



NHTSA

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

ODI Recall Exploratory Research

5.16.2024

Purpose and Research Objectives

Purpose

Understand the mindset of drivers, clarify barriers and identify potential motivators to complete recall repairs. The research findings will help NHTSA craft effective communications pursuant to the agency's mission.

Research Objectives

1. Understand drivers' experiences with vehicle maintenance and recalls.
2. Identify why and when consumers proactively check for recalls and why they don't.
3. Discuss preferred communication channels to get consumers to see and act on recall notices.
4. Explore barriers to recall repairs among general market and at-risk audiences.
5. Assess potential motivators and incentives to encourage recall repairs.
6. Evaluate existing advertising concepts and explore effective elements for future ads.
7. Consider cultural nuances, opportunities and sensitivities in advertising efforts targeted to at-risk markets.

Methodology

Research Design

Online Focus Groups (20 groups)

- 75-minute groups
- n=120 participants
- Field dates: M. April 15-Th. April 25, 2024

		At-Risk Audiences				
	GENERAL MARKET	OLDER ADULTS	LOWER INCOME	RURAL	SPANISH RELIANT	
GROUPS	4 groups n=24 participants	4 groups n=24 participants	4 groups n=24 participants	4 groups n=24 participants	4 groups n=24 participants	
QUALIFICATION CRITERIA	Universal criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National audience • Males and females • Must be a primary or shared decision-maker on vehicle maintenance 	Additional criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ages 55+ 	Additional criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income under \$30K for single person HH • Income under \$50K for multi-person HH 	Additional criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live in small town/rural area 	Additional criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born outside the United States • Speaks Spanish most or all the time at home • Consumes media in Spanish at least half the time 	

Overview of Findings

1

Drivers are proactive on maintenance but checking for recalls is not top-of-mind. While the “Routine” concept is well-liked, it doesn’t reflect the current reactionary behavior of checking for recalls after receiving notifications.

2

Using multiple notification channels conveys importance and leverages the advantages of each channel, with dealers/OEMs seen as the most credible source.

3

Key barriers are related to inconvenience and routine disruption, including finding time to drop off a vehicle and total repair time.

4

Free alternative transportation methods and mobile repairs are the most compelling solutions that help address barriers.

5

Ads must convey urgency, avoid technical terms and highlight convenience. Language matters: “free” gets attention but needs more context to be credible; Spanish audiences are more familiar with “recall” than “retiro.”

At-Risk Audience Insights

OLDER ADULTS

- More **safety conscious**.
- Vehicles are a means of **freedom and independence**.
- Like lower-income audiences, many retired older adults are on a **fixed income**.
- Recalls need to be portrayed as free and potential cost savings that **prevent costly repairs down the road**.
- While **flexible schedules** allow some older adults more flexibility to take their vehicle in for repairs, others suffer from **physical infirmities** that make taking a vehicle in more difficult.

LOWER INCOME

- Have **fewer resources** to combat more life challenges.
- Fewer resources can make getting a recall repaired a **lower priority**.
- It's essential to communicate that recall **repairs are urgent** and delaying repairs can be **dangerous**.
- Repairing a recall may be free, but there are still associated costs, like **lost income from time off work**. Lower-income families often **don't have access to a second vehicle**.
- It's essential to communicate how dealerships work to **make recall repairs more convenient**.

RURAL


- Heavily **dependent on their vehicles** and tend to take good care of them.
- Resonate with the importance of proactively **maintaining one's vehicle and preventing future problems**.
- **Distance is the key challenge** for rural residents – taking a vehicle in for a recall is “an event.”
- **Alternative transportation** is an important motivator.
- For rural residents, the motivating **fear is the possibility of being stranded** with a broken-down vehicle.


SPANISH RELIANT

- Struggle with **language barriers** and may be less informed about the recall process.
- It's important that recall **notification materials be presented in Spanish** as well as English for this audience.
- Families tend to be larger and to share fewer vehicles among larger households – it's important to communicate that **recalls are fast and won't inconvenience the family** longer than necessary.
- Participants express a “**time is money**” attitude – if time is being taken from their day to fix a recall, they should be compensated.


Note:

At-risk audience insights are flagged in this report using colored dots.

 Older Adults

 Lower Income

 Rural

 Spanish Reliant

1

Drivers are **proactive on maintenance** but checking for recalls is **not top-of-mind**. While the “Routine” concept is well-liked, it doesn’t reflect the current **reactionary behavior** of checking for recalls after receiving notifications.

*“It **never occurred to me** that I could look up to see if there’s a recall on my vehicle. Typically, I have **waited until I receive notification** from the dealership or manufacturer.”*

– Older Adults Respondent

*“If a light goes on, I’ll check it out. As far as recalls, I’ve been notified a couple times, but I **don’t really do anything proactive** outside of that... if I hear something on the radio about a recall, I might check it out... I’ve got **other things to do** with my time.”*

– Rural Respondent

1

Drivers are **proactive on maintenance** but checking for recalls is **not top-of-mind**. While the “Routine” concept is well-liked, it doesn’t reflect the current **reactionary behavior** of checking for recalls after receiving notifications.

