



# Geo.CARS Domains

Case Study



Bill Hartzer  
[www.billhartzer.com](http://www.billhartzer.com)  
[e:bill@billhartzer.com](mailto:bill@billhartzer.com)  
p: 214-236-4378

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## About the Author

**Bill Hartzler**

*Senior Consultant, Hartzler Consulting*

Bill Hartzler is the Senior Consultant at Hartzler Consulting (<https://www.hartzler.com>). Bill is a frequent speaker and expert discussion panel participant at various search engine marketing and internet marketing conferences and events such as the SMX and the Pubcon conferences. He writes frequently for Search Engine Journal and Practical Ecommerce magazine, is regularly mentioned on Search Engine Land, and his industry articles are published in many online publications. He maintains a blog on his website, BillHartzler.com (<https://www.billhartzler.com/>), and is one of the original founders of the Dallas/Fort Worth Search Engine Marketing Association. He has over 20 years of search engine marketing, SEO, and social media marketing experience.

Mr. Hartzler has several years of experience as a Webmaster at a major international software company and 20 years of search engine optimization experience working with some of the world's largest brands' web sites. He specializes in highly technical search engine optimization audits of websites and link audits.

Bill has been an active domain name investor and domain developer since the mid 1990s, when he registered his first domain name and launched his first web site. He continues to be an active domain name investor, and actively buys and sells domain names on a regular basis. He wrote "An SEO's Guide to Acquiring New gTLDs" that was featured on Moz.com (<http://moz.com/ugc/an-seos-guide-to-acquiring-new-gtlds>) in March 2014.

Over the past 15 years, Mr. Hartzler has worked as an SEO Manager, SEO Director, Senior SEO Specialist, and Senior Vice President of several different digital marketing agencies.

More recently, Mr. Hartzler provides SEO experience and expertise to provide highly technical SEO audits of web sites, as well as monthly SEO retainer services. He can be reached via email at [bill@billhartzler.com](mailto:bill@billhartzler.com) or by phone at +1.214.236-4378.

## Overview

Since the beginning of the Internet, Americans have primarily used three main Top Level Domains (TLDs) for our websites: .COM, .NET, and .ORG. There are other TLDs that have been introduced that we're all familiar with, such as .EDU and .GOV. It's been fairly easy for us to register .COM, .NET, and .ORG domain names. You have to be associated with an educational institution or a government entity to secure a .EDU or a .GOV domain name. And then there's the others that have been available for quite some time now, such as .INFO, .BIZ, and .TV. Most consumers in the USA are used to .COM, .NET, and .ORG.

In countries outside of the USA, the Country Code Top Level Domains (ccTLDs), are widely accepted and in fact often the default option. Country codes include .de (Germany), .co.uk (United Kingdom), .es (Spain), .com.au (Australia), .ca (Canada), and .it (Italy). Depending on the location of your business, a ccTLD makes perfect sense as an alternative to .COM. Since January 2014, hundreds of new Generic Top Level Domains (New gTLDs) have become available for registration giving consumers greater choice. .CARS/ .CAR/ .AUTO are examples of such New gTLDs and focus on the automotive industry. Some of the best domain names in .CARS/.CAR/.AUTO are still available for registration.

### The .CARS TLD

After an early access period for trademark holders, .CARS/ .CAR/ .AUTO were launched to the general public on January 20, 2016.

The "suggested retail price" for a .CARS/ .CAR/ .AUTO domain name is \$3,000.00 per year. However, we found that we could register a .CARS/ .CAR/ .AUTO domain name for less than the suggested retail price at many registrars like GoDaddy and others. We recently checked some sample prices of .CARS domain names at leading registrars, and found the following prices, as of March 7, 2018. We used Hartzer.Cars as an example:

Domain Name	Registrar	Retail Price
Hartzer.Cars	GoDaddy	\$2,799.00
Hartzer.Cars	Network Solutions	\$2,799.99
Hartzer.Cars	Name.com	\$2,099.00
Hartzer.Cars	Gandi.net	\$2,214.19
Hartzer.Cars	101Domain.com	\$2,699.99
Hartzer.Cars	Uniregistry.com	\$2,888.88

Some domain names are considered to be premium names. Typically, those names are especially short/ memorable, or contain highly sought-after keywords. These domains vary in price by TLD but can easily reach into the six-figure range. In the .CARS/ .CAR/ .AUTO TLDs, there are no premium reserved domain names—none are held back by the registry except for a few select domain names that are used for internal purposes by the registry.

### **Geo .CARS Domain Names**

When we refer to the word “Geo” in the domain name industry, a Geo domain name would be one that includes a city name. An example of Geo keywords would be “Dallas Cars”, “Chicago Cars”, “Atlanta Used Cars”, and “Miami New Cars”. Each of those are Geo keywords, and a Geo domain name would be something like DallasCars.com, Miami.Car, or NewYork.Cars.

Since .CARS domain names have been available for registration for over two years, we decided to evaluate how these domain names are being accepted in the market, how they are performing online, and how these domain names are being used by businesses today. We were also curious to know if they are being accepted and recognized by consumers. Lastly, we decided to evaluate if the required investment into .CARS/ .CAR/ .AUTO domains would be worth it for the businesses using them.

To find the answer to these questions, we were given unprecedented access to the statistics for these domain names. We will provide recommendations for usage and draw conclusions from our findings as well.

## Choosing a .Cars Domain Name

Making the choice to move your current website to a .CARS domain or to launch a new website on a .CARS domain name should be an easy choice. Many of the best names are still available and you can either combine the branding of your automotive business with a .CARS domain or register highly relevant keywords, such as City.Cars domains for your company.

Keywords are an important part of a domain name, as the domain name is one of the first things a visitor sees in the search engine results. If the domain name includes a keyword that's relevant to what they searched for, oftentimes those domain names can get more clicks compared to a domain name that does not contain a relevant keyword. More clicks from the search engine results can mean better search engine rankings, and certainly means more traffic to your website.

### Keyword Rich Domain Names

It is widely thought that one way to potentially gain some search engine optimization advantage is to buy a keyword rich domain name that includes the TLD as one of the main keywords. This strategy has been said to not matter when it comes to search engine ranking advantages in the Google search engine, though. Google has officially stated that they treat new gTLD (generic Top Level Domain) endings the same as legacy domain name endings like .COM, .NET, and .ORG. As early as a July 2015 blog post (<https://googlewebmastercentral.blogspot.com/2015/07/googles-handling-of-new-top-level.html>), Google stated:

Q: How will new gTLDs affect search? Is Google changing the search algorithm to favor these TLDs?

How important are they really in search?

A: *Overall, our systems treat new gTLDs like other gTLDs (like .COM & .ORG).*

So, buying and using a keyword rich new gTLD domain name is just as good as using one of the legacy TLDs, such as .COM and .ORG—they're all treated equally when it comes to Google's organic search results. Being in the search engine optimization business for over 20 years, however, Hartzler Consulting has seen many cases where keyword rich domain names that included the keyword in the ending appear to actually help search engine rankings. They appear to help a website's SEO and overall search engine visibility. Some of these examples are [www.Coffee.Club](http://www.Coffee.Club) (which ranks highly for keywords such as "Coffee Club"), [www.ElSegundo.Storage](http://www.ElSegundo.Storage) (which ranks for "El Segundo Storage"), and [www.Jacksonville.Attorney](http://www.Jacksonville.Attorney) (which ranks highly for keywords like "Jacksonville Attorney"). You can read more about the case study Bill Hartzler published in 2016 titled "Can moving to a new TLD boost search rankings?", published on SearchEngineLand.com: <https://searchengineland.com/can-moving-new-tld-boost-search-rankings-250666>

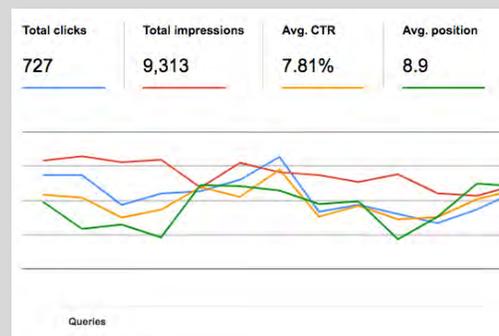
There are many cases when a generic keyword-rich New gTLD domain name can "outrank" an equivalent .COM domain name.

## Google Analytics

One recommended source for keywords is your own web sites' statistics. Most websites currently use Google Analytics in order to determine the website's traffic, number of visitors, referral sources, and keywords. The list of keywords that has brought visitors to your own web site is a great source of possible domain names. In Google Analytics, the Queries report shows the Google search queries that generated the most impressions for your website URLs. For more information about this, see Google's help topic:

<https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1308626?hl=en>.

