



HONDA



CHEVROLET



HYUNDAI

*Ford*



**3 Emerging Digital Marketing  
Trends of 2021**

Automotive

## Three trends observed in the Canadian auto manufacturers competitive set in Q1 2021:

1



**Mobile traffic grows faster than desktop visits.**

2



**Mobile search is the dominant traffic channel.**

3

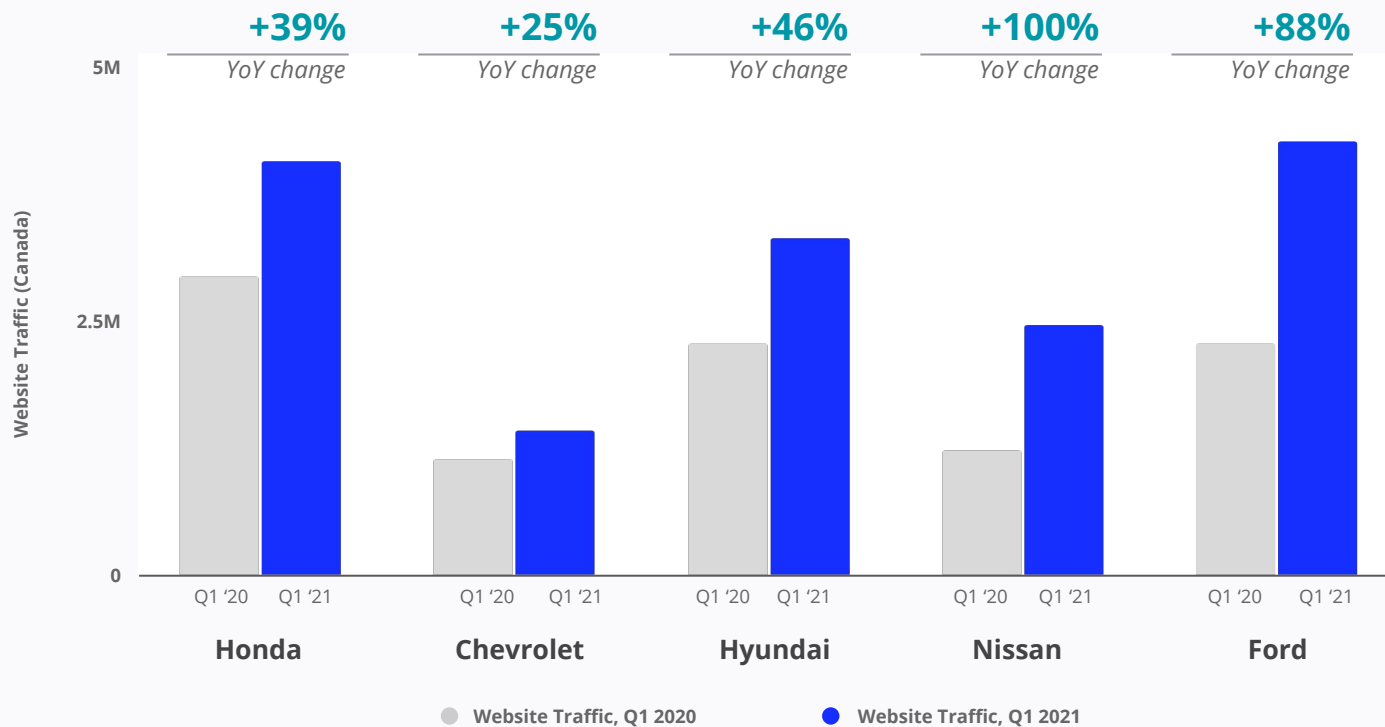


**YouTube video ads received the highest investment increase.**

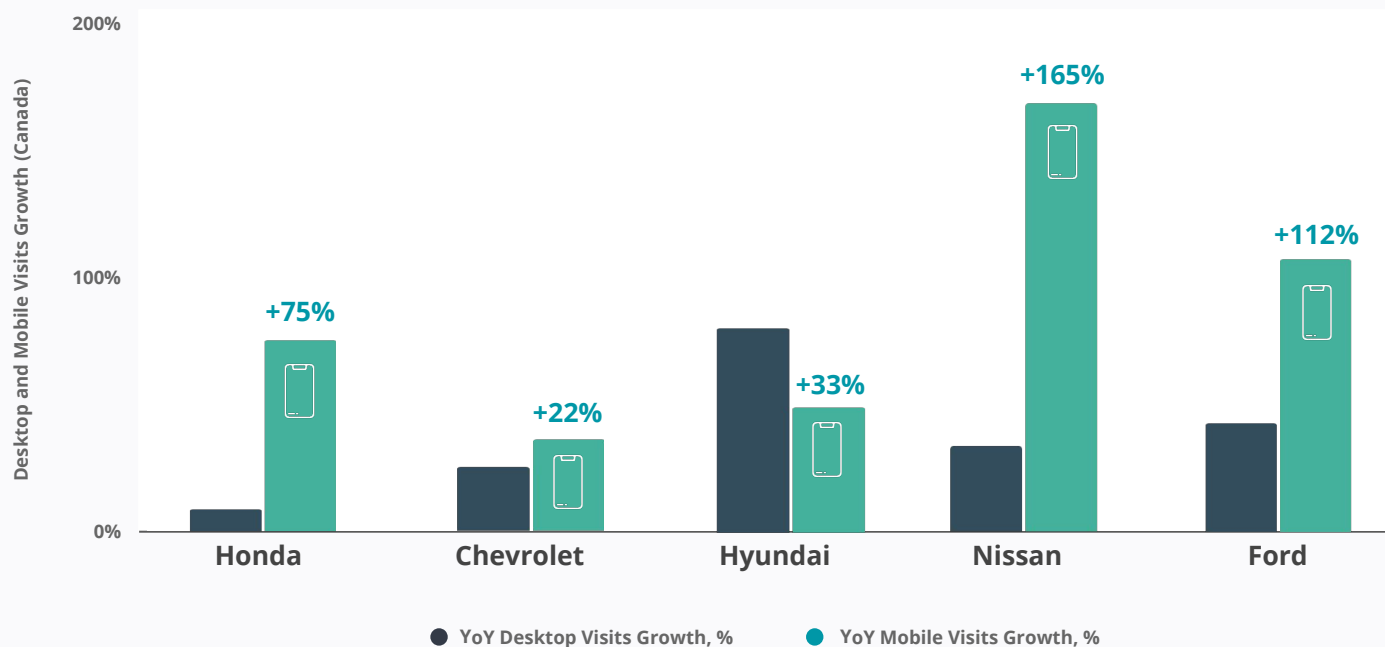
Competitive set includes:



