

COMMERCE

Bentley gets loud, aims high with new bespoke Continental

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Bentley's Monster by Mulliner

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

British automaker Bentley Motors is wooing successful young athletes and musicians to cultivate influence with "Monster by Mulliner."

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The "Monster by Mulliner" Continental GT V8 S is designed by Bentley's Mulliner Division and inspired by audio and video company Monster Inc. The limited-run and narrow focus of the market will likely make the car desirable to a small but influential group of consumers and shows off Bentley's bespoke capabilities.

"The focus here is on Bentley's bespoke capabilities by creating a car for Monster," said Geoff Dowding, head of Bentley's Mulliner division. "Bentley already has a pinnacle audio partnership with Naim, while this car is the showcase for Monster to demonstrate their in car capabilities."

Monster mobile

The Monster by Mulliner made its debut in Las Vegas at the 2016 Consumer Electronics Show Jan. 6-9. The vehicle aims to embody Monster's "always lead, never follow" attitude, which will resonate with young professionals and influential or accomplished athletes and musicians.



Bentley's Monster by Mulliner

Highlighting the vehicle is a custom sound system exclusive to the vehicle. It will consist of 16 Monster speakers personally selected and tuned by Monster CEO Noel Lee, ensuring an optimal mix for all genres of music.

Monster CEO Noel Lee said in a statement, "Monster is proud to collaborate with Bentley on bringing the sound and look of a Monster ride to those who want something bold and different. With our Pure Monster Sound system, the drive will be truly incredible and brings a new level of excitement to the driving experience.

"That's why this collaboration for the Continental GT V8 S is such a perfect fit," he said. "Our Monster motto 'Always Lead Never Follow' has never been more appropriately applied than in association with this impeccably designed automobile."



Monster by Mulliner interior

The influence of Monster extends from the audio performance to the automobile's design and aesthetic. The Continental will boast the high-end audio company's distinct red and black color scheme, present even in the steering rim. The vehicle also features a 3D laser-etched fascia panel exclusive to the vehicle and includes Monster's "always lead, never follow" motto on its headrests.

Bentley's Mulliner division specializes in limited-edition vehicles for the brand's most discerning customers. Limiting the production number helps create desirability.



Monster's motto, featured in Monster by Mulliner

In addition, marketing the vehicle particularly toward influencers suggests that the vehicle's primary function is to raise awareness of the Bentley image. The mass popularity of social media has brought consumers closer than ever to their celebrity heroes, meaning that the influence a celebrity carries is multiplied.

By showing off its ability to create a bespoke model in the partnership with Monster, Bentley may find itself with future clients who are impressed by the vehicle.

Music to the people

Numerous automakers have also recognized the appeal that a great sound system can have to a particular subset of consumers.

For example, last year British automaker Rolls-Royce took its cue from the music industry with the final addition to the trio of Bespoke Collections.

"Wraith Inspired by Music" highlights Rolls-Royce's longstanding connection with prominent musicians in addition to the superb quality of the car's sound system. Joining "Wraith Inspired by Film" and "Wraith Inspired by Fashion," this new model rounds out Rolls-Royce's offerings and helps the brand appeal to a wider audience ([see story](#)).

Rather than focusing on the sound of the car itself, others have gone directly to the musicians to cultivate influence.

For example, last August Toyota Corp.'s Lexus began working with rapper will.i.am to challenge conventional

notions of technology, design and music in a unique experience as part of its Amazing in Motion campaign.

Using laser technology and a Lexus NX, the rapper collaborated with the automaker to create a remix of his famous song #thatPOWER. This unusual project will likely capture consumers' attention and prompt discussion about the brand ([see story](#)).

"We believe that Bentley has the design capabilities to create the greatest level of personalisation and individualisation," Mr. Dowding said. "Here Mulliner has designed and created a car for Monster that clearly shows our ability to personalize."

Final Take

Forrest Cardamenis, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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