While a certain amount of data is available through Google Analytics, you may need to use Google's Webmaster Tools (<https://www.google.com/webmasters/>), now called Google Search Console. You can easily determine the keywords that are bringing traffic to your web site from Google. Using this list, you can start a list of possible domain names that you may want to purchase. Below is an example of the Search Analytics report available in Google Search Console. Under the graph, you will find a list of Queries and Clicks (a list of actual keywords is not shown in the graphic below).



*Sample data from Search Analytics, available in the Google Search Console.*

The Queries section is a list of keywords that have brought traffic (visitors) to your web site. The Impressions section is the number of times your website showed up in the search results for that keyword phrase (query).

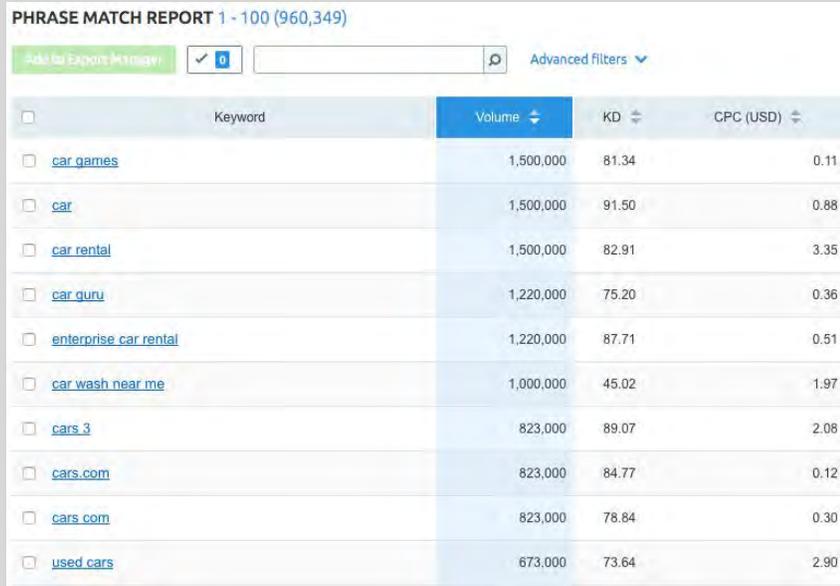
## Online Keyword Research Tools

I recommend researching keywords that include “car”, “cars”, and “auto” for possible use when registering a domain. Online keyword research tools allow you to learn how many people search for a particular keyword or keyword phrase per month. You can also discover related keywords and the number of searches per month for those keywords. Typically, the more popular the keyword, the more valuable that keyword is—and a domain name that contains that keyword is going to be more valuable. The following is a list of popular keyword research tools:

- Google AdWords Keyword Planner - <https://adwords.google.com/home/tools/keyword-planner/>
- Bing Keyword Tool – <https://www.bing.com/toolbox/keywords>
- Keyword.IO - <https://keywordtool.io/>
- Wordtracker – <https://www.wordtracker.com/>
- Wordstream – <https://www.wordstream.com/keywords>
- SEMRush – <https://www.semrush.com>
- SpyFU – <https://www.spyfu.com/>

One way to start the keyword research process is to use a website such as SEMRush.com. Starting with a keyword like “cars”, we are able to see related keywords that people search for on a monthly basis, and how many times they search for that keyword.

Viewing their full report, you have access to hundreds of keyword and related keywords, along with the search volume for these keywords (how many times these keywords are searched for on a monthly basis). Typically, the higher the volume and the higher the CPC (Cost Per Click) being paid to advertise that keyword, the more valuable the keyword is.



**PHRASE MATCH REPORT 1 - 100 (960,349)**

Advanced filters

Keyword	Volume	KD	CPC (USD)
<a href="#">car games</a>	1,500,000	81.34	0.11
<a href="#">car</a>	1,500,000	91.50	0.88
<a href="#">car rental</a>	1,500,000	82.91	3.35
<a href="#">car guru</a>	1,220,000	75.20	0.36
<a href="#">enterprise car rental</a>	1,220,000	87.71	0.51
<a href="#">car wash near me</a>	1,000,000	45.02	1.97
<a href="#">cars 3</a>	823,000	89.07	2.08
<a href="#">cars.com</a>	823,000	84.77	0.12
<a href="#">cars.com</a>	823,000	78.84	0.30
<a href="#">used cars</a>	673,000	73.64	2.90

Sample keywords related to the keyword “cars”, as provided by SEMrush.com.

The above phrase match report includes the keyword, average number of searches per month, the difficulty of the keyword (KD), and the average amount paid per click (CPC) for each visit to a web site via Google AdWords.

As indicated, domain names that include these keywords in combination with “cars” would be considered more valuable. Another option, specifically for those selling cars, would be to purchase a domain name that includes your location or geographical area. For example, if you are a car dealer in Dallas, then purchasing Dallas.Cars would be a good option for you. The same goes for used cars, such as DallasUsed.Cars. Other examples would be:

- Arizona.Cars
- Wichita.Cars
- Phoenix.Cars

The three above domain names are already registered Geo domains that are worth taking an in-depth look at below.

## Studying the .Cars TLD

To analyze the data for Wichita.Cars, Arizona.Cars, and Phoenix.Cars, we wanted to see what happened in the past two years with the .CARS TLD and websites actually using a .CARS domain. We decided to evaluate if a .CARS domain name is worth the \$3,000 purchase price, since this can be considered a premium compared to other TLDs not focused on the automotive industry. Specifically, we wanted to know:

- Is a domain name on .CARS worth the cost of the annual registration fee?
- What is the value a car dealership will receive when launching a web site on a .CARS domain name?
- Can we quantify the value a car dealership will receive by using a .CARS domain name and if so, how much value it is?
- Are there any direct examples of where a business moved or launched a web site on a .CARS domain name?
- If so, how have these web sites been performing since they've been using a .CARS domain name?

Being automotive enthusiasts and marketers ourselves, we were thrilled to be given access to the analytics and search engine rankings data for the three Geo .CARS domain names Wichita.Cars, Arizona.Cars, Phoenix.Cars.

Let's take a look at how these three domain names and web sites have performed since they have had live web sites on them.

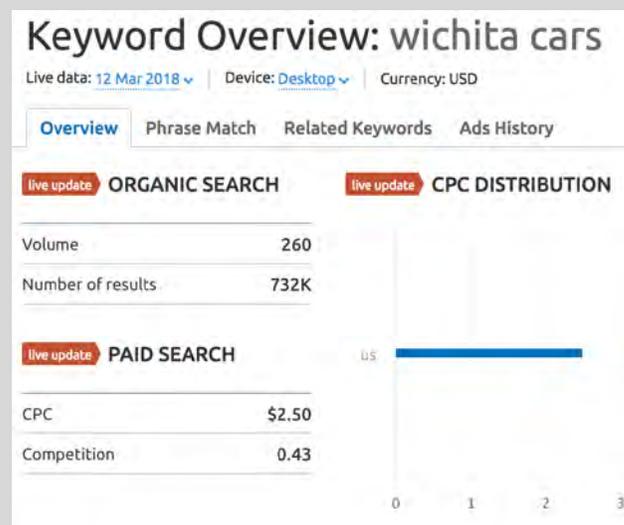
## Wichita.Cars

Scholfield Hyundai Buick GMC, back in 2016, originally launched Wichita.Cars and initially created a brand new single-page website on Wichita.Cars, which essentially allowed visitors to click through to another website. Without a considerable amount of content on the website and only “click through” functionality, the search engines had no incentive to rank this website in the top search results based on the website alone. Google, specifically, does not tend to rank “thin content” web sites very well. This is one of the reasons why the results that we found in my analysis below are all the more astonishing.