Vehicle Maintenance Activities

- Drivers see vehicles as an **important part of their lives** and perform **regular maintenance to protect themselves and their investment**.
 - Routine activities include oil changes, checking tire tread and pressure and getting applicable inspections.
- Some respondents are **proactive DIYers** and will perform maintenance on their own vehicles, whereas **others wait for their vehicles to tell them when maintenance is needed** via service lights.
- **Checking for recalls is not** typically included as **part of routine maintenance**.
 - The “Routine” concept, while generally well-liked, doesn’t reflect current behavior – more work is needed to get consumers to start to include checking for recalls as part of their routine maintenance.

1

Drivers are **proactive on maintenance** but checking for recalls is **not top-of-mind**. While the “Routine” concept is well-liked, it doesn’t reflect the current **reactionary behavior** of checking for recalls after receiving notifications.

Recalls Experience

- **Most have dealt with vehicle safety recalls at some point.** Their experiences with the repair process range from satisfying to frustrating.
 - The recalls repair process is reactionary and typically triggered by receiving a recall notice in the mail.
- In many cases, **repairs are scheduled and made promptly**, with some choosing not to use their vehicle until the repair is made.
 - In some cases, a dealer’s inability to find requisite parts or the consumer’s perception that the recall is not urgent delays repairs.
- More in the **lower-income audience** mentioned **not receiving recall notices** or **delayed receipt** of the notices after already experiencing issues that prompted a recall. They are also more likely to own older vehicles.
- The most **common benefits** of having a recall repaired are centered around **vehicle safety** and vehicle **resale value**, which **increase confidence and peace of mind**.

2

Using multiple notification channels **conveys importance** and leverages advantages of each channel with **dealers/OEMs seen as the most credible source**.

*“You should have all the [communication channels]. If there’s something that needs to be addressed with my car, I would most likely see it on the news or on my phone. But if you **bombard me with all these other methods**, like mail, **then I will most likely [repair the recall].**”*

– Older Adults Respondent

*“I feel if the message comes through a couple channels, it’s **more credible**. If it’s spam, it might come from one place. But, if you’re getting the **same message from three channels**, you know it’s legit.”*

– Rural Respondent

2

Using multiple notification channels **conveys importance** and leverages advantages of each channel with **dealers/OEMs seen as the most credible source**.

Sources of Information

- Most participants would **start with a Google search** if they wanted to check for a recall.
 - Most say they would use a search comprised of the keywords “year, make, model recalls.”
 - Owners look for trusted sites, including those that utilize a secure link (https:), a government site (.gov) or a recognized/trusted brand (i.e., Kelley Blue Book, CarFax).
- Some mentioned using **social media sites as information sources**.
 - **Reddit** was mentioned as an information source, with most mentions coming from younger participants and those with a DIY maintenance approach.
 - **YouTube** and **Twitter/X** are other commonly referenced social media sources.
- Owners **expect to hear from dealers and OEMs** based on past experience.
 - Some owners have a **relationship or trusted contact at their local dealer**, giving the dealer more credibility than other sources. Dealership credibility may reflect manufacturer credibility, as **dealerships are consumers’ primary communication channel with OEMs**.
 - **Dealerships are a trusted authority** on the vehicles they sell – and, by extension, on their associated vehicle safety recalls.

2

Using multiple notification channels **conveys importance** and leverages advantages of each channel with **dealers/OEMs seen as the most credible source**.

Communication Channels

- Participants say that it is **imperative** that they receive recall notifications through **multiple communication channels**.
 - A variety of communication mediums reinforces urgency and increases credibility of the recall notice.
- Letters and manufacturer emails are the **most preferred notification methods**.
 - These are closely followed by dealership communication – email and text are equally effective.
 - Dealers and OEMs are considered the most knowledgeable about specific vehicles, making them a more credible, authoritative resource than the government or other sources.

Preferred Communication Channels (most preferred to least preferred)

	Manufacturer Email	Letter	Dealership Email	Dealership Text	Dealership Call	TV Ad	Government Email	Radio Commercial	Billboard
TOTAL	91 /120	87 /120	77 /120	75 /120	46 /120	32 /120	27 /120	21 /120	12 /120

Q1. Suppose your vehicle had an open recall. How would you like to be notified about it? *Please select all that apply.*

2

Using multiple notification channels **conveys importance** and leverages advantages of each channel with **dealers/OEMs seen as the most credible source**.

Communication Channels

- **Letters are seen as the most official and most credible medium.**
 - Letters gain credibility by being a higher-cost communication channel (printing, ink and postage costs).
 - While email and text are considered especially convenient, participants say email or text notifications may leave them skeptical or worried about the potential for scams.
- Some participants would find a **text or call** from the dealership helpful, but others say they **barely respond to calls or texts from unknown numbers**.
- TV ads, government emails, radio commercials and billboards are **not preferred** communications methods.
 - TV ads, radio commercials and billboards were mentioned as possible channels among the **older adults market**, but overall, they prefer letters and emails from OEMs.
- For **social media communications**, some participants said they would want the ads to **feature their vehicle**.
 - Tailored communications that include specific vehicles seem more relevant and communicate urgency. For some, if they do not see their vehicle represented in a recall communication, they would be less inclined to react since the ad does not visually communicate an issue with their specific vehicle.

