

MULTICHANNEL

Mercedes channels Santa Claus' good list in multichannel holiday push

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By TRICIA CARR

Mercedes-Benz USA is pushing its Winter Event through a multichannel campaign that nods to Santa Claus' "Naughty or Nice" list in a commercial and e-card tool.

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Luxury Daily

The 30-second commercial shows Santa among 2013 vehicles as he ships them off to both naughty and nice consumers. The corresponding digital campaign lets consumers send personalized video e-cards to their friends with "naughty" or "nice" content.

"Year-end campaigns are a staple, and with TV viewers increasingly being online while watching the big screen, we will continue to see multiplatform initiatives," said Paul Farkas, cofounder/CEO of [ULN Ultra Lifestyle Network](#), New York.

"The general concept of a naughty-or-nice card is interesting and something to build on," he said. "Seeing it has registered its URL for a couple more years, Mercedes should look to creating a richer transmedia experience next year with greater personalization, gaming experiences, contest offers and prizes to kindle viral sharing and larger ROI."

Mr. Farkas is not affiliated with Mercedes, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Mercedes](#) was unavailable for comment before press deadline.

New kind of holiday card

The digital component of the campaign is hosted on a microsite at <http://www.naughtyornicecard.com>.

Users can send their friends a Mercedes e-card. The content of the card depends on if the recipient has been naughty or nice.

The microsite states, "Tell Santa who's been naughty or nice and send your friends what they deserve."



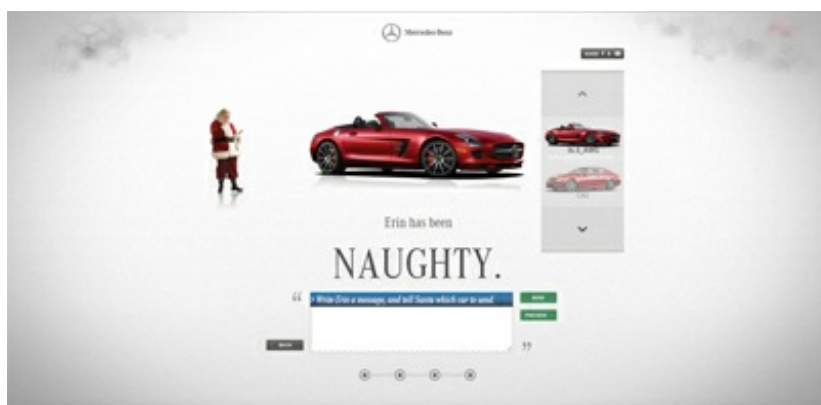
Microsite

Users can log in with their Facebook account or enter their email address. They must also enter the recipient's email address.

Next, users can choose a naughty or nice card. Once users pick the appropriate adjective, they can customize the e-card with a Mercedes vehicle and a personalized message.

The "naughty" card can be customized with the Mercedes SLS AMG or C63 AMG sedan in red. The "nice" version can feature the white GL550 or C250 SUV on the card.

Also, the microsite features a [link](#) to the special offers available during the Winter Event.



Naughty card

Meanwhile, the e-card itself states, "Find out if [sender] thinks you've been Naughty or Nice this year." The recipient must click to view the e-card.

The content is shown in an Internet browser. It starts with a 16-second version of the Winter Event commercial.

After Santa ships off the vehicles in the video, it is revealed whether the recipient is naughty or nice.



Video

Then, the recipient can configure their own version of the vehicle displayed on the card or view the Winter Event specials.



Facebook ad

Mercedes is encouraging clicks to the microsite through Facebook ads that states, "Have your friends been naughty or nice?"

"Failing to announce or bake-in the social card-giving in the TV spots as a transmedia experience is a missed opportunity," Mr. Farkas said.

Toy commercial

The Winter Event commercial first prompted the "Naughty of Nice" theme of the Winter Event campaign. The commercial is currently in rotation on various networks.

The 30-second spot shows Santa walking around two conveyor belts of Mercedes vehicles. One line of vehicles is red and the other is white.



Commercial still

The commercial is set to a rock version of a Christmas song.

Santa seems to be testing the breaks and acceleration of each vehicle before it leaves the workshop.

The vehicles then pile themselves onto a truck to be transported out of the North Pole.

The last scene of the commercial shows Santa waving goodbye to both trucks, one of which holds the “nice” white cars and the other holds the “naughty” red cards.

The commercial ends with a voiceover that states, “Hurry. The offers end soon,” pertaining to the Winter Event.

Embedded Video: <http://www.youtube.com/embed/ZNnWNdfXhQY>

Commercial

The multichannel push is likely Mercedes’ attempt at outdoing the competition during the holiday season.

“It is a cute play off of one of Santa's most famous lines, and it is a way for the automaker to give a shout out to customers on both ends of the behavioral spectrum,” said John Casey, founder and director at **FreshFluff**, New York. “Lexus has done a good job over the years of pushing its brand during the holidays, so I think the aim is to help bring Mercedes top of mind during the holidays.

“It is a fun way for the automaker to extend brand awareness through social media during the crucial holiday buying period, and using the question of the moment as the basis for the campaign,” he said.

“It is clean and slightly irreverent at the same time.”

Final Take

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