



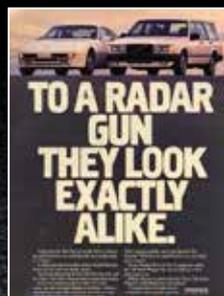
Building a luxury brand across a nationwide network.

Volvo is a Swedish luxury automotive brand, with a rich history that stretches back to the first model that rolled off their production line back in 1927. They have a tradition of marketing their vehicles with a premium safety message underpinning their enviable brand position.

The manufacturer's hard earned and enduring reputation for safety began in 1959 with the introduction of the three-point seatbelt, which is attributed to saving over a million lives. But their innovative drive for introducing active and passive

safety features over the decades – like the child safety seat in the early seventies and the integration of airbags including being the first to introduce side impact airbags – continues to this day.

The luxury heritage of Volvo is interwoven with their reputation for safety. The two are inextricably linked and form one of the most potent brand pillars in the automotive industry. That they wish to protect this hard-earned position is completely understandable.





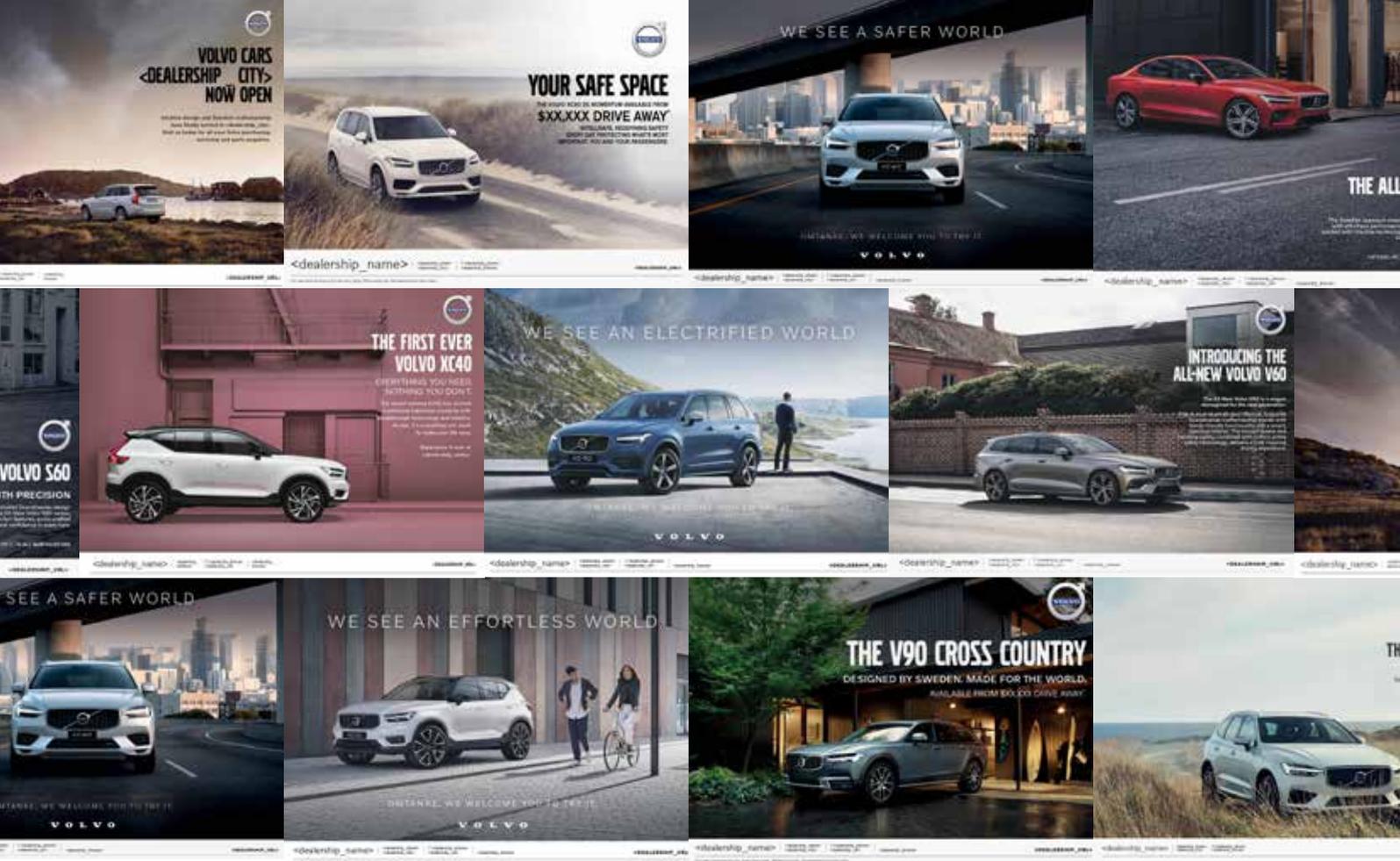
Selling a Luxury Brand. Overt retail comms **versus** brand position.