3

Key barriers are related to **inconvenience** and **routine disruption**, including finding time to drop off a vehicle and total repair time.

*“I don’t believe my dealership offers pickup, and I don’t believe they offer a loaner car either. If there were a recall, I would have to **sit there and wait**, which is **taking time out of my day**. Even committing a family member or friend to pick you up and drop you off **interrupts their schedule, too.**”*

– General Market Respondent

*“Uber is expensive. Finding somebody that can lend you a vehicle in the meantime can be challenging... A car is not a luxury, it’s a need and we all work. We all **need the vehicle for transportation**. If our job is very far away, it’s not great to have to take a bus or pay for an Uber. **That would be so expensive.**”*

– Spanish Reliant Respondent

3

Key barriers are related to **inconvenience** and **routine disruption**, including finding time to drop off a vehicle and total repair time.

Barriers to Getting Recall Repaired

- **Respondents depend on their vehicles for their everyday lives.** The disruption of taking a vehicle in for repair translates into a **time burden** and **inconvenience** – key barriers that can prevent or deter participants from getting recalls repaired.
- **Lack of alternative transportation is another key concern** and is related to the perceived **inconvenience**. At-risk audiences offered unique perspectives on how that inconvenience impacts their daily lives.
 - **Spanish-reliant families** tend to be larger and there is sometimes greater competition for each vehicle – getting a recall fixed means inconveniencing more people.
 - **Lower-income families** are more likely to experience the hardship of having only one vehicle. Recall repairs pose a greater threat to their mobility. Lower-income participants also sometimes have less work flexibility or suffer greater financial challenges from the decision to take off work to drop off a vehicle for a recall repair.
- Some participants, especially **lower-income** and **Spanish-reliant participants**, note **concerns over upcharges and additional costs from the dealer**. Their response indicates the importance of a campaign that continues to educate owners that the process to check for recalls is easy and the repair is free of charge to the vehicle owner.

Barriers to Recall Completion

Somewhat or Very Influential	Time to Drop Off Car	Repair Time	Alternative Transportation	Extra Repairs/ Upcharge	Distance
TOTAL	89 _{/117}	88 _{/117}	82 _{/117}	75 _{/117}	64 _{/117}

Q2. How influential are the following factors in your decision to get or not get a recall repaired?

3

Key barriers are related to **inconvenience** and **routine disruption**, including finding time to drop off a vehicle and total repair time.

Barriers to Getting Recall Repaired

OLDER ADULTS	LOWER INCOME	RURAL	SPANISH RELIANT
<p>Age can be both a barrier and a convenience. Some noted that being retired, they have more flexible schedules and can more easily find time to take a vehicle to the dealership.</p> <p>Others noted that many in their age bracket struggle from infirmities that affect mobility.</p>	<p>Lower-income participants rated four of the five barriers as more influential than other groups.</p>	<p>Rural participants frequently mentioned the lack of nearby dealerships as a challenge.</p> <p>Taking a vehicle in for a recall repair is an “event” and the time cost needs to be mitigated by coupling the recall repair with other errands in town.</p>	<p>Barriers are related to time and money – which often reflects an increased reliance on the vehicle by a larger household.</p> <p>Up-charging is also a concern related to language issues and not understanding the recall process.</p>

Barriers to Recall Completion

Somewhat/Very Influential	Time to Drop Off Car	Repair Time	Alternative Transportation	Extra Repairs/ Upcharge	Distance
General Market	19 _{/24}	19 _{/24}	18 _{/24}	16 _{/24}	12 _{/24}
Older Adults	14 _{/22}	12 _{/22}	12 _{/22}	11 _{/22}	9 _{/22}
Lower Income	19 _{/24}	21 _{/24}	19 _{/24}	19 _{/24}	18 _{/24}
Rural	16 _{/23}	17 _{/23}	15 _{/23}	11 _{/23}	12 _{/23}
Spanish Reliant	21 _{/24}	19 _{/24}	18 _{/24}	18 _{/24}	13 _{/24}

Q2. How influential are the following factors in your decision to get or not get a recall repaired?

4

Free alternative transportation methods and **mobile repairs** are the most compelling solutions that help address barriers.

*“Having a vehicle is very important to me. It’s a **sign of my independence**. It’s a sign of me being able to control what I do, when I do it and how I do it. I want an **alternative solution**. If I can’t have my car or rental, then I want to have **something I can rely on**.”*

– Older Adults Respondent

*“I thought mobile repair would be effective because it also gives me the encouragement that it’s a quick thing. **Time is everything**, so if someone can come here and just swap something out quick, let’s do it.”*

– Rural Respondent

4

Free alternative transportation methods and **mobile repairs** are the most compelling solutions that help address barriers.

Making Recalls Convenient

- The most effective way to motivate repairs is to **remove barriers around disruption and inconvenience.**
 - Many participants mentioned providing incentives for getting recalls repaired and several mentioned providing a gift card or a free gas fill-up. Of the incentives tested, participants most strongly resonated with a free rental vehicle offer.
 - This incentive addresses two of the top three barriers – repair time and alternative transportation.
 - Free rental was the most preferred option in every market.
- Mobile repair can also help **address convenience concerns**, but there is some **skepticism.**
 - Some participants question whether recalls could be repaired effectively without the tools available in the shop.