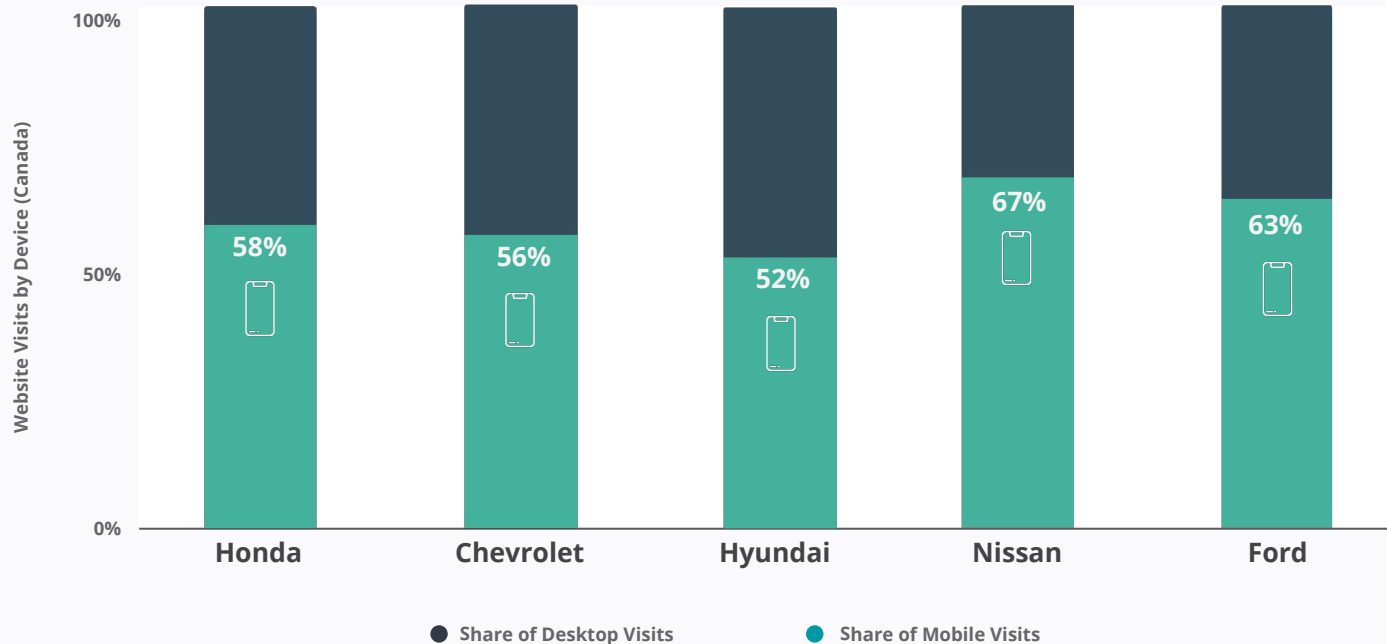
# All car brands in the competitive set saw a double-digit traffic increase from Q1 2020 to Q1 2021.



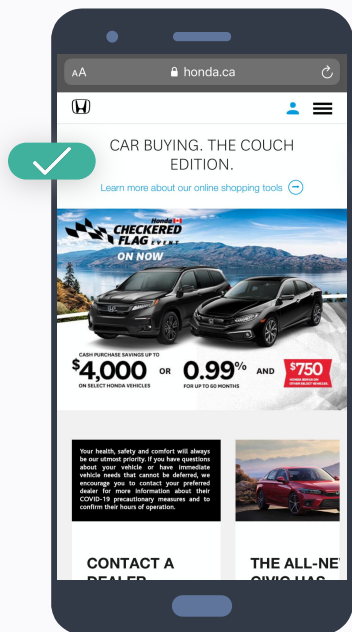
Growth has been spurred by a significant increase in mobile visits, which have more than doubled for Nissan (+165%) and Ford (+112%) from Q1 2020 to Q2 2021.



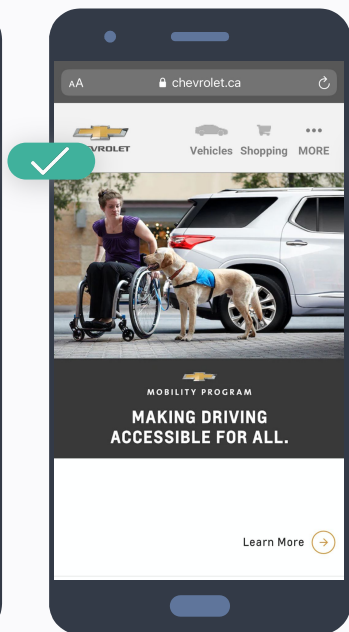
**On average mobile visits accounts for 60% of total traffic, which is 8% points higher compared to Q1 of the last year.**



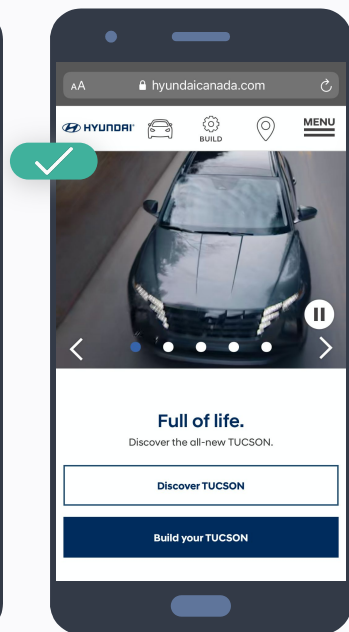
# All car brands in the competitive set have technically optimized mobile websites, which are replicas of the desktop version.



