

CASE STUDY



Summary

In the car market, the received wisdom is that media plans should be led by TV or Outdoor. But online can be just as effective at branding. Ford wanted to use digital media to maintain purchase consideration and sales for their Galaxy people carrier without the usual TV or Outdoor support.

Purchase consideration increased¹ and sales went up by 8% over the period² – a huge achievement.

The core benefits to Ford

- Ability to target a defined target audience cost-effectively without the need for offline media
- AOL provides the perfect platform for a premium positioning
- Audience involved with a creative idea that provided information that was genuinely useful to them
- Purchase consideration and sales increased

Background

The target audience for this campaign were 30 – 44 year old women with children. Research into their daily lives and online behaviour revealed that 'E-commerce', 'travel', and 'researching local activities' are the most prevalent uses of the Internet for this group.³ Research also showed that their family responsibilities made them feel very time-poor; that the wellbeing and safety of their families were fundamental to their own sense of wellbeing; and that they strongly associated a first class experience with calmness and free time. In addition, the benefits of the Ford Galaxy were found to be more relevant during the summer months when families spend longer periods of time travelling together.

On the basis of these insights, sponsorships were created that helped them plan and prepare great family days out.

AOL provided a great demographic and brand fit for the Ford Galaxy. 510,000 AOL members are mothers aged 30 – 44⁴, and AOL's exclusive paid-for content provides the ideal environment to communicate a premium positioning. AOL's safe, family brand values also support the Galaxy's own 'family safety' proposition.

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Objectives

The objective was to communicate the Galaxy's 'Travel First Class' brand values to a target audience of 30-44 year old females with children, positioning the Galaxy as an enabler of a 'calmer life'.

Media Strategy and implementation

AOL produced a 'Family Days Out' guide for the Ford Galaxy, allowing users to search over eighty locations nationwide for first class family days out including 'The Great Outdoors', 'Wildlife', and 'Excitement & Entertainment'. All the destination categories and locations were chosen to give users a range of rewarding, first-class family experiences.

Rich media and text links on the AOL Welcome Screen, Motoring and Travel channels drove traffic to the guide. This was complimented by an AOL Motoring showcase, which highlighted the Galaxy's key benefits, and offered photo galleries, brochures, and test drives.



Performance

The approach proved to be very successful. The campaign was recently given the award for Best Digital Sponsorship in the NMA effectiveness awards. As Iain McNeill, Account Manager at mOne comments: "The Galaxy 'Family Days Out' sponsorships delivered fantastic ROI. Purchase consideration increased¹ and sales went up by 8% over the period² – a huge achievement. AOL's understanding of their audience and publishing capability allowed us to deliver the perfect brand experience on a mass scale."

1. Brand Tracking Q1 - Q4 03, Ford Research. 2. SMMT, Full Year 2003. 3. BMRB, Internet Monitor 03. 4. AOL Audience Data 03.

