

HEADLINE: Women in the fast lane make their marque

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Sales of new cars passed the 1 million mark for the first time in Australia last year, but what may come as a surprise is that according to autochic.com.au founder Juliet Potter about half were sold to women, who make the ultimate decision in around 85 percent of total purchases. Ms Potter adds that although women tend to be much more conscious of issues such as the environment and safety, ego also plays a role, saying: 'A lot of men are driven by ego but I think ego also comes into play for women - it's an extension of who they are and their lifestyle.' James Dutton, chief executive of www.duttondirect.com, says some women believe, like the stereotypical male, that 'their prestige car makes them more appealing...so it seems some women are enjoying success and wealth, and might also be enjoying more attention.' Among corporate women for have purchased luxury cars are former TAC and Qantas chairman Margaret Jackson (Mercedes-Benz CLK 280 coupe), Vanguard Investments general counsel and company secretary Kathryn Watt (Alfa Romeo 159 JTS in a colour to match her Lover shade of Chanel lipstick), Benedict Industries director Dana Dupere (Maserati Spider). It seems women are sometimes no less spontaneous when making purchasing decisions than men, either, with Ms Watt saying: I read a review of the Alfa one morning and just went out, drove it and bought it...It was a purely whimsical purchase without any real research, but I love it.' BMW reports it sells one in 10 of its 7 series models to women. Porsche says women buy about 20 percent of their Boxsters, Caymans and Cayennes models.
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MENTIONS: Alfa Romeo, James Dutton, Margaret Jackson, Mercedes, Porsche*, Qantas*, Vanguard Investments, BMW*