The fortunes of the brand have shifted considerably in Australia over the last few years, with a resurgence in popularity for the range of new Volvo vehicles resulting in a doubling of sales across a nationwide network of nearly 30 dealerships. Adhering to the virtues of the brand is important for Volvo – their customer base is particular about the cornerstone principles of the marque and protecting this market position and brand identity is paramount to growing the brand further.

It takes considerable effort over many years to secure a premium market position in the automotive industry. Gaining such a position requires careful brand management and strategic positioning over a long period of time. This is precisely why luxury car brands are protective of such a position once they've attained it. These brands typically guard their

'premium' reputation with a great deal of vigour. For these manufacturers, controlling the overarching brand message into market is a relatively straightforward process, as the communication around the brand itself is reinforced by the virtues of each model in their range. What isn't so straightforward is controlling the retail message at dealer level.

For Volvo Car Australia, a strong retail network is certainly important to grow the brand. With the arrival of new models and exciting new technologies, a resurgence in the Volvo brand has fuelled greater sales uptake across Australia. But there is always a balance to be had between an overt retail position and a premium brand communication. On the one hand, Volvo Car Australia wants every success for their retail network. But they also recognise the power of protecting their brand essence.



Australia has an inordinately large number of car manufacturers represented in the market per capita – we happen to be the ideal ‘test market’ for automotive brands, with a strong showing of luxury marques. Market share for Australian brands is smaller compared to other global markets, and the competition is fierce for buyers.

For an emboldened Volvo dealer network energised by great new product and exciting sales potential, there was a desire to pursue an aggressive sales stance to capitalise on their newfound product artillery. The challenge for Volvo Head Office was to build on this momentum, but at the same time, remain on brand.

The Volvo Head Office marketing team are specific about their guidelines for the application of the brand in the retail space. Things like the right amount of clearance

when displaying their logo, careful application of lifestyle imagery that reflects their brand, appropriate messaging around pre-owned and demonstrator vehicles and the manner in which they are photographed such that there is a consistent, premium approach at all times. Advertisements are carefully crafted with strong art direction drawing the eye to the vehicles and stark monochromatic imagery with artistic lifestyle elements. Copy is generally sparse and headlines short, punchy and premium. Language is most definitely as important as the visual approach. The urgent sales communications that are prevalent in most automotive advertising required a certain ‘composure’ with Volvo retail advertising. Delicate selection of adjectives has become important to help set Volvo up as a premium manufacturer, but the balance is about composing a message that still manages to convey a value for money message to the buyer. Floor traffic is, after all, floor traffic.



The **subtle** balance of **control** and **freedom** to sell.

