

Live drive

NEW YORK, US: Mitsubishi needed to find a way to let eager motorists try out its new Outlander Sport model, without going to the showroom. It wanted a stunt that would use cutting-edge technology and reflect the progressive values of Mitsubishi itself - and so what's claimed to be the world's first online test drive was born.



United States residents who are over 18 with a valid driver's license will be able to register to have the chance to take a virtual jump behind the wheel to drive the new car in a digital cruise. "We see this project as part of the ever-expanding blur between the virtual world and the physical world," said 180 LA executive creative director William Gelner.

Collaboration between creative advertising agency 180 LA, digital agency-of-record, Schematic, and production company B-Reel, which specialises in superlative media for television, digital signage and internet campaigns, robotics expert Dr. James Brighton and web designer Simon Cave, resulted in the creation of a multiple point of view onboard video camera. It will allow users to take an actual 2011 Outlander Sport for a virtual spin on a closed course from their personal computers. Advanced electronic receivers and state-of-the-art servo motors control the vehicle's dynamics and sync it with precision GPS mapping. A "feature pods" collection challenge also allows Mitsubishi to show off some of the vehicle's deluxe features.

Consumers could begin signing up to the 'World's First Online Test Drive' on 15 October at the car's microsite, www.outlandersport.com. Here, a code is provided that can be used to queue for the live test drive on opening day, 1 November. The online test drive is part of an integrated marketing effort that kicked off 15 October through January 2011 and includes television, print, digital and direct mail.

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