

INTERNET

Omega flaunts PGA sponsorship with New York Times placement

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By RACHEL LAMB

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Watchmaker Omega is promoting its new sponsorship of the PGA Golf Tournament with interactive advertisements on the New York Times Web site.

Omega has the top two panels on either side of the masthead as well as an additional rectangle banner ad down the homepage. It joins other luxury brands such as Gucci and Marc Jacobs who have similar ad placements on the site.

“Obviously, with homepage takeovers, it’s less about efficiency, and more about presence in the right place and in front of the right audience,” said Shiv Gupta, account executive at [AOL advertising](#), Beverly Hills, CA.

“In this case, Omega and PGA have honed in the New York Times audiences, which likely fits their target customer profile,” he said. “In terms of impact, homepage takeovers can have major, long lasting effect on a brand and the long-term lift the advertiser sees in online and offline commerce.

“There is the definite and guaranteed lift in traffic to their sites from clickers and, beyond that, there is a lingering branding effect that will likely drive higher levels of traffic on their site for some time after the takeover.”

Omega did not respond by press deadline. Mr. Gupta agreed to comment as a third-party expert.

Teeing off

Omega was named the official timekeeper of the PGA Tour through 2016, according to the brand.



Omega on the NYTimes site

The first tournament showcasing the new partnership will take place Aug. 8-14 at the Atlanta Athletic Club in Johns Creek, GA.

Omega will be responsible for on-course venue timekeeping at all PGA of America events, including the PGA Championship, the Senior PGA Championship, the PGA Professional National Championship, the Ryder Cup and the Junior Ryder Cup, per Omega.

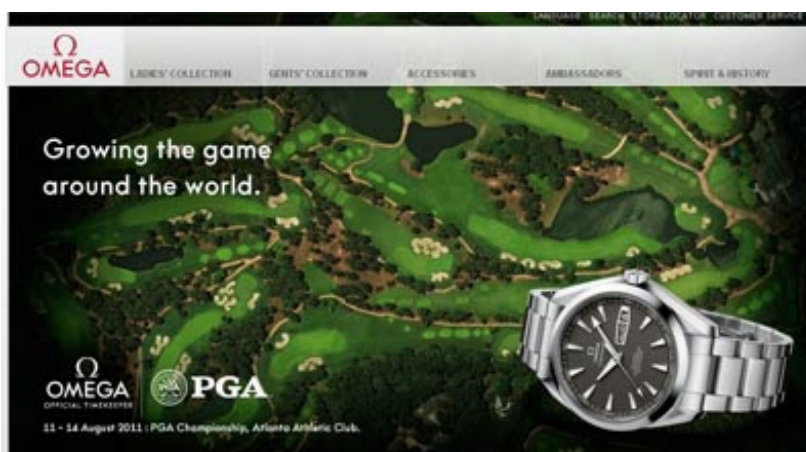
The brand focuses on the Omega Aqua Terra annual calendar model in its ads on the [New York Times site](#).

The steel-on-steel model has an annual calendar, a chronometer, the date, a screw-in crown and a transparent case back.

The watch is an Omega 8601 caliber self-winding movement.

At the ad near the middle of the page, consumers can roll their cursors around the display to look at the Atlanta Athletic Club golf course.

Consumers who click on the ads are brought to the [Omega Web site](#) where they can look at the watch in detail.



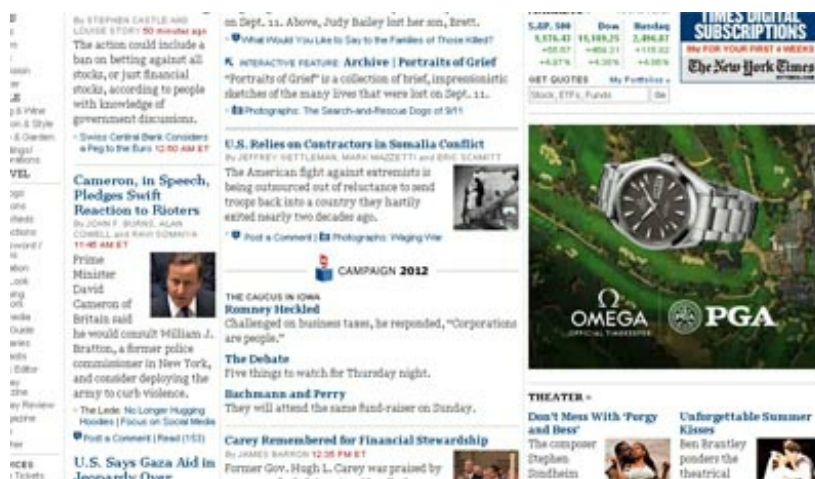
The Omega Web site

On the site, users can check out the features, movement and a gallery of pictures of the Aqua Terra.

“Not much is unique about the ads – they are pretty standard Flash ads,” Mr. Gupta said. “But I think that’s actually what sets them apart.

“They are not trying to do anything flashy with page takeovers or rollovers,” he said. “They are keeping their media simple, understated and elegant, which is what a quality luxury brand strives to do.

“In today’s digital world, every advertiser is trying to make a big splash with flashy rich media. It’s refreshing to see such simple, clean, advertising that doesn’t protrude from the page.”



Omega for the New York times

Getting flashy

On the other hand, some experts believe that the Omega ads do not do the brand justice and do not play up to the creativity that digital can offer.

“On the upside, clearly it is a good piece of media targeting and it’s reasonable to expect the New York Times to have an up-market readership,” said Nick Moore, chief creative officer for Wunderman, New York.

“The issue I have is not with the placement, but with the creative execution,” he said. “It could easily be in the print edition of the New York Times because it is very static and doesn’t take full advantage of the digital medium.”

Quite a few luxury brands have placed digital ads both on the New York Times site and others that attract affluent consumers.

For example, Oscar de la Renta and Calvin Klein are targeting tech-savvy consumers with exclusive video and banner ads on the Vogue.com site (see story).

In this case, the ads took over the screen and allowed customers to play with products and fool around with the ad without ever leaving Vogue.com.

This is important because digital ads are proving to be some of the most useful ways for

brands to market on the Web.

A recent study by Ipsos Mendelsohn and Interactive Advertising Bureau claimed that 61 percent of consumers interact with digital ads ([see story](#)).

Additionally, affluent consumers are also more likely than their less-affluent counterparts to recall ads.

In fact, 88 percent of affluent consumers recalled being exposed to one or more digital ads during the previous week and 21.1 ads, on average, compared to 84 percent of non-affluent consumers who only recalled 20.2 ads, on average.

"It's definitely a smart play by Omega," AOL's Mr. Gupta said. "News is always a difficult and risky environment to advertise within, considering the sensitive nature of the content - it could be extremely negative - and the political polarity of the readers.

"But I really think it's a risk that if executed well and accompanied with some luck can really pay off in the long run," he said.

Final Take

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