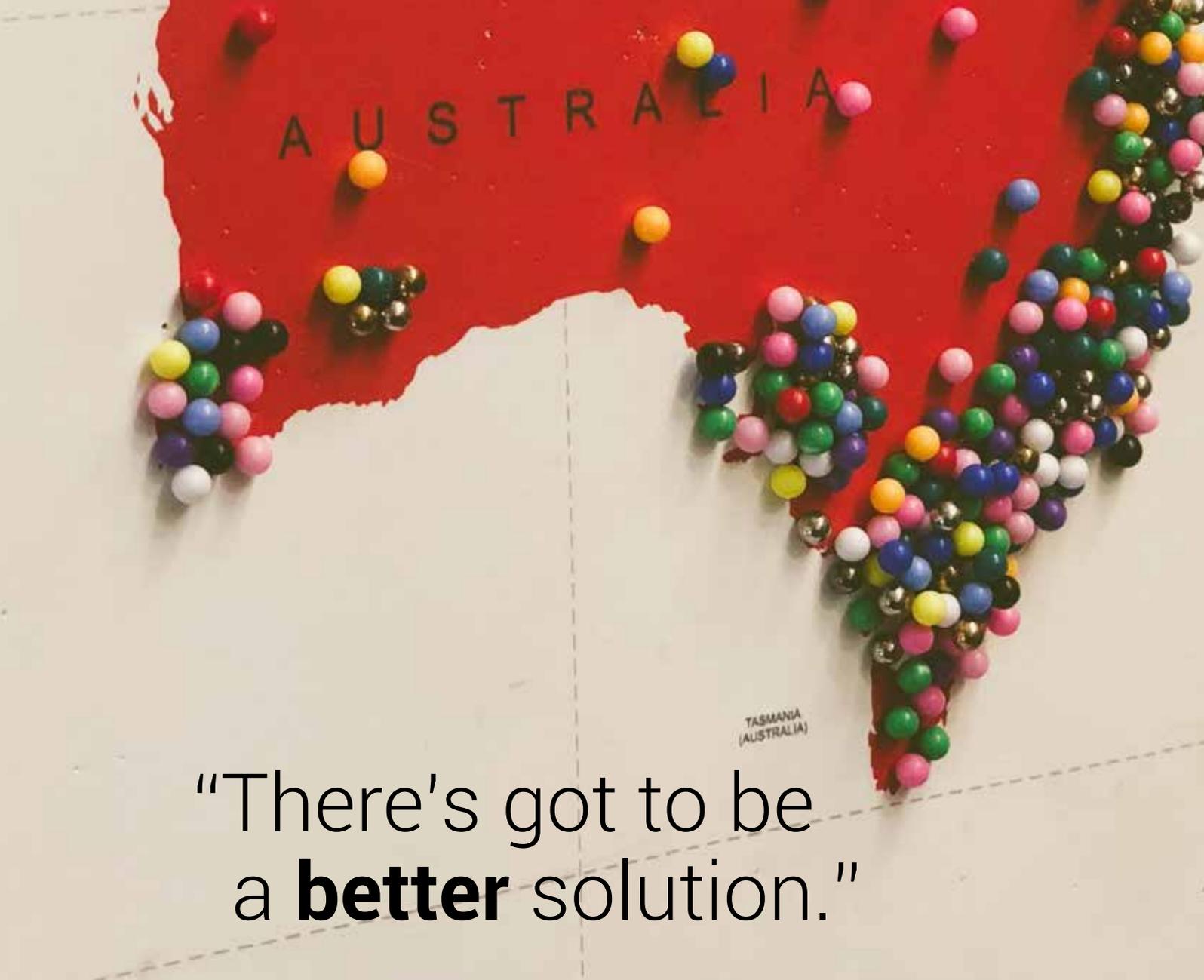
The Volvo Head Office Marketing team recognised that their products were becoming more popular with buyers and while that would normally fuel more retail advertising, they felt that it was important to have a good understanding of the range of retail marketing material being created out there in the marketplace. Basically they wanted the ability to get clear vision on the volume and style of marketing material being created by each of their regions so that their Regional Managers had the tools to be able to manage the message. These Regional Managers were there to guide their dealers on which products to advertise where and how to achieve greatest inroads in their Prime Market Area (PMA).

For Volvo dealers who are invested in the brand and want to establish clear market recognition, they understandably were keen to elevate their dealership name into the main retail creative - their view being that, 'I want to advertise my dealership, not the brand. The brand looks after the brand.' While this view might be appropriate and acceptable for a mainstream brand, Volvo had a luxury position to protect and was doing so in the best interests of their dealer network.

So a balance had to be achieved – one that allowed dealers to generate content that raised awareness of their dealership but was 'on brand'. Dealers needed access to good content that gave them retail presence within branding guidelines.

'That's great in principle, but how do I find an image I can use for my ad?'

The global portal (where head office marketing and the dealer network accessed and shared material) made this subtle balance unnecessarily difficult for the dealer network. Poor system navigation was a barrier for most users and there was no clarity around assets on the system. The Regional Manager's phones ran hot with asset and content requests/queries. Is that vehicle OK to use for the Australian market? Is that an overseas model? Can I use that image in my ad? Am I able to use that heading?



“There’s got to be a **better** solution.”

In 2015, Volvo Australia approached MyAdbox to explore the pain points they were facing around the sharing of content and assets with their dealership network.

Before putting together a proposal, we began (as we always do) with a workshop with the Volvo marketing team to develop a clear picture of the standard suite of assets on a national level and how these assets could be shared with the national retail network. During this workshop we discussed approval processes, workflow practices, brand guidelines and dealer understanding of the brand position. We

discussed the need to drive down the lengthy and frustrating time in approvals between head office and dealers and get messages into market faster.

We returned to Volvo Car Australia with a MyAdbox automated Brand Management proposal that was anchored in a sophisticated Digital Asset Management system and Content Creation software that would overhaul the Volvo advertising workflow model. This new concept would satisfy the dealers who were working within the brand guidelines and also win back those dealers who were ‘going rogue’.



