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## Mercedes-Benz takes consumers to Africa with new editorial content

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*Mercedes-Benz Unimog U406*

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

German automaker Mercedes-Benz is asking consumers to join it on an African safari.

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Issue 3/2015 of Mercedes-Benz Classic Magazine, the automaker's editorial and lifestyle outlet since 2002, features Carel Roux venturing through South Africa in a restored 1974 Unimog U 406. Connecting the brand with diverse lifestyles through heritage helps to sell Mercedes as a lifestyle rather than simply a product and may appeal to new consumers.

### Out of Africa

Mr. Roux notes in the magazine that he recalls how, as a 10-year old in 1958, he recalls sitting at the wheel of an older Unimog model. He went on to train at Mercedes' South African subsidiary and become an automotive technician.

Selling the story of Mr. Roux as a narrative engages readers without overtly pushing promotion. Nonetheless, the role Mercedes vehicles have had in his life is conveyed and the idea of the automaker being a brand that the consumer will grow with is implanted.



*Overlooking Blyde River Canyon from Unimog*

Further noted, Mr. Roux owns seven Universal Motorized Implement, or "Unimogs," and his father's old vehicle is still in road condition. Still at the top-of-mind for all consumers interested in purchasing a vehicle, be it an everyday mode of transportation or a special-interest off-road vehicle, is reliability, and nothing says reliability such as a 60-year-old vehicle that still works.

The issue details Mr. Roux's journey from the Drakensberg Mountains to Kruger National Park in the Unimog. As the

images show, the Unimog can handle the rocky terrain better than most vehicles, giving the traveler a great view to enjoy Blyde River Canyon without having to worry about fatigue from hiking.



*Kruger National Park, South Africa*

Also included are sections on the National Park's guided tours, which offers opportunities to see lions, rhinos, leopards, elephants and buffalo, all of which are photographed in the same frame as the Unimog.

Lastly, travel tips ranging from things to do to places to stay to meals to try are included alongside maps and background information. Offering tips and appealing to the desires of travelers shows that Mercedes is not always interested first and foremost with selling cars, but also providing consumers past and prospective with useful information.



*Elephants and the Unimog*

By pushing its boundaries and range of interests, Mercedes could strike a chord with a different consumer segment and show loyalists that open-mindedness and creativity are themselves hallmarks of the brand.

For young consumers, meanwhile, luxury is about much more than product and brand recognition. Linking the product to a desirable lifestyle and to experiences that many individuals desire helps Mercedes appeal to these consumers in a natural and unforceful manner.

To the future

Other automakers have also thought outside the box to reach new consumers.

German automaker BMW is joining the excitement surrounding the National Football League's season beginning through branded fantasy football.

In an email sent to subscribers, BMW encourages consumers to sign up for the BMW Ultimate Football League for a chance to win prizes and experiences. Fantasy football has become a force to be reckoned with and by tapping into an interest that does not naturally align with its brand BMW may see an uptick in engagement ([see story](#)).

Recently, Mercedes has focused resources on positioning itself as a leader in technological advancement to reach new markets.

In October, the automaker began looking beyond the millennial market with its "mobile club lounge."

The "Vision Tokyo" concept model is an electric-powered, autonomous driving vehicle aimed at the urban trendsetters of Generation Z. A variety of technological advances are presenting automakers with enormous

opportunities to redefine the luxury automotive market ([see story](#)).

Final Take

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