

LowCVP Car Buyer Survey: Improved environmental information for consumers

Research conducted by Ecolane and Sustain on
behalf of the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership

Dr Ben Lane, Ecolane Transport Consultancy
LowCVP Conference, Twickenham – 15th July 2010



Car Buyer Survey – Aims x3

1. To assess the importance of environmental issues at the point of car purchase
2. To identify what environmental information is most easily understood by car buyers
3. To ascertain consumer preferences for how such information should be presented

Car Buyer Survey – Methods



- Focus groups (x6, 52 participants) – London, Birmingham and Bristol



- Web-based survey (1,000 participants)
live.carbuyersurvey.co.uk

Car Buyer Survey – Methods

4. When you chose your CURRENT car, what factors were important in the decision making process?

In your own words, list ONE OR MORE factors in the text boxes provided.

Enter factor here >

Enter factor here >

Enter factor here >

Enter factor here >

Enter factor here >

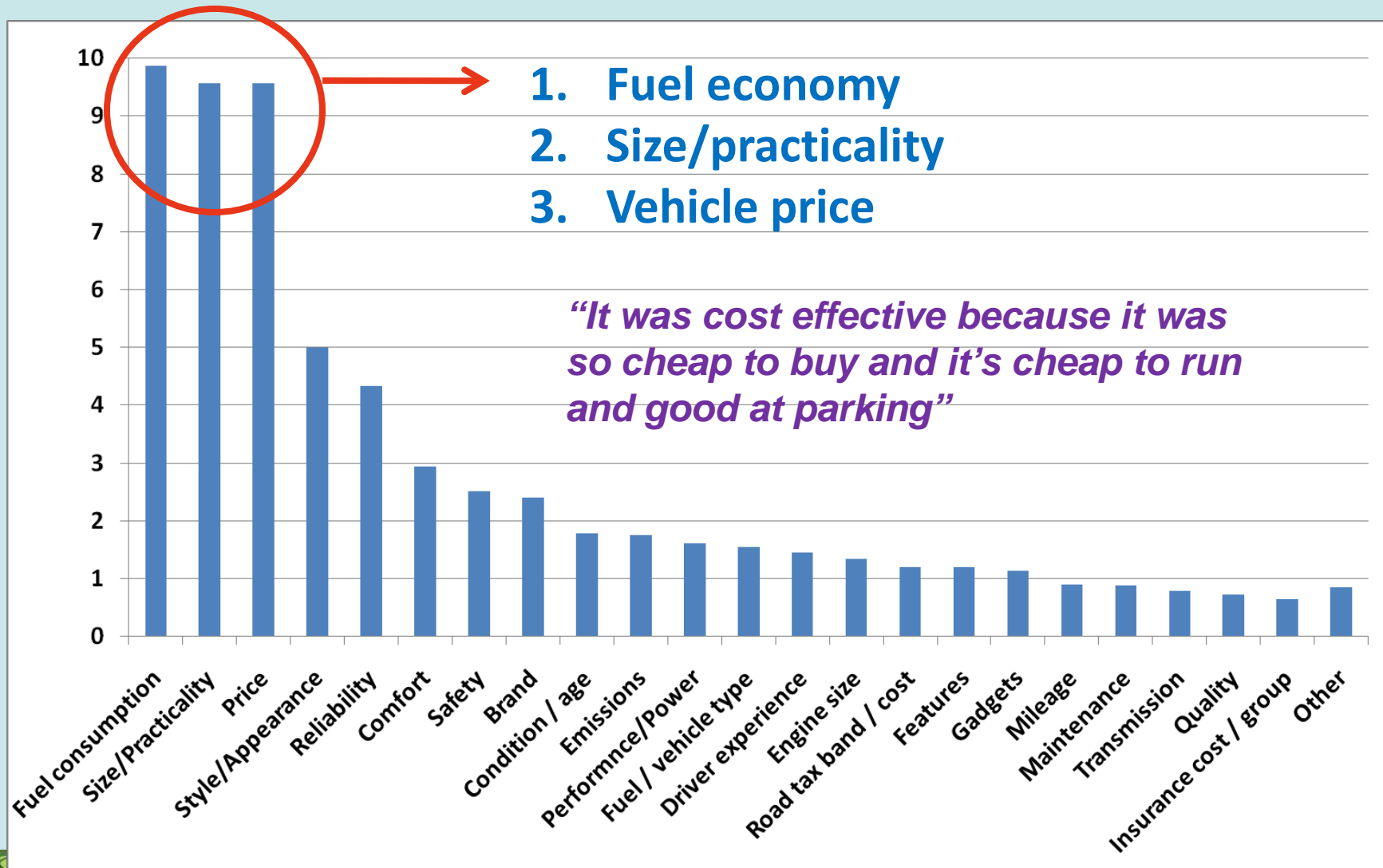
Add more factors



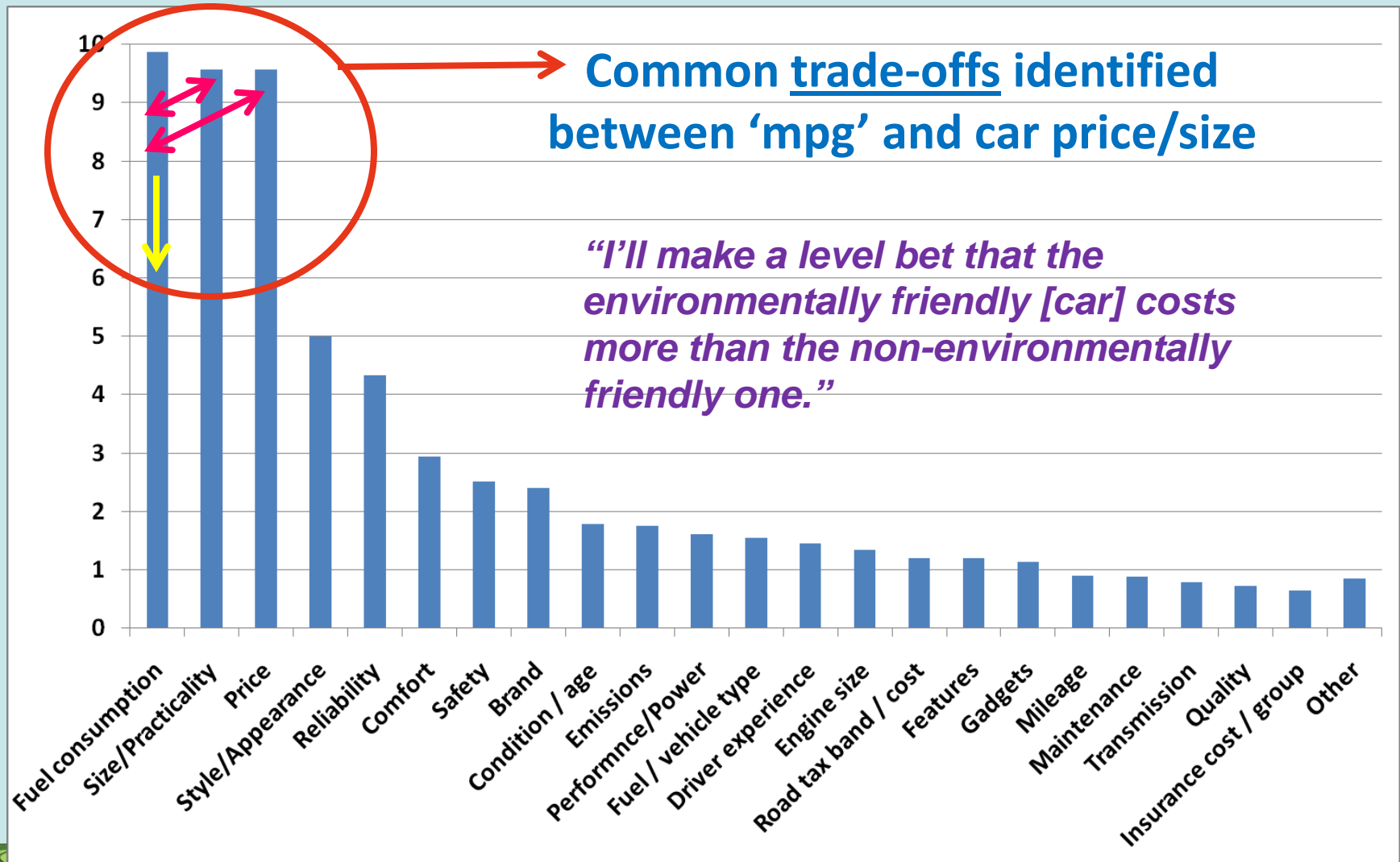
Question 4 of 18

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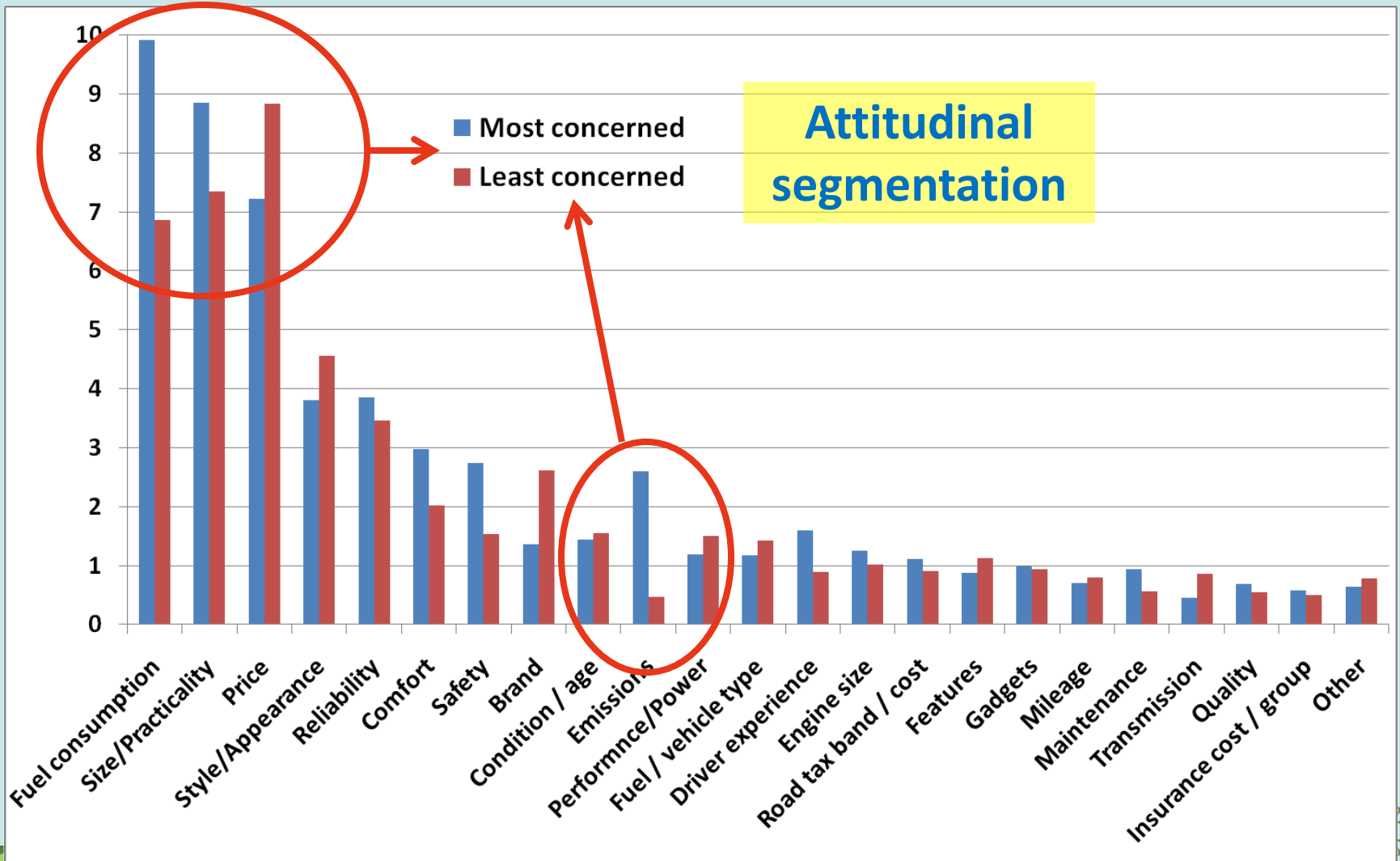
Car Buyer Survey – Purchase Factors