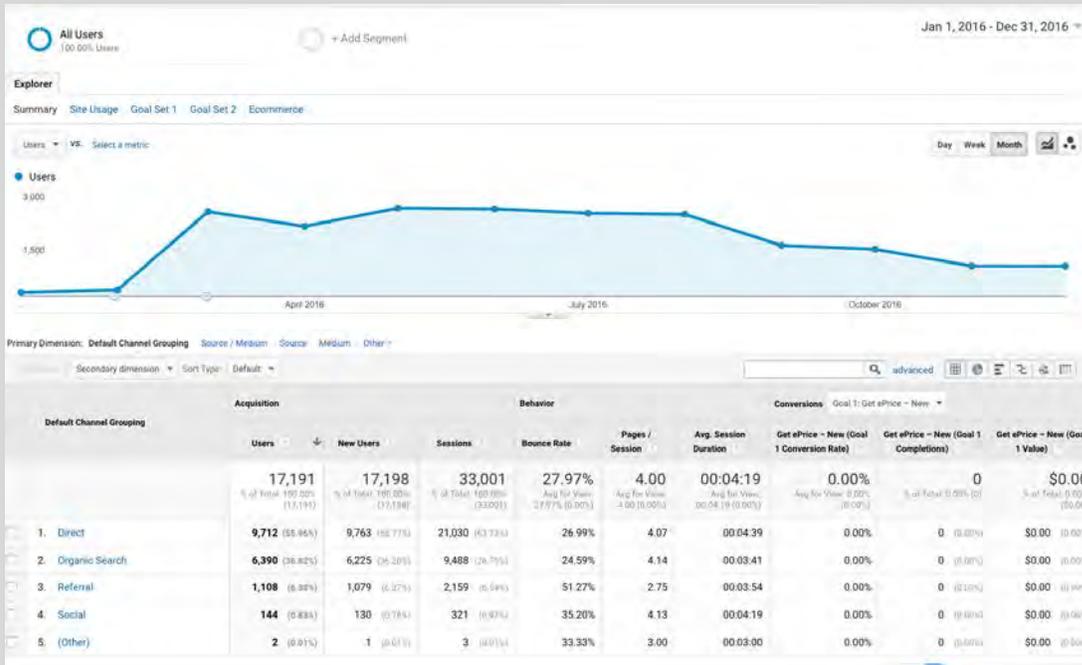
### Wichita.Cars Traffic and Traffic Value

Wichita.Cars received a good amount of visitors right after it launched in 2016. The amount of visitors grew even further when the car dealership launched a new version of the web site in 2017.

- Wichita.Cars received 5,518 Google organic visitors in 2016 and 6,390 total organic search visitors in 2016, just by having a basic web site on the Wichita.Cars domain name.
- The average CPC (Cost Per Click) for the “Wichita Cars” keyword is \$2.50 per click. If we multiply the average CPC by the number of visitors Wichita.Cars received during 2016 from organic search, that the value of that organic traffic is \$15,975.
- The dealership received about \$16,000 if value in 2016 from organic search engine visitors
- The dealership received \$24,280 of value from direct type in traffic visitors during 2016, based on 9,712 direct clicks or type-ins to the web site



*Average Cost Per Click (CPC) for the “Wichita Cars” keyword, according to SEMrush.com.*



17,191 total visitors during 2016 to Wichita.Cars web site according to Google Analytics.

During 2016, there were 17,191 total visitors to the Wichita.Cars web site, as provided by Google Analytics. The data shows 9,712 direct visits or type-ins, 6,390 visits from organic search (this includes Google, Bing, and Yahoo! organic traffic):

Default Channel Grouping	Acquisition			Behavior		
	Users	New Users	Sessions	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration
	17,191 % of Total: 100.00% (17,191)	17,198 % of Total: 100.00% (17,198)	33,001 % of Total: 100.00% (33,001)	27.97% Avg for View: 27.97% (0.00%)	4.00 Avg for View: 4.00 (0.00%)	00:04:19 Avg for View: 00:04:19 (0.00%)
1. Direct	9,712 (56.56%)	9,763 (56.77%)	21,030 (63.73%)	26.99%	4.07	00:04:39
2. Organic Search	6,390 (36.82%)	6,225 (36.20%)	9,488 (28.75%)	24.59%	4.14	00:03:41
3. Referral	1,108 (6.38%)	1,079 (6.27%)	2,159 (6.54%)	51.27%	2.75	00:03:54
4. Social	144 (0.83%)	130 (0.75%)	321 (0.97%)	35.20%	4.13	00:04:19
5. (Other)	2 (0.01%)	1 (0.01%)	3 (0.01%)	33.33%	3.00	00:03:00

17,191 total visitors to the Wichita.Cars web site, as provided by Google Analytics.

Note that the bounce rate was 28 percent, which is very good. Visitors viewed an average of 4 pages per session, and spent about 4 minutes per session. This shows that the traffic is good—the visitors were quality visitors for the car dealership, as they were interested in the content.

When checking the site in March 2016, we found that the site owner essentially had a one-page web site on Wichita.Cars, which directed users to three of their other web sites. For this reason, we didn't expect the Wichita.Cars one-page web site to rank well—the web site needed to expand, add pages and.

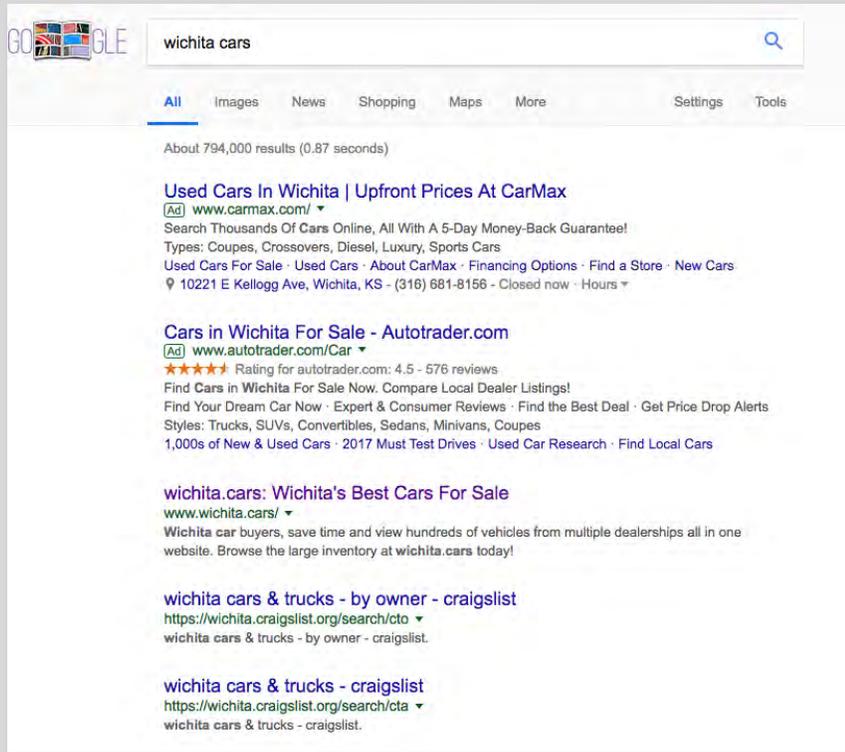
Nevertheless, the car dealership received good value from just having a basic web site live on the Wichita.Cars domain name:

- During 2016, with just a basic web site on Wichita.Cars, the car dealership received 16,102 visitors from direct traffic and organic search.
- The value of the traffic the car dealership received during 2016 from direct traffic and organic search is \$40,255.

Hyundai Buick GMC launched a new website on Wichita.Cars in February 2017.



A Google search for “Wichita Cars” on March 7, 2018, shown below, reveals that the web site Wichita.Cars ranks in the first position in the organic search results (right after the Google AdWords ads):



There are currently about 1,600 web pages of Wichita.Cars indexed in Google. This is a good indication that Google is indexing the entire web site, meaning this business receives organic search-result traffic.

### Search Engine Rankings

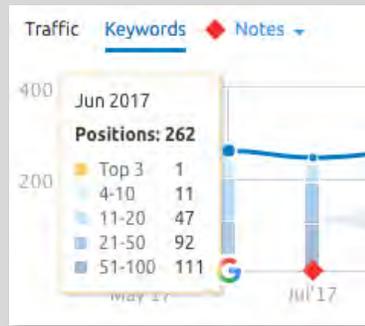
One of the more important issues to look at is the search engine rankings for Wichita.Cars. To do this, we used data we obtained from SEMrush.com, a popular search engine rank-tracking tool.

Looking at the SEMrush.com data for Wichita.Cars, we see that the search engine rankings pretty much stayed the same since the original web site was launched.



Wichita.Cars search engine rankings (keyword rankings) in Google.com over time, data provided by SEMrush.com

When the web site was originally launched, the number of keyword that the web site ranked for was 262 positions total. Note that the web site only was found for 1 keyword in the top 3 positions, and 11 keywords in the top 4-10 positions.



This then changed to having 4 positions in the top 3 and 6 positions in the top 4-10 positions in September 2017.



Currently, as of March 2018, the web site has 2 keywords in the top 3 positions, 7 keywords in the top 4-10 positions, and 32 keywords in the top 11-20 positions.



Wichita.Cars search engine rankings as of March 2018 according to SEMrush.com.

Important keywords that the web site is ranking for are “Wichita Cars”, as well as “Wichita Cars for Sale”. When it comes to search engine rankings in Google, the web site Wichita.Cars has always ranked well for “Wichita Cars”, outranking competitor web sites, such as WichitaCars.COM.

### Wichita.Cars Conclusion

The Wichita.Cars web site has been live on the Wichita.Cars domain name for just over two years. This is a decent amount of data to draw solid conclusions based on data collected from Google Analytics along with search engine ranking data from SEMrush.com.

