputation management team to learn how we can create a customized framework for your organization.



Arrange a Demo

About Onclusive

Onclusive is a world leader in media intelligence technology and services, dedicated to supporting PR, Communications and Marketing professionals. We deliver leading-edge innovation, human expertise, and unmatched media reach in a suite of media management, monitoring and analysis solutions that support every stage of the communications cycle. Our unified platform and services enable our customers to make fast, accurate, data-driven decisions about their communications and marketing strategies, allowing them to prove and improve their value.

