

# LightStream Drives Consumer Education for End-of-Year Auto Buyers

## Five tips to prepare for year-end car purchases

ATLANTA, December 7, 2015 – LightStream, a national online lending division of SunTrust Bank, today offers must-have information for end-of-year car buyers with help from Kelley Blue Book. According to experts from Kelley Blue Book ([www.kbb.com](http://www.kbb.com)), the only vehicle valuation and information source trusted and relied upon by both consumers and the automotive industry, car sales are expected to surpass levels last seen in 2000, revving up momentum through the end of the year. As 2015 heads to the rearview mirror, December typically boasts the highest average incentive price, fueling consumer purchases during the final days of the year. With that in mind, LightStream offers five tips to help consumers take control of their car shopping to make the most out of year-end deals.

“Impressive end-of-year incentives are just the beginning,” said Matt DeLorenzo, managing editor at Kelley Blue Book’s KBB.com. “Well-informed consumers will reap the biggest deals this holiday season. As we move into what we expect to be a strong finish in 2015 car sales, we want consumers to feel empowered before they enter the showroom.”

To maximize year-end deals and empower auto shoppers, Kelley Blue Book suggests the following:

1. **Determine your spending cap.** Budget is the most important factor when purchasing a new car. When calculating a spending plan, it is essential to consider the down payment, monthly payments and interest rates. Purchasing within a set amount will prevent future financial stress.
2. **Recognize the right price.** Once you know the make, model and year of the vehicle you wish to purchase, research the invoice, MSRP and Kelley Blue Book Fair Purchase Price. Also, check to see if your desired vehicle is eligible for incentives. By establishing what your desired vehicle is worth in advance, you’ll prevent overpaying at the dealership or in a private sale.
3. **Let your current car go.** Whether you trade-in at the dealership or sell to a private party, letting go of your current car can significantly increase your down payment and decrease your monthly bill. Research its current value to get the biggest return on investment.
4. **Consider cost beyond the price tag.** The cost of your car is just the beginning. Before you buy, think about out-of-pocket expenses like fuel and insurance, plus depreciation. Those factors can mean a huge difference when it comes to overall expenditures. Kelley Blue Book’s 5-Year Cost to Own information for vehicles takes into consideration depreciation, expected fuel costs, finance and insurance fees, maintenance and repair costs, and state fees.
5. **Control the financing.** When determining the best financing option for you, consider the costs and available methods. Dealers may have special financing incentives, but be sure to measure the cost of financing against the price of the car. Sometimes even a zero-percent loan offer may not be as cost-effective as a cash-back incentive coupled with low-interest financing. And while some lenders and credit unions may offer low rates, they may add extra costs in fees and paperwork time. Research companies like [LightStream](http://LightStream), the online lending division of SunTrust Bank, where people with good credit can find a personal loan at fixed, competitive rates and no fees.

“Car buying with a solid plan in place allows consumers to focus their efforts on finding the car they want, instead of worrying about how to pay for it,” said Todd Nelson of LightStream. “As the exclusive online lender for Kelley Blue Book, LightStream offers auto financing through a simple, streamlined process. Applicants get an answer quickly, and when approved receive their funds through direct deposit, which can be as soon as the day they apply if a few required steps are completed by 2:30ET. With cash in their bank account, shoppers are empowered to negotiate like a cash buyer for any car, at any dealership.”

Visit [Kelley Blue Book](#) for year-end car buying resources.

#### **About Kelley Blue Book (www.kbb.com)**

Founded in 1926, Kelley Blue Book, The Trusted Resource<sup>®</sup>, is the only vehicle valuation and information source trusted and relied upon by both consumers and the automotive industry. Each week the company provides the most market-reflective values in the industry on its top-rated website KBB.com, including its famous Blue Book<sup>®</sup> Trade-In Values and Fair Purchase Price, which reports what others are paying for new and used cars this week. The company also provides vehicle pricing and values through various products and services available to car dealers, auto manufacturers, finance and insurance companies, and governmental agencies. Kelley Blue Book's KBB.com ranked highest in its category for brand equity by the 2015 Harris Poll EquiTrend<sup>®</sup> study and has been named Online Auto Shopping Brand of the Year for four consecutive years. Kelley Blue Book Co., Inc. is a Cox Automotive company.

#### **About LightStream, a division of SunTrust Bank**

LightStream is a national online lending division of SunTrust Bank, providing good-credit customers with competitive rates and an outstanding customer experience. LightStream's proprietary technology offers consumers a virtually paperless loan application, underwriting, funding and servicing experience.

SunTrust Banks, Inc., one of the nation's largest financial services organizations, is dedicated to Lighting the Way to Financial Well-Being for its clients and communities. Headquartered in Atlanta, the company serves a broad range of consumer, commercial, corporate and institutional clients. As of September 30, 2015, SunTrust had total assets of \$187 billion and total deposits of \$146 billion. Through its flagship subsidiary, SunTrust Bank, the company operates an extensive branch and ATM network throughout the high-growth Southeast and Mid-Atlantic States and a full array of technology-based, 24-hour delivery channels. The company also serves clients in selected markets nationally. Its primary businesses include deposit, credit, trust and investment services. Through its various subsidiaries, the company provides mortgage banking, asset management, securities brokerage, and capital market services. SunTrust's Internet address is [suntrust.com](http://suntrust.com).

SOURCE: Kelley Blue Book and SunTrust Banks, Inc.

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