

MULTICHANNEL

## Luxury automakers combine print, digital for highly-targeted, engaging marketing

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By RACHEL LAMB

Even in an increasingly digital world, luxury automakers should continue to use print advertising since it gives them the chance to target a highly-affluent audience and an opportunity to create multichannel touch points.

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Marketers including Lexus, Mercedes-Benz, BMW, Rolls-Royce, Porsche and Maserati are using print marketing in environments targeted towards affluent consumers. However, they could be taking this opportunity to create highly-functional, multichannel touch points to gain deeper engagement.

“For years, the function of print advertising was to supplement TV advertising with more reasons to believe because it offers the opportunity to communicate more facts than TV,” said Philipp Reker, strategy director for [Siegel+Gale](#), New York.

“For example, the role of print is changing and auto marketers are using it as a gateway to promote digital experiences through things like QR codes and smartphone-based augmented reality applications and to drive consumers to Web destinations that offer a more engaging online experience,” he said. “For luxury marketers in particular, print

advertising positions their cars in high-end media environments and among other luxury brands.

“Because print is so segmented, it offers the opportunity to reach a highly targeted, luxury-oriented audience.”

### Revvng up engagement

Many automakers are using print ads in luxury-focused publications for a variety of different reasons, and for different messages.

“Print is more permanent and it is much more effective at creating a visual appeal than most digital methods,” said Patrick Whelan, president of **Great Reach Communications**, Lawrence, MA. “They are trying to portray sophistication.

“Print is the most effective branding tool there is,” he said.

For example, Italian automaker Maserati is taking the next step in mobile marketing by inserting customized QR codes into print ads that lead to an optimized site where consumers can build their own GranTurismo S.

The ad, which is found in many luxury-focused magazines including Robb Report, is a one-page placement with a QR code with the Maserati symbol in the middle.



### *Maserati QR code*

Also, the optimized site post-scan takes consumers to a page where they can build their own car, check out different models, locate a dealer and sign up for email newsletters ([see story](#)).

Meanwhile, German automaker Porsche upped its mobile presence through the incorporation of QR codes on its print ads, bringing consumers to a video that allows the brand personality to shine.

Set in high-end publications including ClubCorp's Private Clubs magazine, Porsche is marketing its new 911 model. Porsche partnered with Microsoft Tag to produce content that adds to the print experience ([see story](#)).



### *Porsche ad*

Also, Mercedes-Benz is running print ads for its A-Class in German consumer publications, high-circulation news magazines, special-interest media and national daily newspapers.

The ads are showing a QR code that leads to the A-Class section of Mercedes' Web site. Users can scroll to go down a city street and see different parts of the campaign ([see story](#)).

### Cracking the code

QR codes can especially help tap consumers who are in the purchase process, per Elizabeth DeMaso, managing partner of [Brenes Co.](#), New York.

"If readers in that purchase process are flipping through a magazine, they will actually be looking for ads to get a better sense of their options," Ms. DeMaso said. "For luxury automakers, it is the chance to support the cost of the vehicle and to differentiate the brand.

"To maximize print's efficacy, it is important to remember that its primary purpose is to garner attention and capture interest," she said. "It is just one of the tools in a marketer's arsenal and it should drive to the Web where customers can get a longer, more in-depth look at the automaker and its offerings."

Not only can luxury automakers help engage with consumers on a multichannel level, they can help them drive to dealerships.

The QR strategies of brands such as Porsche and Maserati allowed consumers to find a dealership which could entice purchases.

Also, print-bar-code-combinations can help automakers capture data on consumers. Marketers can collect data on time spent with videos or number of scans as well as email addresses and other personal information.

Therefore, marketing in a luxury-oriented print environment will help affirm that luxury marketers are being seen and interacted with solely by their target customers.

“Print advertising continues to be an effective format for automotive marketing,” Brenes’ Ms. DeMaso said. “Automobiles are a highly-researched purchase put through a multiple-step consideration process.

“Print is particularly effective early on when browsing for inspiration,” she said. “It is the point where customers begin imagining themselves in particular vehicles and what those vehicles and brands say about them as a person.”

Final Take

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