

ADVERTISING

## Lexus targets sporty males with Jason Day sponsorship

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By RACHEL LAMB



Toyota-owned automaker Lexus is strengthening its long game and attracting young male athletes by sponsoring golf star Jason Day via social media marketing.

Australian-born Mr. Day will debut the sponsorship at the 2011 U.S. Open Championships June 16-19. The golfer will join other Lexus sponsors including Nick Watney, Natalie Gulbis, Charles Howell III, Annika Sorenstam, Peter Jacobsen, Mark O'Meara, Raymond Floyd, Johnny Miller and Mark Pfeil.

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“Lexus has a long history with golf and we are thrilled to announce our sponsorship of Jason Day,” said Nancy Hubbell, prestige communications manager at Lexus, Torrance,

CA. "Jason represents the next generation of golf.

"We are always looking for ways to connect with our audience, and signing on to partner with Jason will help introduce the Lexus brand to a new demographic of both younger drivers and younger golf fans," she said.

Par for the course

Mr. Day will debut the sponsorship with Lexus apparel and make appearances as brand ambassador for the first time at the U.S. Open.



*Jason Day*

As social media tends to draw a younger crowd, Lexus' advertisement of its new sponsor could potentially be best-received via social networks such as Facebook and Twitter.

In fact, the brand has already taken to these sites with photos and announcements of Mr. Day's addition to the Lexus team.

Fans of the Lexus Facebook page have already expressed enthusiasm toward the new sponsor.



### *Lexus' Facebook page*

Lexus has also announced the news on its Twitter account and it has already been retweeted by a number of followers.

"Jason plays with the same dedication to excellence that Lexus applies to every car it manufactures," Ms. Hubbell said. "Jason will be instrumental in helping us introduce the brand, and our entire line of vehicles, to a whole new demographic of young drivers around the world.

"As one of the youngest players in the PGA, we're confident in his ability to do that," she said.

### *Putting around*

In addition to the USGA partnership, Lexus created the Lexus Champions for Charity series of golf tournaments.

This sponsorship has benefitted local charities across the United States since its inception in 1989.

It has generated more than \$200 million for charities through more than 3,000 events.

Lexus sponsors different events and has brand ambassadors to engage with different age groups and consumers.

For instance, Lexus raised awareness for new vehicles and donated to the children's foundation Rising Stars of America based on the number of celebrities that participated in the CT 200h Challenge ([see story](#)).

Other automakers commit to sponsorships of celebrities or athletes to connect with consumers who have the same interests.

For instance, Audi tapped New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady to link itself to participants and supporters of the KickOff 2011 Audi Best Buddies Challenge earlier this month ([see story](#)).

“We realize the importance of connecting with our potential and current customers where their passions lie,” Ms. Hubbell said.

“Partnering with an inspirational golfer like Jason Day and continuing our partnership with the USGA shows that we are stepping up our involvement in golf and continuing to provide our customers with premium experiences,” she said.

Final Take

*Rachel Lamb, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

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