

MOBILE

BMW raises the bar on mobile via video, Google ad content

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By ERIN SHEA

German automaker BMW is raising the bar for mobile advertising among luxury marketers with its new campaign that comprises video content and Google Maps integration to push the i concept vehicles.

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Luxury Daily

The ad shows the various i concept vehicles driving along the ad space and a Google Map of the area that the mobile user is in. A click-through leads to a BMW Web site that gives users a virtual test drive of an i concept vehicle.

"There is a huge opportunity for marketers to tap into mobile capabilities with things like HTML5 and accelerometers to create engaging, interactive mobile experience and integrating technologies such as Google Maps, Street View and YouTube really light it up," said Brendon Kraham, director of global mobile sales and strategy at Google, Mountain View, CA.

"This BMW campaign is a great example of all the possibilities in mobile rich media," he said.

Vehicles of the future

The mobile ads are showing off the new BMW i concept vehicles, which are BMW's line

of electric cars.

In this specific campaign, BMW is promoting the i8 and i3.

The vehicles drive across the mobile ads and a Google Map image pops on whichever city a user is in. The cities offered are New York, San Francisco, London, Boston and Los Angeles.



i concept vehicle ad

A click-through leads to a Web site where users can take a virtual test drive around their city and learn more about the i concept vehicles.



Test drive feature

The test drive allows users to virtually try out either the i8 or the i3 through three different select courses in the user's city.



Virtual test drive

Once the destination is reached, the approximate battery life of the vehicle and distance are calculated using Google Maps.

Users have the option to share that information via Google+, Facebook or Twitter after the drive is complete.

“The heightened interactivity of the ad unit makes a bold statement as to the future of mobile banners and should go a long way toward endearing the brand to the luxury automotive consumer,” said Scott Forshay, Austin, TX- based luxury digital marketing consultant.

“While this ad serves as an intriguing hook to engage the audience in deeper conversations, the sequencing of the communications strategy is expertly delivered,” he said.

“The brand is pushing the envelope of the art of possibility with mobile banner ads.”

In 2012, BMW pushed the i concept vehicles with displays in various locations worldwide.

The i. Born Electric Tour showed off BMW’s new i vehicles before the official North American unveiling. The tour also offered interactive exhibits to showcase mobility solutions and sustainable materials Nov. 14-18 across from Bryant Park in Manhattan.

In addition to New York, cities included Rome, Düsseldorf, London, Paris, Shanghai and Tokyo ([see story](#)).

Marketing master

Overall, BMW had a successful year in 2012 that was in part due to its strategic marketing campaigns.

In fact, luxury automakers that promote strong branding in campaigns make the most impact when it comes to being top-of-mind among potential buyers and is what likely propelled certain brands to have record sales in 2012.

Automakers such as Mercedes-Benz, Audi, Lexus, Porsche, Bentley Motors and Rolls-Royce Motor Cars reported above-average sales for 2012, but BMW came out on top and sold the most vehicles out of any other luxury automaker in 2012 ([see story](#)).

Indeed, the automaker is sure to stand out with this new mobile ad campaign.

“The brand understands that the luxury automotive experience is about the journey and expertly articulates the journey in a manner entirely on brand,” Mr. Forshay said.

“The luxury consumer expects creative innovation and artistic vision from the brand they most covet, and BMW illustrates its commitment to pushing the boundaries of creative interactivity with its highly sought after luxury audience,” he said.

“Other automotive brands should take notice.”

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