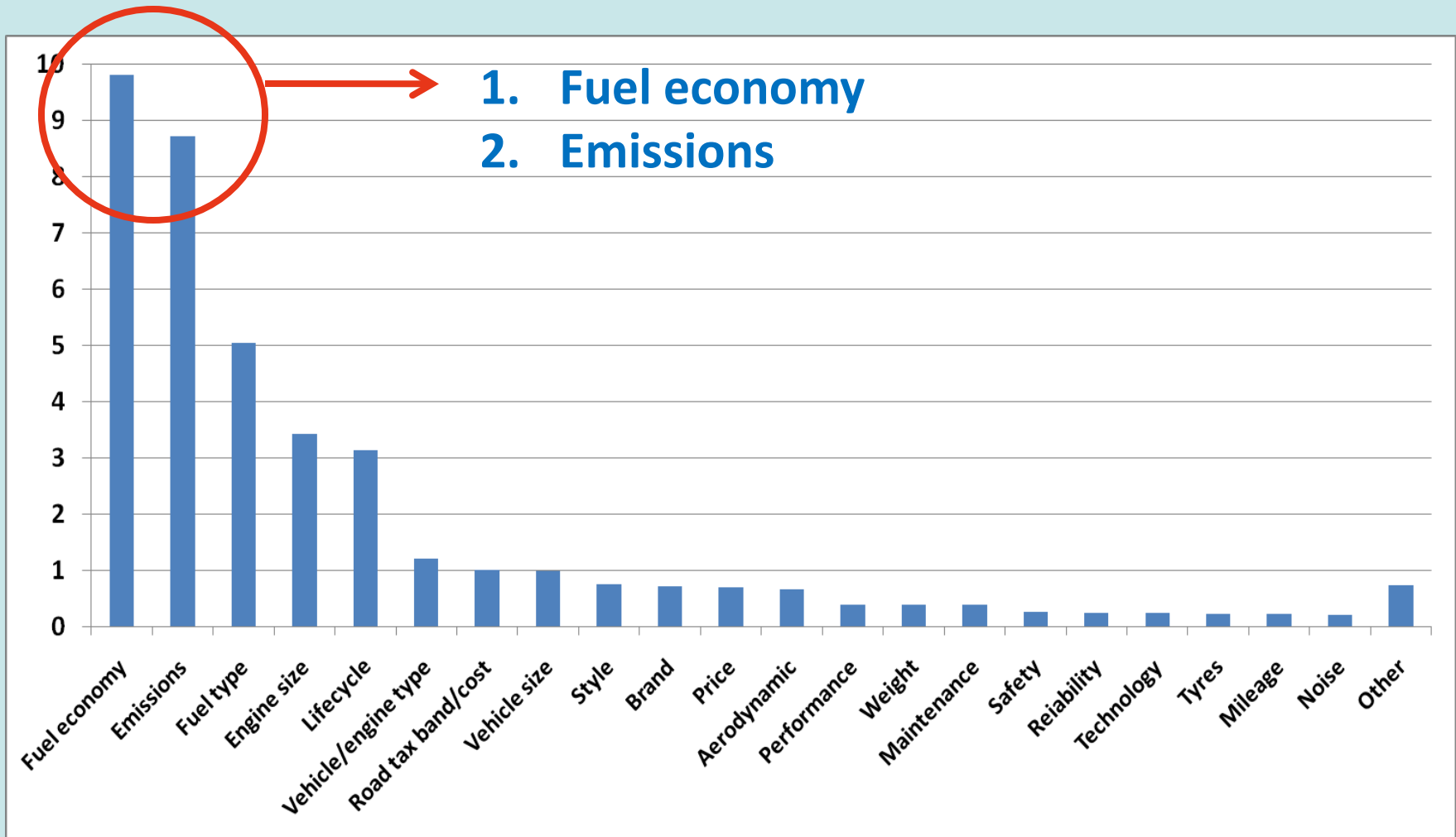
Car Buyer Survey – Purchase Factors



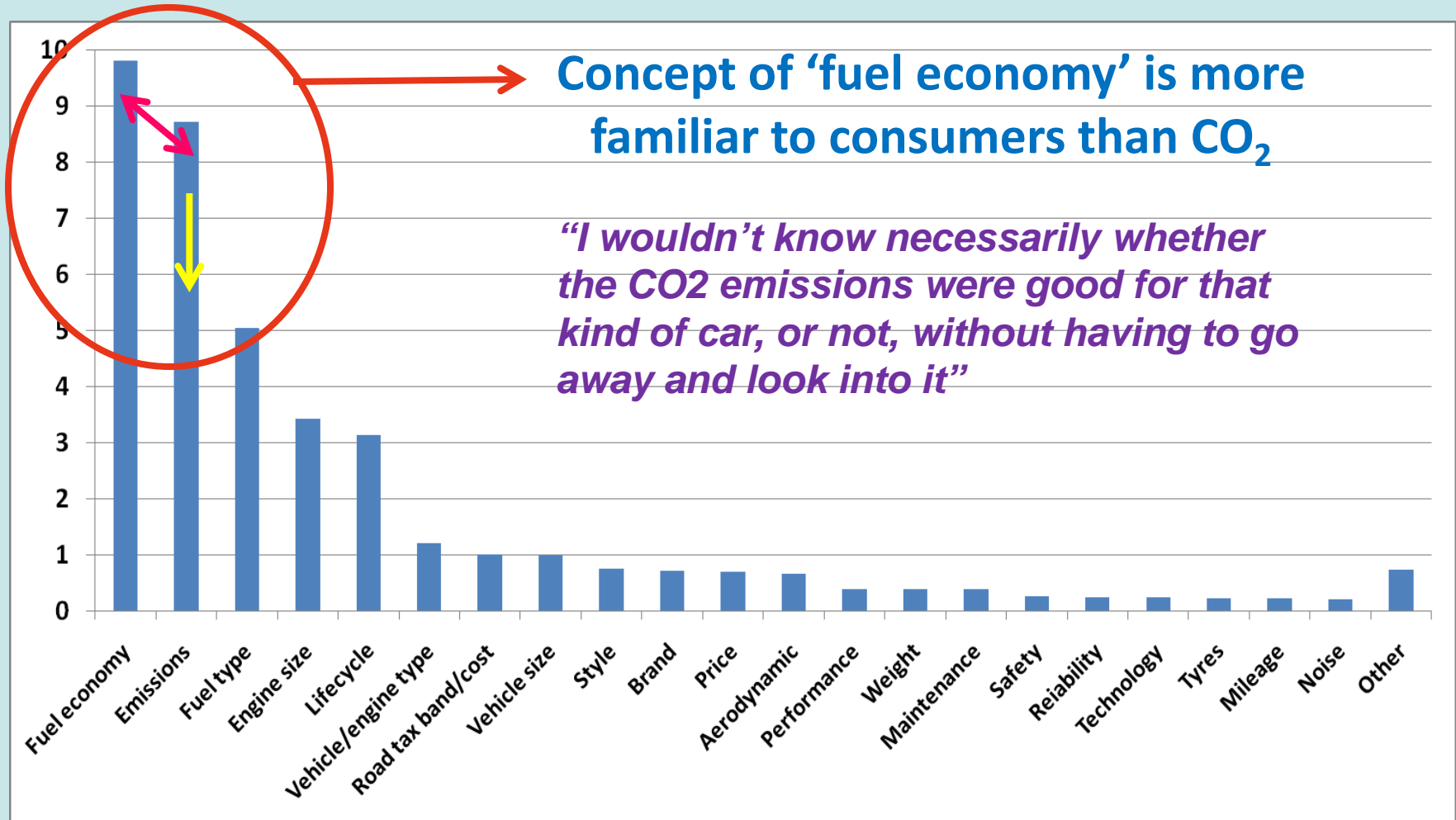
