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by Cox Automotive

AUTO INTELLIGENCE INDEX · Q3 2026

Fullpath's Auto Intelligence Index Finds Hybrids Are the Big Winner of Gas Hikes, Taking a Record 16.7% of New-Vehicle Shopper Demand One Year After the Federal EV Credit Ended

Tel Aviv, Israel, October 2026 — Fullpath by Cox Automotive, the automotive industry's leading AI and Customer Data Platform (CDP), today released its Auto Intelligence Index for the third quarter of 2026, tracking how shoppers and dealer lots responded to both the end of the federal EV tax credit on September 30, 2025, and the recent jump in gas prices.

The data points to a clear winner. Hybrids drew 15.7% of VIN-specific new-vehicle shopper leads in Q3 2026, up from 11.5% a year earlier. Hybrids hit a record 16.7% in September 2026, the same month the national average for gas set a September record of $4.33 a gallon on average.

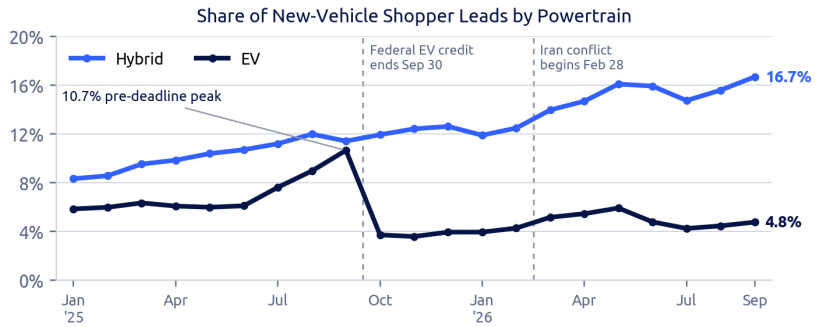
16.7%	+39%	20 days
HYBRID SHARE OF NEW-VEHICLE LEADS	**NEW-EV LEAD SHARE, FEB TO MAY 2026**	**MEDIAN TIME TO SELL A NEW HYBRID**
September 2026 · record high · 11.4% in Sep 2025	4.3% to 5.9% as gas topped $4	vs. 52 days for gas · Q3 2026

The Anniversary: EV Demand Reset After the Credit Expired

One year ago, shoppers raced against the September 30 deadline to claim federal EV credits. EVs accounted for 9.1% of new-vehicle leads in Q3 2025 with numbers hitting 10.7% in September alone*. Within a month of the credit's expiration, that share fell to 3.7%. In the sales environment that followed across the same rooftops, EVs made up 5.4% of new units sold in Q3 2025 versus 1.7% in Q3 2026, and new-EV units sold fell 64%. Hybrids moved in the opposite direction, experiencing a hike from 9.0% to 13.2% of new units sold.

What this means in practice: The 2025 pull-forward was real, and the post-credit EV buyer is a smaller, more price-sensitive group. Hybrids, not EVs, absorbed the electrified demand that remained.

*All figures reflect franchised-dealer activity and exclude Tesla, which holds about half of the US EV market.



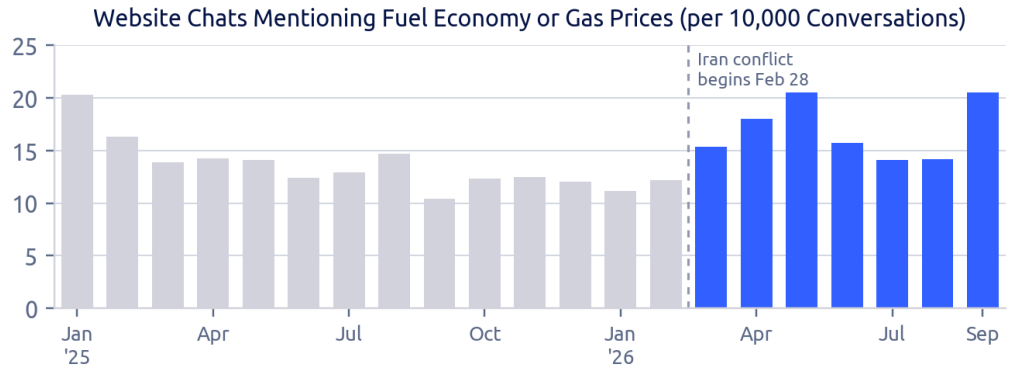
Source: Fullpath platform data. Share of new-vehicle CRM leads tied to a specific in-stock VIN.