The Wichita.Cars web site and domain name is doing better than other similar web sites on others TLD, such as .COM, .NET, or .ORG. What is important to note on top of that are the following three key observations:

- Wichita.Cars received 5,518 organic visitors from Google in 2016 and 6,390 total organic search visitors in 2016, just by having a basic web site on the Wichita.Cars domain name.
- The average CPC (Cost Per Click) for the “Wichita Cars” keyword is \$2.50 per click. If we multiply the average CPC by the number of visitors Wichita.Cars received during 2016 from organic search, we get to a value of organic search traffic totaling \$15,975.
- The direct type in traffic value the dealership received was \$24,280 during 2016, based on 9,712 direct clicks or type-ins to the web site.

Based on my analysis of the Wichita.Cars web site and domain name being used for over two years and having been promoted (other than through organic, free search results), we believe the Wichita.Cars domain name and web site have been a great success. We expect that this dealership will continue benefiting from using a highly relevant Geo .CARS domain name.

In the first year that the Wichita.Cars web site and domain name were live, the car dealership saw about \$40,000 of value through direct type-in traffic, as well as from organic search.

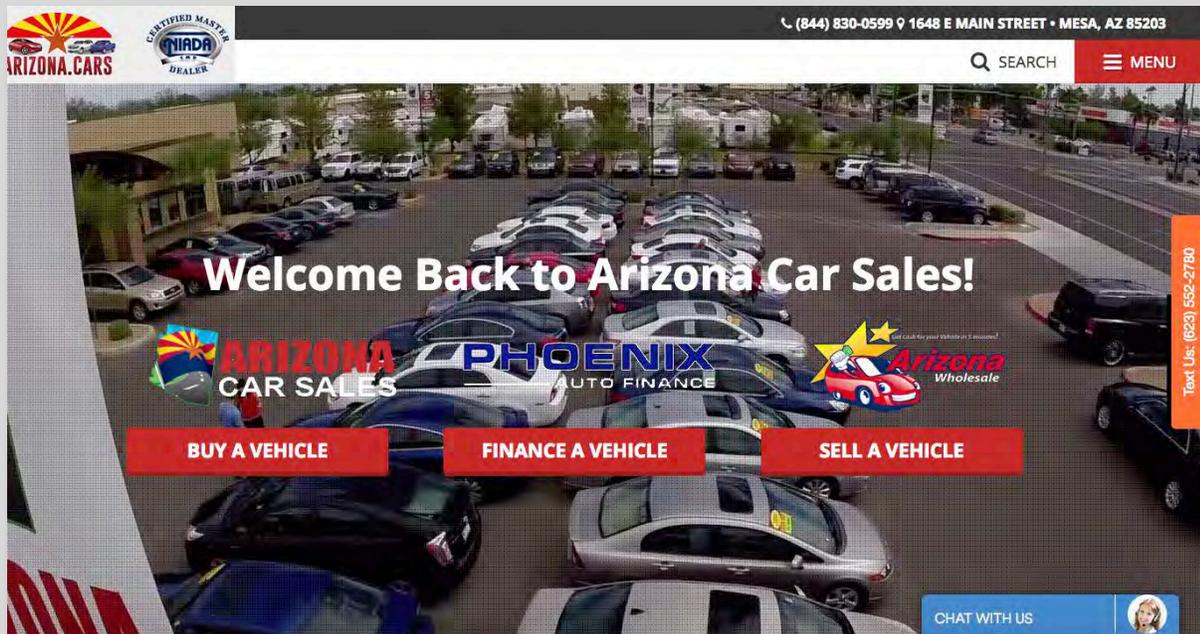
## Arizona.Cars

Arizona Car Sales, in Mesa Arizona, uses the Arizona.Cars domain name for their web site. We took a look at the traffic to the web site from Google Analytics, as well as the search engine rankings (keyword rankings) in the Google search engine using SEMrush.com data.

When looking at the data for Arizona.Cars, my goal was to determine whether or not traffic and keyword rankings are affected by using a .CARS domain name—and, in this case, the name of a State in the domain name. In other words, does being known as, and using “Arizona” in the domain name restrict the web site from ranking well for keywords other than “Arizona Cars”?

The Arizona.Cars web site wasn’t always a web site using the Arizona.Cars domain name. In fact, at the end of May 2016, the dealership, Arizona Car Sales, moved to Arizona.Cars from their previous domain name, ArizonaUsedCars.com. Other than looking at the keywords that the web site ranks for and analyzing the traffic to the web site, it’s important to look at what happened when Arizona Car Sales moved to a new domain name.

The current web site, Arizona.Cars, is shown below:



*Arizona.Cars web site’s home page in March 2018.*

As of March 2018, there are about 200 web pages of Arizona.Cars indexed in Google. This is a good indication that Google is indexing the web site, which should lead to traffic from Google’s organic search results.

### Moving from ArizonaUsedCars.com to Arizona.Cars

As we previously mentioned, Arizona Car Sales, moved from ArizonaUsedCars.com to Arizona.Cars. To our knowledge, when the dealership moved to the new .CARS domain name, nothing else was changed at all. They just moved from one (.com) domain to a .CARS domain.

I took a look at what happened when the car dealership switched to a new .CARS domain name. First, let's look to see if we can identify any change in traffic or search engine rankings according to SEMrush.com:



ArizonaUsedCars.com Traffic according to SEMrush.com.

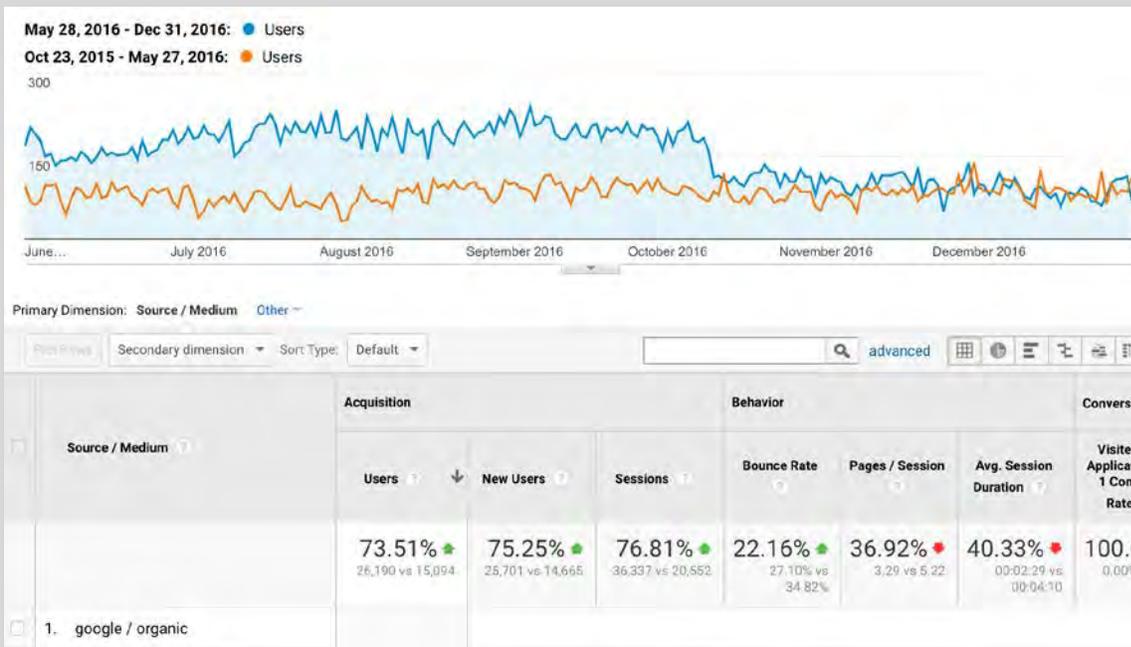
In the above screen shot, we can see the results of the move to a new domain .CARS domain name: the ArizonaUsedCars.com traffic went down to virtually no traffic, around May/June 2016. This is expected, as they no longer were using that domain name—they moved the web site to the Arizona.Cars domain name on May 28, 2016. Let's take a look at the keyword search engine rankings, just to be sure, as well:



ArizonaUsedCars.com Keyword Rankings according to SEMrush.com.

We can also see that when the car dealership moved from ArizonaUsedCars.com to the Arizona.Cars domain name, they lost all their keyword search engine rankings on the ArizonaUsedCars.com domain name. This is expected—as they no longer were using the domain name ArizonaUsedCars.com and had moved to Arizona.Cars.

But what happened when they moved their web site to the Arizona.Cars domain name? The traffic from Google organic search went up 74 percent according to Google Analytics.



*Google organic traffic to dealership web site, comparing before/after it moved to Arizona.Cars domain name.*

Above, we compared May 28, 2016 to December 31, 2016 with October 23, 2015 to May 27, 2016. This is 7 months after the move to Arizona.Cars and 7 months before moving to Arizona.Cars.

As we mentioned, the web site was moved from one domain name to another. There were no other changes made except to move to a new .CARS domain name.

- When the car dealership moved from ArizonaUsedCars.com to Arizona.Cars, Google organic traffic went up 74 percent.