Car Buyer Survey – Purchase Factors



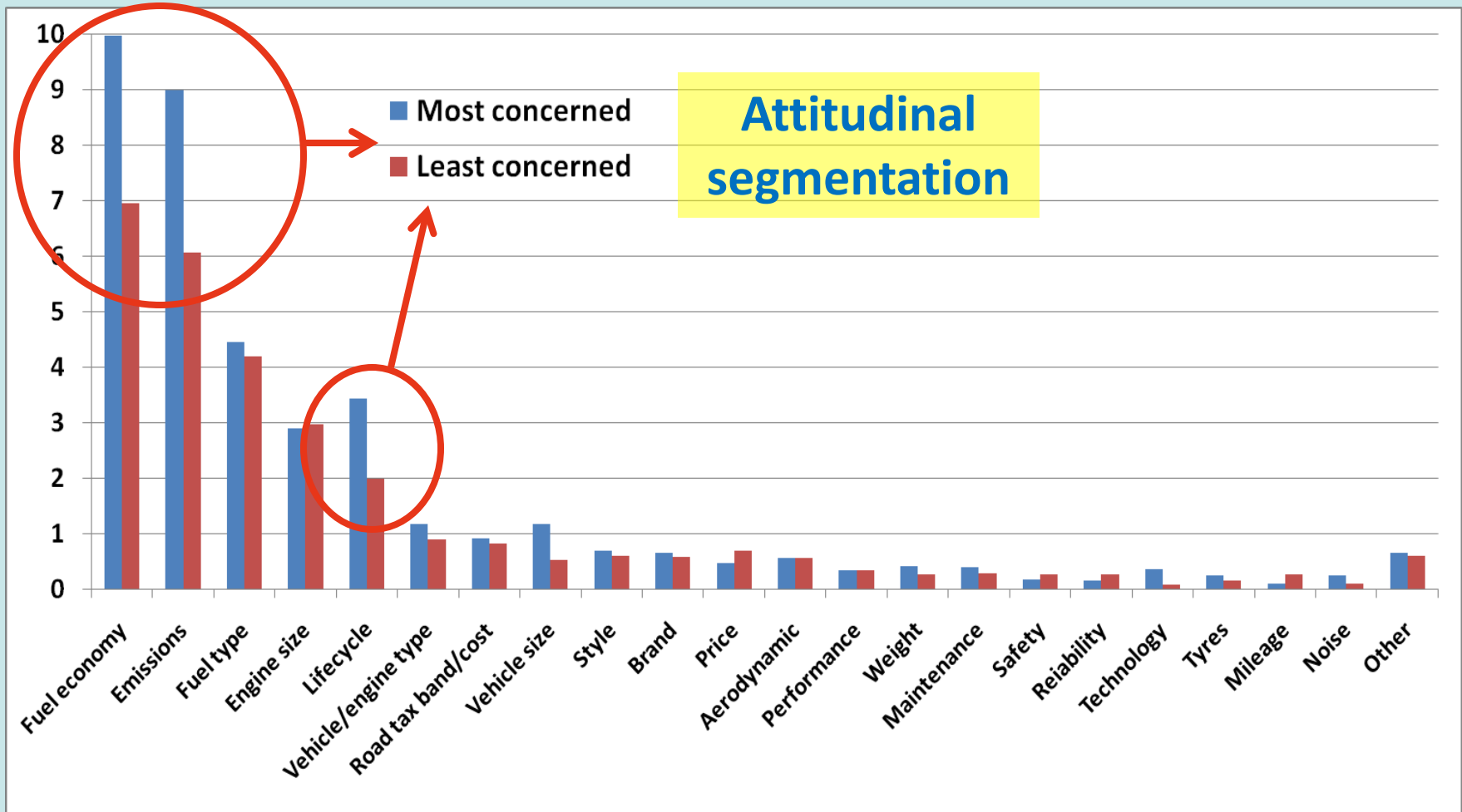
Car Buyer Survey – Env. Metrics



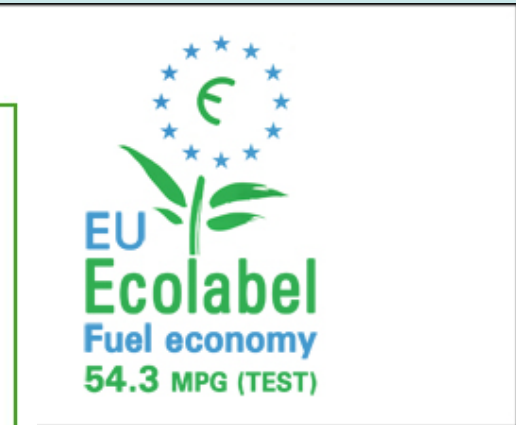