Incentives for Recall Completion

Very or Extremely Influential	Free Rental	Mobile Repair	Free Towing	Ride Sharing Services	Repair-a-thons
TOTAL	114 _{/118}	93 _{/118}	78 _{/118}	61 _{/118}	24 _{/118}

Q3. There are many proposed ways to make repairing a recall more convenient. How influential would the following benefits be in motivating you to get a recall repaired?

4

Free alternative transportation methods and **mobile repairs** are the most compelling solutions that help address barriers.

Making Recalls Convenient

OLDER ADULTS	LOWER INCOME	RURAL	SPANISH RELIANT
Older adults are slightly more skeptical of mobile repair and ride share services. Their preferred incentive is a free rental .	Lower-income participants tend to rate most incentives more highly, indicating the greater need to incentivize recall repairs for this audience.	Rural residents are slightly more inclined toward free rental, free towing and repair-a-thons compared to the general market.	Spanish-reliant participants are much more positively disposed toward free towing compared to other audiences. Like lower income, they tend to rate incentives as more influential, perhaps reflecting larger barriers to recall completion.

Incentives for Recall Completion

Very/Extremely Influential	Free Rental	Mobile Repair	Free Towing	Ride Sharing Services	Repair-a-thons
General Market	22 _{/24}	20 _{/24}	12 _{/24}	13 _{/24}	4 _{/24}
Older Adults	22 _{/23}	16 _{/23}	13 _{/23}	9 _{/23}	3 _{/23}
Lower Income	24 _{/24}	19 _{/24}	17 _{/24}	16 _{/24}	6 _{/24}
Rural	23 _{/23}	19 _{/23}	15 _{/23}	11 _{/23}	6 _{/23}
Spanish Reliant	23 _{/24}	19 _{/24}	21 _{/24}	12 _{/24}	5 _{/24}

Q3. There are many proposed ways to make repairing a recall more convenient. How influential would the following benefits be in motivating you to get a recall repaired?

5

Ads must convey **urgency**, **avoid technical terms** and highlight **convenience**. Language matters: “free” gets attention but **needs more context to be credible**; Spanish audiences are more familiar with “recall” than “retiro.”

*“I’m an idiot. **Make it simple** for me... I don’t need to know how to build the car to drive it. Just tell me the **basic information**. You don’t have to go into the details and all that.”*

– Older Adults Respondent

*“I like ‘at no cost’ because it seems like there’s **no financial liability** for me. With ‘free,’ it always seems like there’s a gimmick, there’s an upsell.”*

– Rural Respondent

*“It would be great to **show a case based on real life** – that if you delay the repair, other things will not work. If you didn’t repair the recall in a timely manner, **it could cause an accident.**”*

– Spanish Reliant Respondent

5

Ads must convey **urgency**, **avoid technical terms** and highlight **convenience**.
Language matters: “free” gets attention but **needs more context to be credible**;
Spanish audiences are more familiar with “recall” than “retiro.”

Elements of Effective Ads: VISUALS

- Visuals need to be relatable and **communicate urgency** while **providing a simple way** for consumers to check for recalls.
 - Including a .gov URL in ads would encourage follow-through among those who are hesitant to click on a link by giving them the option to search for the site independently.
- **Spanish-reliant participants** mention the importance of showing **consequences of not having the repair completed** – e.g., vehicle on fire or other equipment malfunctions. Spanish groups also recommended **more engaging ad elements** – e.g., audio, bright colors, real photos.
 - Some suggested showing physical consequences due to defective parts (crash, death, etc.).
- Rural and older participants mentioned concerns about **being left stranded** but for different reasons.
 - **Rural participants** recognize that while making the time to schedule and get a repair is inconvenient, it is far less inconvenient than having one’s **vehicle break down in a rural area**, where assistance is harder to attain.
 - The distance factor is less of an issue for **older adult respondents**, who feel a **sense of vulnerability** that could come from being **stuck on the side of the road**.
 - While **lower-income participants** didn’t mention the visual of being stranded, they often mention being **reliant on their vehicles to get to work** and as a result, **the stranded visual could also be effective** for that audience.
 - **Spanish-reliant participants** likewise didn’t mention stranding directly, but this idea might resonate based on the challenge of **navigating towing and repair across a language barrier**.

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Ads must convey **urgency**, **avoid technical terms** and highlight **convenience**.
Language matters: “free” gets attention but **needs more context to be credible**;
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Elements of Effective Ads: MESSAGES

- **Time matters** and owners don't want to be **inconvenienced**. The main message should be that **checking for recalls is quick and easy and repairs are made free of charge** to the owner.
 - If consumers are proactive in the process, they can minimize disruption. It is easier for them to manage a planned disruption than an unplanned one.
 - Consumers want to know that their time is respected and that the dealer will do whatever possible to get the recall repaired in a timely manner, including helping them schedule their recall repair at a convenient time.
- Advertising **gains credibility** by mentioning the **source of the recall**.
 - Most consumers are not familiar with NHTSA. If NHTSA is mentioned, it is important to spell out the acronym or reference that it is a government agency to help build awareness and credibility.
 - When referencing the recall-checking website, specifically mentioning its .gov web address helps strengthen credibility.

