

AUTOMOTIVE

Mercedes-Benz merges technology, talent to showcase new features

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Charlotte Cardin tours Montreal in the A-Class with what3words. Image credit: Montreal

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

German automaker Mercedes-Benz is showcasing a sophisticated yet convenient form of navigation by mobilizing musicians as city guides.

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To spread word of its partnership and integration with navigation system what3words, Mercedes-Benz Canada has tapped popular Canadian artists to give consumers tours of their cities. The series started with singer-songwriter Charlotte Cardin, following her as she drives through Montreal showing off not only the city and what3words' technology but the new A-Class as well.

"[We launched the campaign] to generate awareness of the new what3words voice navigation system, which is available on select Mercedes-Benz models," said Nathalie Gravel, national manager of marketing communications and events at **Mercedes-Benz Canada**. "The new way to find your way, what3words is an innovative new system that makes any location easily identifiable, even without an address.

"Founded in 2013 as a startup, what3words has divided the world into 57 trillion 3 by 3-meter squares and has assigned three words to each square," she said. "This means that every location is unambiguous and easy to memorize.

"Equipped with a 25,000-word vocabulary, the system's algorithm is programmed to combine words for maximum clarity and to make it easy for both humans and machines to notice mistakes when they are entering an address. Mercedes-Benz is the first automotive manufacturer to implement what3words as a standard navigation solution in its vehicles."

Driving experience

What3words is a navigation technology that assigns a unique three-word address for locations. The three-word system allows for more precision when finding a destination, creating a simple way to remember GPS coordinates instead of a numbered address.

The system allows for extremely accurate directions to places that do not even have a street address, and it can take

drivers to exact entrances. What3words also includes error detection to prevent mistakes.

This new series takes an urban look at how the system can integrate into drivers' lives.

While driving her new what3words-integrated A-Class around Montreal, Ms. Cardin shows viewers how it works. "Hey Mercedes, navigate to what3words Soulful Herb Drip," Ms. Cardin says, taking viewers to what she believes is a place that offers the best poutine in the city.

The smart navigation system directs her to Montreal Pool Room, where she explains that she does not know where the name came from and has never noticed if there was a pool table in the restaurant or not.

Ms. Cardin explains that the small shop is located in a neighborhood where there are many interesting venues that she plays gigs at. After these shows, she always craves poutine from Montreal Pool Room.

Mercedes' film details the exact point where "Soulful Herb Drip" is located.

"Hey Mercedes, navigate to what3words Change Brochure Masters," Ms. Cardin instructs the AI system once she is back inside the A-Class. The singer explains that the viewers are traveling with her to Phonopolous, her favorite record store in Montreal.

The film ends with Ms. Cardin driving onward to her favorite park, directed by what3words.

Mercedes' new film highlights what3words' technology

Coming up in mid-August, music artist Allie-X will travel through Toronto navigated by what3words, followed by The Strumbellas' take on the same town in September.

What3words

Mercedes-Benz leaned into its adventurous side with another film featuring the technology partner.

The automaker showed drivers the possibilities of where they can go in their vehicles with what3words. The film "Finding the Trail" starred Swiss explorer Mike Horn, lending it another layer of credibility for a brand that is not always the most adventurous ([see story](#)).

While Mercedes has integrated what3words into all of its vehicles, other automakers are using it for specific initiatives.

British automaker Land Rover worked to reduce search times and modernize medical response in remote areas as its business reached a milestone.

As part of its 70th anniversary celebrations, Land Rover forged a partnership with the geocoding solution to help medical response teams locate remote addresses. Land Rover's expert Experience drivers and volunteers traveled across Mull, a remote Scottish island, to deliver special three-word address plates created by what3words, as part of the project ([see story](#)).

Mercedes' effort aims to show how what3words can be used in everyday navigation.

"We have teamed up with the three Canadian artists/bands from our 2019 Garage Gigs initiative to produce an original video content series that demonstrates the functionality of what3words voice navigation," Ms. Gravel said. "The videos feature either the A-Class hatch or sedan.

"Montreal-based singer-songwriter Charlotte Cardin kicks off the series," she said. "Using 'Hey Mercedes, navigate to what3words,' followed by each unique three-word address, Charlotte takes the viewer on a number of journeys down memory lane on route to visiting some of her favorite spots."