

ADVERTISING

## Jaguar pushes F-Type with Lana Del Ray as new ambassador

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By RACHEL LAMB

Jaguar is using musician Lana Del Ray as the spokesperson for its new F-Type model, but some experts are questioning whether the singer is the right choice for the automaker's image.

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Marketers use brand ambassadors to help push products and the brand image, but some experts believe that Ms. Del Ray's image is not one that is typically associated with the Jaguar image. On the other hand, Jaguar believes that the allure of Jaguar, the F-Type and Ms. Del Ray's achievements are aligned in that they are both authentic and modern.

"The best celebrity ambassadors ooze whatever values the brand desires to communicate," said Chris Ramey, president of [Affluent Insights](#), Miami. "But, it is key that the ambassador does not overwhelm the product itself – the product is always the hero.

"Lana Del Ray is a talented up-and-coming young singer, but I doubt she has much brand awareness among the affluent," he said. "Musicians can be particularly risky because they're often judged subjectively by their music.

"Ms. Del Ray's newest CD is titled "Born to Die" – not exactly the messaging many car companies desire to advance."

Mr. Ramey is not affiliated with Jaguar, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Jaguar declined to comment directly on this article.

Not my type

The F-Type is a two-seater sports car that Jaguar claims is a vivid representation of the vitality of the Jaguar brand.

The allure of Jaguar is in large part due to its duality, a unique blend of authenticity and modernity, two values that Jaguar believes are shared with Ms. Del Ray and her professional achievements, per the automaker.

Jaguar did not yet disclose what kind of marketing Ms. Del Ray would participate in for the F-Type.



*Jaguar F-Type phototype*

However, experts are wary about what image Jaguar is trying to portray by using Ms. Del Ray.

"Too often marketers use celebrity brand ambassadors when they don't have anything else to say," Mr. Ramey said. "Execution is key."

However, since it is not clear how Jaguar intends to market its partnership with Ms. Del Ray, whether or not she is a good choice as ambassador is up in the air.

That said, the brand has announced its partnership via social media and an email campaign, so it is likely that Jaguar will continue to market its alignment with Ms. Del Ray on those platforms.

"Jaguar has worldwide brand recognition, but when one starts to explore the descriptors that make up its brand equity, it is not always very positive," said Courtney Albert, brand strategist at Parker Avery, Atlanta. "These past few years, Jaguar has strongly diligently to rid itself of the perceptions of quality issues and a car reserved for an older generation."

Face of the brand

Many automakers use up-and-coming singers to appeal to a younger audience.

For example, Lexus partnered with singer Kylie Minogue by sponsoring her tour of Britain and using the singer in a multichannel campaign to push its hybrid vehicle, the Lexus CT 200h.

The brand claimed that it was striving to reach a younger female audience by sponsoring Ms. Minogue's tour and giving away tickets for it on Lexus' Facebook page.

Lexus also promoted it via radio, television and print ads ([see story](#)).

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Cars

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### *Lexus and Kylie Minogue*

Since Jaguar's audience is not especially young, it could be aiming for the same audience. This is also plausible since the brand used social media to announce its partnership with Ms. Del Ray.

"By aligning with Lana Del Ray, Jaguar is attempting to win over a younger audience," Ms. Albert said.

"More specifically, appeal to particular group that thrives on uncovering the next hottest thing before it becomes widely popular or mainstream," she said. "It is akin to looking at a No. 1 artist today lamenting how you discovered them years ago before all your friends.

No matter how Jaguar plans to market the F-Type and Ms. Del Ray, the ambassador itself must align with the brand.

"It's a curious choice since she's been the face of H&M," Mr. Ramey said. "Should we therefore assume there is a predictive consumer connection between H&M and Jaguar?"

"Humanizing a luxury product is rarely a good decision," he said. "Lest we not forget that luxury is all about the product."

Final Take

*Rachel Lamb, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York*

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