MTV networks, Ford Models and Elizabeth Arden's 'M by Mariah Carey' launch first-ever virtual model sear

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Campaign Brings Ford Models and M by Mariah Carey Brands to Life In-World While Seeking New Face for MTV's Virtual Hills

NEW YORK - In a first for any virtual world, MTV Networks, Elizabeth Arden and Ford Models today announced they are launching a campaign to find the world's first-ever virtual supermodel. The three iconic brands are teaming up to create M by Mariah Carey's "Virtual Ford Model Search" to find the new face of MTV's Virtual Hills.

The campaign is designed to appeal to a generation of young, aspiring consumers who take their online persona as seriously as their real-world presence. Taking branded entertainment to new heights, the campaign offers innovative in-world experiences that build strong connections to the M by Mariah Carey fragrance and to Ford Models.

Beginning Monday, viewers can go to http://www.vmodelsearch.mtv.com/ to create their own customized avatar, which they'll use on their quest to become the world's first-ever virtual model. Participants will experience opportunities to "meet" in-world with a roster of Ford Models' experts who will provide invaluable beauty and styling tips on everything from fashion, skincare, hair, and makeup -- of which all can apply to the real world. Viewers are then given a virtual bottle of M by Mariah Carey -- complete with a spray animation -- along with a Ford Models portfolio book to carry throughout the virtual world. Ford Models' digital video content containing similar fashion and beauty insights will also be available 24 hours a day for viewing. The campaign was designed in conjunction with MTV's Integrated Marketing Group and Elizabeth Arden's media communications agency, PHD.

"Our viewers are accustomed to expressing personal style in all facets of their lives, and that extends to their virtual world personas as well," said Courtney Holt, Executive Vice President of Digital Music and Media for MTV Networks' Music & Logo Group. "With Elizabeth Arden and Ford Models, we're tapping into their twin drivers of fashion and beauty and creating a social campaign where they can seek status and project a confident sense of self with others."

"Bringing Ford Models to MTV's virtual world is a fun way for us to discover great talent," said Mitch Grossbach, General Manager of Ford Models Media. "Who knows, we may just find our next Supermodel."

The multi-faceted campaign engages Hills viewers across all MTV screens, from on-air to online and in the virtual world. To drive awareness for the campaign, MTV will air :30-second Elizabeth Arden/MTV co-branded spots during several episodes of The Hills beginning Monday, Nov. 19th, pointing viewers to co-branded microsites. The microsites, which will appear on MTV.com and inside Virtual Hills, will offer viewers directions on how to enter the campaign, profiles on the semifinalists and blog entries from

contestants. The sites will also contain links for users to purchase M by Mariah Carey as well as links to Ford Models' Web site.

"The opportunity to partner our M by Mariah Carey fragrance with such world-class brands as Ford Models, MTV and our media agency, PHD, offers a unique chance for us to connect with our target audience on a completely new level," said Ron Rolleston, Executive Vice President of Elizabeth Arden fragrances. "Our consumers are young, fresh and creative, and this campaign offers a more personal way to connect and engage with them in a truly interactive fashion."

"By partnering with MTV and Ford Models, the M by Mariah Carey brand will reach fans everywhere they are through a unique and cutting-edge multiplatform campaign tied to the Hills and built around Mariah's debut fragrance," said Tanya Zvonkin, Vice President/Group Director for PHD. "For the fragrance M by Mariah Carey, there needed to be innovative programming that would build excitement and connection to the brand. This campaign extends beyond the borders of MTV's Virtual Hills to include on-air promos and engaging online content."

"MTV and Ford Models have a proven track-record of creating and supporting stars, so the idea of using this new media platform to create a virtual brand ambassador with a partner like Elizabeth Arden seems like its time has come," said Tim Rosta, Senior Vice President of Integrated Marketing for MTV. "The virtual model search will connect our shared audience to MTV's virtual worlds and build a rich community around beauty, fashion style and youth culture."

At the heart of the campaign is a series of events in early January, in which models will be asked to show off their virtual acting capabilities by posing with the bottle and acting out a commercial for the fragrance. They will also be asked to walk a virtual runway and compete in a virtual dance contest. Representatives from Ford Models, Elizabeth Arden and MTV will conduct the judging.

Three finalists will be chosen by an expert panel on January 14, 2008. The winner -- as determined by viewer votes -- will be announced on-air on January 31, 2008.

The winning avatar becomes Ford Models' first-ever virtual world model, the fresh new face of a marketing campaign for MTV's virtual worlds, and the star of a :30-second Elizabeth Arden/MTV co-branded spot.

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