

AUTOMOTIVE

Women are unsung heroes driving luxury auto market

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Audi's "Daughters" spot, for Superbowl 2017. Image credit: Audi

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

NEW YORK The automotive industry has been slow to realize the importance of women as consumers, with many brands missing out on the force behind the growth in the industry.

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During Luxury Daily's Women in Luxury conference Sept. 26, a Walton Isaacson executive stressed the detriment of women being left out of the auto marketing industry, not just as a social issue but as a business issue. The session, "Driving Seat: Women Take the Wheel in Luxury Automotive," revealed that women are the biggest drivers as customers in the luxury auto industry, particularly multicultural women.

"Why are multicultural women more important; because they consume luxury more than non-multicultural women," said Raul Rios, senior director of strategy at [Walton Isaacson](#). "They have a huge appetite for it.

"In the last five years they have started to consume more luxury and are driving the growth," he said. "But what motivates this woman: quality, utility and indulgence.

"There is also a social motivation, which revolves around status, differentiation and self-expression. This is how women want to be perceived."

Luxury Daily organized the event held on Sept. 26 at Swiss bank UBS' U.S. headquarters in Midtown Manhattan.

Women in automotive

There is an untapped mine of customers that can drive significant growth for luxury auto brands, if correctly marketed to.

Multicultural women are the biggest drivers of luxury auto growth right now and consume more luxury than non-multicultural women. Black women make up the majority of multicultural women in the auto industry, and are the most loyal customers in general.

While automotive brands are incorporating women more and more, there is definitely still a gap in the industry. Brands that are looking to attract women, and more importantly multicultural women, need to think about what

drives them and what they value.



Audi looks to tackle gender equality with its Superbowl ad

Social importance

Multicultural women are motivated by quality, utility and indulgence. They value being culturally courageous, which means they are proud of who they are and are happy to put it out there in the world.

About 94 percent of multicultural women believe that it is harmful for brands to put out messaging that stereotypes women. Brands should be responsible with this and look to dispel common myths.

One of the most influential factors for multicultural women is social motivation, which revolves around status and self-expression. Women purchase products based on how they want to be perceived.

Many feel as though buying luxury items will command respect.

Auto brands looking to cater to women should think about contextualizing women's problems. For instance, Cadillac shared a television spot that showed a woman driving, frequently speeding up and slamming on the brakes, looking nervous.

Until finally, her earring rolled out from where it was stuck, allowing her to easily grab it and put it back in her ear.



Cadillac caters to women in Lost & Found

Mr. Rios stressed that catering to women is not just a socially important, but it is a business imperative in order to stay afloat in the unstable industry.

Auto examples

Lexus first took on the LGBTQ community with women in 2014 when it employed L Word actress Tracy Ryerson for the Lexus ES 300h aired on Logo TV.

German automaker Mercedes-Benz is promoting the reliability of its service with a new short that compares its business to an undependable boyfriend in an attempt to corner the female market.

Mercedes' "Party" is a video from the automaker that appeals to younger women through the use of humor for its service business. The vignette shows the story of a woman whose boyfriend stands her up and the aftermath that ensued, but draws a parallel to its service business to exhibit how reliable it is ([see more](#)).

Audi also packed a powerful punch for its Super Bowl advertisement this past year by bringing up a hot-button political topic, and leaning on interactive tools such as Snapchat for greater impact.

Playing on the automotive sector and using childhood as a theme, Audi's spot "Daughters" puts the focus on equality

in the workplace during a tumultuous political time. The spot aired during the third quarter of Sunday's Super Bowl LI, and was also paired with a Snapchat filter to further drive the conversation ([see more](#)).

The ad was significantly polarizing, but Mr. Rios explained that it made a lasting impression, which is extremely important.

"This is not the story of gender or identity but the idea of an unsung hero," Walton Isaacson's Mr. Rios said. "Women are responsible for the growth of the industry but aren't given credit for it.

"Women are outperforming in the luxury SUV and luxury overall," he said. "They are driving this growth.

"These are the consumers we need to be looking at."

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