

TELEVISION

Maserati chases fashion-forward consumers on The Face

November 5, 2013



By JOE MCCARTHY

Italian automaker Maserati targeted affluent female consumers with an appearance on the American modeling competition television series *The Face* that placed the Quattroporte vehicle at the heart of the episode.

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Contestants on the show were asked to develop an online commercial of the Quattroporte that embodies core brand values. Unlike the fleeting nature of product placements that can stay invisible to consumers, structuring an entire episode around a product likely creates a greater impact.

"Product placement is often effective in gaining the attention of the show's audience," said Amanda Rue, strategist at [Carrot Creative](#), New York.

"This is likely to build awareness of the new Maserati among the show's female audience," she said. "As the trend of 'native' advertising grows, brands are looking for high-impact channels to convey their brand messaging.

"Being an integral part of a television program like this allows the brand to communicate the core values to a target audience."

Ms. Rue is not affiliated with Maserati, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Maserati was unable to comment directly.

Demand to drive

The Face searches for models that have the potential to launch a brand's reputation. Supermodels Naomi Campbell, Caroline Winberg and Erin O'Conner lead teams of aspiring models through challenges proffered by select brands.



The Face - Maserati Quattroporte episode

In the Maserati Quattroporte episode the teams were asked to create a commercial that captures "style, elegance, technology and power" of the brand.

General manager of Maserati Europe, Giulio Pastore was the guest judge who decided which commercial would be touted as a representation of the brand.

Ms. Campbell's team won the challenge with a commercial that shows the models Emma Holmes and Jacquell Smith move toward a Quattroporte vehicle with hastening speed. The intent of the video was to show that the car compels one to drive it.



Ms. Campbell's team

The models wore couture dresses from Iris van Herpen during the filming.

Throughout the episode the Quattroporte is displayed from various angles, giving viewers ample time to develop an affinity for the vehicle.

A Maserati spokesperson said that the brand has seen a rise in female ownership over the past few years, especially in China, where 30 percent of drivers are women.

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/Q6OpXgFpkTo](https://www.youtube.com/embed/Q6OpXgFpkTo)

Maserati - The Face

Traditional means

Although other mediums achieve louder voices every day, television's conventional ability to sway is still leveraged by automakers.

For instance, Audi of America is looking to shatter the misconceptions surrounding diesel vehicles with a 60-second television spot that depicts a new Audi A8 L TDI in a comical web of misunderstanding.

The automaker's far-reaching campaign encompasses television, print, digital and social media and strives to dispel myths and reinforce the benefits of clean diesel such as range, efficiency and power. Audi is likely to accomplish its intended goal by relying on humor's ability to deflate stubborn views ([see story](#)).

For instance, Twitter opened up its television advertising targeting product to United States companies that run national commercials, enabling luxury brands to extend conversations with consumers and boost campaigns.

TV ad targeting lets brands directly communicate on Twitter with consumers while a commercial is still fresh in their minds. Soundly integrating TV into the social media world collapses the distance between brands and consumers, which can increase brand recall and heighten the possibility for sales ([see story](#)).

"Integrating with a television program also gives a reach that they may not be able to achieve through other channels," Ms. Rue said.

"It also gives a much richer experience with the brand beyond a standard 30-second TV commercial," she said.

"The combination of deeper product and brand stories coupled with the larger TV show audience makes this an effective strategy in reaching, and appealing to, a predominately female audience."

Final take

Joe McCarthy, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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