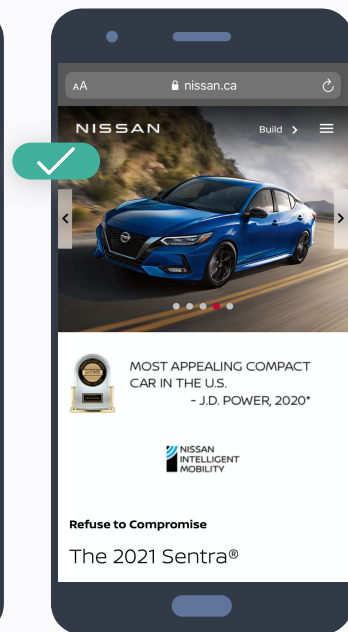
Honda



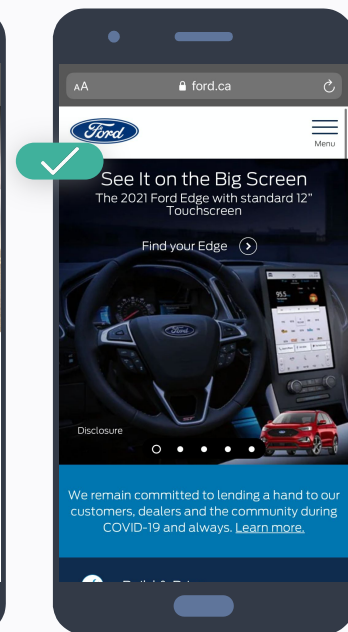
Chevrolet



Hyundai



Nissan



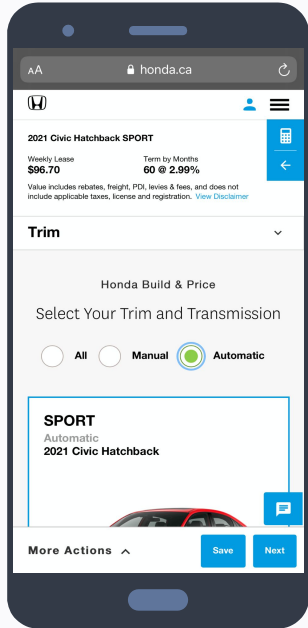
Ford



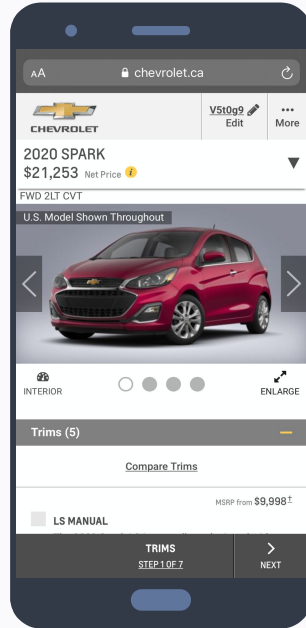
Optimized for mobile

## However, some sections, like car builds, offer a very complex user experience.

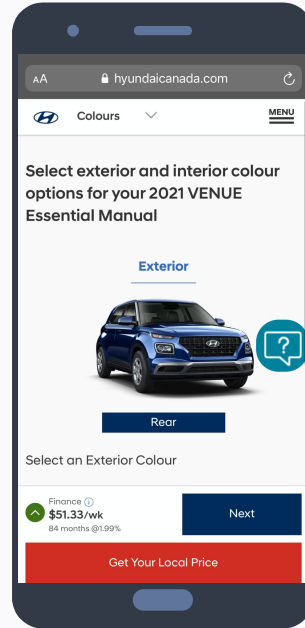
Despite the fact that most car brands, except, Ford, aim to mimic a web app-like experience by dropping the main navigation to the bottom of the screen, the number of controls and call-to-actions takes away from a streamlined mobile experience.