5

Ads must convey **urgency**, **avoid technical terms** and highlight **convenience**.
Language matters: “free” gets attention but **needs more context to be credible**;
Spanish audiences are more familiar with “recall” than “retiro.”

Elements of Effective Ads: LANGUAGE

- **Nothing is ever really “free.”** Participants say that the verbiage should be that the recall repair is “**free of charge**” to the owner or “**at no cost**” to the consumer.
 - The use of “free” alone is considered gimmicky and not credible.
 - Consumers must sacrifice time and gas money to bring their vehicle to the dealership.
 - Consumers often believe they have already paid for a functioning, safe vehicle.
 - Additionally, while consumers do not have to pay to have the repair made, it isn’t truly “free” since the OEMs must cover that cost.
- **Keep it simple when it comes to language.**
 - The overwhelming preference is to use layman’s terms and avoid technical language in recall communications, especially in headlines/subject lines.
 - Technical language should be used sparingly and in the body of the communication for added detail if needed.
- **Spanish-reliant participants** are more familiar with the term “recall” than with the native-language equivalent, “retiro.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

Multiple layers of communication are required.

Continue OEM and dealer outreach but support with advertising.

- The process is **mostly reactionary** at this point; owners have been conditioned to wait to receive a letter or alert from a dealer before thinking about scheduling a repair.

Use advertising to expand awareness and influence owners to be more proactive in the recalls checking and repairs process.

- OEMs and dealers are considered experts in their respective vehicles.
- Government is considered a trusted, objective source for recalls-related advertising but is not a preferred source of recall notifications.

Send more than just letters.

- All audiences want to be notified via multiple communication channels. Multiple channels increase perceived urgency and credibility and provide reminders to get the recall repaired.

Communications need to convey **urgency** and **convenience**.

Reinforce the consequences of not getting recalls repaired.

- Checking for recalls is not a part of most consumers' maintenance routine. Advertising needs to make a compelling case that checking for recalls is a good use of scarce time.
- It is important to communicate the risks of not checking.
- Mentioning that a recall repair is a **smaller inconvenience than being stranded or injured** is compelling and influential, especially among **rural consumers** and **older adult consumers**.

Underscore that checking for recalls is quick and easy and repairs are made free of charge.

- Repairing now prevents future disruption, costs and danger.
- Consumers' time is respected – recalls are repaired promptly.

Use the **right language** and **tone**.

Be cautious with the word “free.”

- “Free” can be effective and attention-getting, but consumers tend to prefer more detailed phrases like “at no cost to you” or “free of charge.” When using the word “free,” it’s important to substantiate the claim with clarifying subtext.

Avoid technical terms – call an air bag an air bag.

- Most consumers want to see layman’s terms so the communications are easier to understand. This also plays an important role in communicating with **Spanish-reliant owners** who tend to be less familiar with the recall process.

Portray severity but eschew drama.

- Dramatic portrayals of recall risks (e.g., “Bomb on Board” creative) can be attention-getting but can also **detract from messaging effectiveness** if perceived as overly dramatic.

Work with **OEMs** and **dealers** to identify ways they can help.

Work with dealers to minimize barriers and incentivize repairs.

- People are motivated to get recalls repaired when they see that the dealership is taking pains to **make things as convenient as possible**.
- Bolster messaging with **specifics about incentives**, whether financial or related to convenience.

Tailor advertising to the specific needs and concerns of each audience.

Leverage each audience's unique concerns and challenges to motivate checking for and repairing recalls.

OLDER ADULTS

For older adults, the main concern is **losing mobility and independence**. Additionally, the risk of being stranded creates a sense of vulnerability.

LOWER INCOME

Lower-income owners are more financially sensitive; messaging needs to reinforce that **repairs are free of charge** and highlight any additional **incentives**.








RURAL

Distance is a major challenge for the rural audience; they **worry about being stranded** on the side of the road in the middle of nowhere.