The Gas Shock: Shoppers Ran to Hybrids First

The national average for regular gas climbed from about $2.98 in February 2026 to more than $4 by the end of March, peaked at $4.56 in May, and averaged $4.33 in September, according to AAA. Mentions of fuel economy or gas prices in dealer website chats rose 68% from February to May and returned to that same peak level in September.

The electrified share of new-vehicle leads (EV, hybrid, and plug-in hybrid combined) rose from 17.9% in February to 23.8% in May. Hybrids drove most of that gain, adding 3.6 points versus 1.6 points for EVs. Price is a likely reason: the median new hybrid is listed at $40.8K in Q3 2026, compared with $48.1K for EVs and $49.8K for gas models.

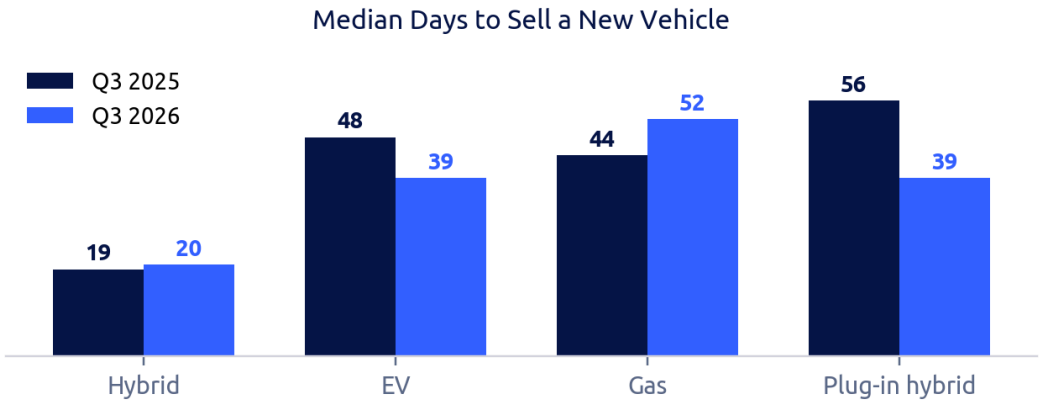
What this means in practice: $4 gas revived EV curiosity, but it converted most strongly into hybrid demand, with no charging trade-offs and a lower sticker.



Source: Fullpath platform data, dealer website chat conversations; gas prices from AAA.

On the Lot: Hybrids Turn in 20 Days While Gas Slows

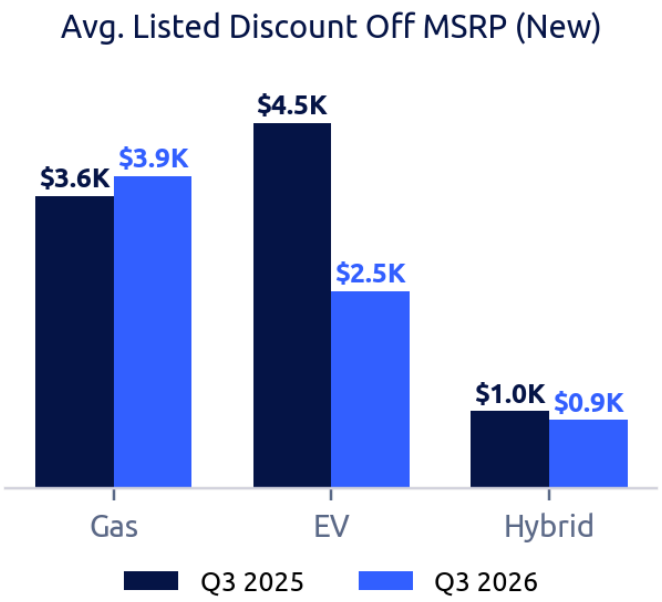
Hybrids were the fastest-moving new vehicles on dealer lots in Q3 2026, selling in a median of 20 days, less than half the 52 days it takes to move gas models. Gas vehicles slowed by 8 days year over year when comparing performance in 2025 to 2026. New EVs actually sold faster than a year ago (39 days versus 48), largely because dealers are moving far fewer of them and keeping leaner EV stock.

