

Oakland Tech News

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'Ron Burgundy' Anchors Dodge Durango Launch

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

his character talking up Durango on TV for three months before "Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues" comes out on Dec. 20.

"The Dodge brand's irreverent tone and attitude make Ron Burgundy the perfect pitchman for the new 2014 Dodge Durango," Francois said. "By joining forces with Paramount Pictures, we're able to show the new Dodge Durango and its cutting-edge technology in a completely unexpected approach that is fresh, funny and culturally provocative to our audiences."

Francois said the campaign's co-branded television commercials and online content were directed by Jake Szymanski. One benefit of having an entertainer like Ferrell write the commercials is that he "overproduced" the amount of content Dodge expected from him.

Francois said Ferrell's commercials were supposed to highlight three features – the Durango's 360 hp, the vehicles 25 mpg for highway driving and its technology and infotainment systems.

Francois said that Ferrell didn't just help create Dodge's three commercials – one for each highlight, but 70 different commercials.

Not all of them will be broadcast on television. Ferrell is the co-founder of the web site, "Funny or Die," and some of the Burgundy spots will air on the Internet but not on television.

Francois was asked about the risk of having a spokesman like "Burgundy" be a spokesman for Dodge and the Durango.

Kuniskis said that he never heard anyone say he or she disliked the character to the point that his being a spokesman would be a polarizing thing for Dodge.

Francois said the Burgundy campaign is only phase one of the Durango promotion. Once the Burgundy movie hits the screens in December, Dodge will move to phase two, which doesn't use Ferrell's character.

Kuniskis said that the dealers he's spoken with enjoy the character and enjoy the spots they've seen. Burgundy ads will be supported by local dealer ad groups.

Francois said that the launch of the Durango is important. That particular model has not had a lot of marketing muscle put behind it in the recent past.

"We had to launch the Dart," Kuniskis said. "That was an important launch because we hadn't had a car in that market segment for years."

Now it's the Durango's turn, Kuniskis said. When asked who the target buyer is, Kuniskis said he's heard that question every time they launch a new vehicle, but Dodge's demographics skew younger than many other brands and he expects the average Durango buyer to be someone in his or her 40s with a family.

'You Got a Lot Right' – J.D. Power to GM Orion Employees

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the bigger quality story. We at J.D. Power are optimistic about GM's future quality. But it only gets harder from here on. GM is launching a number of new models in the near future and the competition is only going to get tougher."

What GM has to do, Lesnau said, is to get the public to understand that the quality of its vehicles has improved, and in many instances is better than Toyota or Honda. But the automaker is in a good position to get that message out.

"Hopefully, I'll be back here next year to make it three years in a row that the Sonic won our APEAL award," Lesnau said.

Joe Ponce, executive director, GM Global Operations Quality,

said it's always nice to have J.D. Power come to a plant and present an award. Ponce said he wants that to become a habit.

Gerald Johnson, vice president, North American Manufacturing, said that the celebration was what he called a "two-fer." The plant received the J.D. Power award and the BIQ award.

"I am particularly proud to be here today, because I remember the early days when we dreamed that the work we did here would be recognized as the best in the company and in the industry," Johnson said. "I remember what Mark Reuss said. 'It's not good enough to be competitive, we're playing to win.'"

Johnson said the workers should feel proud about what they've accomplished, but they have to remember that "you're

only as good as your last win."

"You should celebrate today," he added, "but then go back to your jobs and work harder and smarter to produce quality vehicles so that you win more awards in 2014. We have a proud history, but we have an even brighter future. Like they say, build these cars like you own them."

Pat Sweeney, president of UAW Local 5960, said that he was glad that the plant had a good relationship with J.D. Power, but that was to be expected "because we see them here so often."

When asked what made Orion Assembly different from other GM plants, Johnson said in an exclusive interview, the answer was simple – nothing.

"This is a plant that executes GM's Global Manufacturing Sys-

tem, and as a result, I am here today to recognize the people here for their excellent work," Johnson said. "GM has 40 out of 56 plants in this region that have earned BIQ awards, and more than 100 plants around the world."

And the Sonic wasn't the only GM car to win an APEAL award, Johnson said. This across-the-board quality has been achieved because people in the company have focused on quality like a laser.

