Car maker generates 19 per cent response rate for model launch with online magazine

When car maker SEAT launched the Exeo — a sub-premium saloon defined by elegant design and a sporty ride — the company wanted to deploy an advertising strategy to match the sophistication of the car.

SEAT worked with digital marketing agency Metia, using its PageLife platform to create a glossy online magazine that made a real impact on customers. More than 19 per cent of users clicked through from the application to order a brochure or book a test drive.

5 mins Each visitor interacted with the application for more than five minutes, demonstrating strong customer engagement

The company plans to use the technology to launch forthcoming models

19% of users clicked through to request a brochure, book a test drive, or contact their local dealership

SEAT can access valuable data, such as information that interests customers

Devising new concepts

When you're a car maker with a customer base of young early adopters, you're always looking to innovate. So when SEAT launched the Exeo—its first foray into the sub-premium sector—the company wanted its advertising campaign to be equally pioneering. With a tech-savvy target market, the Web was a crucial part of the company's advertising strategy. Rob Taylor, National Communications Manager at SEAT United Kingdom, says: "The Exeo brand is inspired by the idea of 'going beyond.' We wanted our advertising to reflect that spirit—breaking new ground and appealing to business and corporate customers. We knew that the online space was crucial to getting our message across."

A standard online campaign was not enough for the Exeo. SEAT needed something special. "We wanted to create a Web showcase that would match the elegant design and the exhilarating experience of the Exeo," says Taylor. "It was important to involve prospective buyers with the car, to give them the chance to explore and customise it in detail." The team at SEAT was also keen to highlight a number of innovative technologies used in the car, such as a sunroof that includes photovoltaic panels to capture the sun's energy, and

intelligent computer controls to improve safety in difficult driving conditions. Says Taylor: "We were looking for a tool that could illustrate these features in a compelling way, and get our customers excited about the technology in the car." There were also time pressures to consider. "We needed a partner that could work quickly to fit with our advertising strategy, delivering a quality product to a tight deadline," says Taylor.

Finding the ultimate support

Taylor looked for an experienced developer to create an online engagement tool for the Exeo. And, after carefully evaluating the market, SEAT chose Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Metia. "Metia worked closely with us to understand exactly what we wanted to achieve. The team recognised that the online

advertising had to share the same high production values as the Exeo brand," says Taylor.

Metia began creating a glossy online magazine for the Exeo using its PageLife technology, based on the Microsoft Silverlight browser plug-in. Andrew Martin, Vice President at Metia, says: "PageLife makes the most of Silverlight to deliver a rich, compelling user experience. The technology was a perfect fit for the Exeo, because it allowed us to include a deep level of detail and seamlessly integrate multimedia features."

Bringing concepts to life

Using Microsoft Expression Studio, the Microsoft Visual Studio development system, and Microsoft SQL Server data management software, the team at Metia created the Exeo

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magazine. Martin says: "We had to move fast to meet the deadline SEAT had set. Expression Studio helped our developers and designers work together more efficiently. For the Exeo project, they were literally sitting side-by-side, exchanging ideas and code."

The team created an interactive online magazine, with rich layers of media, including images, embedded video, and animation. Users turn the pages by clicking and dragging the corners. Potential buyers can change the colour of their Exeo, view animated demonstrations of features such as the headlight auto-focusing system, and explore details of the interior by clicking on hotspots within an image.

Generating exceptional results
The magazine microsite coincided with the appearance of the Exeo as Featured Car of the Month on MSN Motors and generated a significant response. Over the first four weeks of the campaign, each visitor spent an average of more than five minutes interacting with the application, demonstrating a high level of engagement with the brand. Crucially, more than 19 per cent of users clicked through to request a brochure, book a test drive, or contact their local dealership.

The magazine provides the SEAT team with valuable customer data. Using comprehensive tracking tools, SEAT can see the features—such as popular paint colours—that most interest customers. This data helps managers make crucial production and advertising decisions.

Such compelling results have inspired SEAT to consider using the technology to launch forthcoming models. "The results far exceeded our expectations, demonstrating particularly strong customer engagement," says Taylor. "PageLife is a good fit for our brand. It's a cutting-edge product that effectively represents our design-driven cars. We're already looking at ways to use Metia PageLife again in the future."

SEAT also attributes part of the campaign's success to the level of partner expertise offered by Metia. He says: "We were impressed by the way Metia worked closely with us to deliver a great product to a tight deadline. We wouldn't hesitate to use the agency again for future Silverlight development."

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Rob Taylor, *National Communications Manager at SEAT United Kingdom*

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