

AUTOMOTIVE

## Lincoln draws on emotional ties with athlete ambassador

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*Serena Williams shares her Lincoln story. Image credit: Lincoln.*

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

U.S. automaker Lincoln is tapping an emotional bond while mirroring its capability to multitask and exude an opulent experience through its latest ambassador.

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To celebrate the new design of its most prestigious vehicle, Lincoln is working with tennis player Serena Williams in a multifaceted digital campaign. Ms. Williams is a true loyal customer of the Lincoln navigator, and the automaker is sharing her personal story of how the car has supported her lifestyle while remaining a piece of luxury.

"Navigator is Lincoln's flagship SUV, combining modern luxury with advanced technology to elevate family travel to first-class," said John Emmert, group marketing manager at [Lincoln Motor Company](#). "Navigator represents an opportunity to attract more women to the Lincoln brand. Lincoln's collaboration with Serena Williams allows the brand to resonate among this important demographic.

"By showing how Navigator effortlessly fits into Serena's life as a busy mom, we hope to invite others to see themselves behind the wheel."

**Emotionality with luxury**

Leading up to her participation in the Indian Wells tournament on March 5, Ms. Williams will be the face of the new Lincoln Navigator.

Launching Feb. 15, the campaign is drawing parallels between Ms. Williams's elegance, strength and power to the new Lincoln Navigator.

*Lincoln Navigator: Serena Williams and Navigator - A Champion Always Returns / Lincoln*

While Ms. Williams is known for her exceptional athleticism in tennis, she also manages her own clothing line, charity boards and her family. Lincoln notes that she does all this while maintaining grace, much like the Navigator.

The brand mentions that the athlete's first purchased car was a Lincoln Navigator, nicknamed "Ginger." Buying the car was a milestone in her life, which Ms. Williams says she will always associate with Lincoln.

In a series of videos she discusses buying and naming "Ginger," and how Lincoln's Navigator still fits into her life today.

Moments like these are important for auto brands to capitalize on. Since buying a car is such a heavy purchase and vehicles become a large part of consumers' daily lives, it is important that these brands tout an emotional experience.

This is even truer for luxury brands, as the emotionality of high-end cars outweighs their necessity in regards to purchase decision-making.

Another video shows Ms. Williams driving the new Navigator, with the tagline saying, "A champion always returns."

A similar video with the same tagline intercuts Ms. Williams driving and playing on the tennis courts to convey drama.

#### Influencers and ambassadors

Lincoln is known for its ambassadors and celebrity spokespeople. The brand recently exhibited how these influencer-driven spot on TV are still extremely powerful with a 28 percent increase in interest on a vehicle during last year's Grammy positioning.

Lincoln Continental's share of interest among midsize luxury sedans grew 24 percent during last year's Grammy's when the spot aired.

The campaign featured a performance from blues musician Gary Clark Jr, fitting with the theme of the musical awards show ([see more](#)).

Influencers such as these that reflect the brand's spirit and values are extremely important.

Kering-owned jeweler Pomellato also did the same recently, picking Italian influencer and entrepreneur Chiara Ferragni as its latest face.

The blogger and founder of The Blonde Salad, which today includes a collection and a talent agency, will act as a spokesmodel for the ongoing PomellatoForWomen campaign. Since the effort is a celebration of strong, independent women, Ms. Ferragni was chosen as an ambassador for her status as a self-made businesswoman ([see more](#)).

"Lincoln Navigator represents elegant strength, powerful acceleration and a standout presence, which are traits Serena Williams embodies not only a tennis superstar, but as a new mom and business entrepreneur," Lincoln's Mr. Emmert said. "Serena possesses a pioneering spirit, which Lincoln parallels through our innovative products and services that provide effortless solutions for today's modern family.

"Serena has also had a long-time connection to Lincoln, stemming from her purchase of a Lincoln Navigator years ago that she nicknamed 'Ginger,'" he said. "The feeling of safety and strength attracted Serena to the Navigator brand both when she bought Ginger and today."