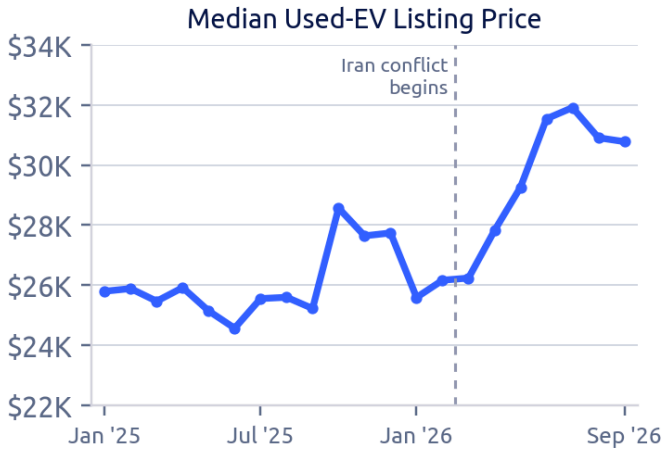


Source: Fullpath platform data. Same-store panel; days from on-lot date to sale.

Pricing tells the same story. The average listed discount off MSRP on new EVs fell from $4.5K (7.6%) to $2.5K (4.2%), while median EV listing prices dropped 11% as the mix shifted toward lower-priced models. Gas-model discounts edged up, and hybrids barely needed discounting at all.

In the used market, electrified vehicles got more expensive. The median used-EV listing price rose 22% year over year to $31.1K, with most of the climb coming after February, and used-hybrid prices rose 6%, compared with 2% for used gas vehicles. Used EVs now sell in a median of 25 days, on par with used gas cars.

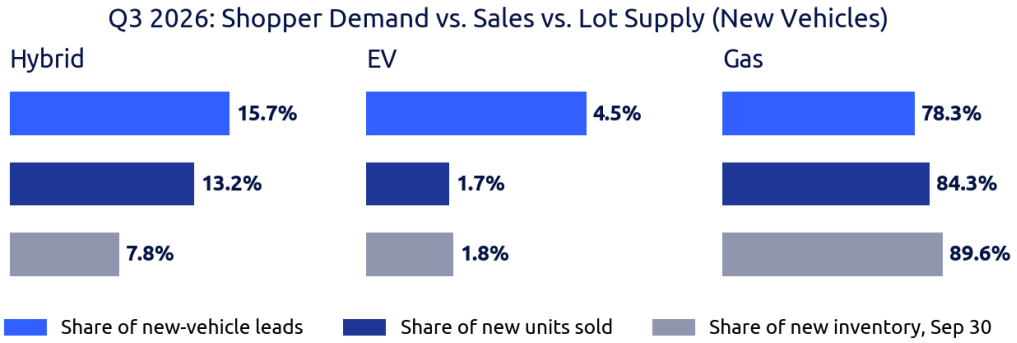




Source: Fullpath platform data. Discount is MSRP minus final advertised price on new units with a valid MSRP. Used-EV prices reflect listing mix, including newer off-lease models.

For Dealers: Hybrid Demand Is Outrunning Supply

Electrified vehicles drew 21.7% of new-vehicle shopper leads in Q3 2026 but only 15.7% of new units sold. Supply is a big part of the gap. Hybrids made up 15.7% of new-vehicle leads and 13.2% of sales, yet only 7.8% of new inventory on dealer lots at the end of September, while gas models were 89.6% of stock against 84.3% of sales. EV stock (1.8%) is now sized close to EV sales (1.7%).



Source: Fullpath platform data. Inventory share reflects new units on dealer lots across the Fullpath network as of September 30, 2026.

“The end of the EV credit and $4 gas have reshaped what car shoppers want, and hybrids are the clear winner,” says Ro Oranim, Head of Content at Fullpath. “Demand is outrunning supply across the industry making it even more critical to leverage shopper signals in real time. Dealers who see these shifts as they happen can turn shopper behavior into smarter inventory management, targeted marketing campaigns, and meaningful follow-up before the market moves on.”

METHODOLOGY

The Fullpath Auto Intelligence Index draws on Fullpath's CDP and AI analytics, aggregating anonymized dealer inventory, CRM, and website data across thousands of franchised dealerships nationwide. Q3 2026 covers July 1 through September 30, 2026. Gas prices are AAA national averages. Learn more at fullpath.com/data-insights/.

ABOUT FULLPATH

Fullpath by Cox Automotive is the AI ecosystem for car dealerships that unifies fragmented data to ensure every workflow, channel, and AI agent works in perfect harmony. Built on the core Customer Data Platform (CDP), Fullpath handles the heavy lifting of automated marketing and lead follow-up. This powerful infrastructure allows dealerships to turn complex data into more sales, blending timeless dealership charm with the cutting-edge technology of the agentic era.

PRESS CONTACT

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