

MULTICHANNEL

## Mercedes-Benz bends videos to thank fans

February 12, 2015



*Mercedes-Benz in 360-degree view*

---

By NANCY BUCKLEY

German automaker Mercedes-Benz is celebrating its Facebook fans with a social video that brings consumers on a 360-degree ride around Cape Town, South Africa, in a SL 63 AMG.

**Sign up now**

**Luxury Daily**

The joyride in South Africa is led by a German journalist and videographer with multiple GoPro cameras attached to the vehicle. The social video that coincides with the drive gives consumers a unique view of the city and Mercedes' vehicle while the Facebook release allows the automaker to potentially captivate the 18 million enthusiasts who are already fans.

"Prospects don't buy what you sell," said Chris Ramey, president of [Affluent Insights](#), Miami, FL. "They buy what you represent."

Mr. Ramey is not affiliated with Mercedes-Benz, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

**Mercedes-Benz** was unable to comment by press deadline.

**Enhanced videos**

Jonas Ginter mounted multiple cameras in different angles around the vehicles. The GoPro's are placed in 3D printed mounts that consist of a cube of plastic specially designed to hold the cameras.

The six cameras are placed around the car to allow Mr. Ginter to receive a 360-degree view of the drive. He tried to use a drone to get aerial footage, but the winds in Cape Town were too strong. The experimental features of this film allow Mr. Ginter to play with the features of a GoPro and create the video for Mercedes fans.



### *Thank you to fans*

Mr. Ginter developed the idea when he was playing with a mobile application called "Tiny Planet." On the app photographs are bent into 360-degree images. Mr. Ginter combines the app's effects with video to create a 360-degree film.

A behind-the-scenes video interviews Mr. Ginter and viewers are able to discover more about his background and the processes used in this film.

"In order to resonate with consumers today, brands need to do more than advertise and publicize their products and services," said Jim Gentleman, senior vice president of account management and strategy at SK+G, Las Vegas. "They need to create and publish content that not only informs but entertains and engages as well. This 360-degree social video from Mercedes-Benz dramatically captures the feel of driving the SL 63 AMG in an immersive, IMAX-style way while also providing a sort of visual candy for the viewer. It's a powerful combination.

On MBLife, Mercedes-Benz's lifestyle site, there are even more details about the production of the film. Also, on the brands Facebook page there are images offering a glimpse into Mr. Ginter's journey of filming the video.

Embedded Video: [https://www.youtube.com/embed/TW8\\_6pAklRk](https://www.youtube.com/embed/TW8_6pAklRk)

## *The SL 63 AMG on a 360-degree ride through Cape Town*

The film itself is paired to music as the viewer is brought through Cape Town, into an aerial 360-degree view, through the colorful buildings and local beaches. The constantly changing viewpoint of the vehicle and location keeps the film fast paced and interesting. At the end, Mercedes thanks the 18 million Facebook fans.

"Likes, Shares, Favorites and Tweets are the new currency in marketing and serve as an indicator of engagement, preference and loyalty among consumers," he said. "18 million Facebook fans is an impressive feat. Mercedes-Benz is smart to recognize this milestone with an entertaining, artistic video of a panoramic drive through Cape Town in one of its signature sports cars. Of course, they're hoping those 18 million fans will share it with 18 million friends and family."

### **Thanks for the likes**

Mercedes honored its fans in other campaigns such as when Mercedes-Benz USA thanked its 9 million Facebook fans by releasing a video featuring its CLS-class vehicle and painting with light special effects.

The video titled "Light-Painting in Real-Time" showed off the automaker's CLS-class in a live-action painting with light video by Finnish director Anssi Määttä. The video was promoted on the mb! by Mercedes-Benz's Web site and the brand's Facebook page ([see story](#)).

Similar to Mercedes, Italian automaker Ferrari celebrated its 15 million Facebook fans with a social video offering enthusiasts a virtual ride in a LaFerrari.

The celebratory lap was driven by Ferrari's head of development test driver, Raffaele De Simone, and the video's perspective is from the passenger's Google Glass camera. Consumers may have felt appreciated by Ferrari's gesture, which may have increased engagement ([see story](#)).

Honoring fans at specific number counts allows brands to turn branded content into fan appreciation campaigns.

"Celebrating fan counts is applauding those most likely to watch the video," Mr. Ramey said. "Perhaps a nod of gratitude to some and a nudge to others."

### **Final Take**

*Nancy Buckley, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/QUQUd5szpmA>