The Digital Asset Management (DAM) software provided Volvo Australia and the dealer network with the ability to store, collate, access and distribute digital assets according to user status. This software also provided:

Asset version control

The generation of asset variations for re-purposing requirement

Adding metadata to assist with search functionality and sorting

Asset management controls – including rights management and user permissions

Expiration control and the capacity to archive

Secure storage of all assets in the one location on Amazon S3 servers

This DAM gave Volvo the power of true asset management, giving the head office team and dealers the capacity to search, download and distribute assets for their own purposes. And the system provided protection around Rights Management issues – an important consideration for lifestyle imagery that Volvo relied on heavily.

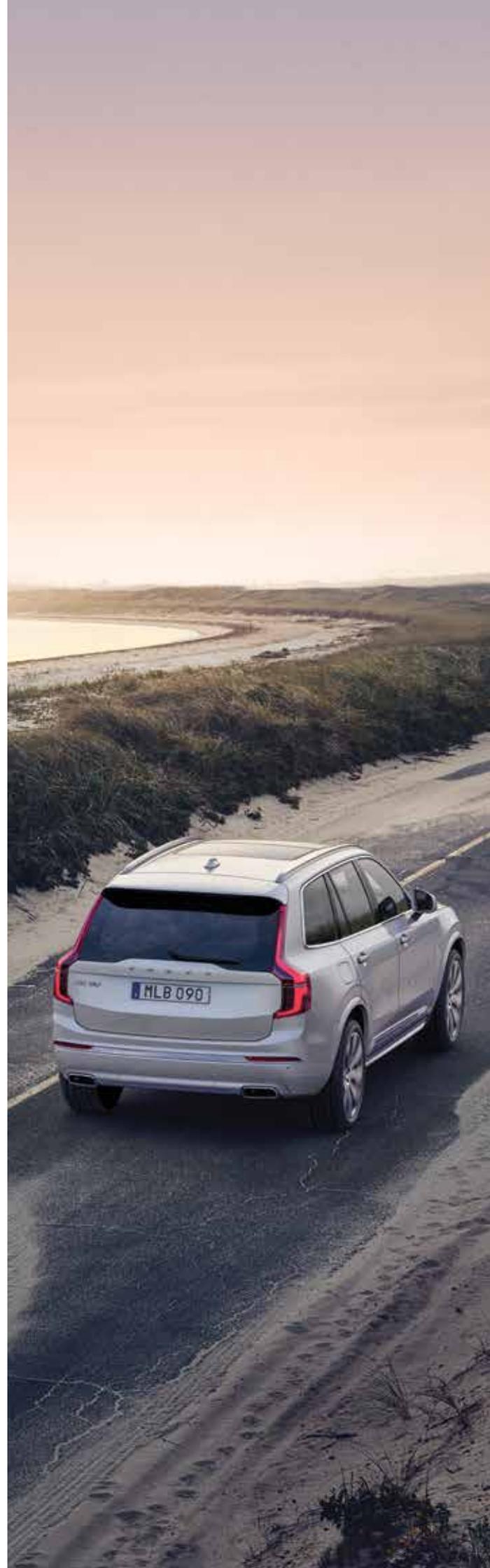
We worked closely with the Marketing Team to arrive at a retail layout for all media that met the brand guidelines and would enable dealers to introduce their dealership name into creative. As part of this process, we categorised dealerships into regions, ensuring that each Regional Manager was able to focus on their own region through the smarts of the content creation platform. The platform also facilitated a workflow that would give dealers 'freedom within the framework' to customise approved on-brand creative to suit their needs, without the need for an arduous approval process.

Conclusion

Armed with a dynamic content creation system that guards the brand guidelines while providing dealers with the flexibility to tailor their message, Volvo Car Australia is consistently meeting 'go-to market' deadlines. Furthermore, the network no longer needs to clarify asset accessibility with their Regional Managers, reducing frustrating and lengthy approval processes for dealers. This also freed up the Regional Managers to focus on the bigger picture issues around sales across the network instead of micro managing local area marketing requirements.

MyAdbox has helped Volvo achieve a 'halo effect' in regard to their marketing strategy - where what is advertised nationally at brand level, is now echoed across the country by the dealer network, who are able to get to market quicker thanks to the time and cost efficiencies of the dynamic content creation system. The end result is more brand presence in market, more often.

Dealers are now able to confidently download assets with relevant copy decks to ensure the language they are using is head office approved and that all media placements they are making will be fulfilled as they have the ability to create and push to publication in under 5 minutes.