According to SEMrush.com, the average CPC (Cost Per Click) for the keyword “Used Cars Arizona” is \$3.66 per click. Let’s use this amount to assign a value to each click (from organic search), the web site was receiving before and after the web site was moved from ArizonaUsedCars.com to Arizona.Cars:

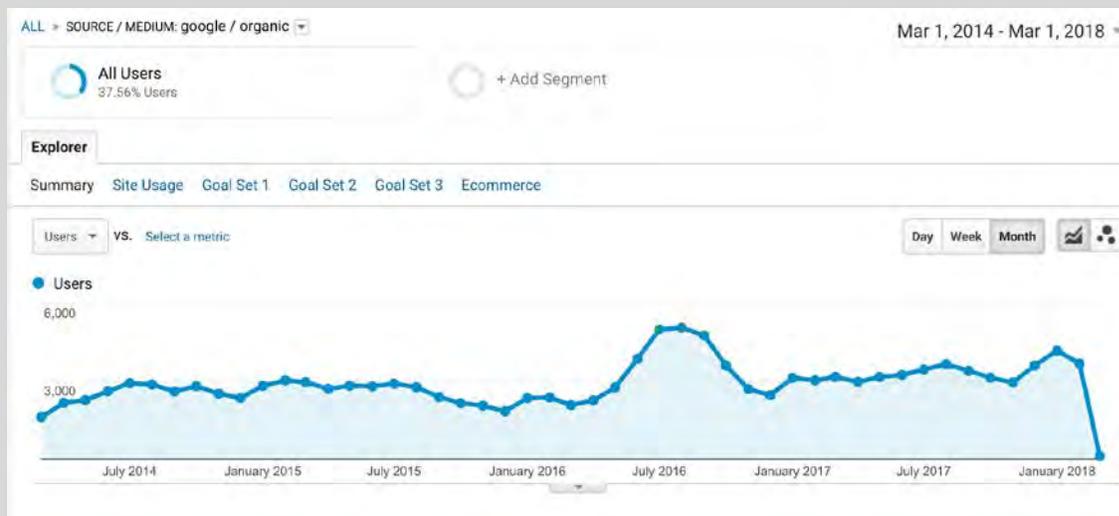
- The dealership, on ArizonaUsedCars.com, received 15,094 visitors from Google organic search in the 7 months before they moved. That's a value of \$55,244.
- The dealership, on Arizona.Cars, received 26,190 visitors from Google organic search in the 7 months after they moved to that domain name. That's a value of about \$95,855.
- Just by moving from ArizonaUsedCars.com to Arizona.Cars, the dealership saw a traffic value increase of \$40,611 over the 7 month period (\$69,618 of value annualized).

It's important to note here that the only thing that was done was change domain names. The web site design or content did not change when the web site moved to the new Arizona.Cars domain name.

### Traffic Quality & Acceptance

I took a look at the Google Analytics web site traffic data for the web site Arizona.Cars. There is more data in Google Analytics as far as traffic goes—as SEMrush.com only has data from May 2017 to March 2018 for new gTLD domain names. In Google Analytics, the web site data that is available is from March 2014 to March 2018. The domain name Arizona.Cars was not registered until January 20, 2016.

As we mentioned, the car dealership web site was moved from ArizonaUsedCars.com to Arizona.Cars at the end of May 2016. Let's take a look at the bigger picture—the traffic before and after the web site moved: not just the Google organic search traffic that went up 74 percent after the domain name moved to Arizona.Cars.



*Arizona.Cars overall website traffic, March 2014 to March 2018 according to Google Analytics.*

If we look at the data as if the web site was launched in January 2016 (when the Arizona.Cars domain name was registered), the web site traffic is better from January 2016 to November 2016 than it was during the previous period (before January 2016). There was a large spike in traffic from September 2015 to January 2016. However, this was prior to the Arizona.Cars domain name being registered. It occurred on the web site on the prior domain

name ArizonaUsedCars.com. (Remember, the web site moved at the end of May 2016 to the new domain name, Arizona.Cars).

Just by looking at the overall traffic before the web site moved, and then after the web site moved, it's receiving more traffic after the move to the new domain name.

Even though the web site was on another domain name prior to June 2016, overall, we can see that the traffic from Google organic search is higher from January 2016, after the domain name Arizona.Cars began to be used for the web site.

Let's take a look at the period of time before and after the web site move and look at the referring sites—to see what the traffic looks like before and after.

1. <a href="#">google / organic</a>			
May 28, 2016 - Mar 1, 2018	70,836 (46.19%)	69,393 (46.02%)	96,875 (45.46%)
Aug 24, 2014 - May 27, 2016	50,381 (27.01%)	50,051 (27.05%)	68,685 (30.14%)
<b>% Change</b>	<b>40.60%</b>	<b>38.64%</b>	<b>41.04%</b>
2. <a href="#">(direct) / (none)</a>			
May 28, 2016 - Mar 1, 2018	29,468 (19.21%)	29,491 (19.56%)	46,068 (21.62%)
Aug 24, 2014 - May 27, 2016	28,308 (15.17%)	28,437 (15.37%)	39,674 (17.41%)
<b>% Change</b>	<b>4.10%</b>	<b>3.71%</b>	<b>16.12%</b>
3. <a href="#">GeniusMonkey_OOIA / Referral</a>			
May 28, 2016 - Mar 1, 2018	21,491 (14.01%)	21,213 (14.07%)	27,696 (13.00%)
Aug 24, 2014 - May 27, 2016	5,761 (3.09%)	5,738 (3.10%)	6,851 (3.01%)
<b>% Change</b>	<b>273.04%</b>	<b>269.69%</b>	<b>304.26%</b>
4. <a href="#">m.facebook.com / referral</a>			
May 28, 2016 - Mar 1, 2018	7,913 (5.16%)	7,864 (5.21%)	9,864 (4.63%)
Aug 24, 2014 - May 27, 2016	4,412 (2.37%)	4,308 (2.33%)	5,689 (2.50%)
<b>% Change</b>	<b>79.35%</b>	<b>82.54%</b>	<b>73.39%</b>

*Web site visits, before and after the web site was moved, according to Google Analytics.*

As with the increase in traffic on the Wichita.Cars web site, the Arizona.Cars web site did some paid advertising before and after the web site was moved—and benefitted from the increase in traffic. From May 2016 to November 2017, they did some advertising with GeniusMonkey, which is programmatic display advertising. The Google organic

traffic went up during this period of time, as well as the overall web site traffic, from the display advertising. 30 percent of the web site traffic was from Google organic search during this period of time.

### Search Engine Rankings

I also took a look at the web site’s keyword rankings over the same period of time, from May 2017 to March 2018.

The keyword rankings are reported by SEMrush.com. When we looked at the keyword rankings for Arizona.Cars, the number of keywords the site is ranking increased over time.



Keyword positions of Arizona.Cars, according to SEMrush.com, from May 2017 to March 2018.

In June 2017, Arizona.Cars had 3,212 keywords in the top 100 search engine rankings, with 80 in the top 3 positions. There were 181 keywords in the top 4-10 positions.



The number of keywords in the top 100 positions continued to climb, and in March 2018, the keyword positions are as follows:



Arizona.Cars has 6,236 keywords in the top 100 search engine rankings in Google’s organic search results as of March 2018. This is nearly double the number of keywords, after 9 months.

Some of the keywords ranked in the top 3 positions in Google include:

- auto financing phoenix az
- phoenix auto finance
- az car sales
- auto dealers in mesa az
- mesa az car dealerships
- arizona used car dealerships
- used car dealers az
- az auto dealers
- phoenix car loans
- lease car phoenix

Even though the domain name and the main brand of the business includes “Arizona” as a keyword, the web site does rank well for Arizona, Mesa, and Phoenix keywords.

## Arizona.Cars Conclusion

The car dealership moved from ArizonaUsedCars.com to Arizona.Cars at the end of May 2016. Only the web site was moved to a new domain name and no other changes to the web site were made. As a result of the move to the new .CARS domain name, the web site got more Google organic search traffic during 2016 than the previous period that we analyzed:

- The dealership, on ArizonaUsedCars.com, received 15,094 visitors from Google organic search in a 7-month period before they moved. That's a value of about \$55,244.
- The dealership, on Arizona.Cars, received 26,190 visitors from Google organic search in a 7 month period after they moved. That's a value of about \$95,855.
- Just by moving from ArizonaUsedCars.com to Arizona.Cars, the dealership saw a traffic value increase of \$40,611 (\$69,618 of value annualized).

Search engine rankings since SEMrush.com has been tracking them, continue to go up and has not been affected by any Google search algorithm updates or other influences that would have decreased the number of positions the web site is ranking for—which is impressive.

