



Your Car Is Not Yours

By Dale Jodoin
Columnist

There was a time, not that long ago, when buying a car meant something clear. You paid for it, you owned it, and it answered to no one but you. It sat in your driveway like a tool, quiet and loyal, waiting for the next trip.

That time is ending. Across Canada, a quiet shift is taking place. New vehicles are no longer just machines. They are connected systems, built to collect information, send it away, and charge you again and again to keep parts of the car working. What looks like ownership on paper is starting to feel more like a rental in practice.

Most people have not been told that in plain language. When you step into a newer vehicle, you are stepping into something that watches. It tracks where you go, how you drive, how fast you stop, how often you travel, even how you speak through voice commands. It connects through its own cellular signal, just like a phone, sending that information back to company servers

From there, the data does not always stay put. It can be shared with partners, used for analysis, and in some cases passed into larger data networks that most drivers never see.

The strongest example so far has come from General Motors. Its OnStar system, built into millions of vehicles, has been tied to collecting detailed driving behaviour and sharing that information with outside parties. Speed, braking, location patterns. The kind of information most people would never think a car is keeping.

Once that information leaves the vehicle, control over it becomes uncertain. It can move from one company to another. In some cases, it can circle back into systems that affect insurance or risk scoring. The car is no longer just getting you to work. It may also be quietly building a profile of how you live.

At the same time, the price of the vehicle itself has not gone down. In fact, for many Canadians, it has gone sharply up. New trucks and SUVs can cost as much as a small home used to. Yet even after paying that price, drivers are finding that parts of the vehicle are locked behind subscriptions.

This is where the shift becomes hard to ignore. Features that once came standard are now being turned into monthly charges. Not repairs, not fuel, not optional upgrades after the fact. Features already built into the car.

Across the industry, the pattern is clear. Toyota charges for remote start and navigation services after a trial period. Hyundai and Kia offer subscription packages for remote access, tracking, and safety alerts. Nissan and Subaru follow similar models, starting free and then quietly switching to paid plans.

Then there is the digital layer. Tesla charges for premium connectivity, including navigation data and streaming. Volkswagen and Audi offer paid Wi Fi, online radio, and app services. Porsche sells data packages tied to its connected systems.

These are not small extras. They are becoming part of the everyday driving experience. Without them, parts of the vehicle feel stripped down, even though the hardware is already there.

The most troubling shift may be in performance and control. Ford charges for hands free driving systems. General Motors requires ongoing payment for its advanced driving features. Mercedes-Benz has sold acceleration boosts through software. BMW offers digital upgrades through its connected store.

The capability exists inside the vehicle from day one. But access is locked unless you continue to pay.

That changes the meaning of ownership. For decades, once you bought a car, everything inside it was yours. Now, parts of it can be turned on or off depending on a subscription. Miss a payment, and you may lose access to features you thought you already owned.

For many Canadians, that feels like a line has been crossed.

What makes this harder to see is how it begins. You sit in your new vehicle, a screen lights up, and you are asked to agree. You want the system to work, so you press accept. It takes seconds. The language is long, detailed, and rarely read. In that moment, you may have agreed to data collection, data sharing, and subscription terms that continue long after you leave the dealership. It does not feel like a contract. But it is.

The industry is moving in a new direction. Cars are no longer just sold once. They are designed to bring in money over time through software, services, and data. For the companies, it creates steady income. For drivers, it creates a slow drain that builds year after year. And it raises a deeper question.

If you are paying tens of thousands of dollars for a vehicle, but key parts of it can be controlled remotely, updated without your say, or locked behind a fee, do you truly own it?

Or are you paying for access?

This is not a future problem. It is already here.

That does not mean drivers are powerless, but it does mean they need to be alert. Check the settings in your vehicle. Turn off data sharing where you can. Be careful about activating services you do not need. Ask direct questions before buying. What is included? What expires. What will cost more later. Because the old idea of a car, simple and fully yours, is fading.

What is replacing it is more complex, more connected, and in many ways, less yours than it appears. That is the warning. And for Canadians already stretched by the cost of living, it may be one of the most important things to understand before signing on the dotted line.



Employers Aren't Judging 'Who' You Are, They're Judging

'How' You Are

By Nick Kossov

Whether it's a scuffed kitchen table, a varnish-bare desk in the corner of your bedroom or a sterile cubicle at your local library, the posture is the same: a defeated, oxygen-starved hunch while scrolling through LinkedIn and other job boards, hitting the 'Easy Apply' button with the persistence of a gambler on a 12-hour losing streak, sending out your resume like junk mail. Essentially, you're begging strangers to give you permission to make a living.

