

MOBILE

Lincoln leverages rebranding campaign via mobile, digital New York Times ads

December 7, 2012



By TRICIA CARR

Lincoln Motor Company is targeting its rebranding message and video to readers of The New York Times' mobile and digital outlets as the buzz for the automaker's name-change and brand-defining MKZ model hits the city.



At a press conference at New York's Lincoln Center earlier this week, Lincoln announced that it would now be named Lincoln Motor Company and produce new luxury vehicles such as the 2013 MKZ. The ads are likely tapping affluent consumers' curiosity in the campaign and encouraging clicks to a microsite through a "Meet Lincoln" button.

"Prospects have been ignoring the Lincoln brand in favor of Cadillac, Chrysler, BMW, Mercedes, Lexus and other luxury vehicles," said Al Ries, chairman of marketing strategy consultancy [Ries & Ries](#), Roswell, GA. "Ford is trying to establish Lincoln as an important brand by treating it as a company rather than a product."

Mr. Ries is not affiliated with Lincoln, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Lincoln](#) was not available to comment before press deadline.

Driving views

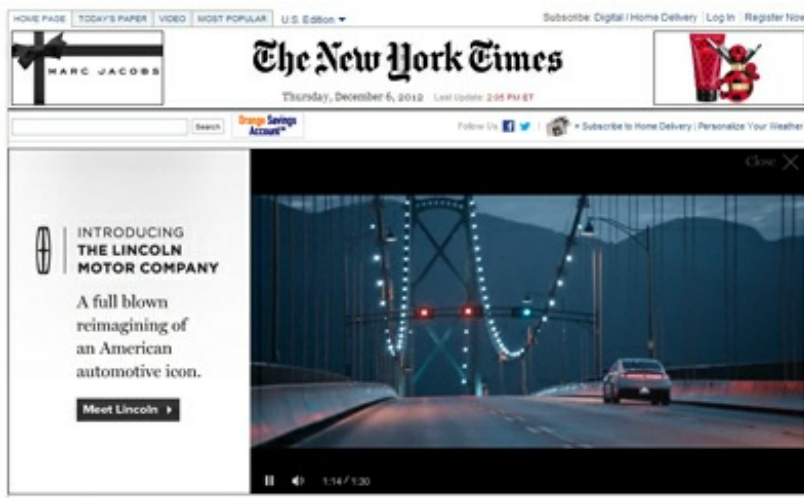
The Lincoln ads were present Dec. 6 on both the New York Times mobile site and Internet site.

The banner ad on the Internet site was expandable. The collapsed banner ad stated “Introducing the Lincoln Motor Company” and “A full blown reimagining of an American automotive icon.”



New York Times banner ad

Once expanded, readers could watch the rebranding video called “Time for Magic” and click the Meet Lincoln button to go to the microsite.



Expanded ad

Meanwhile, the mobile banner ad appeared below the header of the optimized site. It said “Introducing the Lincoln Motor Company” and featured the Meet Lincoln button.

The New York Times

 INTRODUCING
THE LINCOLN MOTOR COMPANY [Meet Lincoln](#)

Dec 6, 2012,
9:45 AM EST

Weather
☀ 31°F

Dow
▲ +0.84 +0.01%

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The embrace from a broad swath of the rank-and-file may empower Speaker John A. Boehner as he negotiates on tax increases and spending cuts.



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An elite Egyptian unit positioned tanks outside the



Mobile banner ad

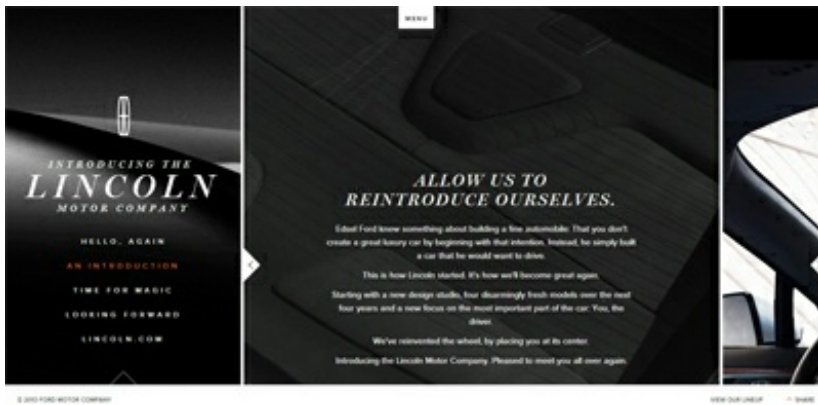
Users could click the button to go to an optimized version of the introductory microsite.

The microsite contains readings on the history and projected future of the Lincoln brand as well as the video. The four sections are Hello, Again; An Introduction; Time for Magic; and Looking Forward.

The site also directs users to [Lincoln.com](#) where the microsite is a featured slide on the opening page.

The Hello, Again section briefs readers on the 12-month-long rebranding campaign. For instance, it states, “Hello again, to a new, inherently different kind of driver.”