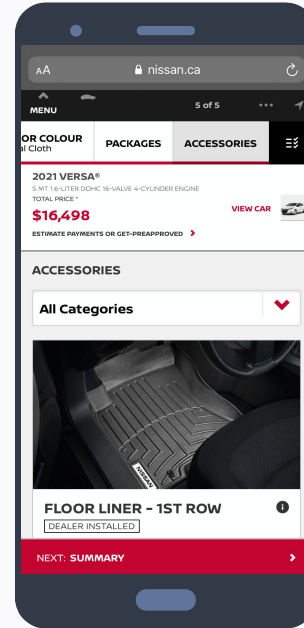
Honda



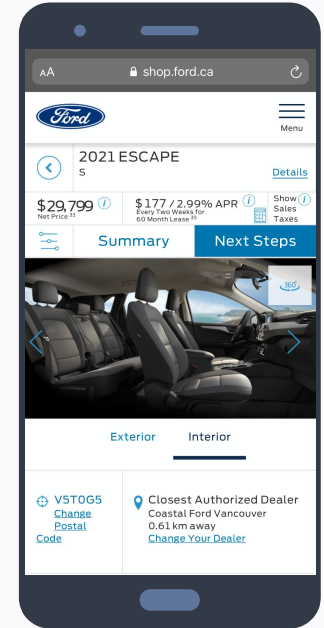
Chevrolet



Hyundai



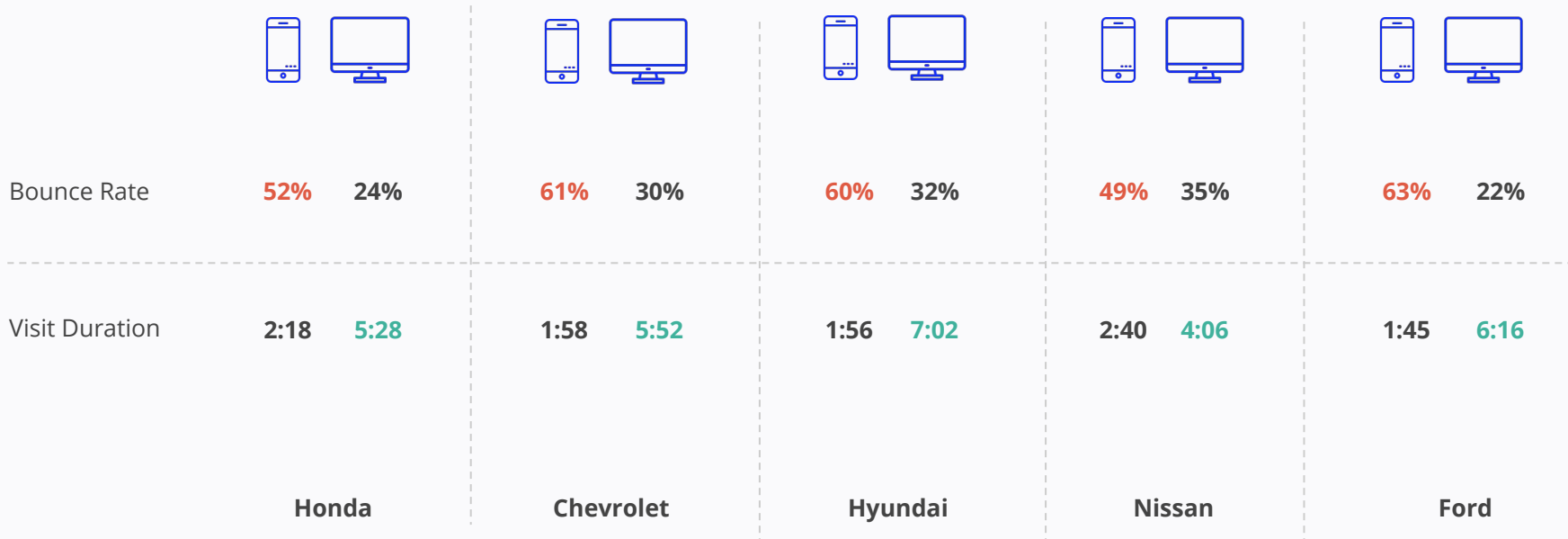
Nissan



Ford

## Mobile bounce rate is 2X of that of desktop, while visit duration is 3 times shorter.

*There is an opportunity to optimize and simplify a mobile experience to serve specific content users seek to find on their mobile devices, which might both improve user experience and mobile metrics.*





1



Mobile traffic grows faster than desktop visits.

2



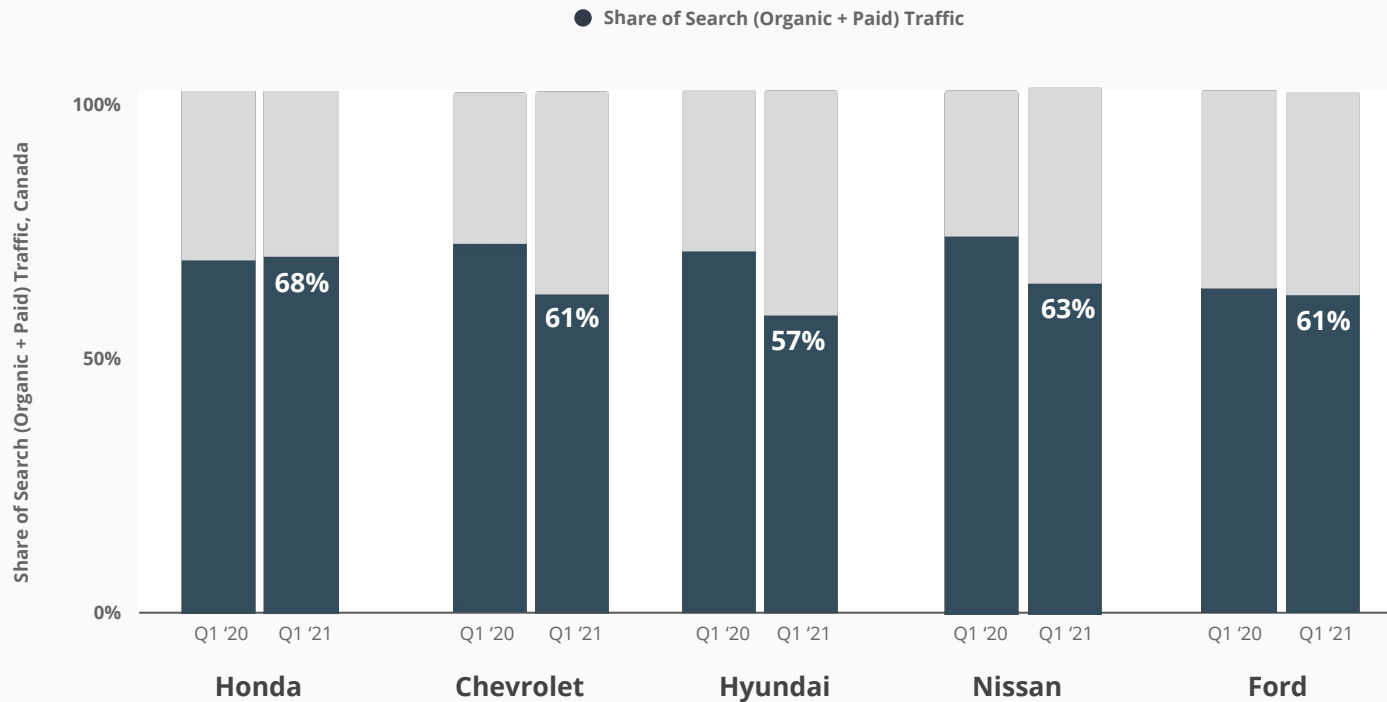
Mobile search is the dominant traffic channel.

