

EVENTS/CAUSES

Maserati heightens image with charitable, social endeavor

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Maserati Quattroporte

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

Italian automaker Maserati is positioning itself for the youth market by helping to launch Ldny Foundation's Legacy Collection.

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In partnership with digital design firm Those, the Legacy Collection was on display in the windows of department store Liberty London for a week's time, ending Nov. 2. Working with technology companies and charities could make Maserati more visible to a younger and aspirational audience.

"Maserati is focussed on being the absolute opposite of ordinary' we like to surprise people," said Anna Angelini, head of press and public relations for **Maserati** North Europe. "The window of Liberty is not a place you'd expect to see Maserati, and the Liberty brand is a good fit as it is high-end, distinctive and iconic.

"We added the cutting edge Woodpecker technology to make the window stand out and be different from a static display; we allowed the London public to engage with the window and become a part of it," she said. "The charity element is something which fits well with Maserati's commitment to championing enterprise; Maserati has supported LDNY and WIE since Spring 2015."

Excellence through passion

The Ldny Foundation encourages young individuals living in London and New York to develop creative talents to reach their potential. This support is given through SME grants, educational scholarships and effective projects.

Ldny Foundation's Legacy Collection is a luxury fashion project focused on promoting low-income aspiring female designers. The partnership thereby positions Maserati as a product to aspire to instead of one that is closed-off from the underprivileged.



Maserati Gran Turismo Centennial Edition

In addition to items from the Legacy Collection, the window display at Liberty London included Those's "Woodpecker" drawing system, which sketched Maserati models and items from the Legacy Collection onto the window. The system also turns surfaces into interactive displays, which it uses to display tweets on the glass window.

"Maserati has always been an iconic brand representative of impeccable styling, and style is equally important in fashion as in the automotive industry," said Tina Masciadrelli, senior account executive at [The O Group](#). "Die-hard Maserati loyalists expect the Maserati brand to be on the forefront of technology, and as fashion, technology and other industries grow more interconnected a collaboration with iconic department store Liberty is a natural extension.

"The #LibertyxMaserati movement is also a great way to introduce a more contemporary audience to the Maserati brand in a known, admired and aspirational context," she said. "While few Liberty shoppers will be able to purchase a Maserati, the affiliation brings more attention to the auto brand while they ramp up production."

Liberty London's window display was launched in conjunction with a VIP event, highlights of which have been captured on a video uploaded to YouTube.

The video begins with exterior and interior shots of Liberty and the Woodpecker sketching as passersby stop to watch. After that brief montage, speakers from Liberty and Maserati discuss the collaboration.

Maserati at Liberty London

Viewers are encouraged to tweet about the window display and the Woodpecker using #LibertyxMaserati. The tweet will then immediately be displayed on the windows.

A consumer enjoys seeing her own content being used in a branded effort, as it gives her a sense of responsibility and importance in building the brand.



Legacy Collection window display

The social media prompting combined with the one-week window made the display a must-see event.

"Like any pop-up initiative, the limited time frame draws attention and gets the right people involved quickly," Ms. Masciadrelli said. "The one-week time frame allows Maserati brand loyalists to feel exclusive through VIP and early access invites.

"Other fashion, automotive and technology lovers who are in-the-know will make an effort to see the exhibit as soon as they can, keeping the hype and social media buzz strong," she said.