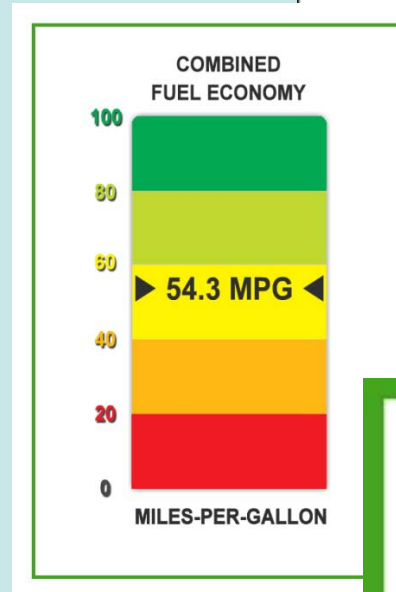
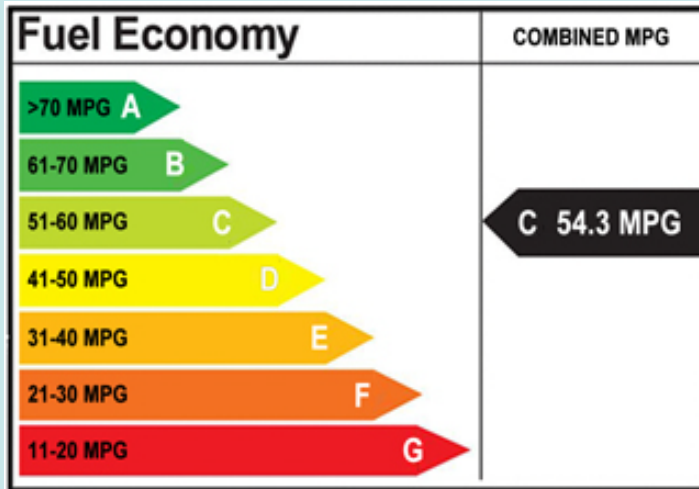
Car Buyer Survey – Env. Metrics