Next, the introduction tells readers, “Starting with a new design studio, four disarmingly fresh models over the next four years and a new focus on the most important part of the car: You, the driver.”



Microsite

The Time for Magic section shows the video that aligns the Lincoln brand with experiences such as a space shuttle launch and natural phenomenon. It also shows the first Lincoln models and the creation of the MKZ.

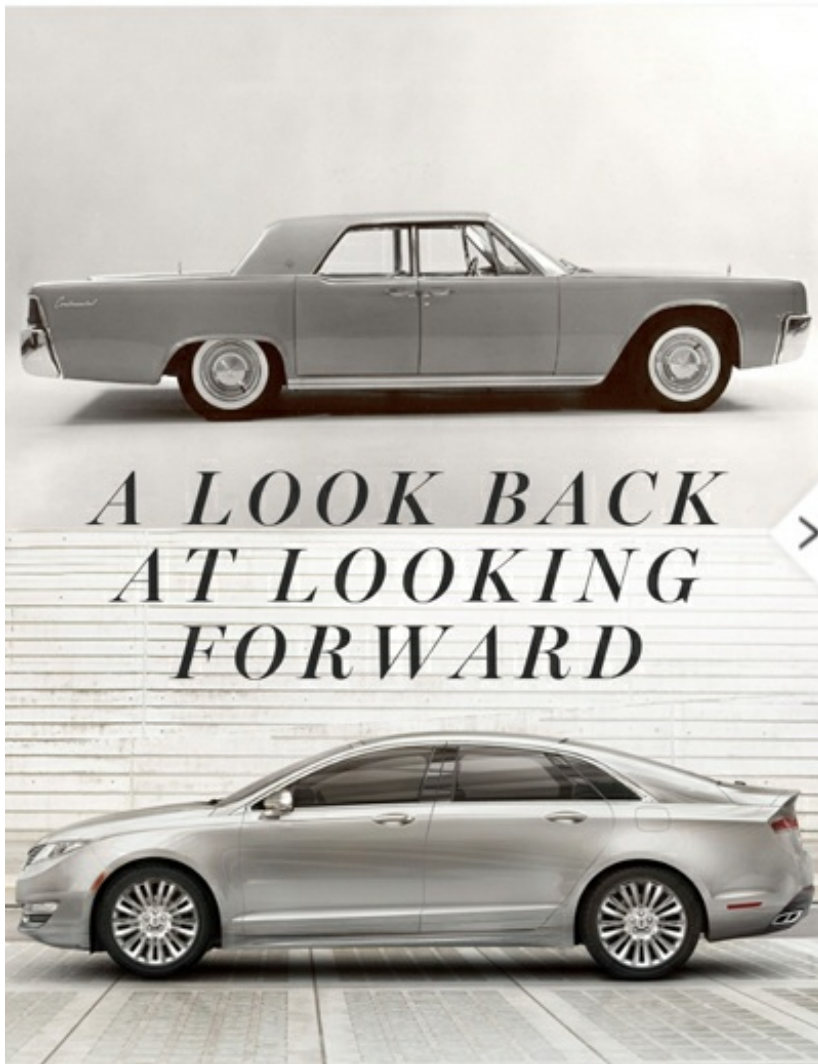
Embedded Video: http://www.youtube.com/embed/ZIGL_Mxn0NU

Time for Magic video

Lastly, the Going Forward section shows a timeline of the Lincoln brand that primarily features recent events.

Users can click a link on the last event to “Discover the MKZ.” They can also reach this content through a static button on the menu of the site.

The mobile-optimized site contains the same content, but its viewing planes and functions are tailored to mobile devices.



Mobile microsite

TV time

Lincoln is also planning a television spot during Super Bowl XLVII to refresh the brand.

The automaker is calling on late-night talk show host Jimmy Fallon to produce the commercial. It will be construed from tweets, according to various online reports.

The commercial debuted Dec. 3 and features 16th U.S. President Abraham Lincoln and vintage models, according to [an article in Bloomberg](#).

The spot is running during prime-time shows including NBC's singing competition program "The Voice."

Lincoln's rebranding campaign seems to be based on several elements, one of which is targeting a younger market than it has traditionally attracted, per Ron Kurtz, president of [American Affluence Research Center](#), Atlanta.

The New York Times ad campaign is also targeting affluent, smart consumers. The ads use an emotional approach to emphasize that Lincoln is changing.

"The content of the ad is a good emotional and inspirational approach that is both

entertaining, especially for a 90-second spot, and contributes perspective and credibility for the changes Lincoln is making,” Mr. Kurtz said.

“To communicate its message, Lincoln could use a number of media, especially magazines with an affluent and relatively young audience,” he said.

However, the digital ad content may not attract potential buyers, per Ries & Ries' Mr. Ries.

“Some readers might find the content interesting, but not necessarily people who are thinking about buying a luxury vehicle,” Mr. Ries said. “If you are planning to buy an expensive car, you want to know more about the car, not the company.

“It is expensive, but I think television is the best vehicle to promote an automobile brand,” he said.

Final Take

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