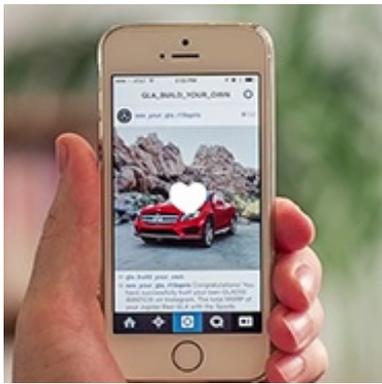


MOBILE

Mercedes-Benz lets consumers customize GLA model on Instagram

October 24, 2014



Still from Build your own GLA video

By JOE MCCARTHY

Mercedes-Benz USA is continuing to mine Instagram in creative ways with a maze-like "Build your own GLA" campaign.

[Sign up now](#)

Luxury Daily

Mercedes-Benz ingeniously worked around the inability to link images on Instagram by creating a large network of tagged images that consumers can easily follow on their way to their ideal GLA model. More so than other automakers, the brand consistently innovates on Instagram, and its 1.3 million followers prove that it knows how to engage fans.

"Now that the GLA is actually in market and consumers can actually buy one, we tried to think of what we could do to take advantage of the Instagram platform," said Mark Aikman, department manager of digital marketing and CRM at Mercedes-Benz USA, New York. "We wanted to bring the native functionality of Instagram into the car buying process.

"Instagram is obviously a platform where people are to have a little bit of fun," he said. "This [campaign] teaches them about the product and gives them something enjoyable to do.

"We're talking about the product in channel that's really authentic for the millennial consumer and for our brand."

Staying fresh

Vehicle customization is a hallmark of most automaker's digital presence. If a consumer wants to experiment with vehicle features, they can usually access a customizer on the desired brand's Web site, Facebook page, dedicated mobile application, and elsewhere.

Mr. Aikman noted that the customization option is one of the most popular features on Mercedes-Benz USA's Web site.

Ultimately, the exhaustiveness of customization options leaves consumers with little to ponder except how the car runs in real life.

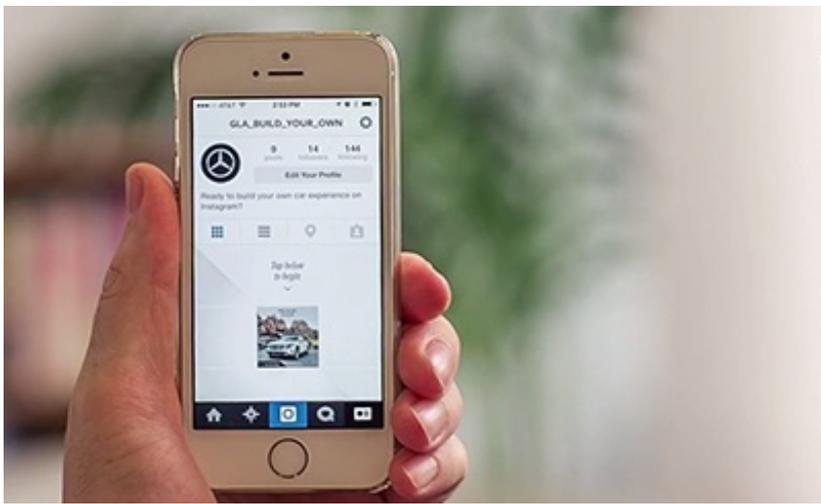


Aston Martin customizer app

One obstacle automakers face, however, is motivating potential consumers who may not have considered the brand to actually use the programs. Oftentimes, consumers have to go through multiple, time-consuming steps that likely lead to abandoned designs, leaving only serious consumers to fulfill the process.

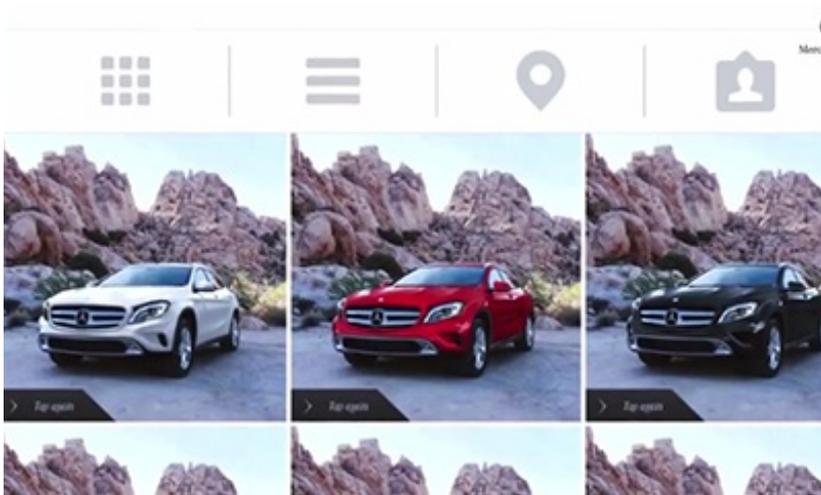
Mercedes-Benz sought to address this issue by bringing customization to Instagram in a surprisingly breezy fashion. The initiative also targets younger consumers who may not have recognized that the automaker has affordable vehicles.

Interested consumers are asked to follow the @GLA_Build_Your_Own account where they can begin their journey by tapping a central image.



Video still

When the image is tapped, a tag emerges that says "choose_your_gla_color." The full range of GLA color options then appears for consumers to browse.



Video still

This process continues as consumers select wheels, a roof and a grille, and the customized car gradually gains new new details.

At the end of the journey, a consumer's car and details about that car are revealed. Mercedes also tells consumers the price of the car and encourages them to take the final image to a local dealer to get started with the ownership process.

Mr. Aikman concedes that while consumers may not automatically approach a dealer after completing the process, the Instagram journey may prompt them to consider other, more binding steps that may ultimately lead to sales, or at least future engagement.

In any case, the campaign generated significant interaction since it launched Oct. 23.

Mercedes-Benz released a brief video that walks viewers through the process.

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/B3UW5AXwWUQ](https://www.youtube.com/embed/B3UW5AXwWUQ)

Build Your Own Mercedes-Benz GLA on Instagram

What begins as a vast field of options gets whittled down as consumers progress until the

final car is arrived at. Mercedes-Benz used hundreds of linked accounts and thousands of tagged images for this campaign.

Rising to the top

The GLA line gained attention on Instagram earlier in the year with another novel campaign.

Mercedes-Benz USA invited fans to show off their personalities by packing their GLA models, or an equivalent space, with essential items and then snapping stylish photographs.



#GLAPacked cargo arrangements

The automaker first invited photographers, graphic designers, explorers and other social influencers to pack a GLA reflecting their interests. Although packing for a road trip is often a lesson in discovering what matters, Mercedes seems to be flaunting the car's expansive storage area, indicating that there are no limits here ([see story](#)).

"Instagram has been a really important platform for us and we've been trying to do a really cool things on it," Mr. Aikman said.

Final Take

Joe McCarthy, staff writer on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/VM55Hg9ygiA](https://www.youtube.com/embed/VM55Hg9ygiA)

© Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.