

MOBILE

Lexus builds model awareness via mobile banner ads

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By RACHEL LAMB

Toyota Corp.'s Lexus is drawing eyes to its new model through mobile banner advertisements on The New York Times mobile site.



Likely in an attempt to engage with the New York Times' affluent smartphone and tablet audience, Lexus chose a banner ad on the homepage of the news publication's site. Lexus' placement on the site follows on banner ads that the automaker has placed on other mobile sites.

"This placement is a great branding initiative and a win-win for Lexus," said Rachel Lewis, Fort Worth, TX-based senior marketing strategist at **iProspect**. "Even if consumers don't click on the banner, the brand's well-known logo makes Lexus top of mind."

"Should consumers elect to click on the banner, Lexus sends the user to a page featuring the new ES model," she said. "Beyond the basic branding of the ads, Lexus also has a new product to feature to consumers who've demonstrate an interest in the brand."

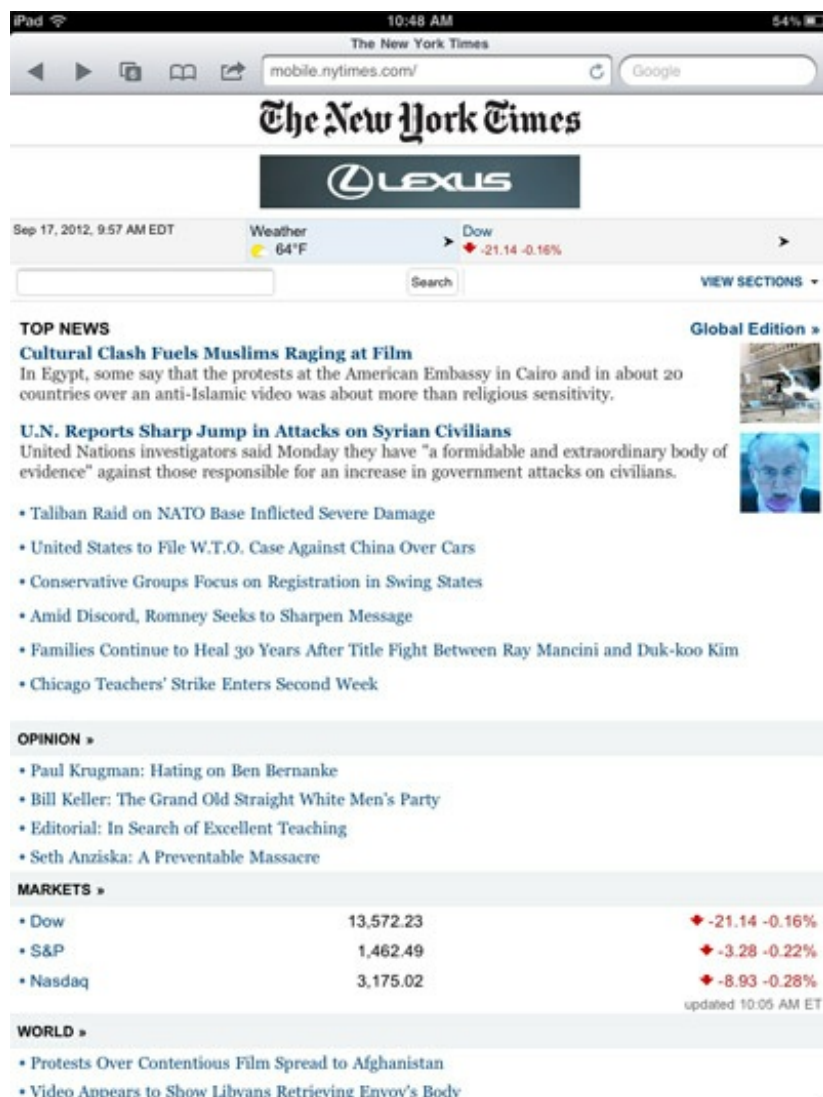
Ms. Lewis is not affiliated with Lexus, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Lexus could not respond before press deadline.

Not too flashy

Lexus placed an ad on the top section of the front page on the New York Times mobile site.

It is a simple ad with just the Lexus name against a background of the automaker's characteristic green shade.

