

INTERNET

Mercedes outfits Santa's sleigh with performance magic

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Mercedes' animation

By STAFF REPORTS

German automaker Mercedes-Benz is helping Santa Claus deliver gifts in style through a holiday sleigh configurator.

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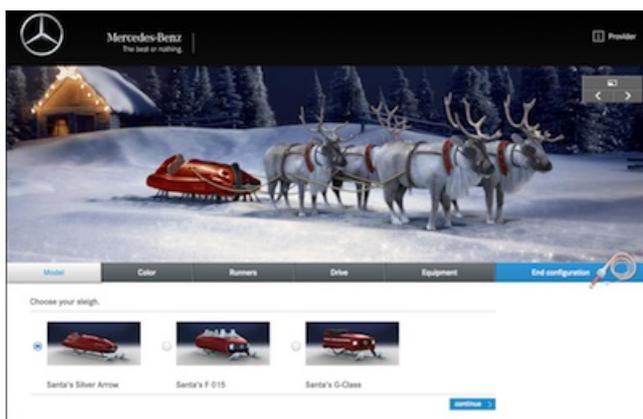
Configurators are popular among automotive brands, which use the digital technology to display the features and options with which each model is equipped. By creating a sleigh configurator, Mercedes is displaying its digital savviness while staying top of mind among consumers well after the fact due to the charm involved in the effort.

Dashing through the snow

The effort was shared by the automaker on its primary brand social accounts as a season's greeting. A click-through lands on a microsite developed by the brand, showing a snowy landscape with a small cabin, a sleigh and four reindeer.

Mercedes first asks users to select from three different sleigh models: Santa's Silver Arrow, Santa's F 015 and Santa's G-Class. When an option is selected, the sleigh above changes to reflect the choice.

In the color section, users pick from seasonal colors such as Reindeer Nose red or Jingle Bells gold. Users then select runners and "drive," which shows Mercedes' 4Matic, Hybrid and AMG options as reindeer and horses, as well as "equipment packages" such as an angel Safety Package Plus, a shooting star Navigation system and a gnome holding a lantern Intelligent Light system.



Mercedes' sleigh configurator

When all options have been selected, a video automatically loads showing a young doe peeking out from behind a tree trunk in light flurries. After, the user's Mercedes "Santa Class" sleigh is shown with options to email or share the creation via Facebook, Twitter, Google+ or Pinterest.

Shareable items that include comical or lighthearted branded materials but are not overtly pushing consumers toward a purchase are more likely to make a lasting impression.

Last year, Toyota Corp.'s Lexus created a way to connect with consumers for the holiday season through branded GIFs.

With the application PopKey, consumers could send and share GIFs with one another, and Lexus created several GIFs to appear on the keyboard that showcase vehicles with bows or in the snow. By presenting consumers with shareable, fun items, Lexus likely created a connection with the younger generations of consumers and encouraged potential social media posts among these consumers ([see story](#)).

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