3

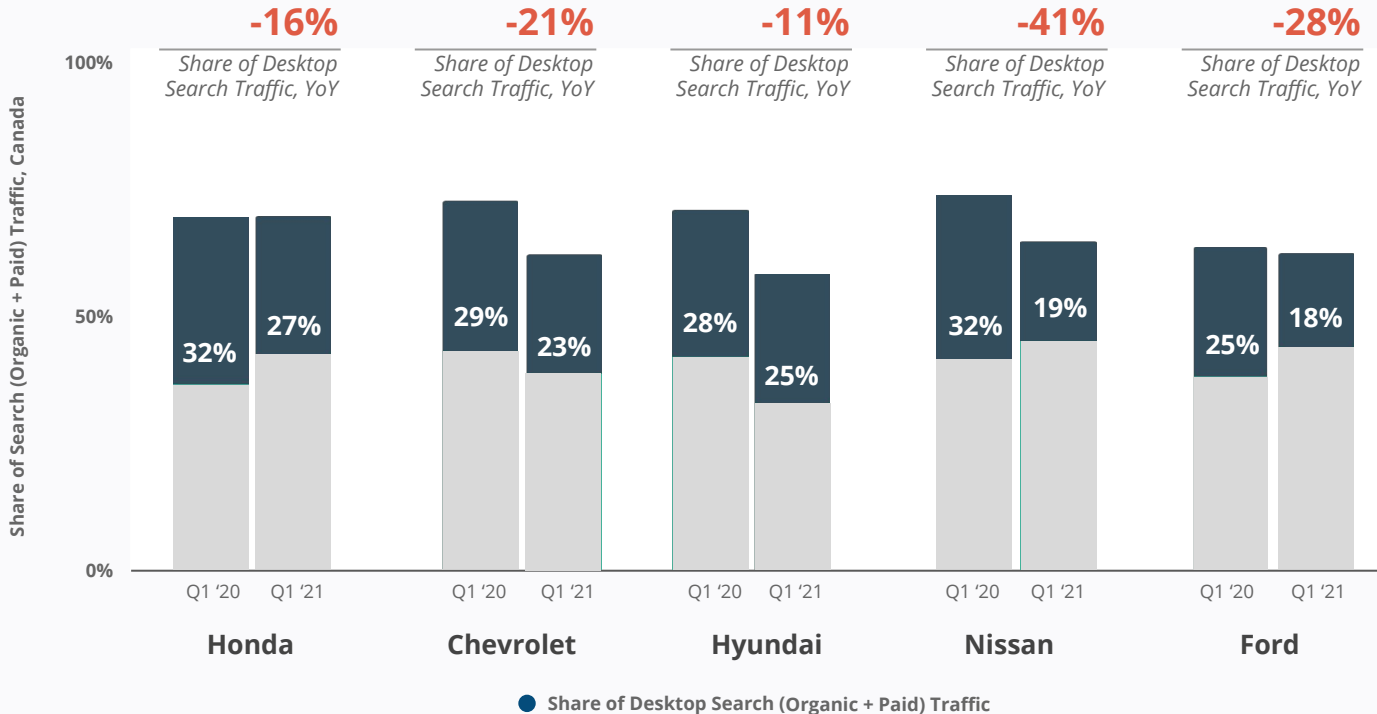


YouTube video ads received the highest investment increase.

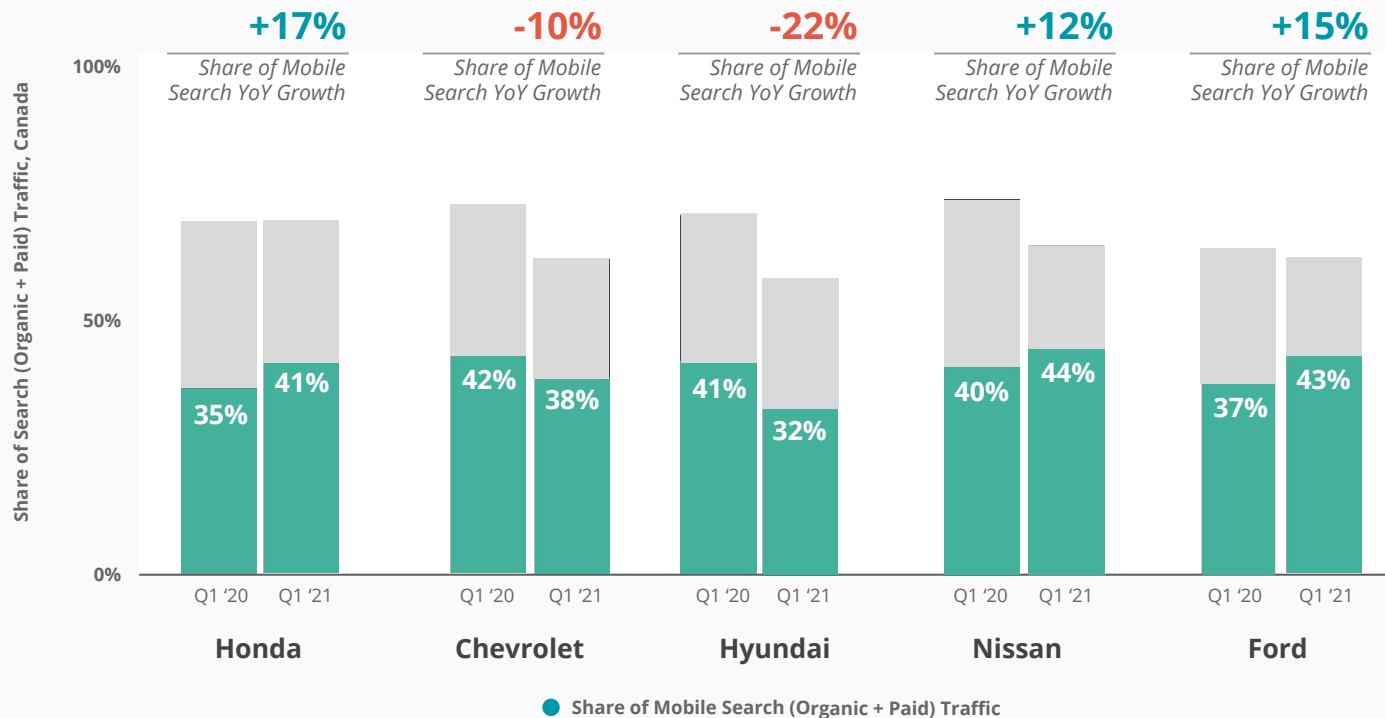
# The share of total search traffic declined for most brands in the competitive set in Q1 2021.