"We now have internal and external metrics that show this effort has paid off," Johnson said. "As for letting the public know how well we're doing, repetition is the key."

"We have to achieve quality every day with every vehicle and every new program at every plant."

Chrysler Schedules Supplier Training for Week of Oct. 21

Opportunity is knocking for auto suppliers who would like to do business with Chrysler.

The automaker's annual Supplier Training Week is set for Oct. 21-25 at Chrysler's headquarters in Auburn Hills.

"This provides suppliers – and companies that wish to be suppliers – and Chrysler a unique opportunity to add value to both sides of our partnership," said Scott Kunselman, senior vice president, Purchasing and Supplier Quality.

"Supplier Training Week is designed to enhance the lines of

communications, improve efficiency and quality, as well as help us build a solid working relationship."

Suppliers will have the chance to attend 94 different instructor-led training sessions in the areas of purchasing, risk management, engineering, supplier quality, supply chain management, corporate quality, manufacturing, materials engineering and finance.

To register to attend Supplier Training Week, go to the web site www.chryslertraining.com.

Regular registration is \$100

and closes on Oct. 17. Walk-in registrations will be accepted during Supplier Training Week for a fee of \$150.

"We will continue to provide daily meal vouchers with each registration," Kunselman said. "We are also offering an enhanced mobile app, as well as a \$25 Mopar service voucher, which can be applied toward the purchase of a service or product (oil change, Mopar part, etc.) at any participating Chrysler dealership."

Katie Hepler, manager of Corporate Communications, said

some new training sessions this year include ones on prototype build engineering, additional Pentastar indirect supplier sessions, Chrysler quality management studies for new and advanced users, third party audit, and web FFQ for indirect suppliers.

"We're always looking for new suppliers," said Hepler, "especially in the area of innovation."

"We're always looking for new ideas, so companies interested in doing business with us should sign up to attend Supplier Training Week."

Chrysler Turning Pink in Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Chrysler has launched a month-long campaign to support breast cancer awareness.

The automaker adds its voice to the nationwide effort to raise awareness about the importance of early detection, treatment and prevention of the dreaded disease. The campaign will run in conjunction with Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which began Oct. 1.

During the month-long campaign, Chrysler will conduct a series of informational seminars for its employees with health plan partners Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Henry Ford Health System, said company spokesman Mike Palese.

Employees also will be able to schedule screenings at various nearby company locations.

In order to raise general awareness, the automaker will distribute pink "Chrysler Cares" wristbands to all employees. Chrysler also will use pink illumination on its Auburn Hills headquarters tower and glass Pentastar during

the observance, Palese said.

"Chrysler Group is proud to participate in the annual campaign to increase awareness about the resources that are available to foster early detection, treatment and prevention of breast cancer," said Nancy A. Rae, senior vice president, Human Resources. "We

are pleased to add our voice to this important cause."

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control reports that breast cancer is the most common cancer among women and the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths among women in the U.S.

About one in eight women in

the U.S. will develop invasive breast cancer over the course of their lifetime. In 2013, an estimated 232,000 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed in women in the U.S., along with 64,000 new cases of non-invasive breast cancer.

Ford Founder's Moving Assembly Felt 'Round the World

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to reach and stretch when building a vehicle to ensure that the work conditions meet Ford ergonomic standards. Since the implementation of this virtual process in 2001, the number of ergonomic issues during physical builds has been reduced by nearly 20 percent.

"Technologies such as 3D printing, robotics and virtual manufacturing may live in research but have real-world applications for tomorrow and beyond," said Paul Mascarenas,

chief technical officer and vice president, Ford Research and Innovation. "We use Henry Ford's spirit of innovation as a benchmark for bringing new technologies into the manufacturing process."

John Fleming, Ford executive vice president of Global Manufacturing, added, "Henry Ford's core principles of quality parts, workflow, division of labor and efficiency still resonate today."

"Building on that tradition, we're accelerating our efforts to standardize production, make factories more flexible and introduce ad-

vanced technologies to efficiently build the best vehicles possible at the best value for our customers no matter where they live."

Ford's recent expansion plans in global manufacturing and production will result in eight new assembly plants and six new powertrain plants, which will help retain 130,000 manufacturing jobs around the world, said Adamski.

They also put the company on pace to produce 6 million vehicles in 2013 – approximately 16 vehicles every 60 seconds around the world.



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