

ADVERTISING

Audi positions itself as technological frontrunner with A4 campaign

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2017 Audi A4

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German automaker Audi is showing how intelligence is the new rock 'n' roll in its latest advertising campaign.

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The national multichannel campaign for the Audi A4 focuses on the car's integration of technology, claiming that technology is as ubiquitous and influential in culture and life as rock 'n' roll once was. Creating a favorable narrative around a product's innovations can appeal to consumers on an additional level of sentiment.

"The A4's segment has long been defined by performance, but the A4 redefines the segment, banishing this one dimensional stance," said Ken Bracht, general manager, Audi brand marketing. "The benchmark performance of the A4 surpasses that of its luxury competitors and adds another differentiating layer - it offers a new level of technology. The Audi virtual cockpit, class leading driver assistance systems, class-leading performance are examples of this."

Tech 'n' roll

The cornerstone of the campaign, which includes six commercials, print and out-of-home advertisements, is a minute-long spot entitled "Rock and Roll."

Rock and roll begins with musicians walking to their instruments, while a rock song modeled after Iggy & The Stooges' "Search and Destroy" touts the virtues of technology. Images show ice carving, x-ray imaging, virtual reality headsets, smartphone screens and tablets, all separated by images of the Audi A4. At the end, a man walks out on stage to rapturous applause, but it is revealed to be a tech showcase, not a rock concert.

Audi A4 - "Rock and Roll"

The commercial shows that while rock and roll used to be among the dominant aspects of life, that influence has now been relocated to the tech industry. By placing itself within the technological revolution, Audi presents itself as being as edgy and meaningful as rock and roll.

This theme is built on by "Touch," a 30 second spot featuring the same song and highlighting the increasing complexity of technology. A man shuts off his alarm clock, which is knocked slightly off-screen and then emerges as a newer model, watches as a manual thermostat is replaced with a digital one and as an analog watch becomes a smart watch.

In the final moment, he walks outside and around the front of his Mercedes vehicle, which then turns into an Audi A4, suggesting the advancement of the Audi brand over its competitor.

Audi A4 - "Touch"

The technological advances of the vehicle include Google Android Auto and Apple CarPlay compatibility, Bang & Olufsen 3D Advanced Sound System with 19 speakers, a color HUD, a rearview camera, LED lighting and semi-autonomous vehicles.

Other commercials focus on some of these features. "Pilotless" highlights the A4's piloted driving; "Intelligent Statement" showcases the new virtual cockpit; "Faster" shows off the infotainment system and smartphone integration and "Horsepower" demonstrates the power of the new 2.0-liter TFSI engine.

Audi A4 - "Intelligent Statement"

The ads will run on primetime and sports TV, including the NCAA March madness men's basketball tournament, which begins March 17, and on the Discovery Channel, USA, FX, HGTV and AMC.

Full speed ahead

The intersection between technology and automobiles is no secret, and many of the anticipated vehicular advancements are technological in nature. Accordingly, many brands are trying to position themselves as players in the tech field.

For example, in October British automaker Jaguar partnered with tech magazine Wired to reach a new market segment with its latest innovations.

The luxury carmaker unveiled the XF C-X75 supercar, featured in the recent James Bond film "Spectre," while the Land Rover brand unveiled its new "Mind Sense," "Air Bubble," "Predictive Infotainment" and "Cargo Sense" technologies. By coupling a hyped vehicle that has wide interest among consumers with technological advances, Jaguar was able to reach a larger audience when it detailed its innovations ([see story](#)).

At the top of the list of anticipated advancements is autonomous driving, which Audi has taken steps toward with the A4 and which other brands are also dedicating resources to.

For example, German automaker BMW is marking its centennial not only by looking back, but also by looking forward to its Vision Next 100 Years vehicles.

The Vision vehicles were made with a highly personalized vision in mind and an eye on rapid technological advancement. Autonomous driving as well as manual driving for the pleasure of the activity are both key focuses, and more extensive connections between driver and vehicle with the improvement of artificial intelligence are also key focuses ([see story](#)).

"Intelligence is rising in every aspect of culture and life today; be it sports, entertainment, business, fashion - the impact is undeniable," Mr. Bracht said. "Brainier means sexier and knowledge trumps all. Today's cultural icons are pushing boundaries with ideas and technology - these are the icons that Audi celebrates.

"Audi has made a name for itself merging performance and technology, and pushing the industry standard forward," he added. "From the first automotive manufacturer to bring satellite Google Earth mapping into our vehicles, to first to introduce in-vehicle LTE wifi service, being a tech leader is a key tenant for Audi."