

AUTOMOTIVE

Land Rover shares explorer's landmark expedition in extensive campaign

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Ed Stafford was the first person to walk the length of the Amazon river. Image credit: Land Rover

By ELLEN KELLEHER

U.K. automaker **Land Rover** is casting a spotlight on its "Above and Beyond" philosophy through an extensive interview with British explorer Ed Stafford, the first man to travel the length of the Amazon.

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Land Rover is playing up its ties to celebrity ambassadors these days, from the singer John Mayer to Mr. Stafford, to advertise its rugged SUVs' association with a quest for adventure. These brand diplomats are being called on to cement its reputation for fearlessness and exploration amid the pandemic.

Amazon travails in focus

In a 16-minute video, with maps of his trip in the background, Mr. Stafford recounts his 860-day ordeal of walking the 4,086-mile length of the Amazon, back in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

During the clip, Mr. Stafford details his journey from the summit of Mount Mismi in the Andes and the drug trafficking "red zone" area of Peru into Colombia. Months later, he arrives in Brazil, where after "9 million steps and 200,000 mosquito and ant bites," he makes his way to the Atlantic Ocean.

Ed Stafford shared his long journey in an extended film for Land Rover

"Everybody told me that I was going to die when I announced at the beginning of 2008 that I was going to attempt to be the first person to walk the length of the Amazon, nobody thought it was possible," Mr. Stafford said.

At one point, after his partner in adventure Luke has flown back to the United Kingdom, Stafford describes himself as a "paranoid, nail-biting mess." He eventually is introduced to a young Brazilian forestry worker Cho who accompanies him to the mouth of the Amazon and finishes the expedition with him in August of 2010.

"Cho eventually came to England and lived with my mom for a time in Leicestershire," he said.

Watch our live interview with explorer [@Ed_Stafford](#) as he answered your questions on his epic adventures around the world. [#LandRover](#) [@kentoncool](#) <https://t.co/ufpCma7bXE>

pic.twitter.com/uQnijy0w38

Land Rover (@LandRover) [October 6, 2020](#)

Land Rover tweet promoting the partnership

As well as his work as a global ambassador for Land Rover, Stafford won attention as the author of *Walking the Amazon: 860 Days. One Step at a Time*. He also appeared in an Instagram Live interview sponsored by Land Rover in October.

Brand diplomats

Mr. Stafford's turn in the spotlight comes on the heels of the automaker's attempts to showcase the singer John Mayer's exploration of the California Redwoods at the Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park in a 2020 Land Rover Defender ([see story](#)).

That campaign was conducted jointly with *The Atlantic*, the US magazine and publisher.

The celebrities Land Rover recruits are in some cases niche stars, but all lend an aura of adventure and authenticity which is critical to Land Rover's brand identity.

Past spots include the composer Hans Zimmer creating a musical score that was inspired by a drive in a 2018 Range Rover along the Angeles Crest Highway ([see story](#)).

A second one tracked the use of the Land Rover Discovery by the marine biologist and television broadcaster Monty Halls while on a trip to remote Ireland with his family ([see story](#)).

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