

EVENTS/CAUSES

## Bentley bolsters awareness, charity efforts via Concours of Elegance sponsorship

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By RACHEL LAMB

British automaker Bentley Motors is increasing its presence among affluent consumers through its role as the main sponsor of the inaugural Windsor Castle Concours of Elegance at the Castle next month.

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The Windsor Castle Concours is a gathering of 60 of the world's rarest and most-desirable cars, likely roping in affluent consumers and car buyers. Bentley's sponsorship could increase its event awareness and draw attention for its models in the event.

"A luxury product is best served by understating its presence," said Chris Ramey, president of Affluent Insights, Miami. "This is particularly the case when it is a philanthropic event and your product is a motor car.

"The larger and more expensive the product, the less you likely need to promote your participation," he said.

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

**Bentley**, which did not respond before press deadline, is the manufacturer of Queen

Elizabeth II's State Limousine and a Royal Warrant Holder.

VIPs only

The [Windsor Castle Concours of Elegance](#) is Sept. 7-9 at the Castle in Windsor, England.

Bentley's role as sponsorship allows it to host the Pegasus Club, a VIP reception and dining area with a Bentley theme.

Also, a hand-built Mulsanne model will chauffeur owners and guests throughout the event.



*Bentley Mulsanne*

Six Bentley models will also be taking part in the Concours, including the Embiricos and the 8-Litre saloon.

They have been sourced by private or public collections as well as overseas museums and have been seldom shown in public. This underlines the special nature of this particular event, according to Bentley.

Furthermore, as a sponsor, Bentley will support several charitable organizations that help children and their carers, such as [The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity](#) and [East Anglia's Children's Hospices](#).

This could draw attention to Bentley not only as a manufacturer of fine cars, but also as a socially-responsibly entity.

Showing off

Automotive displays such as international auto shows and the Concours d'Elegance events draw numerous brands, so automakers might release new models or offer exclusive experiences to gain attention from consumers.

For example, Jaguar, Land Rover, Range Rover, Rolls-Royce, Bentley and Aston Martin tapped the growing luxury market in China by releasing new vehicles at the Auto China 2012 car show and relying on press hype and social media to create awareness ([see story](#)).

Also, Bentley pushed the 2013 Continental GT Speed, what it calls its fastest model to date, at the 2012 Goodwood Festival of Speed in Britain with an extra social media push on the

side last month ([see story](#)).

Meanwhile, Porsche took a more social approach to its display by sharing exclusive videos, interviews and images from the Goodwood festival via its news site at <http://origin.porsche.com> and its @Porsche Twitter handle with hashtag #PorscheGoodwood ([see story](#)).

"Bentley benefits because the list of guests is vetted to ensure any of them has the disposable dollars to purchase a Bentley," Mr. Ramey said. "A prospect has to try a product before they'll consider a purchase – this is the case regardless of whether it is car, clothing or cognac.

"Every touch point communicates to a prospect and client and luxury brands are expected to be charitable," he said. "Bentley's contribution confirms what the affluent guests expect."

Final Take

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

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