

RADIO

Lexus, Mercedes reinvent radio marketing with Pandora sponsorships

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By RACHEL LAMB

Automakers Lexus and Mercedes-Benz are switching up traditional radio marketing by sponsoring stations on Pandora that are designed to push the brands' models and campaigns.

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Luxury Daily

Lexus is promoting its Engineering Amazing campaign with its "future-proof" music station while Mercedes is pushing its M-Class vehicles with its Moms/Dads Who Rock stations. Lexus and Mercedes have teamed up with radio host and Los Angeles Times music director Nic Harcourt and musicians Reba McIntire and Javier Colin, respectively.

"Our strategy is to capitalize on the unique platform offerings of Pandora to bring the idea of Engineering Amazing to life and engage people in a new and surprising experience," said Nancy Hubbell, prestige communications manager at Lexus, Torrance, CA.

"Like all of our partnerships, this adds value to Lexus by enabling us to better connect with our consumers in an environment where they live and work," she said.

"We are always seeking different solutions to targeting consumers, so while traditional radio promotions can be effective, we wanted a new, more engaging way to reach our audience."

Mercedes did not respond by press deadline.

Rock out

Lexus' Engineering Amazing campaign was designed to give consumers an opportunity to look at the lengths the automaker is willing to go in designing technologically-advanced vehicles, per Ms. Hubbell.

The **Lexus Pandora station** is called Future-Proof Music and features artists such as Amy Winehouse, Death Cab for Cutie, Band of Horses, Adele, Train and the Constellations.



Lexus' Pandora station

The music tastemaker Mr. Harcourt makes the playlist of what he considers 100 songs of future-proof music, similar to the idea of Lexus' future-proof engineering.

When users download the playlist, they have the option to submit their own ideas for a future-proof song.

These suggestions could be selected for a user-generated playlist to be released later this year.

Clicking through the Engineering Amazing ads takes consumers to the Lexus Web site at <http://www.lexus.com> where they can watch a video with Mr. Harcourt and discover Lexus vehicles through its Engineering: Knowledge, Engineering: The Future and Engineering: Breakthroughs sections.



The Lexus Web site

Meanwhile, Mercedes is pushing its 2012 M-Class vehicles with exclusive video interviews and artist-curated mix tapes through its Moms and Dads Who Rock stations at

<http://www.pandora.com/momswhorock> and <http://www.pandora.com/dadswhorock>.

Songs on the Moms Who Rock playlist are from musicians such as Reba, Blake Shelton, Annie Lennox and Dolly Parton while the Dads Who Rock songs are from Peter Gabriel, Simon & Garfunkel, Gavin DeGraw and Toto.



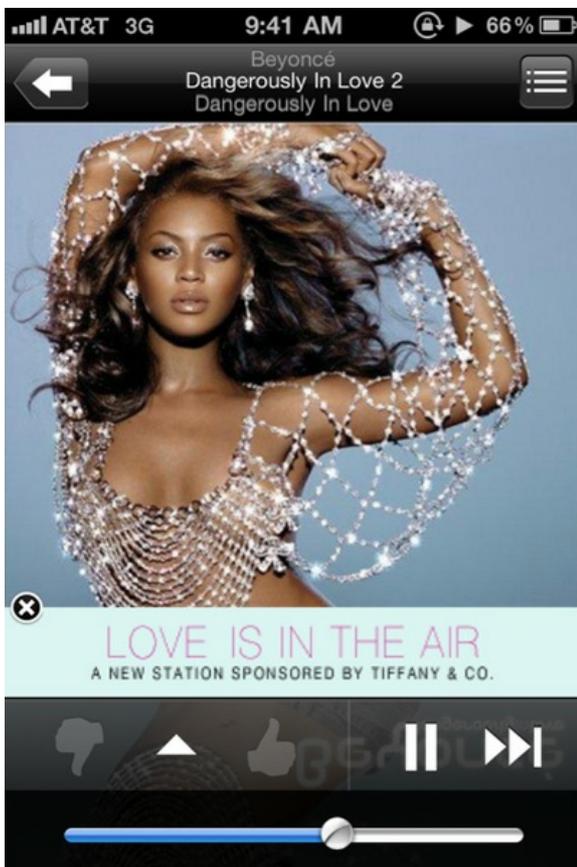
Moms Who Rock station with Reba

Clicking on the Mercedes logo will take users to the brand's Web site at <http://www.mbusa.com> where they can learn about the M-Class and other Mercedes vehicles.

Tuning in

Music has long been used to create relationships between luxury brands and affluent consumers.

Pandora played its part when jeweler Tiffany & Co. curated a love song-themed station to push its What Makes Love True microsite and mobile application that emphasizes the brand's lifestyle ([see story](#)).



Tiffany's Pandora station

Additionally, menswear designer John Varvatos paired with upscale audio company McIntosh Laboratory to build brand awareness and display products through the celebration of the upcoming album from the rock band Jane's Addiction with an event in Los Angeles ([see story](#)).

Premium tequila Patrón also gave three rising stars the chance to shine when they submitted their music acts to the XO Café Music Project where they received advice from industry experts and promotion, touring or recording packages ([see story](#)).

“At Lexus, we strive to future-proof our vehicles by always striving for new, more intuitive technology,” Ms. Hubbell said.

“This theme definitely carries over in our marketing efforts as we seek out the newest, most technologically-advanced ways to share our message,” she said.

Final Take

Rachel Lamb, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

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