

TEST DRIVE

July 2006

DM SUPERTEST

– the only verdict you need

Saab

The convertible roof-style opening on the pack lets you slip into a beautifully crafted interior of satin finish and elegant design. The text tells us that this car is more than an icon; it is an iconvertible. It also challenges the reader with a question about the car: 'The product looks stylish and unique; beautiful even. But does it fulfil the purpose for which it is intended?' A question we might also ask about this pack, which is based on a good creative idea that is in danger of being lost in the styling.

Agency: Draft London – Carl Knapper (art) & Kevin Mills (copy)

Nissan

Now this is more like it. This pack has been fashioned like an 'Access all areas' pass, and indeed that's the headline on the front. Inside, the letter gets straight to the point – find the right Nissan 4x4 for me. The brochure aids this with a nice link between the range and different parts of the UK, highlighting each model's strengths in coping with various terrain. It's simple and, with interesting facts about the locations dotted throughout, enjoyable to read, too.

Agency: Tullio Marshall Warren – Emma Robinson (art) & Natasha Ali (copy)

Land Rover

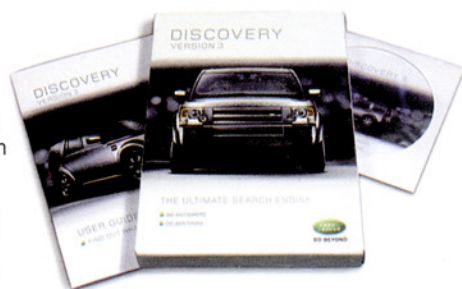
They do love their boxes over at Land Rover, and this one presents itself as the outer for a software package. This is version 3 of the ultimate search engine – a reference to the Discovery 3 that lets you go anywhere. Inside, there's a user guide, clear letter and some stickers. The reply device sits in the sleeve that the disc would come in (if it were real software), and very cleverly becomes the envelope to return the form in. Lovely. Pretty much everyone will open this mailing, and I doubt they'll regret it.

Agency: Craik Jones – Jo Jenkins (art) & David Brown (copy)

Mercedes-Benz

With or without an envelope line, I defy anyone not to open a piece from Mercedes-Benz. This pack extols the virtues of the Executive range through a down-the-line range brochure with an equally straight letter, which should appeal to the 'Executive' audience – that is, nothing too tricky, please, we're very busy. Overall, it's Mercedes-Benz through and through, but I just feel it should push the boat out a little.

Agency: Claydon Heeley – Simon Haslehurst (art) & Tris Williams (copy)



Saab
Land Rover
Nissan
Mercedes-Benz

Heart-stopping. Awe-inspiring. Ground-breaking. We've heard it all before, so are car marques telling us anything new? Well, I'm not convinced they are.

Tonally there seems little to differentiate the mainstream manufacturers, apart from the more forward-thinking companies like Smart, Nissan and Skoda. But these distinct personalities are thin on the ground, and prestige brands just seem to use longer words and thicker paper stock.

There is, however, some nice stuff out there...

Sean Kinmont, creative director, 23red, puts our contenders through their paces

