

MOBILE

Maserati takes customization to mobile through QR placement

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GranTurismo S



Exterior Nero Carbonio

Solid Colours



By RACHEL LAMB

Italian automaker Maserati is taking the next step in mobile marketing by inserting customized QR codes into a print advertisement that leads to an optimized site where consumers can build their own GranTurismo S.

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Luxury Daily

The advertisement, which is found in many luxury-focused magazines including Robb Report, is a one-page placement with a QR code with the Maserati symbol in the middle. The optimized site post-scan takes consumers to a site where they can build their own car, check out different models, locate a dealer and sign up for email newsletters.

“High smartphone usage in the higher income brackets is a truth, and from what we see from our own statistics, QR code scanning is significantly higher on smartphones,” said Laura Marriott, Vancouver, British Columbia-based CEO of NeoMedia Technologies.

“Affluent individuals are also likely to be tech-savvy and are often early adopters, which makes them an ideal audience to scan a QR code,” she said. “Thus brands like Maserati that leverage QR codes to offer their consumers a means to interact with their brand are showing that they understand their target audience and are appealing to their target audience.”

Ms. Marriott is not affiliated with Maserati, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. The GranTurismo S is a two-door vehicle with a 4.7L V8 engine. It can go 0-60 miles per hour in 4.9 seconds and maxes out at 183 miles per hour.

Safe landing

The ad in Robb Report is for the new Maserati GranTurismo GT.

Maserati shows the red convertible against a sunset with “Maserati” and the logo at the top of the page above “Hand-stitched adrenaline.”



Maserati ad

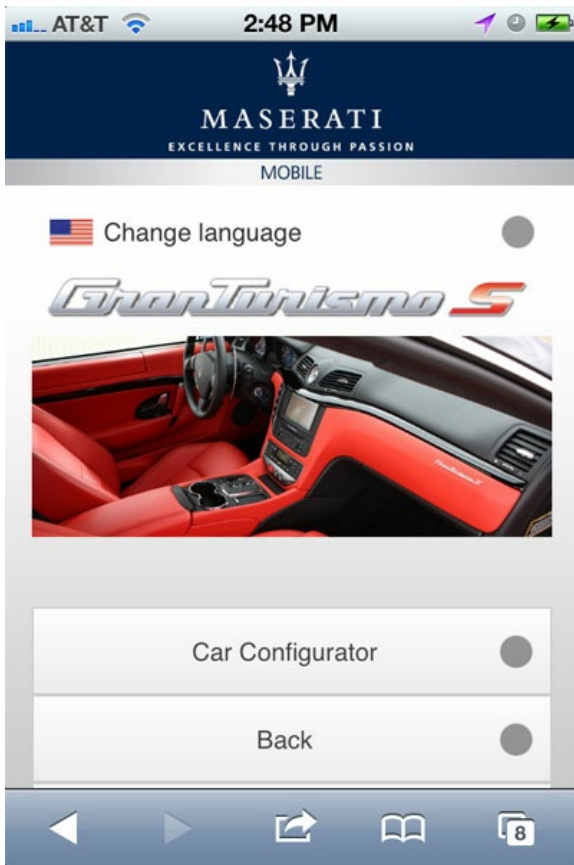
The rest of the ad describes some of the car features, including extensive customization options, and includes the QR code with the Maserati symbol enclosed.

“Custom codes create a nice visual connection to the brand, especially since QR codes are so visible, which is part of the reason they work,” said Mike Wehrs, CEO of Scanbuy, New York.

“We always guide our customers to use custom codes when they make sense, like in print, and ensure they work across multiple devices and apps,” he said.

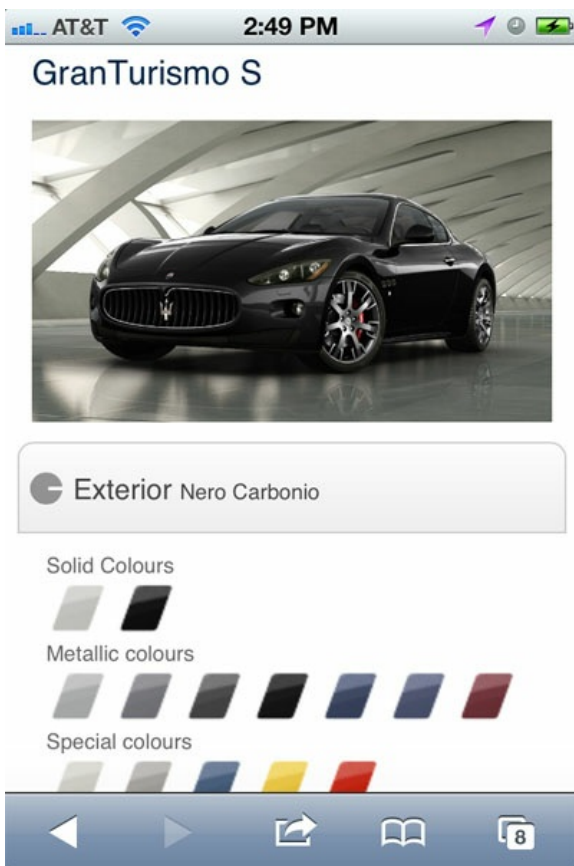
There is also a call-to-action at the bottom of the page for the Maserati Web site and phone number.

When consumers can the code, they are taken to the mobile-optimized site where consumers can explore the vehicle.



Maserati landing page

Users are able to choose car color and wheel rims by tapping different colored swatches.



Maserati customization page

Consumers can look at other models, find dealerships and explore other components of the brand by tapping at the Maserati logo at the top of the page to be brought to the

homepage.

Maserati takes its mobile site as an opportunity for customer retention by including a section for email blast sign-ups.

Cracking the code

Other luxury brands have been using customized bar codes.

For example, U.S. lifestyle brand Ralph Lauren upped the QR code ante with customized bar codes to lure consumers into its store locations ([see story](#)).

The new bar code, complete with the brand's polo player logo, is in Ralph Lauren store windows to entice affluent men into stores and allow them to engage with the brand through a chance to win tickets to the US Open tennis tournament.

Branding a QR code makes it undeniably property of that label, especially to those who already know its mascot or logo.

Indeed, as long as the brand experience reflects post-scan – most importantly, that the content is optimized for mobile – some experts think that customization is unneeded.

“We tend to recommend that our brands do not brand their codes, but instead leave them as is and use other elements of their campaign for branding in order to ensure the best possible consumer experience,” NeoMedia's Ms. Marriott said.

“However, as long as the custom QR codes are easily identified by the consumer and result in a positive scan experience, then great,” she said.

Final Take

Rachel Lamb, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York