Car Buyer Survey – Env. Metrics



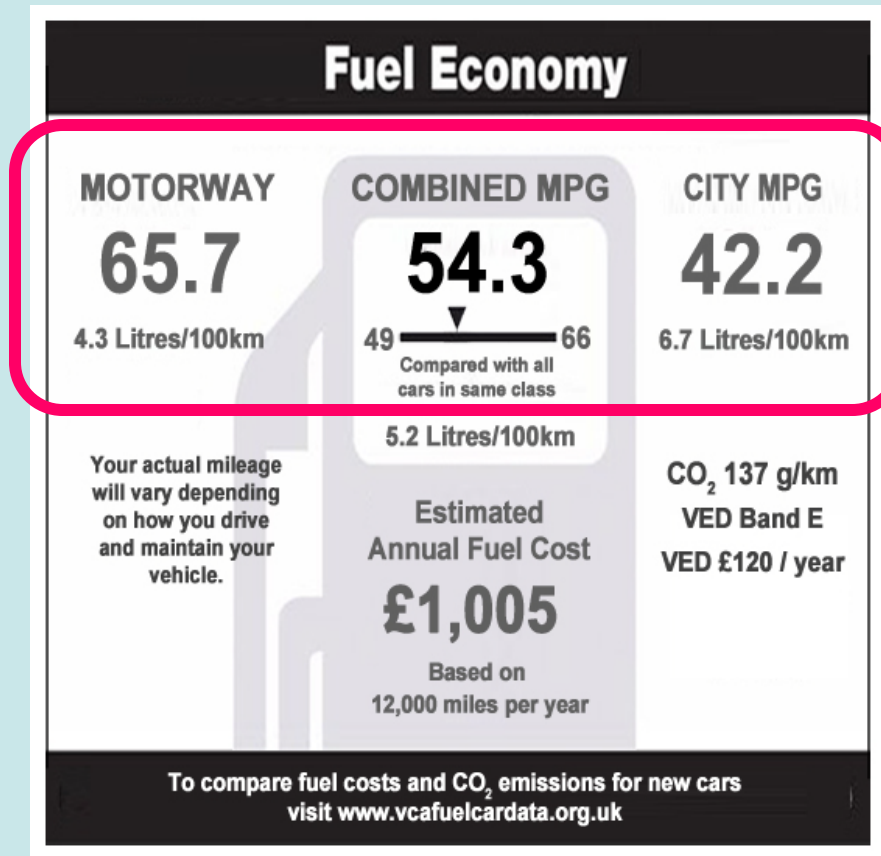
Car Buyer Survey – Format



Participants respond very positively to the colour banded format

“I think that’s why it’s good because it’s a format that you’re used to, so you can kind of relate to it”

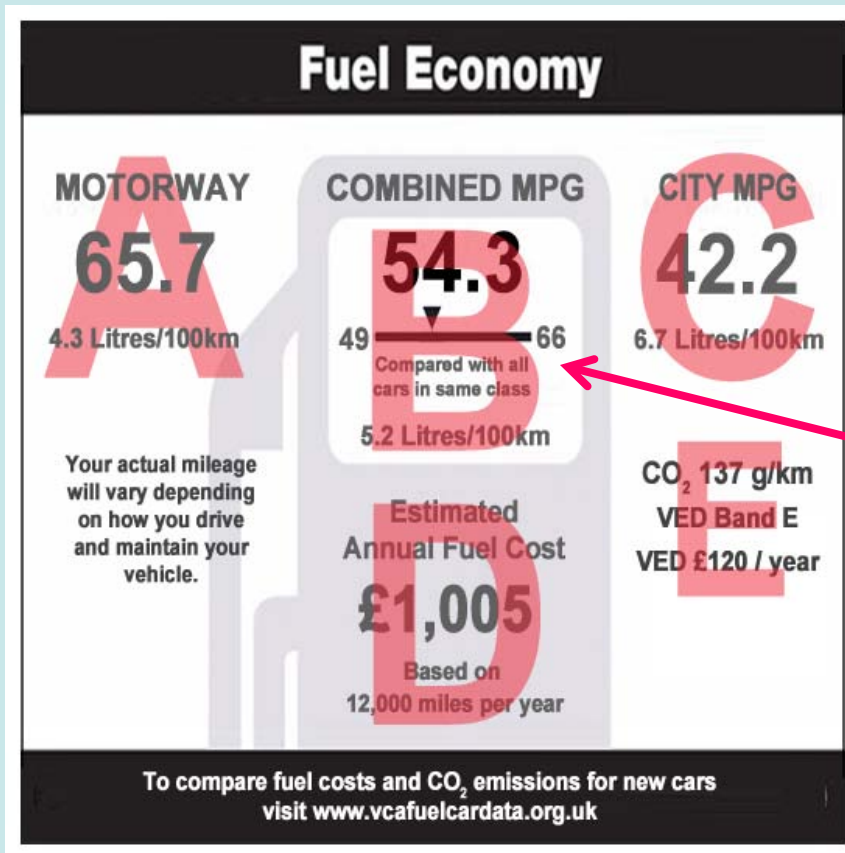
Car Buyer Survey – Format



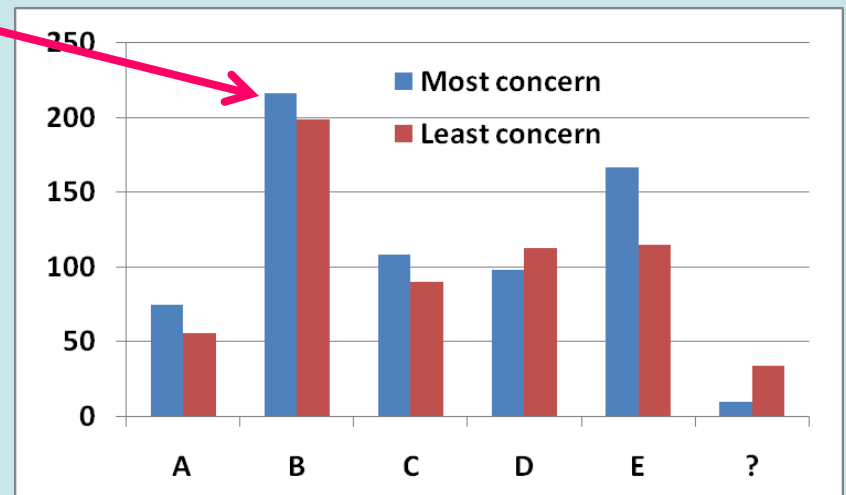
- ✓ Leads with MPG, which is displayed in large type
- ✓ ‘City’ / ‘motorway’ preferred to ‘urban’ / ‘extra-urban’

