

INTERNET

## Mercedes mixes things up with heritage and cultural exploration

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Mercedes 450 SLC

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

German automaker Mercedes-Benz is taking consumers to "the Paris of South America" in a vintage 450 SLC to highlight its maintained desirability.

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The automaker has posted a video to Facebook depicting a drive through Buenos Aires, considered the most European of Southern American cities for its architecture and the influence brought by Spanish and Italian immigrants. The video helps associate the Mercedes brand with adventure, class and culture, all of which are attractive traits to consumers.

**Mercedes-Benz** could not be reached before press deadline.

Latin Europe

The video begins with the Mercedes-Benz 450 SLC emerging from a tunnel into the bright skies of Argentina's biggest city. Shots that appear to be taken from the car show off the trees, landscape and architecture of Buenos Aires.

After a number of shots, the adventurers venture into a caf and then spend time examining the city's murals and artwork while brief insert shots show off the city's legendary architecture.

The couple returns to the car and drives to the city center, where they tour buildings, look at more street art, stroll by an outdoor concert and wander into an outdoor market. They tango, explore again and then return to the SLC as it gets dark.

The second half of the video shows off the city's nightlife. Shots of pizzerias and cinemas lead to a short time lapse shot of a heavily trafficked main intersection.

The couple eventually arrives at a bar and nightclub, where they dance the night away before making their way to the waterfront the following day.

Using an impressionistic style of video, which contains no dialogue and very quick cuts, creates an aura simultaneously enigmatic and desirable, suggesting the image the brand wants to create for itself.

The SLC is never emphasized in the video despite appearing during transitions. Although this may in part be a result of the vehicle no longer being in production and thus unable to generate sales, it also shows the brand is concerned

with more than just creating sales.



*Mercedes-Benz C107*

Using a vehicle from the brand's heritage in a video like this one suggests that there is something inherent to the brand's DNA about travel, culture and exploration. Although that may not generate sales in the short term, it helps cultivate desire and maintain positioning while reminding long-time consumers and loyalists that the automaker has not forgotten its past or what it stands for.

#### On an adventure

Recent months have seen Mercedes associating its vehicles with adventure and exploration in a variety of different ways.

For example, in November Mercedes asked consumers to join the brand on an African safari in its brand magazine.

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 ([see story](#)).

At the same time, Mercedes was also exploring uncharted territory on men's lifestyle magazine GQ's mobile site.

The homepage of the Cond Nast-owned magazine contained an advertisement for the Mercedes GLC, which lands on a site for the vehicle that takes the user on a GQ-sponsored trip in the car alongside a photojournalist. Placing Mercedes next to the magazine in different locations helps to clarify Mercedes' values ([see story](#)).

#### Final Take

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