

EVENTS / CAUSES

Audi projects M.I.A., Janelle Monáe holograms to light up A3 launch

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Janelle Monáe performing in Los Angeles alongside a hologram of M.I.A. performing in New York

By JOE MCCARTHY

Audi of America celebrated the launch of its entry-level A3 model with hologram-enhanced performances by musicians M.I.A. and Janelle Monáe.

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The automaker used 3D projection mapping technology to fuse together the events in New York and Los Angeles on April 3. As M.I.A. performed in New York and Janelle Monáe performed in Los Angeles, they were joined on stage by a real-time hologram version of the other.

"While you would like to think that the need for elaborate and expensive launch events is not always necessarily, to be competitive today, it is, in fact, often necessary," said **Damon M. Banks**, freelance journalist and media consultant, New York.

"There are so many launches happening, and newsworthy events happening each day, so having an event that pushes the limits and creates buzz is what will help the brand achieve the recognition needed during a significant product launch," he said.

Mr. Banks is not affiliated with Audi, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Audi of America was unable to respond by press deadline.

Red, blue, green

Audi's launch event marked the first time that a hologram performance occurred with integrated video mapping, meaning that the holograms parroted what each performed was up to. The brand chose M.I.A. and Ms. Mon  e for the event due to their boundary-pushing styles.

The high-tech events were intended to bring attention to new features in the A3 such as the 4G LTE WiFi connection and the Multi Media Interface, or MMI touch.



M.I.A. performing for Audi A3 launch

The bi-coastal performances were aired in Audi dealerships nationwide, creating a level of real-time brand unity rarely seen.



Audi A3 launch performance

Audi enlisted Milan-based artists Carnovsky to create an installation to accompany the performances. The installation used colored LED lights that interacted with printed color to highlight various Audi A3 "scapes" including the city, mountains and beach, according

to the brand.

The A3 model was on full display throughout the events and attendees could share photos from photobooths.

The brand also engaged fans on its social accounts.



Audi of America Facebook posts

Audi of America recently unleashed the biggest wave of advertising efforts for its entry-level, sub-\$30,000 A3 model that hit the United States April 3.

The multichannel campaign revolves around a television spot featuring comedian Ricky Gervais and various other celebrities. Four other spots trail the lead commercial and convey ideas such as resilience and authenticity and build upon the buzz that began with the Super Bowl ([see story](#)).

Bridging the virtual

Brands are leveraging innovative in-store and out-of-home tactics to educate, build awareness and stoke sales, according to a session March 27 at ad:tech San Francisco.

The “Overstimulated: Winning over the Jaded Audience” session explored emerging tactics such as a virtual spokesman, body sensor in-store installations and interactive subway displays. When seeking to create memorable experiences in a crowded retail space, luxury brands are increasingly turning to new technologies to appear innovative ([see story](#)).

Other automakers have projected hologram displays during pivotal events.

For instance, Toyota Corp.’s Lexus generated interest in the IS model during New York Fashion Week with a live holographic performance art experience that showcased the brand’s penchant for devising creative ways to engage fans.

The “Lexus Design Disrupted” event centered on the brand’s commitment to technology design and featured model Coco Rocha and a retrospective from the archives of designer Giles Deacon. Structuring the event around a broad theme rather than the IS model itself

allowed Lexus to reach greater creative heights and stand out in a crowded arena ([see story](#)).

"When it comes to branch launch events in this market, bigger is always better," Mr. Banks said.

Final Take

Joe McCarthy, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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