What's most impressive and noteworthy, though, is the fact that the traffic from Google organic search went up over 74 percent—just by moving to a .CARS domain name. That result alone brought a value of over \$40,000 in additional traffic to the web site over a 7 month period. This value continues to rise in as Arizona.Cars benefits from more keyword search engine rankings and more Google organic search traffic.

## Phoenix.Cars

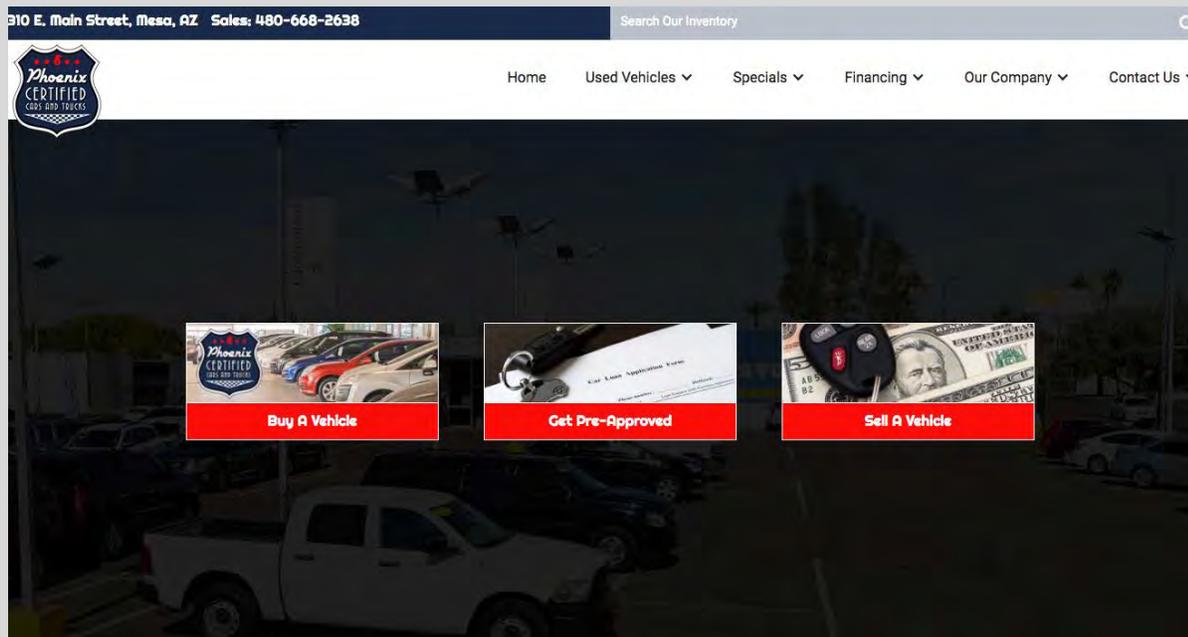
Phoenix Certified Cars and Trucks, in Mesa, Arizona, uses Phoenix.Cars for their web site. The Phoenix.Cars web site appears to be smaller than the Wichita.Cars web site, but a larger web site than the Arizona.Cars web site, with over 600 pages indexed in the Google search engine.

### Pages Indexed in Google

- Wichita.Cars – 87 pages indexed
- Arizona.Cars – 211 pages indexed
- Phoenix.Cars – 630 pages indexed

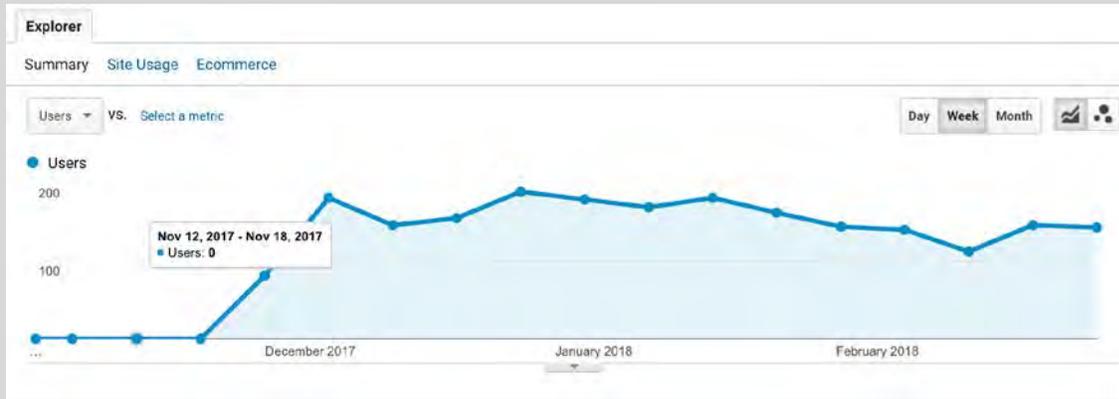
Similar to the Wichita.Cars web site, Phoenix.Cars was launched directly on the Phoenix.Cars domain name. This is different than the Arizona.Cars web site, where the car dealership had moved to from ArizonaUsedCars.com to Arizona.Cars.

A screen capture of the current home page of Phoenix.Cars is below:



### Traffic to the Phoenix.Cars Web Site

Based on the Google Analytics data that we were given access to, it appears that the Phoenix.Cars web site was launched around December 2017.



Overall web site traffic to Phoenix.Cars web site, December 2017 to March 2018.

When the web site was launched in December 2017, 60 percent of the traffic came from direct type-ins of the domain name, 17 percent from Google organic search, and about 18 percent from Facebook. There doesn't appear to have been any advertising done, except from advertising on Facebook.

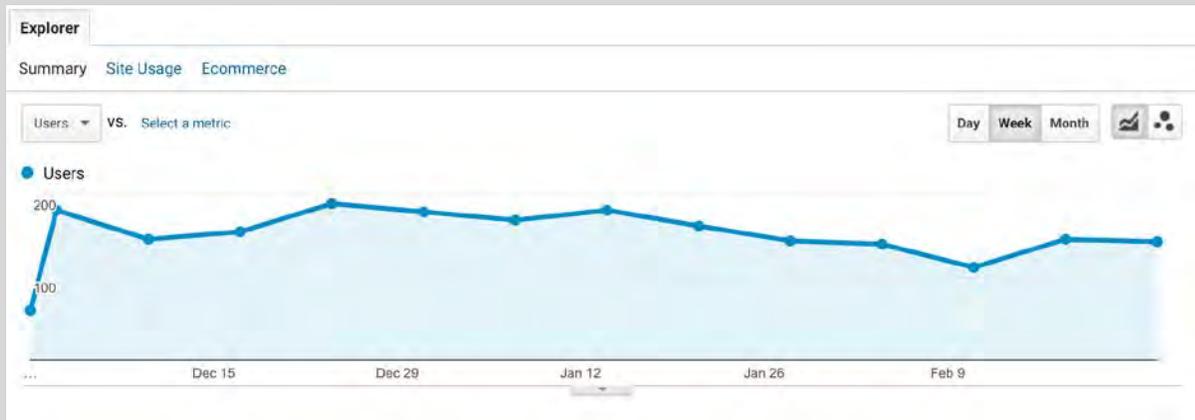
Source / Medium	Users	New Users	Sessions	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration
	658 % of Total: 100.00% (658)	649 % of Total: 100.00% (649)	1,183 % of Total: 100.00% (1,183)	47.51% Avg for View: 47.51% (0.00%)	5.18 Avg for View: 5.18 (0.00%)	00:03:46 Avg for View: 00:03:46 (0.00%)
1. (direct) / (none)	399 (59.55%)	391 (60.25%)	791 (66.86%)	51.96%	4.49	00:03:27
2. google / organic	112 (16.72%)	102 (15.72%)	184 (15.55%)	27.72%	8.58	00:05:37
3. m.facebook.com / referral	100 (14.93%)	100 (15.41%)	113 (9.55%)	46.02%	4.77	00:02:41
4. l.facebook.com / referral	23 (3.43%)	23 (3.54%)	27 (2.28%)	70.37%	4.19	00:02:55
5. lm.facebook.com / referral	13 (1.94%)	12 (1.85%)	16 (1.35%)	12.50%	10.75	00:05:06
6. bing / organic	5 (0.75%)	5 (0.77%)	7 (0.59%)	0.00%	3.29	00:00:41
7. controlpanel.carbaselive.com / referral	3 (0.45%)	3 (0.46%)	4 (0.34%)	75.00%	2.00	00:04:52
8. yahoo / organic	3 (0.45%)	3 (0.46%)	3 (0.25%)	33.33%	2.00	00:01:11
9. searchencrypt.com / referral	2 (0.30%)	2 (0.31%)	2 (0.17%)	50.00%	6.00	00:03:56
10. business.facebook.com / referral	1 (0.15%)	1 (0.15%)	12 (1.01%)	58.33%	3.67	00:08:47

Traffic to Phoenix.Cars web site, December 2017.