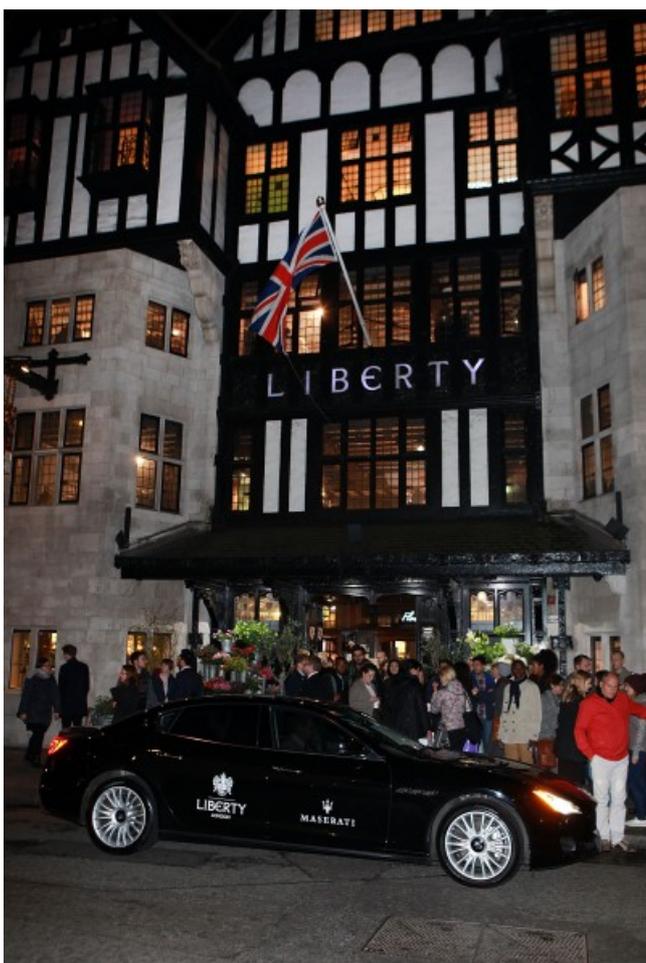
Lined outside Liberty London's main entrance were a number of Maserati Quattroportes, giving the automaker a clear connection to the charity.



Maserati's lined the main entrance of Liberty

Although most millennial consumers have not yet attained the wealth to purchase a Maserati, the brand can nonetheless imprint itself in consumers' minds by showcasing a concern for economic equality.

Young consumers are especially mindful of social issues and brand values, meaning it is particularly important for brands with fewer entry-level products to properly position themselves to an emerging group of luxury consumers.



Maserati VIP event at Liberty

"Among ultra high-end brands competition is fierce and luxury consumers have access to endless options," Ms. Masciadrelli said. "There will always be a bigger, better, more expensive choices, but consumers crave emotional benefits just as much as functional ones.

"A brand such as Maserati, that provides the utmost in product quality and design alongside a venerable history,

charitable affiliations, and strategic collaborations offers a much more compelling reason for loyalty than brands competing on functional qualities alone," she said.

Branching out

Maserati has previously ventured into other industries with carefully chosen partnerships.

In May, it married "slow food" with "fast cars" in a partnership with Michelin-star chef Massimo Bottura.

Maserati's partnership with Mr. Bottura is described by the automaker as "unit[ing] the excellence of the Trident marque with the acclaimed gastronomic virtuosity" represented by the chef's work and his restaurant Osteria Francescana. Selecting a brand partner that is outside the traditional wheelhouse of an automaker will show that Maserati has interests beyond automobiles and common associations such as racing ([see story](#)).

Other automakers have been more direct in their ventures into other industries.

For example, in September, British automaker Bentley Motors continued to establish itself as a choice purveyor of more than just cars.

The company unveiled its new luxury collection at the Frankfurt International Automobile Exhibition. With seven lines of clothing, accessories and more, Bentley will rely on its loyal consumers to diversify its brand and differentiate it from its automotive competitors ([see story](#)).

Reaching into other sectors through partnerships rather than products allows Maserati to showcase values without diluting the brand.

"Maserati has been a style pioneer in the automotive world since its very first road car was produced in 1947," Ms. Angelini said. "Maserati was the first car maker to bring racing pedigree and luxurious style together in a sports car package. Over the years the brand has had many fashion associations all over the world; it not only resonates with the 'die-hard' Maserati loyalists but it also introduces the brand to a new audience which may not have previously been exposed to Maserati."

Final Take

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