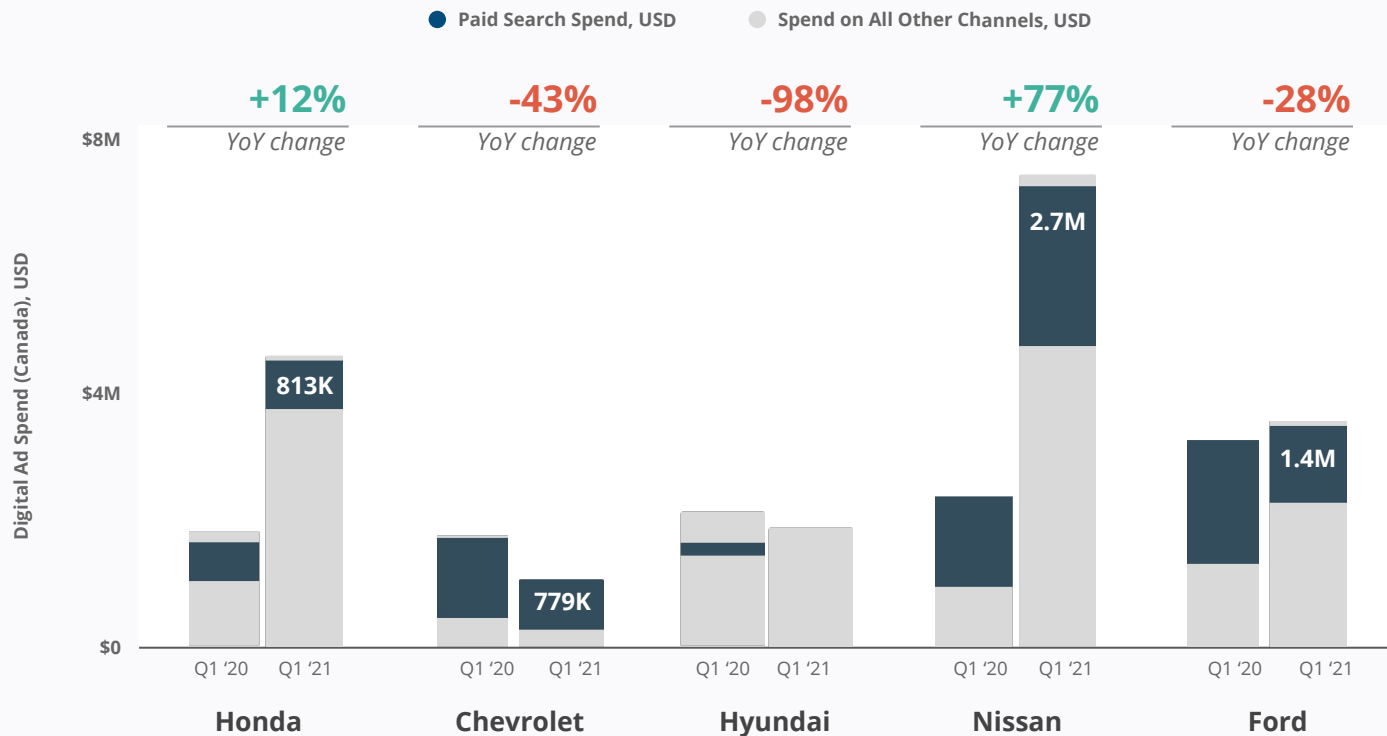
The decline was driven by a shrinking share of the desktop search traffic. While the actual desktop visits increased quarter on quarter, this channel grew slower than others.



**At the same time, Honda, Nissan and Ford (the biggest traffic gainers) saw an increase in mobile traffic that compensated for declining desktop searches.**



# Paid search wasn't a priority channel for most car brands in Q1 2021, and only Nissan increased investment by **+77%** into this channel compared to Q1 2020.



Spend is a directional approximation and does not include retargeting, or behavioural targeting.