“You know, I can look at those figures and it means something to me immediately”

Car Buyer Survey – Format



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Car Buyer Survey – Format

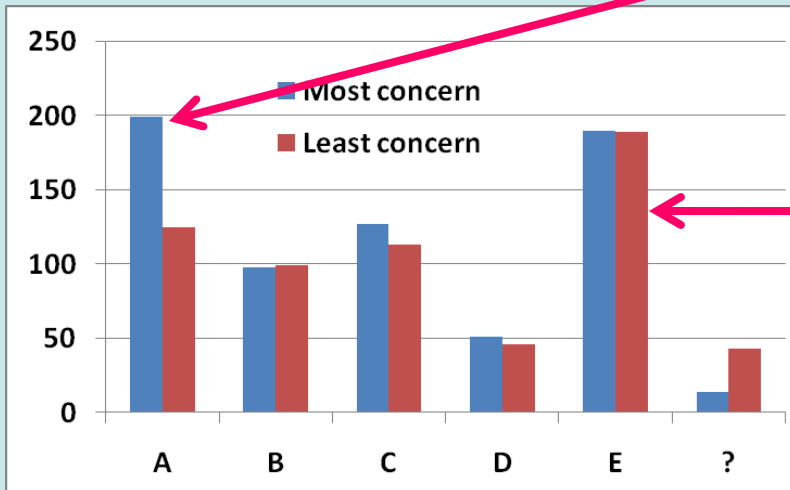
- ✓ Participants respond well to colour coded bands
- ✓ Colour bands recognised almost as a brand/logo

“...we automatically think, oh, yes, I bought my car as an A because that was good, so that’s telling me where I stand”

Fuel Economy		VED band and CO ₂
CO ₂ emission figure (g/km)		
<=100	A	
101-110	B	
111-120	C	C 114 g/km
121-130	D	
131-140	E	
141-150	F	
151-165	G	
166-175	H	
176-185	I	
186-200	J	
201-225	K	
226-255	L	
256+	M	
Fuel cost (estimated) for 12,000 miles		£830
VED for 12 months		£35
Fuel Consumption:	Litres/100km	Mpg
Urban	5.5	51.4
Extra-urban	3.6	78.5
Combined	4.3	65.7
<p>To compare fuel costs and CO₂ emissions of new cars, visit www.vcacarfueldata.org.uk</p>		

