

# VW innovates with talking newspaper ad

## Gives voice to Vento's engineers

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An idle mind thought it was the Devil speaking, another put it down to a fevered imagination, a child got scared and a reader jumped out of her skin when she heard the newspaper talking. These are just a few of the reactions Volkswagen's ad for Vento got through its 'talking ad', sent out through two dailies (*The Hindu* and *The Times of India*) which carried a pre-recorded chip extolling the vehicle's virtues, across five cities.

Mr Lutz Kothe, Head of Marketing and PR, Volkswagen Passenger Cars, Volkswagen Group Sales India Pvt Ltd, said the group was all about innovation, be it engineering or marketing and ad-

vertising. Speaking to *Business Line*, he called the ad "a democratisation of innovation," adding that it reached 25 lakh households in New Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore and Chennai. Volkswagen's dealers in the smaller cities were given copies of the newspapers to distribute to prospective clients. Vento is Volkswagen's entry-level sedan in India, prices starting at Rs 6.99 lakh ex-showroom Delhi.

DDB Mudra is the advertising agency behind this ad. Mr Bobby Pawar, Chief Creative Officer, Mudra group, told *Business Line* the ad tied in with Volkswagen's philosophy of being best-in-class in everything that it did. It's hard to part with a work of art one has created - this was the

insight the advertising team hit upon and looked for an impactful way to convey, he explained. The full-page ad depicts an engineer in the factory looking at the Vento with utter sorrow and the tagline: "Crafted with so much passion, it's hard to let go."

"We wanted to give the passion of the engineers a voice, we wanted people to hear what goes into a Vento in a medium where people don't expect to hear it," said Mr Pawar.

### LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES

A light-sensitive chip activated the recording once the newspaper was opened (or fell open).

It was an exercise that posed quite a few logistical challenges - to name some,

the chip itself was sourced from vendors in China; the supplements to which the chip had been attached had to be printed a few days ahead; and extra trucks and drivers had to be hired to distribute the newspapers, Mr Kothe said.

He would not comment on how costly this exercise was but said it was the beginning of a 360-degree campaign that would now follow.

Mr Pawar expressed appreciation for the newspapers and media buying agency Mediacom India for their courage and willingness to go along with the plan.

Though it is a first for India, there are references on the Internet to other talking ads published elsewhere in the world.