Conclusion cont.

Dealers feel supported and empowered by Head Office to create beautiful, pre-approved content which boosts their PMA presence without the need to engage a third-party agency to create advertisements (a costly, time consuming alternative that reintroduces tedious approval requirements).

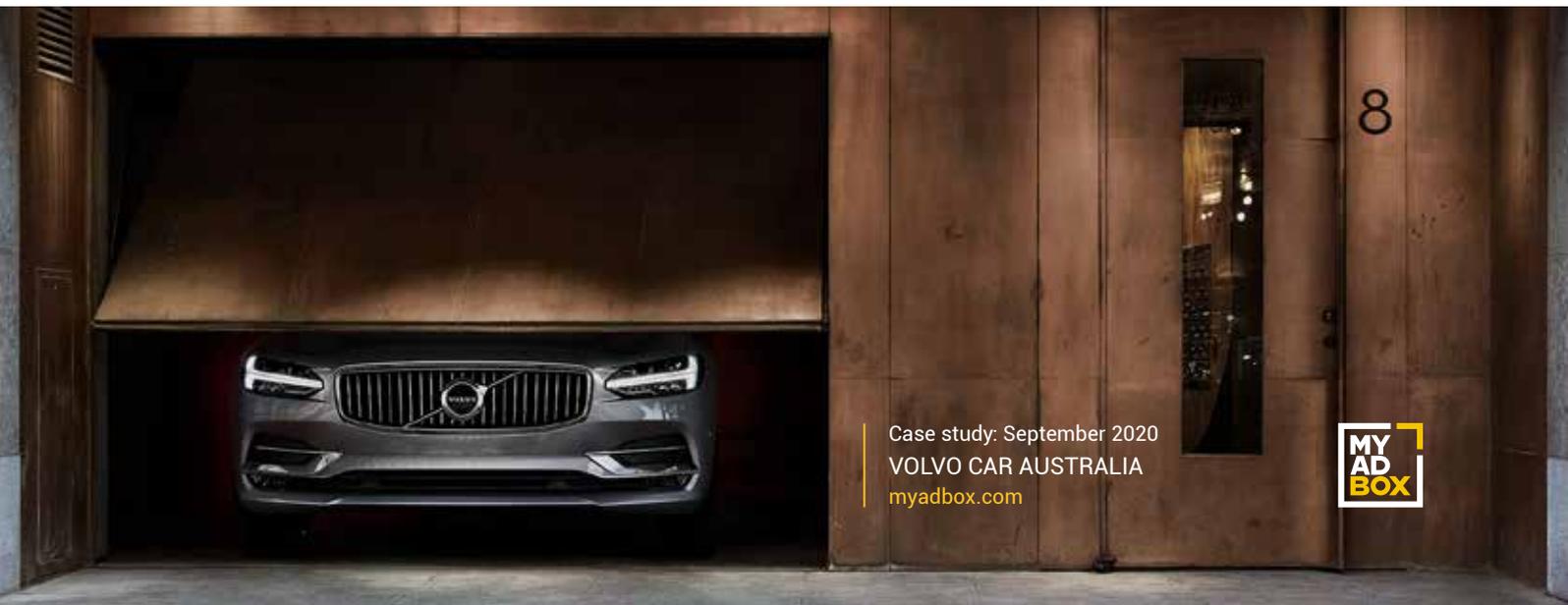
While dealer usage of the platform has increased considerably with all dealers accessing nationally approved material, there are occasions where some dealers will want to create a bespoke piece relevant to their PMA. MyAdbox, as brand champions for Volvo, have been engaged by Head Office to act as a Brand Approval team for these situations of custom created content. This is a genuine endorsement of our firm grasp of the virtues of the brand and the brand guidelines.

For Volvo Head Office, there is comfort around the fact that they now have complete transparency over how often their network are creating and placing media. This drives

more intelligent conversations around effective marketing on a dealer level and informs the Head Office Marketing team on new concepts and assets to introduce onto the platform to drive sales.

Thanks to the dynamic content creation platform which draws on pre-approved, modifiable templates, Head Office Marketing doesn't need to worry about their brand position being compromised in a 'noisy' retail advertisement, ensuring consistency of a premium message across Australia.

The Volvo/MyAdbox solution proves that it is possible to balance the delicate marketing requirements of a Luxury automotive brand with the local area retail marketing needs of a dealer network. **For more information around introducing MyAdbox Brand Management software into your business, contact Andrew Baker - abaker@myadbox.com**



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VOLVO CAR AUSTRALIA
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