

Brand Positioning of Electric Luxury Cars in the Premium Automotive Market: A Conceptual Framework

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Abstract

The transition toward electric vehicles (EVs) is reshaping the premium automotive sector. This paper explores the brand positioning strategies adopted by manufacturers of electric luxury cars to distinguish themselves in a highly competitive and evolving market. It presents a conceptual framework identifying the core dimensions of brand positioning for electric luxury vehicles, including sustainability, technology leadership, heritage, and experiential branding. The paper also examines consumer perceptions, emerging brand archetypes, and the implications for traditional luxury automakers.

Keywords: Brand Positioning ,Electric luxury vehicles

1. Introduction

The automotive industry is undergoing a fundamental transformation driven by sustainability concerns, regulatory mandates, and technological innovation. Among the most affected segments is the luxury automotive market, where electric vehicles (EVs) are rapidly emerging as a new status symbol. This paper investigates how electric luxury car brands are positioned in the premium segment and proposes a framework for understanding effective positioning strategies in this space.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Brand Positioning in Luxury Markets

Luxury brand positioning traditionally hinges on exclusivity, heritage, craftsmanship, and emotional resonance. Scholars such as Kapferer and Bastien (2012) emphasize symbolic value and experiential branding as core pillars of luxury.

2.2 Electric Vehicle Adoption and Consumer Behavior

Research by Egbue and Long (2012) indicates that environmental concern, innovation appeal, and performance are key motivators for EV adoption, but price and infrastructure remain barriers. In the luxury segment, these barriers are mitigated by higher purchasing power and lifestyle alignment.

2.3 Differentiation in Automotive Branding

According to Keller (2003), automotive brand differentiation is built on performance, design, reliability, and brand legacy. In EVs, these attributes are augmented by digital interfaces, autonomous capabilities, and green branding.

3. Research Objectives

- To identify key dimensions that define brand positioning in the electric luxury car market.
- To explore how traditional luxury automakers and EV-native brands differentiate themselves.
- To propose a conceptual framework linking brand identity, consumer expectations, and market positioning.

4. Conceptual Framework

The paper proposes a four-dimensional conceptual model for brand positioning of electric luxury vehicles:

4.1 Technological Superiority

Brands such as Tesla and Lucid Motors position themselves as pioneers of innovation, emphasizing software leadership, autonomous driving, and battery range.

4.2 Sustainable Prestige

Sustainability is no longer a compromise but an aspirational value. Brands like Mercedes-Benz EQS and BMW i7 combine eco-consciousness with elegance and status.

4.3 Heritage Integration

Legacy automakers like Audi and Porsche leverage their brand heritage to instill trust, while subtly repositioning themselves as future-ready without alienating traditional buyers.

4.4 Experiential Differentiation

Premium EV brands focus on in-car experiences—AI-enabled interfaces, silent driving, curated interiors—to evoke luxury in new ways beyond mechanical powertrains.

5. Competitive Landscape

- Tesla: Positions as a tech-first brand, often compared to Apple, focusing on minimalist design and autonomous innovation.
- Lucid Motors: Leverages extreme range and performance to appeal to elite consumers, positioning as a hyper-luxury EV option.
- Porsche Taycan: Merges racing heritage with electric performance, aiming at emotionally-driven buyers.
- BMW i Series: Integrates eco-luxury and driving pleasure, positioning on intelligent sustainability.

6. Consumer Perceptions

Early adopters of electric luxury cars are often:

- Tech-savvy and environmentally conscious
- Status-driven but open to new interpretations of luxury
- More focused on digital prestige than mechanical specifications

7. Implications for Marketers

- Storytelling Must Evolve: Traditional themes of horsepower and engine growl are replaced by silence, digital elegance, and green credentials.
- Sub-Branding is Strategic: Use of sub-brands (e.g., EQ, i, Taycan) helps isolate and elevate electric offerings.
- Experiential Marketing: Showroom experience, VR test drives, and AI-powered customization tools enhance positioning.

8. Conclusion and Future Directions

As luxury consumers embrace sustainability and digitalization, brand positioning strategies must align with these evolving values. This conceptual paper lays the foundation for empirical research by defining the dimensions that matter most in the electric luxury car market.

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