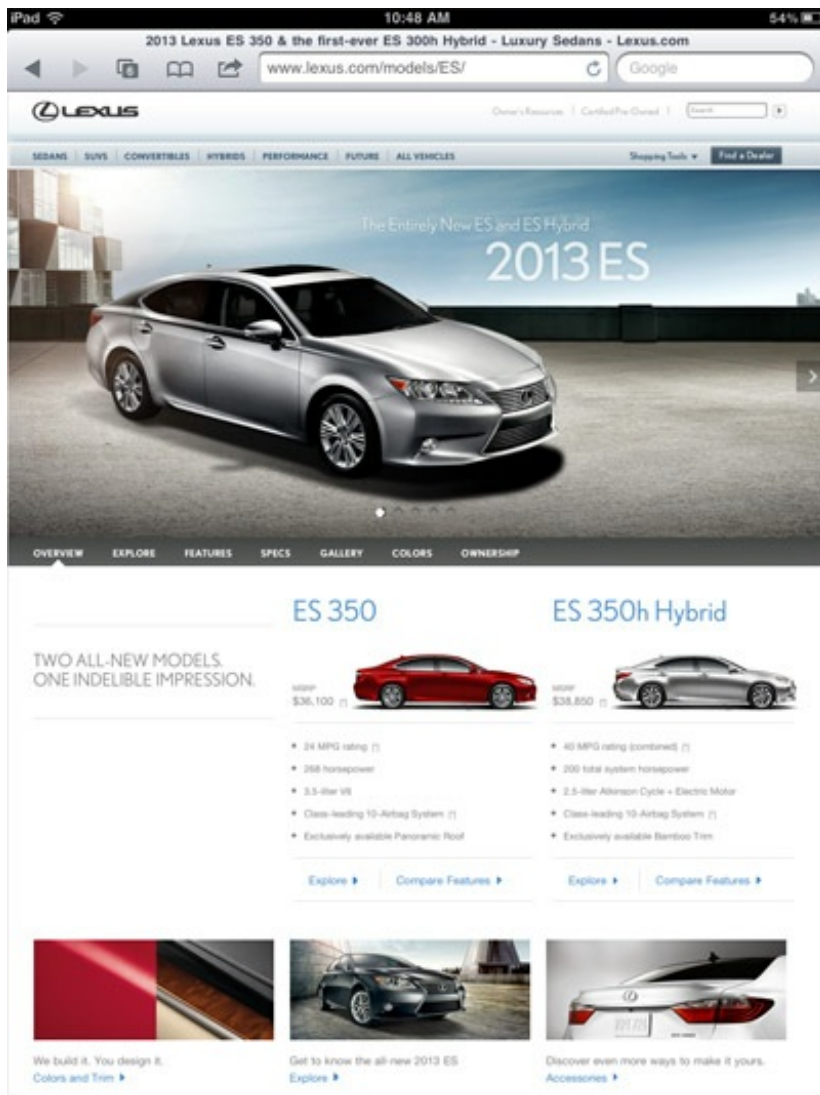


Mobile banner ad on the New York Times

When consumers click on the ad, they are brought to a page of the Lexus site dedicated to the ES.

On the site, consumers can check out characteristics of the ES 350 and ES 350h hybrid.

Users can also look at features, picture galleries, colors and ownership opportunities. The page also links to the main Lexus Web site and its social media pages.



