

MOBILE

BMW flaunts sustainability vehicles through solo app sponsorship

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By RACHEL LAMB

German automaker BMW is promoting its electric i3 and i8 models through a solo sponsorship of the AOL Editions application for the iPad, linking consumers to branded content such as videos, images and the Web site.



The Editions app is a daily magazine curated with reader-specific material. BMW is the first and only sponsor for the app, which is free in Apple's App Store.

"Mobile is a natural channel for an auto brand like BMW," said Mack McKelvey, senior vice president of Millennial Media, Baltimore, MD. "Mobile also presents opportunities for advertisers like BMW to engage consumers in a variety of ways.

"By tweaking their campaign goals, targeting and creative, BMW can not only reach prospective car buyers, but they can also run campaigns simply to increase brand affinity, or remind consumers to take their car in for maintenance," she said.

Ms. McKelvey is not affiliated with BMW, but agreed to comment as an expert on mobile ads.

Neither **BMW** nor **AOL** was able to respond by press deadline.

The BMW i3 generates output of 170 horsepower and accelerates 0-60 miles per hour in under four seconds, and 0-100 miles per hour in under eight seconds.

The electric motor is designed for operation in an urban environment.

The BMW i8 is a sports car meant to drive outside of an urban environment. Its high-performance three-cylinder combustion engine produces 220 horsepower and has an acceleration of 0-62 in under five seconds.

Both of the vehicles were designed for high-performance with greater efficiency than non-electric vehicles.

The lines' engines use electric current rather than fossil fuel, so no climate-harming gases are generated and released into the air.

Ultimate sustainability machine

The same BMW ad is available in each section of the magazine, which is split into top news, local news, technology, business, entertainment and sports.

The top portion of the ad shows two BMW i3 and i8 concept vehicles against a city background.

ADVERTISEMENT



BMW i.
BORN ELECTRIC.

It's one thing to look futuristic. It's another thing to actually behave that way. With pure progressive shapes to fascinate us. With lightning performance to excite us. Where electric cars are fun to drive and reflect responsibility. Where super light and super strong carbon fiber sets a new standard in range and safety. Welcome to BMW i.

[bmw-i-usa.com](http://www.bmw-i-usa.com)

BMW i ad

The lower segment gives some information about the vehicles and includes a link to the i concept line at <http://www.bmw-i-usa.com>.

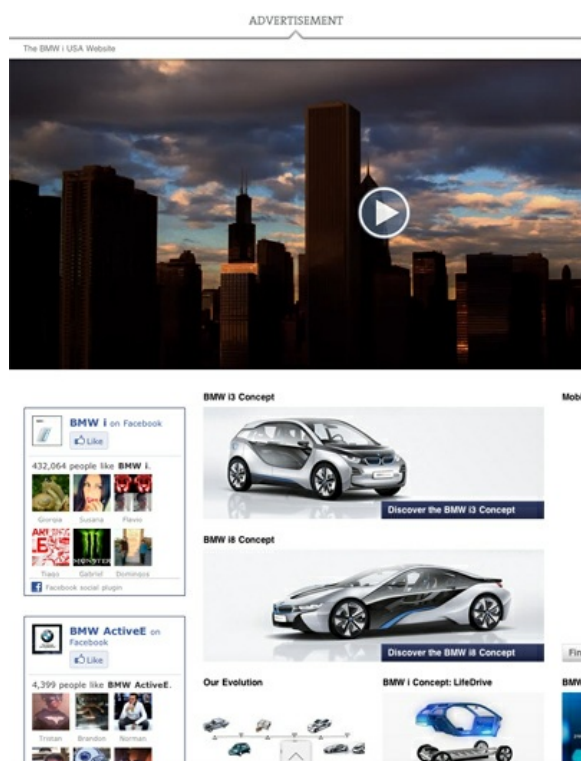
The two sections are divided by a series of images and a video.

BMW i8

The video shows the concept cars speeding through New York and explains how the i line is sustainable and reduces BMW's carbon footprint.

Users are also able to tap on the URL address which takes them to an optimized version of the BMW i Web site.

Here, consumers can interact with the concept models, review articles about the BMW i line, learn about BMW's other sustainable car, the ActiveE electric car, and chat with other brand enthusiasts about the automaker.



BMW i site

Electric sparks

BMW has been advertising its sustainability efforts as of late.

For instance, it used an iPhone app to decipher consumers' driving habits to determine whether or not they are compatible with an electric car that tracked the miles they drive per

day ([see story](#)).

When BMW launched its first electric car, MiniE, consumers who tested it offered tips and suggestions about the model and electric cars in general.

The EVolve application has tips from these pioneers that aid BMW engineers as well as the public that is considering buying an electric car.

Edition's audience is likely similar to that of BMW's, and therefore can be useful in reaching potential customers.

Trying to tie together the proper app audience with a luxury brand can be tricky, so Ms. McKelvey offered a few best practice tips.

"To start, brands should think about what they are trying to accomplish with their campaign," Ms. McKelvey said. "In terms of creative units, in-app mobile ads often provide brands an opportunity to run rich media ad units or feature mobile video, but in some cases, brands may find that a traditional banner ad campaign better suits their needs.

"Secondly, brands should think about which devices they want their ads to run on," she said. "Both Android and iOS have thriving app marketplaces that present great opportunities for advertisers, but other operating systems like RIM and WP7 should still definitely be considered too."

"In order to reach affluents, brands like BMW must target well beyond tablets."

Final Take

Rachel Lamb, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York