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Marketing Exec Revels In Success of Chrysler Ads

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European flavor to this market, I'd never do that," Francois said. "But to bring the best of my knowledge . . . because a human being is a human being . . . so to bring some experiences here and to test the market.

"It's fundamentally, for the time being, very different."

That is to say, an advertisement for Fiat in Europe would be noticeably different than a similar ad in the U.S. And a Chrysler brand or vehicle ad, in turn, would strike a different tone than a comparable Fiat vehicle ad in this market.

Francois attributes part of this keen sensitivity to his own global heritage, so to say

— he's a native Frenchman, working for an Italian auto and industrial conglomerate (Fiat) selling U.S. cars out of Detroit. (That alone might be a pitch for a sitcom.)

But in this post-2009 bankruptcy world for Chrysler, Francois has fit in remarkably well within a Motor City auto industry that has been surprisingly insular to outside automotive influences.

Francois has done remarkably well in shepherding this whole series of ads that besides drawing a buzz, bring actual attention to Chrysler products, which is the whole point, one supposes.

For example, buyer consideration of the Chrysler 200 went up tenfold off of that fa-

mous Eminem Super Bowl ad whose title was actually "Born of Fire."

That's the ad that included the tagline "Imported from Detroit" and it has become so popular in the 18 months since broadcast that Chrysler now has a line of T-shirts and other paraphernalia sporting that popular culture saying (proceeds are donated to Detroit-area charities).

Francois made light of his own situation that he was this French-native, Italian-business marketer who landed in Detroit and he was left to figure out this town by way of local TV that was then drowning in ads for window insulation and Art Van furniture.

But figure it out he did.

"From time to time, during very specific moments, the less commercial (product pitch) you are, the stronger the message," Francois said.

"And timing is important — the stronger the message. What makes a message perfectly relevant is that it hits the right nerve at the right time."

Indeed, the 2011 Super Bowl ad with Eminem spoke to Detroit's recovery in the same way that the Clint Eastwood ad might have done for all of America just a year later.

But, of course, this being a presidential election year in the U.S., it wasn't surprising to see the Eastwood ad dragged into U.S. national political debate.

Adcraft Hosts Chrysler

Join the Adcraft Club of Detroit on April 9 for "Chrysler Day" at the San Marino Club in Troy to hear from one of the hottest executives within the Chrysler Group regime — Saad Chehab. Chehab is a progressive branding executive who was instrumental in developing Chrysler's successful "Imported from Detroit" ad campaign.

Share lunch with Chehab as he further discusses the "Imported from Detroit" campaign and what Chrysler has planned that might tie into its ongoing renaissance theme.

Lunch is at 11:30 a.m. and the formal program begins at 12 noon. Tickets are \$35 for members, \$45 for non-members and \$25 for junior / student members. See Web site.

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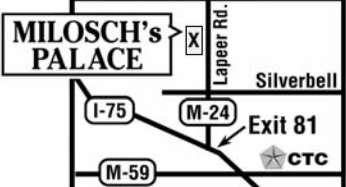
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NHTSA Says Chrysler 300, Dodge Charger Earn Five-Star Safety Rating

AUBURN HILLS — The 2012 Chrysler 300 and 2012 Dodge Charger have achieved 5-star safety ratings from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The 5-star rating is the highest rating for safety by NHTSA and measures vehicle safety performance in three categories, including front and side crashes as well as for rollover.

"We're very pleased that both the 2012 Chrysler 300 and 2012 Dodge Charger have achieved the highest overall rating," said Scott Kunselman, senior vice president - Engineering, Chrysler Group LLC.

"The results of these tests reflect crashworthiness and performance in different scenarios."

The rating is a combination of frontal, side pole and barrier performance with the static stability factor accounting for the rollover rating.

Both Chrysler 300 and Dodge Charger also achieved high marks in rollover testing with a 4-star rating.

"These vehicles are comprehensively equipped with advanced safety features," added Kunselman.

"Both vehicles are robustly designed with a rigid structure to protect occupants and have numerous advanced safety features, including available Adaptive Cruise Control, which NHTSA notes as a technology proven to reduce crashes."

The advanced Adaptive Cruise Control maintains a set distance between vehicles when the cruise control is engaged.

Other safety and security features on the Chrysler 300 and Dodge Charger include standard electronic stability control and available blind-spot monitoring.

Earlier this year, the

Chrysler 300 and Dodge Charger were named a "Top Safety Pick" by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

Both the Chrysler 300 and Dodge Charger are equipped with more than 65 safety and security features, including segment-exclusive Ready Alert Braking and Rain Brake Support features to support overall vehicle handling and performance under all weather and pavement conditions.

Safety ratings are just part of the story with both the 2012 Chrysler 300 and 2012 Dodge Charger.

Both vehicles also are equipped with a new 8-speed automatic transmission, a first by a domestic automaker.

Combined with the award-winning 292-horsepower Pentastar V6 engine, both vehicles achieve a Best-in-Class EPA-rated 31 miles-per-gallon on the highway.

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