1



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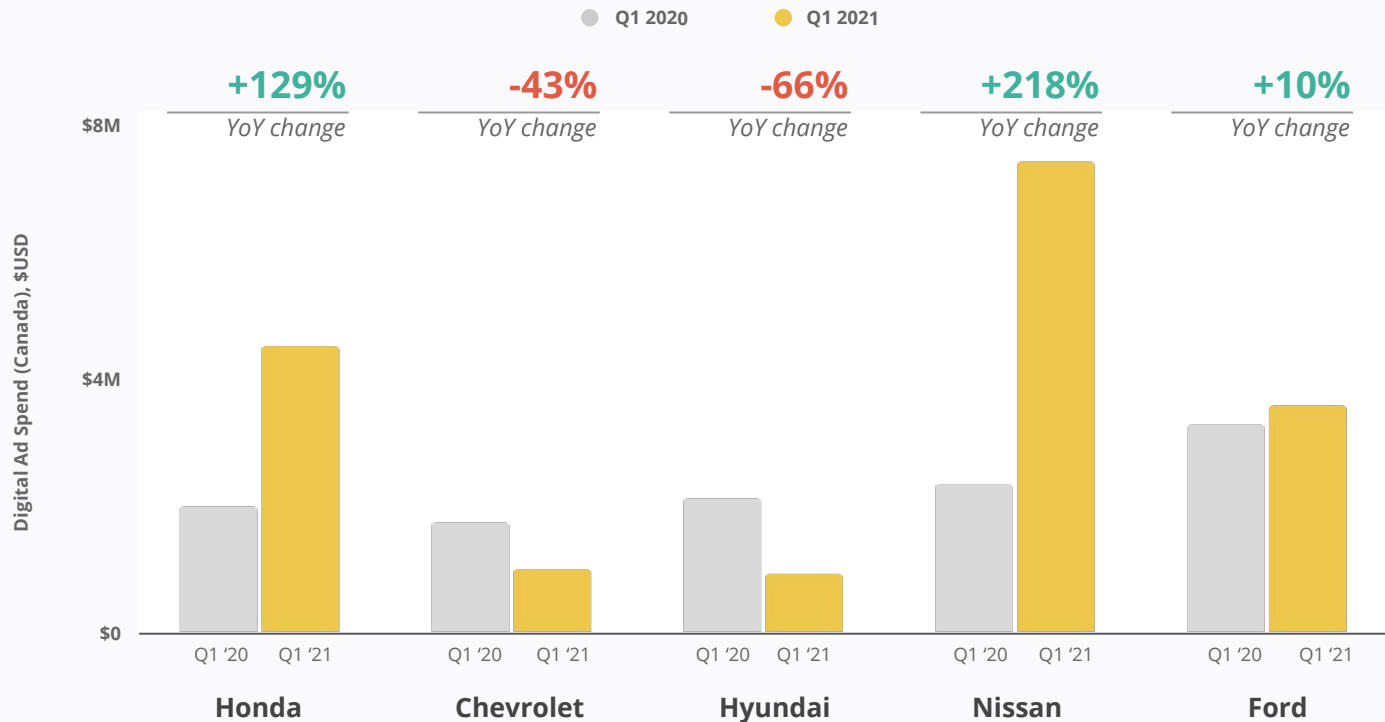
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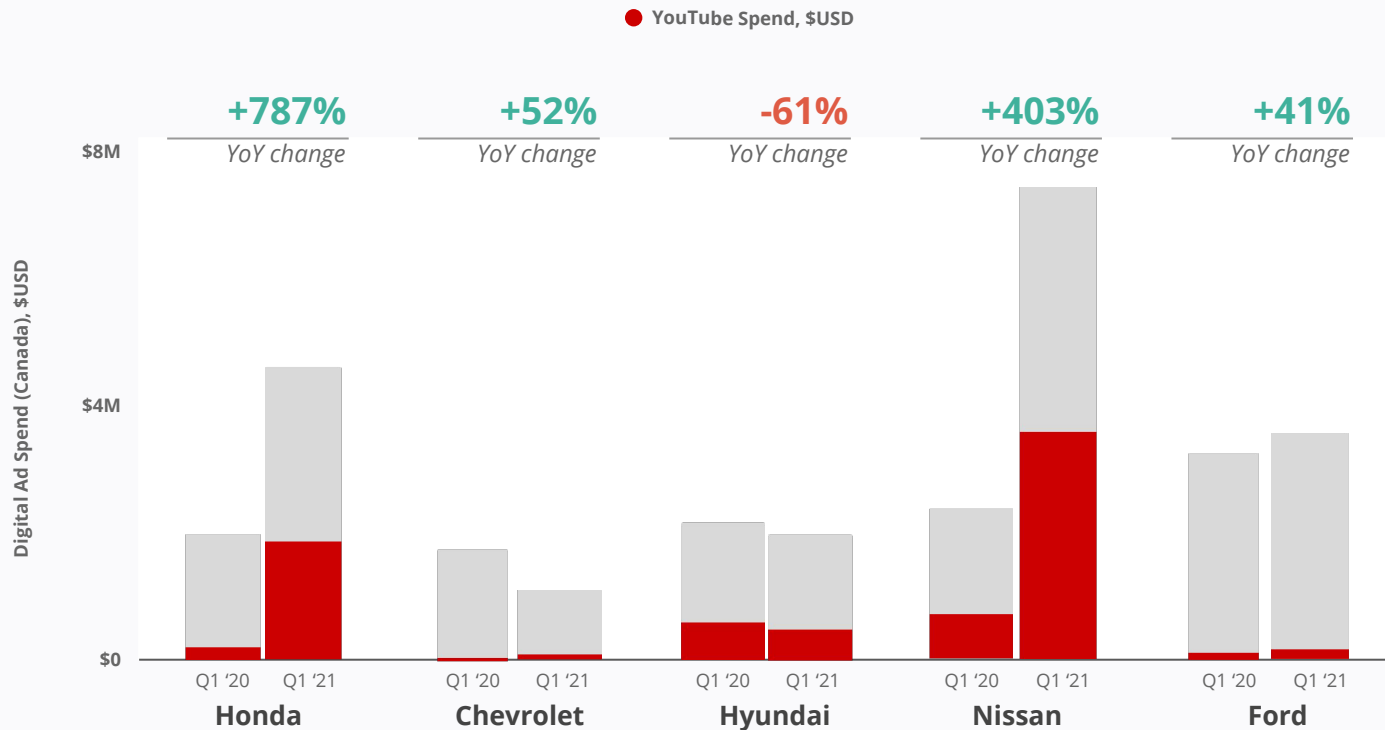
**YouTube video ads received the highest investment increase.**

**Nissan and Honda have significantly increased their digital advertising spend in Q1 2021, while Chevrolet and Hyundai invested less money in direct ads compared to the same period last year.**



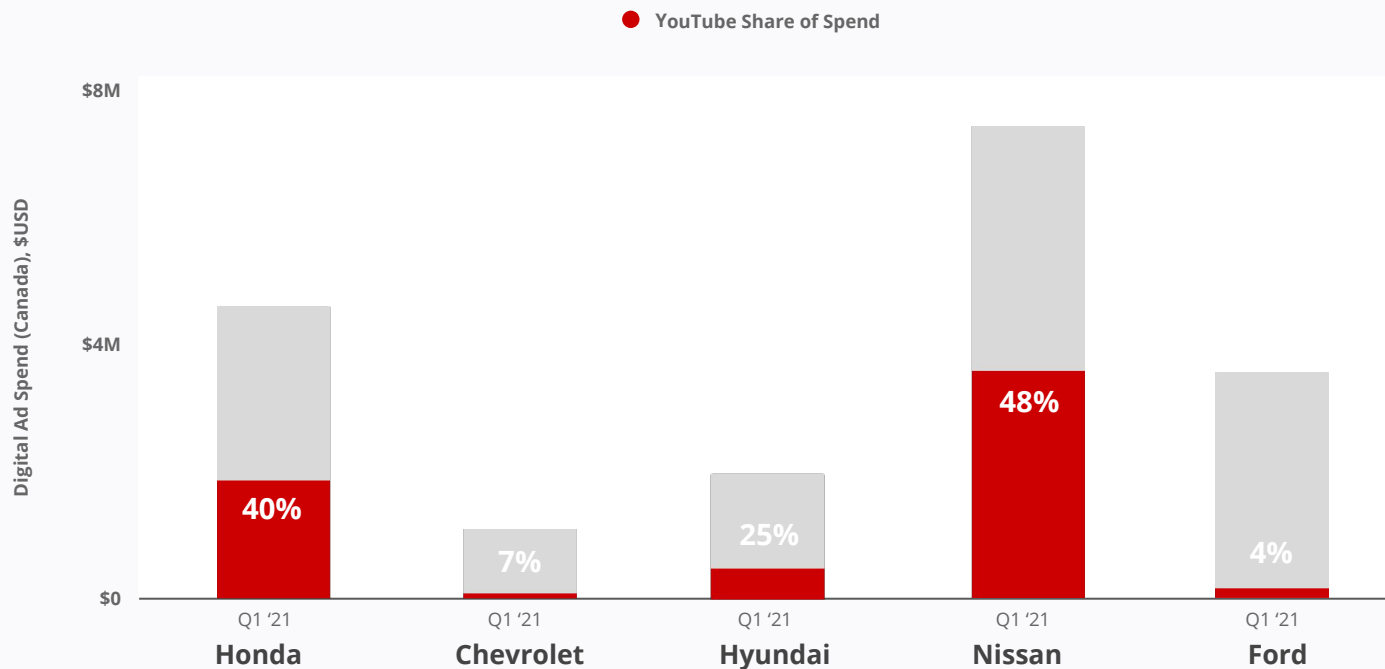
Spend is a directional approximation and does not include retargeting, or behavioural targeting.