You've probably sold yourself a list of reasons why your phone isn't ringing: ageism, the economy tanking, AI, automation, biases, aggressive ATS filtering, inflated requirements, etc. You've likely adopted the comforting lie that the 'hiring system'—a mythical, monolithic beast—is broken, conveniently overlooking the fact that no two employers evaluate candidates in the same way. Blaming how employers hire is easier than admitting you haven't given employers a reason to notice you.

Employers aren't judging who you are. They're judging HOW you are.

Self-proclaimed career coaches peddle the 'who you are' narrative to exploit your emotions. In reality, employers lack the bandwidth to obsess over your identity, age, or gender. They aren't judging your 'who'; they are auditing your 'how.' Whether through your resume, LinkedIn profile or during an interview, the focus is on your value. An experienced hiring manager evaluates whether you'd be a value-add, a strategic asset, to their business's profitability.

The majority of recruiters and hiring managers—note I'm not saying 'all'—don't care about your age or supposed excessive qualifications.

Ageism: The most convenient lie in the job seeker's arsenal is ageism. It allows the job seeker to blame a biological clock rather than having a stagnant skill set. Having the sense of entitlement that 20 years of doing 'the job' entitles you to 'the job' is a major source of the frustration and anger in today's job market. Experience isn't a synonym for value; it's often a synonym for 'expensive habits.' Does ageism happen? Of course it does, but not nearly to the extent job seekers are being led to believe it does. Employers don't fear your age; they fear your inability to adapt to a 2026 workflow.

When you talk about your 'decades of experience' instead of how you were a contributor to your employer's profitability, you're telling your interviewer that your best work is in the rearview mirror.

Overqualified: Claiming you're 'overqualified' is just a pretentious way to soothe your ego. It's a self-serving narrative that ignores the clinical reality: an employer doesn't see you as a superstar; they see you as a flight risk. It's your job to prove you won't be bored by Tuesday, gone by Friday, or too proud to take direction from a manager younger than your neckties.

"To tell your spouse (and yourself) that you were turned down because you were too skilled or too experienced is much less bruising on the ego than the alternative." — Job Tips For Geeks
In 2026, the greatest advantage a job seeker can give themselves is not viewing themselves as a victim, a limiting belief that makes them believe they have no control over their job search. The Follow-Up: When a victim doesn't get a callback, they assume, "They don't like me because I'm [what they believe they're a victim of]." A job seeker having a resilient mindset thinks, "My 'How' didn't land. What more can I do to show that I'd be so valuable that they won't ignore me?"

The Resume: A victim's resume is a repository of 'responsibilities,' a list of what they were told to do, not of what they actually achieved. It's the ultimate 'who I am' document, crying out for a participation trophy. In contrast, a job seeker who views themselves as a high-value asset writes a resume that resembles a balance sheet. They provide evidence of how they solved challenging problems, protected their employer's profit margin, and delivered measurable results.

The Interview: When asked about employment gaps or short job tenures, a victim becomes defensive, offering excuses. Conversely, a job seeker with a strategic mindset treats the question as a career audit. They don't apologize for a gap; they explain how they sharpened their 'How,' enhancing their value proposition. Likewise, they frame a short job tenure not as a failure but as a calculated exit from an environment that wasn't a good fit. Leaving a room you don't belong in is a strength, not a weakness.

Blaming external factors communicates to employers and, worse, your subconscious: "I can't control my life, therefore I'm not accountable for my results." The job market isn't a social club or a bazaar of "good intentions." It's a transactional exchange of money for results. By dropping excuses like ageism, bias, and the so-called "broken system," you're pushing yourself to confront the only thing that truly makes you hireable: what value can you bring to an employer's profitability?

Employers not responding to your applications isn't because of a conspiracy against you; it's because you're not effectively showing 'how' you can contribute to the employer's bottom line. In other words, you're not a victim; you're simply not demonstrating how hiring you would be profitable.



CHARITY CRICKET TOURNAMENT

★ SATURDAY, JULY 4 ★

10 AM TO 10 PM

Trophy Presentation and Ceremony at 10 pm

Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park
705 Sandy Beach Road, Pickering

★ ALL PROCEEDS GO TO PICKERING FOOD BANK ★

1ST PRIZE- \$1500

2ND PRIZE- \$750

\$400 ENTRY FEE PER TEAM

To register or for more info:

pickeringcricketclassic@gmail.com