Landing page

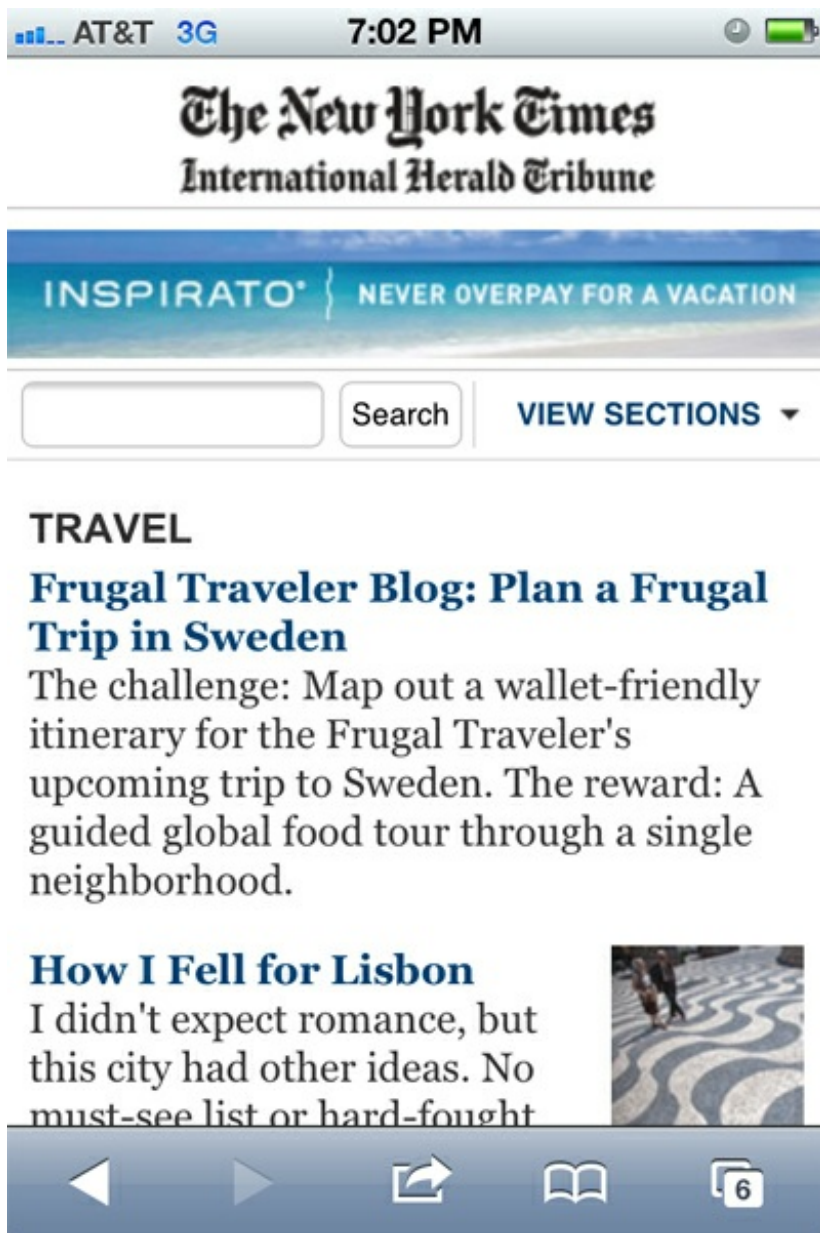
“The simplicity of these banner ads is smart move on Lexus’s part,” Ms. Lewis said. “Due to screen size, space is limited on mobile in general and even more so on mobile banner ads.

“Lexus has the luxury of incredible brand recognition and, as a result, can get away with ads featuring only the logo,” she said. “Consumers know the brand and its core offering without additional messaging that would clutter the banner and take up precious ad space.”

Lexus is following on the heels of other marketers that advertise on the New York Times mobile site.

For example, high-end destination club Inspirato is looking to tap affluent jetsetters through targeted mobile banner advertisements on the New York Times’ mobile-optimized site.

By using the obvious placement in the travel section, Inspirato could be attempting to target wealthy consumers in a time where summer travel is being planned. Linking to an optimized site for easy bookings will likely ensure transactions (*see story*).



Inspirato's ad on the New York Times site

Also, Miami-based Fontainebleau hotel is using the New York Times mobile site to reach an affluent audience with a banner ad that connects to optimized content to promote deals at its property ([see story](#)).

Banner act

Lexus has been using banner ads on a variety of different platforms.

For example, Lexus is likely targeting younger aspirational consumers through ads and videos on the mobile game application Gems With Friends.

Players can check out a video of the new ES and connect to the Lexus Facebook page through the ad ([see story](#)).

Meanwhile, in an effort to push its Enform mobile app and the GS 2013 vehicles, Lexus used Leap Day to exclusively advertise on music service Pandora's mobile and Internet channels.

Banner ads on the site and in Pandora's mobile apps linked to the Lexus mobile site

where there was more information on the Lexus Enform app and GS models ([see story](#)).

Also, Lexus used mobile banner ads to access The Wall Street Journal's affluent reader base to promote the GS ([see story](#)).

"The New York Times audience is a perfect fit for Lexus," Ms. Lewis said. "The audience is engaged and affluent, and likely on-the-go, making mobile an excellent opportunity for the brand to message to these consumers.

"Furthermore, the New York Times is one of the most-read news sites in the world, so this placement is also a win in terms of volume," she said.

Final Take

Rachel Lamb, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

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