

TELEVISION

Audi pushes A6 in child-comedy TV commercial

May 17, 2012



By TRICIA CARR

Audi is taking a turn in its marketing efforts for the A6 model by premiering a television commercial that uses child humor to appeal to consumers during the National Hockey League playoffs.

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The German automaker on May 14 premiered its 30-second commercial called “Alien” that features a child naming reasons why her father is not from this planet including that he drives a spaceship, which is his Audi A6. The commercial uses comedy from a child to entertain viewers in contrast to the automaker’s past commercials for this model that focus on safety and performance.

“Audi’s consumers are curious, adventurous and entrepreneurial,” said Andrew Lipman, communications manager of [Audi of America](#), Herndon, VA. “They are creative and bold, require new tools, new ideas and new inspirations, and they need a solid foundation built on history, confidence and trust.

“But that does not mean they do not like to laugh,” he said. “We strive to surprise and delight our customers.

“We are always looking to engage with our progressive audience in a way that is forward-

thinking and entertaining and in this commercial we are highlighting the superior technology of the Audi A6 with the help of a little humor and comedy.”

Aliens have landed

Audi premiered its Alien commercial earlier this week during the New York Rangers versus New Jersey Devils game in the NHL playoffs.

The commercial began with a young girl who proclaims, “I have evidence that proves my dad is a space alien.”



Alien commercial still

The child explains her evidence – he speaks a strange language, drinks “green stuff” and dresses like a nonhuman – when in reality he is gargling mouthwash, making a healthy smoothie and wearing a biking suit. Her father is shown acting out the reasons as she lists them.



Alien commercial still

The last reason is that her father drives a spaceship, which is his Audi A6.

When the girl’s father presses the start engine button, the dashboard lights up and the GPS screen automatically lifts itself upright.



Alien commercial still

This scene is meant to show the vehicle's MMI Navigation with Google Earth, thermal imaging camera with Night Vision Assistant and head-up display, per Mr. Lipman.

The car pulls out of the driveway with the girl in the backseat. A voiceover makes the final assertion that the driver is an alien.

The scene fades to a black screen that says, "The highly advanced A6." The commercial ends with the Audi name, logo and tagline, "Truth in Engineering."

Alien commercial

"Passion and enthusiasm are high during major sporting events like the NHL playoff games and advertising on TV is an effective way to capture the attention of and engage our progressive audience, while striking an emotional cord and providing top-notch entertainment value," Mr. Lipman said.

Ready for takeoff

The new Audi commercial is a contrast from its other television placements that promote the A6.

For example, Audi showed how the vehicle helps to address problems that a driver faces on the road, such as hazardous driving conditions or other distracted drivers in a commercial produced in September ([see story](#)).

The Road commercial

In fact, Audi beat out rivals BMW and Mercedes-Benz by creating print and TV advertising campaigns that most resonated with affluent consumers by highlighting brand innovation and efficiency, according to a study by Phoenix Marketing International ([see story](#)).

“On the global market, Audi is a very strong brand where it has sales that are close to arch-rivals BMW and Mercedes-Benz, but in the United States, Audi lags far behind,” said Al Ries, chairman of marketing consultancy [Ries & Ries](#), Roswell, GA. “Audi must have figured that its strategy in the U.S. needs to change.

Audi could hope to create hype on its social media channels as it previously attempted with its Superbowl TV spot.

The automaker looked to wipe out the long-hyped vampire fad with its Super Bowl XLVI advertisement for the S7, which promotes its powerful LED lights that can apparently destroy creatures of the night ([see story](#)).

Vampire Party commercial

Audi shared the Super Bowl commercial through social media marketing in which consumers could put together pieces of a puzzle and share the results with their friends. The automaker also added a mobile component by introducing a [#solongvampires](#) hashtag found in the commercial.

In addition to its TV placement, Audi is pushing the new Alien commercial via its [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Google+](#) and [YouTube](#) accounts.

It is surprising that the brand did not show a hashtag or other mobile call-to-action in this commercial, since it seems to be a potentially viral spot compared to past TV ads.

“Almost every advertising program these days is built around the goal of generating favorable buzz on the 'Net and, unfortunately, that might not help sales very much,” Mr. Ries said. “To be successful, a brand needs a positioning strategy.

“Most people cannot give a single reason for buying the brand,” he said. “A BMW is a fun car to drive and Mercedes-Benz is a prestigious vehicle, but what is an Audi?

“Unless a commercial can answer this question, it is not going to be very successful.”

Final Take

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