SPANISH RELIANT

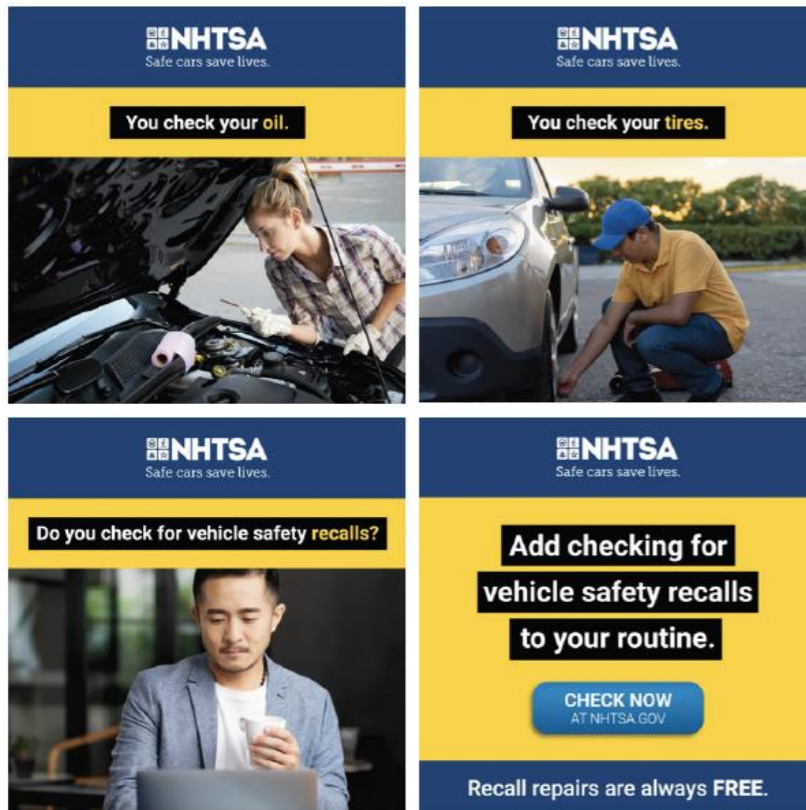
The Spanish-reliant audience has some overlap with the financial sensitivity of the lower-income audience but also faces **challenging language barriers**. It is important to have **Spanish language resources** and to **use simple language**.

Appendix A: Concept Evaluation

<p> Safe cars save lives.</p> <p>You check your oil.</p> 	<p> Safe cars save lives.</p> <p>You check your tires.</p> 
<p> Safe cars save lives.</p> <p>Do you check for vehicle safety recalls?</p> 	<p> Safe cars save lives.</p> <p>Add checking for vehicle safety recalls to your routine.</p> <p>CHECK NOW AT NHTSA.GOV</p> <p>Recall repairs are always FREE.</p>

“Routine”
(English Concept)

“Routine”



“Routine” is a concept that communicates the desired behavior of checking for recalls in a relatable, short-form banner ad. Respondents believe it effectively communicates that implementing recalls into one’s maintenance routine is a simple way to care for one’s vehicle. However, some find the concept unrelatable or unimportant, hampering its overall effectiveness.

Effective Elements

- Simple, clearly communicates message.
- Provides a way to check recalls.
- Communicates that checking for recalls is easy.
- Framing message in context of regular maintenance is relatable.
- Effective reminder to add checking for recalls to one’s checklist.
- Feels credible because it’s from the government.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Not relatable for those who don’t do maintenance on their own.
 - People take their vehicles to the shop for maintenance.
- Not exciting, doesn’t grab your attention.
 - Static images aren’t compelling.
 - Not influential in changing behavior.
- Concept feels dated.
 - Many don’t dip the stick to check oil.
- Needs to focus more on family and safety.
 - Emphasize the importance of vehicle maintenance to keep your family safe.

FREE!

RECALL REPAIRS DON'T COST A THING AND CHECKING FOR RECALLS IS EASY.

Check now



NHTSA
Safe cars save lives.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

TO CHECK FOR VEHICLE RECALLS



NHTSA
Safe cars save lives.



ARE YOU DRIVING ON BORROWED TIME?

Get safety recalls fixed for FREE.

CHECK YOUR VEHICLE

NHTSA
Safe cars save lives.



Checking vehicle safety recalls is easy and recall repairs are free.

Check now

NHTSA
Safe cars save lives.

RECALLED AIR BAGS DON'T PROTECT. THEY COULD KILL.



CHECK FOR RECALLS

Repairs are free.

NHTSA
Safe cars save lives.

BOMB ON BOARD!



Your recalled air bag could kill.

Repairs are free.

NHTSA
Safe cars save lives.

CHECK FOR RECALLS

DEFECTIVE AIR BAG RECALL REPAIRS ARE FREE

CHECK FOR VEHICLE SAFETY RECALLS

NHTSA
Safe cars save lives.

Recall Ads Collage

(English Concept)

Recall Ads Collage



Recall Ads Collage shows a variety of different static banner ads to gauge participant reactions to different communication approaches. Reactions differ by concept but overall participants find that the ads convey the importance of checking for recalls and getting recalls repaired. However, some find certain concepts to be dramatic, gimmicky or even boring, making them less effective at influencing behavior.

Effective Elements

- Concepts communicate urgency.
 - “Bomb on Board” gets attention – fear is a strong motivator.
- Communicating that recalls are free is appealing and effective.
 - The burst graphic with the word “free” is attention getting.
- “Checking is easy” is compelling.
- Concepts clearly give you somewhere to click to check for recalls.

Opportunities for Improvement

- “Bomb on Board” is a bit dramatic and too extreme – some don’t respond to fear tactics.
- “Free” feels gimmicky to some.
 - Looks like a cheesy ad trying to sell you something.
 - “Free” draws you in but your mind goes elsewhere without the smaller subtext.
 - Should focus on safety – “Safe cars save lives.”
- Parts catalogue is too busy, might not resonate with those unfamiliar with the parts depicted.
- Some concepts are vague – don’t communicate urgency.