We do know that some of the direct traffic to the web site is from direct type-in traffic and some is from unknown sources. Both of these sources are classified under the (direct) / (none) source in Google Analytics. We do think that the direct traffic, at 60 percent of the total traffic, is rather high. We do not have any specific data that proves that

the direct traffic is type-in traffic. However, with the Facebook traffic being at about 18 percent, it's not likely that the direct traffic is from untracked Facebook clicks.

We also took a look at the traffic as a whole from December 2017 to March 2018. There was a jump in traffic during the week of February 25, 2018 to March 3, 2018, as seen below:



*All traffic to the Phoenix.Cars web site, from December 2017 to March 2018.*

During the week of February 24 to March 3, 2018, it appears that additional Facebook advertising was done—or the web site was mentioned on Facebook more, which brought more traffic to the web site. When the web site was mentioned on Facebook during this time, we find it very interesting that the Google organic search traffic went up as well.

Source / Medium	Acquisition			Behavior		
	Users	New Users	Sessions	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration
	292 % of Total: 100.00% (292)	257 % of Total: 100.39% (256)	500 % of Total: 100.00% (500)	46.80% Avg for View: 46.80% (0.00%)	4.12 Avg for View: 4.12 (0.00%)	00:03:42 Avg for View: 00:03:42 (0.00%)
1. (direct) / (none)	140 (47.14%)	122 (47.47%)	194 (38.80%)	56.19%	3.74	00:02:21
2. google / organic	61 (20.54%)	53 (20.62%)	108 (21.60%)	25.93%	7.11	00:05:43
3. l.facebook.com / referral	53 (17.85%)	53 (20.62%)	55 (11.00%)	89.09%	1.47	00:00:12
4. m.facebook.com / referral	15 (5.05%)	15 (5.84%)	15 (3.00%)	66.67%	1.93	00:02:22
5. my.dealersocket.com / referral	5 (1.68%)	0 (0.00%)	74 (14.80%)	29.73%	3.41	00:05:59
6. carbase.com / referral	4 (1.35%)	3 (1.17%)	6 (1.20%)	50.00%	2.33	00:04:59
7. m.autotrader.com / referral	4 (1.35%)	4 (1.56%)	4 (0.80%)	50.00%	2.00	00:01:21
8. yahoo / organic	4 (1.35%)	0 (0.00%)	32 (6.40%)	25.00%	4.47	00:07:21
9. autotrader.com / referral	3 (1.01%)	3 (1.17%)	3 (0.60%)	0.00%	6.00	00:03:14
10. bing / organic	3 (1.01%)	0 (0.00%)	4 (0.80%)	25.00%	2.25	00:00:13

*Traffic to Phoenix.Cars web site, February 25, 2018 to March 3, 2018.*

We can see that the direct traffic percentage actually went down when the Phoenix.Cars web site was mentioned more on Facebook. But, at the same time, the Google organic search traffic went up at the same rate as the Facebook traffic. Google organic search traffic was 19 percent of the total traffic to the web site during this period. Previously, back in December 2017, the Google organic traffic was 16 percent of the total traffic to Phoenix.Cars.

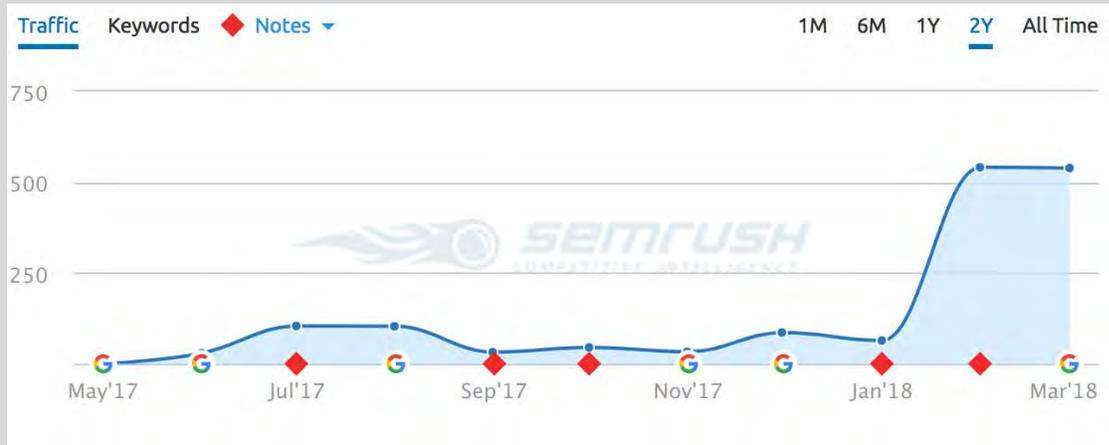
What's interesting to note here, as well, is that we are still seeing a considerable amount of traffic going directly to the web site—it is more traffic than the web site had during December 2017, and we attribute this to more people seeing the brand name and going directly to the web site (typing in the domain name in the web browser). In many web browsers, users may think that they're searching for the keyword or brand name "Phoenix.Cars" but, since Phoenix.Cars is actually a domain name—they are taken directly to the web site.

### Traffic Quality & Acceptance

One sign of the general acceptance and understanding of a domain name and a brand is the amount of type-in traffic a web site receives. When internet users hear a domain name or remember a domain name and intend to go directly to a web site, they will type in that domain name into their web browser. Just like the other .CARS domain names and web sites we have analyzed, Wichita.Cars and Arizona.Cars, we see a trend: there continues to be a considerable amount of direct, type-in traffic to these web sites, especially with Phoenix.Cars. This is a good sign.

## Search Engine Rankings

For Phoenix.Cars, we took a look at the web site's search engine rankings in the Google search engine. The web site did not receive any paid search traffic from Google AdWords, and it does look like there may have been some paid advertising done on Facebook. As we mentioned previously, it is interesting to note that when additional traffic came from Facebook, the Google organic went up.



*SEMrush.com estimate of traffic from Google organic search, May 2017 to March 2018.*

The estimate of traffic by SEMrush.com is different than the Google Analytics traffic—and there are a few reasons for this. While the domain name Phoenix.Cars was registered on January 20, 2016, the latest version of the web site for Phoenix.Cars wasn't really live until December 2017. SEMrush.com shows that there was some traffic to the domain name—but this does not appear to be correct.

We know that the web site wasn't launched until December 2017. Is this an indication that even prior to the web site being launched there was type-in traffic going to the Phoenix.Cars domain name?

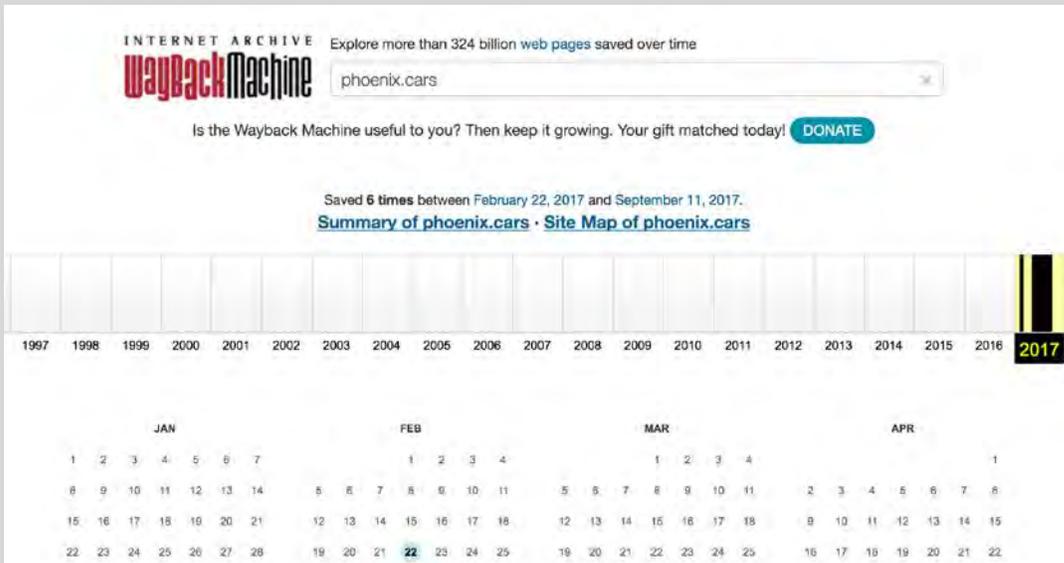
This is a possibility.

The web site was launched in December 2017, but let's look at the keyword search engine rankings according to SEMrush.com:



Keyword rankings for Phoenix.Cars, from May 2017 to March 2018, according to SEMrush.com.

I took a look at archive.org, and there doesn't appear to have been a previous web site on the Phoenix.Cars domain name:



History of web site on Phoenix.Cars domain name, according to Archive.org.