**YouTube ad channel was the biggest gainer in terms of advertising dollars in Q1 2021, all car brands in the competitive set, except Hyundai, increased their investment in this channel.**



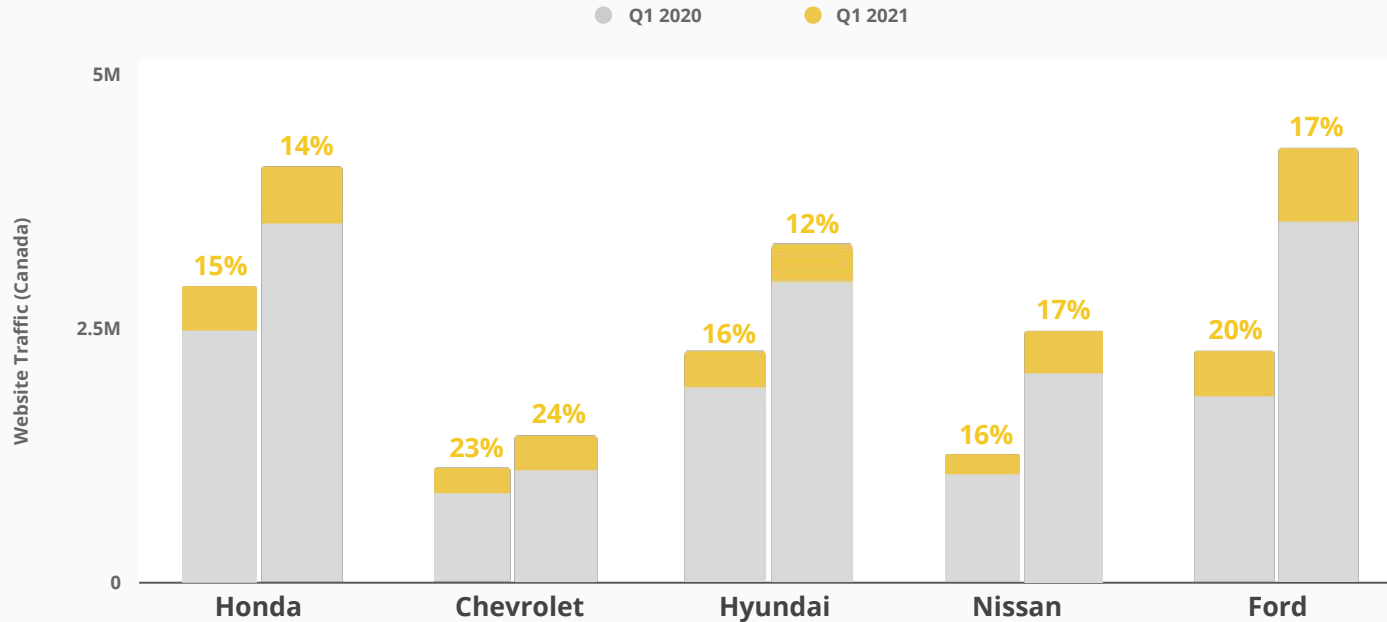


## Both Nissan and Honda invested almost half of their Q1 2021 advertising budget into YouTube video ads.



Spend is a directional approximation and does not include retargeting, or behavioural targeting.

Overall, paid traffic share\* has remained approximately the same quarter on quarter.



\*Includes display and paid search traffic

## Key Takeaways

**Web Experience — Mobile Traffic Grows Faster than Desktop Visits:** All five brands in the competitive set (Honda, Chevrolet, Hyundai, Nissan, Ford) have seen double-digit growth in their web traffic in Q1 2021 (vs. Q1 2020). Growth could be observed in both desktop and mobile visits, but the latter grew much faster. Car brands like Nissan and Honda saw their mobile traffic increase by +165% and +75%, while desktop visits increase only by 33% and 9% respectively. While all brands have technically mobile-optimized websites, the user experience of the “car build” page is overly complex for mobile browsing. Hence, mobile visits demonstrate twice as high a bounce rate and significantly (3X) shorter visit duration. There is an opportunity for the car brands to analyze the main objectives of mobile visits and create a simplified experience for mobile users.

**Traffic Channel — Mobile Search is a Dominant Traffic Channel:** Total (organic + paid) search traffic on average drove ~62% of total web visits in Q1 2021, which is 6% points down from Q1 2020. The quarter-on-quarter decline was driven by a declining share of desktop search visits, which on average decreased by 23% amongst the competitive set. Mobile searches, saw a double-digit growth (Honda, Nissan, Ford) and compensated for a declining share of desktop search visits. Mobile search traffic is a dominant traffic channel for all car brands in the competitive set. 31-44% of total traffic is driven by searched on mobile devices.

**Advertising Spend — YouTube is the Biggest Gainer:** Nissan increased their advertising budget by 129% and 218% respectively, while Chevrolet and Hyundai spent less money on direct advertising in Q1 2021 compared to the same period last year. All car brands except Hyundai increased their investment into YouTube. Both Honda and Nissan allocated 8X and 4X more money into YouTube video advertising in the first quarter of 2021 than in Q1 2020. Overall, a share of the paid traffic didn't significantly change quarter on quarter for any of the brands in the competitive set besides Hyundai (the brand decreased its total digital spend by 66% in Q1 2021).