**NO TE JUEGUES LA VIDA POR UNA
BOLSA DE AIRE DEFECTUOSA.**



VERIFICA LOS RETIROS DE SEGURIDAD



“Lotería”
(Spanish Concept)

“Lotería”



“Lotería” encourages consumers to check for and repair open recalls on their vehicles to avoid serious consequences. Participants believe that the concept is not effective at grabbing attention, doesn’t communicate urgency and doesn’t communicate that recalls are free, dampening its overall effectiveness.

Effective Elements

- Communicates the importance of repairing vehicles after a recall.
- Receiving key information in Spanish is critical, especially when pertaining to safety and more technical information.
 - Effective at communicating to this audience.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Does not grab attention; would not motivate participants to act.
- Color doesn’t communicate urgency or danger.
- Doesn’t communicate that recalls are free.
 - Needs to convey that recalls are “free of charge.”
 - Should include some form of compensation to get attention and motivate action.
- Visuals feel outdated, static and cartoonish – would need some audio to be more compelling.
 - Consequences need to be real, dramatic and explicit to communicate danger and shift behavior.

Preferred Communication Channels

	Manufacturer Email	Letter	Dealership Email	Dealership Text	Dealership Call	TV Ad	Government Email	Radio Commercial	Billboard
TOTAL	91 _{/120}	87 _{/120}	77 _{/120}	75 _{/120}	46 _{/120}	32 _{/120}	27 _{/120}	21 _{/120}	12 _{/120}
General Market	19 _{/24}	18 _{/24}	17 _{/24}	16 _{/24}	8 _{/24}	7 _{/24}	7 _{/24}	5 _{/24}	2 _{/24}
Older Adults	20 _{/24}	22 _{/24}	17 _{/24}	15 _{/24}	10 _{/24}	7 _{/24}	3 _{/24}	7 _{/24}	5 _{/24}
Lower Income	16 _{/24}	14 _{/24}	15 _{/24}	15 _{/24}	8 _{/24}	5 _{/24}	7 _{/24}	1 _{/24}	2 _{/24}
Rural	18 _{/24}	18 _{/24}	13 _{/24}	12 _{/24}	14 _{/24}	7 _{/24}	5 _{/24}	4 _{/24}	0 _{/24}
Spanish Reliant	18 _{/24}	15 _{/24}	15 _{/24}	17 _{/24}	6 _{/24}	6 _{/24}	5 _{/24}	4 _{/24}	3 _{/24}

Q1. Suppose your vehicle had an open recall. How would you like to be notified about it? *Please select all that apply.*

Barriers to Recall Completion

Somewhat or Very Influential	Time to Drop off Car	Repair Time	Alternative Transportation	Extra Repairs/ Upcharge	Distance
TOTAL	89 _{/117}	88 _{/117}	82 _{/117}	75 _{/117}	64 _{/117}
General Market	19 _{/24}	19 _{/24}	18 _{/24}	16 _{/24}	12 _{/24}
Older Adults	14 _{/22}	12 _{/22}	12 _{/22}	11 _{/22}	9 _{/22}
Lower Income	19 _{/24}	21 _{/24}	19 _{/24}	19 _{/24}	18 _{/24}
Rural	16 _{/23}	17 _{/23}	15 _{/23}	11 _{/23}	12 _{/23}
Spanish Reliant	21 _{/24}	19 _{/24}	18 _{/24}	18 _{/24}	13 _{/24}

Q2. How influential are the following factors in your decision to get or not get a recall repaired?

Incentives for Recall Completion

Very or Extremely Influential	Free Rental	Mobile Repair	Free Towing	Ride Sharing Services	Repair-a-thons
TOTAL	114 _{/118}	93 _{/118}	78 _{/118}	61 _{/118}	24 _{/118}
General Market	22	20	12	13	4
Older Adults	22	16	13	9	3
Lower Income	24	19	17	16	6
Rural	23	19	15	11	6
Spanish Reliant	23	19	21	12	5

Q3. There are many proposed ways to make repairing a recall more convenient. How influential would the following benefits be in motivating you to get a recall repaired?

Appendix C: Demographics

General Market (n=24)

Demographics

Category	Demographic	Total
Gender	Male	46% (n=11)
	Female	54% (n=13)
Age	18 to 34 years old	38% (n=9)
	35 to 54 years old	46% (n=11)
	55 years old or more	17% (n=4)
Ethnicity	White	50% (n=12)
	Black	21% (n=5)
	Hispanic	17% (n=4)
	Asian	13% (n=3)
	Other	0% (n=0)
Education	High school or less	4% (n=1)
	Some college/vocational/tech	17% (n=4)
	College graduate	63% (n=15)
	Postgraduate	17% (n=4)
Household Income	Less than \$50K	8% (n=2)
	\$50k–\$99k	58% (n=14)
	\$100k+	33% (n=8)
4 Point Census Region	Northeast	29% (n=7)
	Midwest	25% (n=6)
	South	25% (n=6)
	West	21% (n=5)
Employment Status	Employed	75% (n=18)
	Not employed	4% (n=1)
	Student	4% (n=1)
	Retired	17% (n=4)
	Homemaker	0% (n=0)
	Other	0% (n=0)
Area of Residence	An urban area	42% (n=10)
	A suburban area next to a city	46% (n=11)
	A small town/rural area	13% (n=3)