Just a registration of the domain name Phoenix.Cars may have helped the Phoenix.Cars domain name rank, as it was ranking for nearly 1300 keywords in August 2017.



Keyword positions for Phoenix.Cars in August 2017, according to SEMrush.com.

The domain name ranked for 3 keywords in the top 3 positions in Google organic search in August 2017, and 5 keywords in the top 4-10 positions.



Keyword positions for Phoenix.Cars in March 2018, according to SEMrush.com.

In March 2018, however, the web site is ranking for 4 keywords in the top 3 positions, and 8 keywords in the top 4-10 positions in Google organic search. While the web site is ranking for less keywords, there are more important keywords showing up in the top ranking spots.

The web site is ranking in the top spots for these keywords, as of March 2018:

- phoenix cars
- phoenix certified cars and trucks
- phoenix vehicle
- phoenix cars
- phoenix car
- phoenix cars and trucks
- the phoenix car
- arizona cars and trucks
- certified car and truck
- az cars and trucks

The addition of the web site ranking for Arizona and AZ keywords is noteworthy—as well as the fact that the web site continues to rank in the top spot for Phoenix Cars and the company’s brand name, Phoenix Certified Cars and Trucks.

Previously, we had mentioned that the web site traffic from Google organic search went up significantly when the Facebook traffic went up. This is interesting to note—and my opinion is that when the company name was mentioned on Facebook more often, Facebook users who saw that brand name went to Google and searched for the company name or brand name, or the web site. We do not see a jump in actual search engine rankings based on the SEMrush.com data, so the jump in Google organic traffic is most likely due to those users doing more searches because of the brand mentions in Facebook.

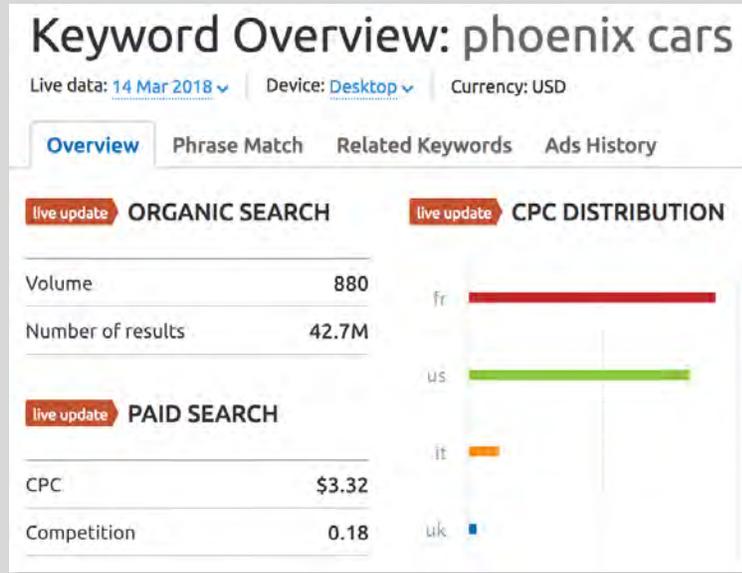
I estimated the traffic value of the visitors to the Phoenix.Cars web site. So far, we have 3 months of data from Google Analytics.

Since the web site was launched in December 2017, the web site has received the following traffic (December 2017 to March 14, 2018):

Default Channel Grouping	Acquisition		Behavior			
	Users	New Users	Sessions	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration
	2,075 <small>% of Total: 100.00% (2,075)</small>	2,071 <small>% of Total: 100.04% (2,066)</small>	4,481 <small>% of Total: 100.00% (4,481)</small>	42.33% <small>Avg for View: 42.33% (0.00%)</small>	5.08 <small>Avg for View: 5.08 (0.00%)</small>	00:04:52 <small>Avg for View: 00:04:52 (0.00%)</small>
1. Direct	1,151 (54.11%)	1,146 (55.34%)	2,269 (50.64%)	47.91%	4.94	00:04:03
2. Organic Search	515 (24.21%)	479 (23.13%)	1,114 (24.86%)	27.38%	6.55	00:06:14
3. Social	382 (17.96%)	380 (18.35%)	471 (10.51%)	61.15%	3.75	00:02:30
4. Referral	78 (3.67%)	65 (3.14%)	626 (13.97%)	34.66%	3.98	00:07:12
5. (Other)	1 (0.05%)	1 (0.05%)	1 (0.02%)	0.00%	5.00	00:00:44

*Phoenix.Cars web site traffic from December 2017 to March 14, 2018 according to Google Analytics.*

- The web site has received 1,151 visits from direct type-ins, and 515 visitors from organic search (Bing, Yahoo, and Google combined).
- The average CPC (Cost Per Click) for “Phoenix Cars” is \$3.32 per click, according to SEMrush.com.



Average CPC for “Phoenix Cars” is \$3.32 per click.

- If we calculate the value of the number of direct visitors and organic search traffic to the web site so far, it is 1,665 visitors times \$3.32 per click: \$5,531.
- In the few months that the Phoenix.Cars web site has been live, the car dealership has already covered the cost of the annual registration of the domain name.
- If we annualize the value, that’s an estimate of \$53 per day, which is a total estimate of \$19,600 annually.

Just by putting up a web site on Phoenix.Cars, the dealership has received an estimate value of \$5,531 in traffic in the first 103 days—and will receive nearly \$20,000 in expected direct type-in and organic search engine traffic annually.

## Conclusion

By analyzing three separate GEO domain names using the .CARS TLD (Top Level Domain), we are able to see the differences between the three web sites and the traffic to them. By looking at these differences, we were able to determine that each of these web sites have traffic indicators that show a general acceptance of the .CARS TLD, that there is no confusion that using a .CARS domain name will not have any negative effects on internet traffic and visitors. In fact, it's quite the opposite.

We are seeing a considerable amount of direct, type-in type of traffic to each of the .CARS web sites that we analyzed. In fact, when more traditional paid advertising was done, that only increased the amount of direct, type-in traffic to the web site. More people were exposed to the "brand", and they searched for that brand—and went directly to the .CARS web site.

The trends are positive, and this is what we are seeing after the analysis:

- Registering a .CARS domain name and putting up a basic web site creates value. That value is from the direct type-in traffic and the "free" organic search traffic for Google, Yahoo, and Bing.
- One web site simply moved from a .COM to a .CARS TLD and saw an increase of 74 percent in Google organic visitors just by moving to a .CARS domain name.
- The value received from using a .CARS domain name for your car dealership web site is very, very good. In one case, the car dealership is seeing an increase of over \$40,000 in value from the direct type-in and organic search traffic.

Two of the web sites did do some paid advertising that brought traffic to their web sites. One of them, Wichita.Cars, drove traffic via iHeartMedia advertising. This increased the direct type-ins and direct traffic to the web site. Arizona.Cars did paid advertising via GeniusMonkey, which also drove up the amount of direct and type-in traffic to the web site. However, the car dealership moved their web site to a .CARS domain name and changed nothing else: and they saw a significant increase in additional traffic.

The third web site we analyzed, Phoenix.Cars, continues to get a considerable amount of direct type-in traffic to their web site, even after they launched the web site in December 2017. When they received more Facebook traffic (via organic Facebook traffic and/or sponsored Facebook traffic), the web site received a considerable amount of additional traffic from Google's organic search. Internet users searched Google for the keyword "Phoenix cars" or Phoenix.Cars, and visited the web site. The car dealership, after 103 days, has received over \$5,000 in direct type-in and organic search traffic, which is more than the annual registration cost of a .CARS domain name.

When it comes to search engine rankings for all of these .CARS web sites, the web sites are getting crawled by the search engines. They do rank well for valued keywords, related to their business and the content that they have on their web site.

It's clear to me that using a .CARS domain name for your web site can increase the amount of direct and type-in traffic to your web site. Combine this with more branding efforts and paid advertising, and you have a winning combination. That winning combination is not only from increased keyword search engine rankings: it's in the value received from direct type-in traffic and organic search engine traffic and clicks to the web site.

## Resources

Bill Hartzler was compensated for his time to review and collect the data required to produce a report on the findings. In no way did this have an effect on the outcome of the study of our opinions about the results.

The following list of web sites were used and referenced in this study:

**Wichita.Cars**

<https://Wichita.Cars>

**Arizona.Cars**

<https://Arizona.Cars>

**Phoenix.Cars**

<https://Phoenix.Cars>

**SEMrush**

<https://www.semrush.com>

**Google Analytics**

<https://www.google.com/analytics>

**iHeartMedia**

<https://www.iheartmedia.com>

**GeniusMonkey**

<https://www.geniusmonkey.com>

**Hartzler Consulting**

<https://www.hartzler.com>

**Bill Hartzler**

<https://www.billhartzler.com>

**pflyz creative**

<https://www.pflyzcreative.com>

**WordPress Website Management**

<https://managewpwebsites.com>



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