Car Buyer Survey – Format

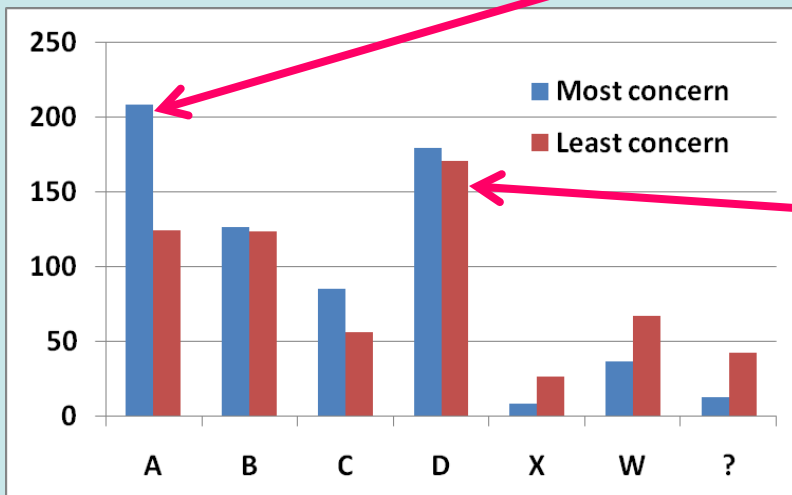
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226-255	L		
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VED for 12 months			C £35
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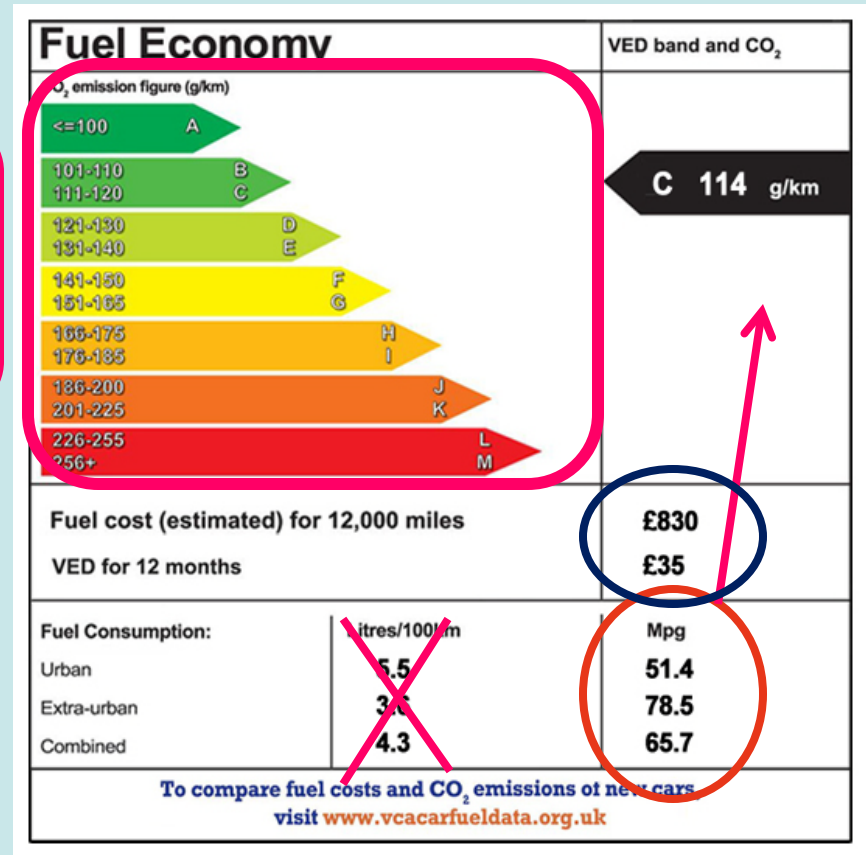
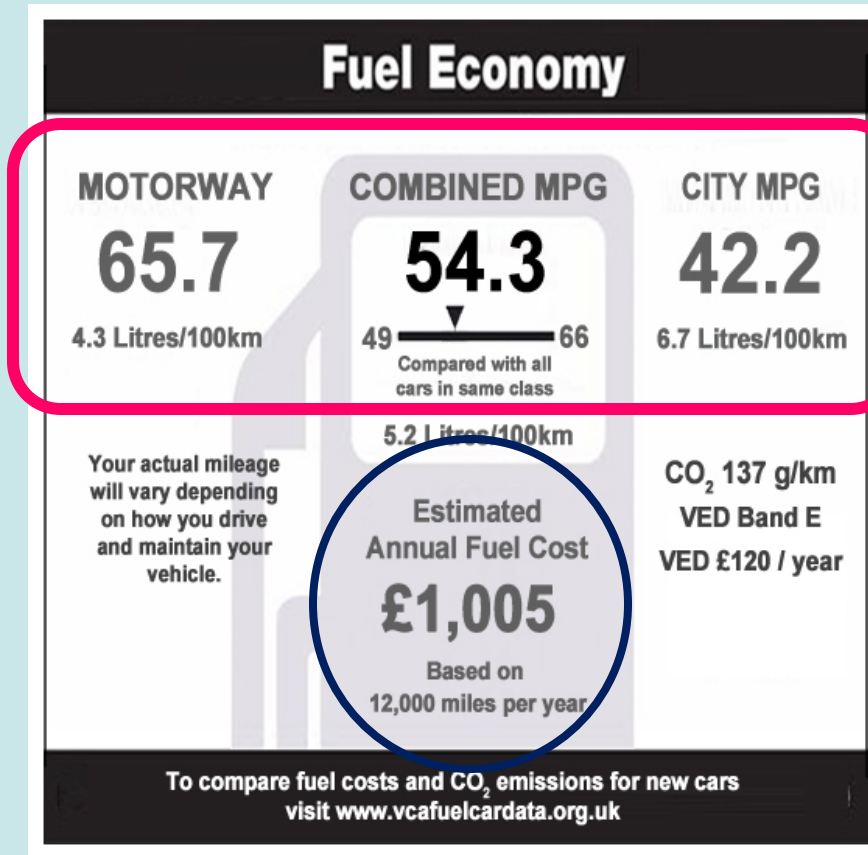
- ✓ Many interested in seeing relative info if simple
- ✓ BUT risk of ‘information overload’



Fuel Economy		VED band and CO ₂	
CO ₂ emission figure (g/km)		Best in class	
<=100	A	99 g/km	C 114 g/km
101-110	B	A	
111-120	C		Worst in class
121-130	D	154 g/km	
131-140	E		
141-150	F		
151-165	G		
166-175	H		
176-185	I		
186-200	J		
201-225	K		
226-255	L		
256+	M		Best in class
Fuel cost (estimated) for 12,000 miles		£830	£734
VED for 12 months		£35	£0
Fuel Consumption:		Litres/100km	Mpg
Urban	5.5	Best in class 4.3	51.4
Extra-urban	3.6	3.2	88.3
Combined	4.3	3.8	74.3

To compare fuel costs and CO₂ emissions of new cars, visit www.vcacarfueldata.org.uk

Car Buyer Survey – Implications



Car Buyer Survey – Recommendations

- Fuel economy information (in terms of ‘mpg’) should be made more prominent on the Fuel Economy Label (alongside CO₂ information)...
- Consideration should be given to adding ‘best in class’ fuel economy information, while not overloading consumers with too much information...
- Further research into the most effective lifecycle metrics and formats should be considered (to account for new technologies such as plug-in hybrid and EVs)...
- Five further recommendations in final report...

Car Buyer Survey – Implications

Fuel Economy Information	CO2 Emissions	Fuel economy
<p>CO₂ emission figure (g/km)</p> <p>Best in class 99 g/km 74.3 MPG</p> <p>Worst in class 154 g/km 48.2 MPG</p>	<p>Road tax band</p> <p>C 114 g/km</p>	<p>Combined</p> <p>65.7 MPG</p> <p>51.4 City</p> <p>78.5 M/way</p>
<p>Total lifecycle / recycling impact ****</p>	<p>Fuel cost for 12,000 miles £830</p> <p>Road tax for 12 months £35</p>	
<p>To compare fuel costs and CO₂ emissions of new cars, visit www.vcacarfueldata.org.uk</p>		