Older Adults Market (n=24)

Demographics

Category	Demographic	Total
Gender	Male	54% (n=13)
	Female	46% (n=11)
Age	18 to 34 years old	0% (n=0)
	35 to 54 years old	0% (n=0)
	55 years old or more	100% (n=24)
Ethnicity	White	63% (n=15)
	Black	13% (n=3)
	Hispanic	13% (n=3)
	Asian	8% (n=2)
	Other	4% (n=1)
Education	High school or less	4% (n=1)
	Some college/vocational/tech	29% (n=7)
	College graduate	46% (n=11)
	Postgraduate	21% (n=5)
Household Income	Less than \$50K	13% (n=3)
	\$50k–\$99k	42% (n=10)
	\$100k+	29% (n=7)
	Prefer not to answer	17% (n=4)
4 Point Census Region	Northeast	17% (n=4)
	Midwest	25% (n=6)
	South	33% (n=8)
	West	25% (n=6)
Employment Status	Employed	46% (n=11)
	Not employed	4% (n=1)
	Student	0% (n=0)
	Retired	42% (n=10)
	Homemaker	0% (n=0)
	Other	8% (n=2)
Area of Residence	An urban area	29% (n=7)
	A suburban area next to a city	71% (n=17)
	A small town/rural area	0% (n=0)

Lower-Income Market (n=24)

Demographics

Category	Demographic	Total
Gender	Male	46% (n=11)
	Female	54% (n=13)
Age	18 to 34 years old	21% (n=5)
	35 to 54 years old	67% (n=16)
	55 years old or more	13% (n=3)
Ethnicity	White	46% (n=11)
	Black	25% (n=6)
	Hispanic	8% (n=2)
	Asian	13% (n=3)
	Other	8% (n=2)
Education	High school or less	4% (n=1)
	Some college/vocational/tech	25% (n=6)
	College graduate	58% (n=14)
	Postgraduate	13% (n=3)
Household Income	Less than \$50K	100% (n=24)
	\$50k–\$99k	0% (n=0)
	\$100k+	0% (n=0)
4 Point Census Region	Northeast	21% (n=5)
	Midwest	25% (n=6)
	South	25% (n=6)
	West	29% (n=7)
Employment Status	Employed	67% (n=16)
	Not employed	13% (n=3)
	Student	0% (n=0)
	Retired	4% (n=1)
	Homemaker	4% (n=1)
	Other	13% (n=3)
Area of Residence	An urban area	54% (n=13)
	A suburban area next to a city	46% (n=11)
	A small town/rural area	0% (n=0)

Rural Market (n=24)

Demographics

Category	Demographic	Total
Gender	Male	42% (n=10)
	Female	58% (n=14)
Age	18 to 34 years old	13% (n=3)
	35 to 54 years old	58% (n=14)
	55 years old or more	29% (n=7)
Ethnicity	White	79% (n=19)
	Black	8% (n=2)
	Hispanic	8% (n=2)
	Asian	0% (n=0)
	Other	4% (n=1)
Education	High school or less	8% (n=2)
	Some college/vocational/tech	33% (n=8)
	College graduate	50% (n=12)
	Postgraduate	8% (n=2)
Household Income	Less than \$50K	8% (n=2)
	\$50k–\$99k	50% (n=12)
	\$100k+	42% (n=10)
4 Point Census Region	Northeast	25% (n=6)
	Midwest	29% (n=7)
	South	33% (n=8)
	West	13% (n=3)
Employment Status	Employed	67% (n=16)
	Not employed	4% (n=1)
	Student	0% (n=0)
	Retired	8% (n=2)
	Homemaker	13% (n=3)
	Other	8% (n=2)
Area of Residence	An urban area	0% (n=0)
	A suburban area next to a city	0% (n=0)
	A small town/rural area	100% (n=24)

Spanish-Reliant Market (n=24)

Demographics

Category	Demographic	Total
Gender	Male	42% (n=10)
	Female	58% (n=14)
Age	18 to 34 years old	33% (n=8)
	35 to 54 years old	63% (n=15)
	55 years old or more	4% (n=1)
Birthplace	South America	63% (n=15)
	Mexico	21% (n=5)
	Central America	13% (n=3)
	Someplace else	4% (n=1)
Education	High school or less	0% (n=0)
	Some college/vocational/tech	29% (n=7)
	College graduate	58% (n=14)
	Postgraduate	8% (n=2)
	Decline to answer	4% (n=1)
Household Income	Less than \$50K	8% (n=2)
	\$50k–\$99k	46% (n=11)
	\$100k+	38% (n=9)
	Decline to answer	8% (n=2)
4 Point Census Region	Northeast	13% (n=3)
	Midwest	21% (n=5)
	South	38% (n=9)
	West	29% (n=7)
Employment Status	Employed	63% (n=15)
	Not employed	8% (n=2)
	Student	8% (n=2)
	Retired	4% (n=1)
	Homemaker	8% (n=2)
	Other	8% (n=2)
Area of Residence	An urban area	75% (n=18)
	A suburban area next to a city	25% (n=6)
	A small town/rural area	0% (n=24)