

BY EAMON DONOGHUE

NEARLY half a million used cars were flogged in the first half of this year, figures revealed yesterday.

Carzone.ie said more than 454,000 pre-owned motors were shifted between January and June.

But the vast majority of searches on the website were people looking for a bargain rather than buying as there were 100 million searches in the same period.

The findings also showed:

■ Diesel cars account for 84% of Carzone searches

■ The top two financial concerns for motorists are fuel costs and road tax, and

■ Only 2.2% said they would consider buying a hybrid or electric power model.

Carzone's Shane O'Donoghue said:

FULL SPEED AHEAD FOR SECOND-HAND CAR SALES

454,000 pre-owned vehicles sold in just 6 months

"There's absolutely no doubt the new car market has significantly dropped since the boom times and people are being more canny with their money."

"Today in Ireland demand outstrips supply, that's why so many used cars are

being imported in right now. If you can get a hold of a two-year-old car these days it's going to be like a new one anyway."

Volkswagen Golf was the most searched model, followed by the BMW

3 Series, BMW 5 Series and the Audi A4. Mr O'Donoghue added: "We are now very much a part of the Irish motoring scene, whether you're a buyer or just browsing, and that's not changing anytime soon." But the firm still sees a

future for traditional car dealerships in Ireland. Mr O'Donoghue added: "I think there's always going to be a need for car dealerships, especially used dealers."

"But websites like ours, what we're becoming very good at, is putting buyers in touch with the right car dealer in a more efficient manner."

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CENTRE OF ATTENTION
 Dublin Wives star Virginia Macari and models yesterday



YOU BEAUTY
 Virginia really looks the part

Dublin wife a high frier

BY SAM HAMILTON
SHAKE your salt and vinegar and get ready to batter the competition - the Irish Traditional Italian Chippers Association need a new ambassador. Dublin Wives star Virginia Macari chipped in yesterday to announce a nationwide search.

The winner takes home a year-long modelling agency contract, a €1,000 cash prize and a holiday worth €1,500.

You can enter online at www.itica.ie, before stylist Maria Fusco and Roz Flanagan help pick the winner. You'd be flipping mad not to give it a go.