Emily Connor
Int. Seminar I
December 9th, 2016

Jetta Believe It

We all count on our cars to take us from point A to point B. Whether that be a shameful fast food run at midnight or a dreaded family road trip to grandma's house on Christmas, we all rely on our automobiles to take us where we are too lazy to walk. Volkswagen is a brand everybody knows and loves. Who can resist an iconic punch buggie or a miniature jetta when they see it zoom by? I can't. A Volkswagen car has the appeal of a German luxury brand and the sustainability of an earth friendly Prius. Environmentalists across the globe will rush to defend their jetta's honor with dignity. On September 18th, 2015 the world turned upside down for tree huggers and teenage girls alike when it was revealed that

Volkswagen had been falsifying data to disguise high emissions from government regulated tests.

Anybody who watched the superbowl or flipped through a magazine in 2015 has seen Volkswagen's major advertisement campaign that prioritized the environment and their low emission vehicles. Later that year, the Environmental Protection Agency unveiled the stunning evidence that Volkswagen had been manipulating software in order to meet the regulation of low emission “Clean Diesel” vehicles. From 2009 through 2015, Volkswagen models such as the “TDI diesel models of Jettas, Passats, and Touareg SUVs, as well as TDI Audi” (Federal Trade Commission, “Clean Diesel” Campaign) were equipped with the deceitful software. Soon after government officials released evidence of misconduct to the public, the German automobile enterprise admitted their guilt and staggering figures of their wrongdoing. Volkswagen stated that a total of “11 million cars worldwide, including eight million in Europe, are fitted with the so-called ‘defeat device’ (Russell Hotten, Volkswagen: The scandal explained)." The software itself is capable of adjusting its settings to perform abnormally when being tested. In an attempt to change the results of the tests the device would present itself in a “safety mode in which the engine ran below normal power and performance. Once on the road, the engines switched out of this test mode” (Russell Hotten, Volkswagen:The scandal explained). As a result of the altered

machinery, Volkswagen allowed millions of cars to emit 40 times above what is allowed in the United States. As a parallel, Volkswagen is your “loving” boyfriend who has actually been cheating on you with your best friend for 6 years.

How will this scandal impact us you ask? Well, climate change actually isn’t real, so it's all good! Volkswagen’s highest officials have stepped down and the company is still struggling to rebuild its reputation. Lets face it, coming back from a controversy like this is like forgiving a friend that just voted for Donald Trump. Probably won’t happen anytime soon. People need time to recover from the lies and deceit. If you can't trust a Jetta, then who can you trust? This revelation should serve as a lesson to the American people. You can not believe everything you see in see. We interact with advertisements every day and rarely do we question the information presented to us. We don’t generally like to be skeptical of products we enjoy, because we don’t want them to become tainted by reality. Volkswagen’s eco friendly ad campaign in 2015 exemplified this common misconception between consumers and big brand companies. The information in television and print advertisements is designed to manipulate the average consumer, by idealizing the factual data and perfecting the appearance

of a product. Big name companies have proven time and again that they will do whatever is required to make some extra profit, and for Volkswagen that became abundantly clear. They fooled us once, but all relationships have their ups and downs. Life's a bumpy road but most Volkswagens come with four wheel drive. In other news, Volkswagen still leads and sales to Prius.

SOURCES:

Body., United States. Environmental Protection Agency. Office of Transportation and Air Quality. Assessment and Standards Division Issuing. *EPA Optimization Model for Reducing Emissions of Greenhouse Gases from Automobiles (OMEGA) : Core Model Version 1.3 Documentation*. Washington, DC: n.p., 2010. 1. Print. This source explained detailed causes and effects of carbon dioxide emissions. I became more knowledgeable about the effects of automobile use and climate change.

"FTC Charges Volkswagen Deceived Consumers with Its "Clean Diesel" Campaign." FTC Charges Volkswagen Deceived Consumers with Its "Clean Diesel" Campaign | Federal Trade Commission. March 29, 2016. Accessed December 09, 2016. https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/press-releases/2016/03/ftc-charges-volkswagen-deceived-consumers-its-clean-diesel. This source also elaborated on the details of the Volkswagen scandal, including statistical evidence and details on the legal action taken by the US government.

Hotten, Russell. "Volkswagen: The Scandal Explained." BBC News. 2015. Accessed December 09, 2016. http://www.bbc.com/news/business-34324772. This source gave me multiple pieces of evidence to back up my claim. I found it extremely detailed yet easy to understand.

Rechtin, Mark. "FTC Charges Volkswagen With False Advertising." Consumer Reports. March 29, 2016. Accessed December 03, 2016. http://www.consumerreports.org/volkswagen/ftc-charges-volkswagen-with-false-advertising/. This source gave specific statistics about the Volkswagen controversy. This source helped me reconfirm the specifics about the chain of events that lead to the scandal.

Zhang B., Veijalainen J. and Kotkov D. (2016). Volkswagen Emission Crisis – Managing Stakeholder Relations on the Web.In*Proceedings of the 12th International Conference on Web Information Systems and Technologies ISBN* 978-989-758-186-1, pages 176-187. This source served as great background and gave my research factual insight about the Volkswagen emission crisis. I used this to inform myself before starting my paper.