

MULTICHANNEL

Land Rover creates digital hype with new Victoria Beckham vehicle

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By TRICIA CARR

British automaker Land Rover is creating hype for its Range Rover Evoque model by marketing a car designed by model, singer and fashion designer Victoria Beckham that the automaker has limited to 200 vehicles for sale worldwide.

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Land Rover created a viral multichannel campaign surrounding the vehicle release by putting on an event in the Chinese capital of Beijing April 22 that was backed by social media marketing via the automaker and Ms. Beckham. With its limited production, this project may be a marketing tactic more than a branding effort.

"Any time there is a partnership between two brands with two unique identities, you need to ensure that there are compatible equities to share between the two brands," said Karen Kreamer, president of **K2 Brand Consulting**, Overland Park, KS.

"In the case of Range Rover's collaboration with Victoria Beckham, there are shared equities between the two brands that make sense in terms of a brand partnership such as the British legacy, award-winning design credentials and global brand awareness," she said.

"From Range Rover's perspective, the brand associations inherently provided by the David

Beckham brand as an international sports superstar is an added bonus.”

The original Range Rover Evoque went on sale last September.

Ms. Kreamer is not affiliated with Land Rover, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Land Rover could not comment directly before press deadline.

Spice up your ride

Land Rover revealed the special-edition vehicle with Victoria Beckham at an event at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, China.

Design director Gerry McGovern and Ms. Beckham collaborated on the model and attended the event.



Mr. McGovern and Ms. Beckham at the launch event

The automaker appointed Ms. Beckham as a creative design executive in July 2010.

The special-edition Range Rover Evoque was developed over the past 18 months.

Ms. Beckham worked with the Land Rover design team to create mood boards that reflected her personal style and translated that into the bespoke vehicle.

For example, Ms. Beckham inspired the use of rose gold from a similar-colored men's watch she wore.

Land Rover aligned itself with Ms. Beckham due to her global appeal and status in the luxury fashion world, per the brand.

The automaker hopes to draw the attention of affluent consumers in international markets such as China, Russia and Brazil where Land Rover is growing, per the automaker.

Land Rover will produce 200 of the Range Rover Evoque Special Edition with Victoria Beckham vehicles that will first go on sale in China in October 2012. The vehicles will be sold worldwide soon after.

Land Rover hopes to appeal to men and women with this vehicle. Ms. Beckham designed the car with her husband and soccer player David Beckham in mind.



Range Rover Evoque with Victoria Beckham

The vehicle will feature a 240HP 2.0-liter gasoline engine, matte grey paint, 20" gloss black forged alloy wheels and rose-gold detailing.

The interior holds four seats that are finished in a vintage tan leather.



Special-edition Evoque interior

The same leather is also used to cover the door inserts, arm rests and central storage box lid.



Special-edition Evoque interior

The automaker is also producing a four-piece luggage set and leather wallet to complement the vehicle.

The luggage line features two wheeled suitcases and bags lined in the same suede used for the roof lining.

A leather wallet with rose-gold detail contains a guide to the features of the car and is signed by Victoria Beckham.

By aligning itself with popular fashion designer and British pop icon, this move by Land Rover seems to mainly appeal to woman, per Al Ries, chairman of marketing consultancy **Ries & Ries**, Roswell, GA.

“Existing Range Rover models are rugged, off-the-road vehicles that appeal primarily to men,” Mr. Ries said. “The Evoque differs due to its smooth, curving lines that suggest a more feminine nature.

“Using Victoria Beckham will help create publicity for Range Rover’s new model,” he said.

But the long-term success of this vehicle is in question, especially with the 200-cap on production.

“Since only 200 vehicles will be produced, Range Rover’s objective is obviously not to sell vehicles, but to generate publicity for the brand,” Mr. Ries said.

Talking back

Land Rover created buzz on social media surrounding its new vehicle collaboration.

First, the automaker shared the news that the Range Rover Evoque Special Edition with Victoria Beckham would be revealed in Beijing over the weekend in conjunction with the start of the Beijing international auto show.

Land Rover shared a live feed from the event on Sunday. Photos are now available as

well.

The automaker is sharing a two-minute, 30-second short film created by British photographer Nick Knight via social networks that features Ms. Beckham driving the car.

Short film by Nick Knight

Land Rover also created a three-minute documentary of the making of the car.

Documentary

Land Rover has essentially devoted its Twitter feed to news about the vehicle.

The automaker is using Twitter hashtag #VBEvoque to stir up conversation about the limited-edition car and is encouraging users to talk to the brand about the vehicle at its [@LandRover](#) account.

Ms. Beckham recently joined Facebook and is sharing news, photos and videos on her page about the vehicle. The Facebook page has accumulated more than 134,000 fans.

The automaker is also using a microsite to showcase the vehicle at <http://victoriabeckham.landrover.com> that shows artistic photos of Ms. Beckham next to the vehicle.

Meanwhile, Fiat recently revitalized marketing efforts of its year-old vehicle collaboration with Gucci through a series of five short films that the brand premiered during an event in

Milan, Italy, and on a microsite during the live viewing party.

Gucci and Fiat called on international magazine editors and video producers to create the concept videos for the 500 by Gucci vehicle ([see story](#)).

There is a question as to whether these collaborations add value to a brand or create short-lived media hype.

“Generally speaking, adding a designer name to any product is much the same as celebrity endorsement and it serves more as a distraction from the brand than adding any value to it,” said Rob Frankel, branding expert at marketing consultancy firm [Frankel & Anderson](#), Los Angeles.

“Brands that are creatively and strategically bankrupt tend to borrow interest by rubbing up against a celebrity in hopes of attracting media attention more than anything else,” he said.

Final Take

Tricia Carr, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York