

Five mindset groups were discovered and found to exist consistently within every Porsche model type owned (most Porsche owners having characteristics from more than one of the groups). The five groups:

- "Top Guns"
- "Proud Patrons"
- "Fantasists"
- "Bon Vivants"
- "Elitists."



"Top Guns are intense, driven individuals who buy a Porsche because they want more than just a very fast car, they want an elite racing machine. Top Guns get a quiet kick out of feeling lean and mean, from knowing that a strong measure of precision handling and a great surge of power are at their command. Top Guns expect to be noticed, seeing it as only natural that others would eye them with some degree of awe. And while a Top Gun has something of the 'lone cowboy' attitude about them, they also possess a flyboy sense of camaraderie, expressing an unstated bond with other Porsche drivers as well as an inclination toward joining clubs and societies of like-minded professionals."

"Proud Patrons enjoy the recognition they get through simple Porsche ownership, but not from driving. Married men with kids, the Proud Patron perceives Porsche ownership as an end unto itself. Their Porsche is a prized possession, a reward, a trophy they earned as a result of all their hard work. But Proud Patrons do not imbue their Porsche with any strong emotions beyond simple pride in having that Porsche key on their key chain. They feel no compulsion to challenge other drivers, feel no need to seek an adrenaline high from the driving experience. Proud Patrons lead relatively unpretentious, uncomplicated lifestyles, enjoying the simple pleasures."

"Fantasists especially enjoy the car for themselves, having little interest in trying to impress others. Fantasists become kids again when they get behind the wheel of their Porsche. It is their catalyst to escape. It is also their favorite toy, a toy that no other kids are ever allowed to play with. Their Porsche makes Fantasists feel warm, snug, protected, giving them the sensation of flowing along as if one with the car. Ultimately, Fantasists must park their Porsches (far away from other cars) and rejoin the world of grown-ups. And thinking as a grown-up, Fantasists start to feel somewhat guilty about owning a Porsche, wondering if they haven't gone a bit overboard with such an indulgence. But the feelings of guilt and selfishness never keep the upper hand for long, the pull to be a kid again being simply too hard to resist."

"Bon vivants represent the 'jet-setter' orientation, enjoying the 'sexy' image of driving a Porsche. Bon Vivants are the jet setters, the thrill seekers who want it all. Bon Vivants lead exciting, adventurous, passionate lives, fueled by the desire to smell all the flowers without ever leaving the fast lane. Bon Vivants dine out, frequent night clubs, go to movies, dabble at gourmet cooking, entertain at home, travel around the globe, go hunting and shooting, and even find time for volunteer activities. Their Porsche is a reward that begets additional rewards, a sleek, metallic statement. Bon Vivants love pushing their Porsches to the pulse-pounding limit, feeling all-powerful, soaking up the driving experience with a lusty joy."

"Elitists reject the stereotypical Porsche driver image. Along with being extremely well-to-do, Elitists have an 'old money' way of looking at things, the perspective of a blue blood. And so, to the Elitist, a Porsche is just a car, nothing more. Regardless of the origin of this aristocratic point of view, it remains appalling to the Elitist that anyone would see a Porsche as emblematic of a certain lifestyle, that anyone would funnel their identity through their car. To the Elitist, it is the whole of one's life, the way of life itself, that ought to hold center stage. And so while the Elitist might appreciate the precision handling, he invests little of himself in his Porsche."

Again, remember that Porsche customers will cross over several of these groups. It is possible to have an owner or prospect who transcends several of these mindsets. However, predominant motives are usually stronger in one specific area. We must be careful not to stereotype when we sell. These groups are generalizations; proper qualifying will reveal the strongest buying motives on a case by case basis.

While we have defined five different personality types who buy these cars, it may be challenging to qualify and determine in which category a prospect belongs. What we must recognize is that **these customers have different wants and needs—dictating different sales approaches and demonstrations.**

A NOTE ABOUT THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE PORSCHE SALE

While the majority of Porsche buyers are men, women undoubtedly have an influence in most purchasing decisions. This may take the shape of support, that they also are interested in a new sports car for themselves or these men, but it can also be a negative reaction. This new Porsche can be viewed as expensive, too impractical or uncomfortable, or eliminate the possibility of a different purchase that is more in line with what the woman desires. Great care should be taken to qualify both parties, so that your presentation can address the needs of both. He may be a “Top Gun,” while she needs to be sold on the reliability or ease of use, storage capabilities, etc. Or perhaps she fits a different group, and would like to buy—or not buy—for very different reasons than her spouse.

ATTITUDE SUMMARY: TODAY’S PORSCHE PROSPECT

- Really no visual or demographic clues! (Their “mindset” sets them apart)
- Most are independent, entrepreneurial and self-motivated
- Most are more “inner directed” regarding the car they drive
- They know what they want, and are self-confident enough to make the “strong” Porsche statement
- Their age and affluence give them respect in their community
- Most are involved and active—in hobbies, organizations, sports.

“Porsche owners devote extraordinary effort to research to support their purchase decisions, sometimes spending months in deliberation before making a decision.” This conclusion was drawn by the investigator for one Porsche study. Let’s read between the lines. Did these people want to spend the time researching the purchase of a Porsche, or did they feel obligated to continue investigating due to a lack of understanding of the car’s value?

This value gap undermines the credibility of the salesperson when talking price. The old theory that “if you can’t dazzle them with brilliance, then baffle them with_____” will no longer sell a Porsche in today’s competitive market.

To these people, time is money, meaning they don’t want to waste time shopping, but sometimes they find shopping necessary due to a lack of knowledge, and/or confidence on the salesperson’s part. Indecision is created by a lack of confidence in the product and/or the sales process—ultimately resulting in a lack of financial commitment.

“BARGAIN HUNTERS”

Most of the subjects in the Porsche study paid considerably less than the asking price for their Porsches. In all cases, the subjects believed they had negotiated a very good deal for themselves. While price shoppers are a reality, their number and to what extent are influenced by price advertising and weak presentations—as evidenced by the following quotes from new-Porsche buyers:

“I only contacted one dealer, but I used ads from the New York Times for comparison during the negotiations. It is easy to whipsaw the local dealers around because of our proximity to all of the New York dealerships.”

“I had an idea of what I wanted to pay for the car, and was really surprised when the salesperson showed me what I could buy it for. I’m not complaining!”

“When I went into the dealer, I needed the salesperson to show me why the 944 S2 Cabriolet was \$50,000. Evidently he didn’t understand, so I paid \$39,000.”

SOME CONCLUSIONS FROM PORSCHE’S IMAGE RESEARCH...

- **Porsche is perceived as an “experience,” not a “car”**
 - Does not compete with sedans
 - Discretionary purchase—not primary transportation
- **Prospects have positive self-image**
 - Successful
 - Independent
 - Confident
 - Role models
- **Overcoming purchase barriers**
 - Owner image (“Do I deserve this/Is this me?”)
 - Channels (“How do I buy it easily/conveniently?”)
 - Driving experience enjoyment (“Is it OK to have so much fun driving?”)
- **Images of the cars themselves...**
 - 911: Maximum high performance
 - 928: Performance without compromise
 - 944: A real Porsche with high performance and practicality