

AUTOMATIVE

## BMW shines a light on US competitors in 2016 Paralympics

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*BMW's Paralympics television spot highlights athlete Josh George*

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

German automaker BMW is augmenting visibility for this year's Paralympics through a series of sponsorship activations on Snapchat.

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The non-profit worldwide athletic competition Paralympics Sept. 8-17 kicked off a few weeks after this year's Summer Olympics, but sees significant less broadcast attention. As a sixth-year sponsor, **BMW** is shining a light on United States athletes with behind-the-scenes preparation and on-site happenings with a Snapchat Live story, paired with sponsored ads within the app's Discover channel content.

"BMW is a global leader in transportation design, development and delivery," said Michael Becker, managing partner at **mCordis**. "For the Paralympics this year the team at BMW have applied their skills to designing and producing state of the art, custom fit, carbon fiber wheelchairs for athletes.

"These new chairs should increase the safety and competitiveness of the athletes," he said. "This project demonstrates the diversity of BMW's capability."

Mr. Becker is not affiliated with BMW or the Paralympics but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

BMW did not respond by press deadline.

Snapping organic content

**BMW** launched a live story on Snapchat that gives users an inside look at the events taking place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil during the 2016 Paralympics. The automaker has sponsored the U.S. team for six years and is highlighting their accomplishments on the extremely popular social media platform.

Fans will get a more intimate look at what is happening on-site in an organic matter. The Snapchat story, sponsored by BMW, aggregates content from users who are posting images and video from the athletic competition.

The auto brand will also share shortened clips of its television spot that highlights the Paralympics with Discover channel stories from media brands such as CBS, Vice and People. The 10-second ads appear within the media's

professional content.

One television spot promoted the athletic competition by showcasing various athletes prepping for the big games, reminding consumers that the games are not over yet. The video opens with text reading "for those who think the games are over," which then cuts to clips of a variety of athletes training and then displays "try telling that to them, the games continue September 7."

Another video focuses on Paralympian Josh George, who competes in a cutting edge wheelchair designed by BMW for racing. The footage shows him pushing through training on a long road while a narrator emphasizes the BMW wheelchair was designed for breaking stereotypes and world records.

BMW drives forward

The automaker has often taken to athletic competitions for marketing purposes and recently took to the Olympics. BMW urged consumers to skip the wait for an electric vehicle with two new television spots that aired during the games.

The commercials advertised the newly available BMW 330e, a plug-in hybrid available from \$44,695. The ads implicitly targeted competitors and underscored the importance that higher mileage and more environmentally friendly vehicles have for BMW ([see more](#)).

BMW leverages a wide range of social media in a similar manner to the Snapchat push. The brand recently brought families together as it showcased its vehicles' full potential and launched a new Instagram account to tell the story of two brothers.

The automaker showcased Sam and Emile Hurly, who reunited after three years for a drive down the California coastline. Finding a new way to tell humanistic stories will likely resonate with consumers, making BMW a more likely choice as they shop for a car down the road ([see more](#)).

"BMW is a global and respected brand, with a significant following and reach," Mr. Becker said. "Its support of the Paralympics, along with its engineering support, and advertising will most certainly increase the exposure for the event and draw valuable attention to the athletes.

"Athletes dedicate their lives to excellence, as does BMW," he said. "It is wonderful to see BMW's leadership in action."