

AUTOMOTIVE

NBA star illustrates many Mercedes S-Class abilities in new campaign

June 8, 2021



NBA star Klay Thompson highlights several different S-Class features in a new campaign. Image credit: Mercedes-Benz

By KATIE TAMOLA

German automaker Mercedes-Benz is enlisting the charisma of an NBA superstar to demonstrate the capabilities of its S-Class sedan.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

The automaker has released a series of short, fun films featuring American professional basketball player, Klay Thompson. In each quirky and entertaining spot, Mr. Thompson uses his magnetic personality and candor to highlight the 2021 S-Class.

"These ads are quick at just 16 seconds long and are perfect for social media," said Julie Blackley, communications manager at [iSeeCars](#), Boston. "They resemble the funny videos that are common on TikTok, which is a departure from a typical luxury car ad.

"Klay Thompson is a fan favorite and is known for his fun-loving personality and this ad plays on what Klay is known for while positioning the S-Class as a vehicle fit for a famous athlete," she said. "He's the perfect choice for Mercedes, which attracts older buyers than its competition and is trying to reach a younger demographic."

Play with Klay

Mercedes has tapped the Los Angeles native in a new campaign highlighting its new S-Class sedan.

Mr. Thompson joined the Golden State Warriors in 2011 and is a three-time NBA champion and five-time NBA All-Star. He is known for being one of the greatest shooters in NBA history.

The 31-year-old athlete is currently recovering from an Achilles tendon injury as he looks forward to the 2021-2022 season.

Before [@KlayThompson](#) hits the road, he likes the S-Class to make some crowd noise for him.
[#MBAmbassador](#) [#SClass](#) [#MBUX](#) [#drivesafely](#) pic.twitter.com/BhhzjRfVII

Mercedes-Benz USA (@MercedesBenzUSA) June 2, 2021

In a handful of short films, the affable athlete highlights disparate features of the vehicle including its speed and efficiency to its aesthetics and technology.

The entire campaign reflects the prioritization of S-Class drivers and passengers. With Mr. Thompson asking the car questions about local food vendor closing times to requests to hear the revered basketball swishing sound, the campaign illustrates how personalization and service are at the forefront of the S-Class.

The ads highlight the 12.8-inch organic LED touchscreen where consumers can personalize 800 settings from their car or their phones, in up to seven user profiles. The short films also highlight the finely tailored leathers and wood and metal trim that envelop the car's technology.

[@KlayThompson](#) knows the S-Class New-Generation Multifunction Steering Wheel and Leather Interior are both as smooth as a Klay 3 pointer. Hashtag Swish. [#MBAmbassador](#) [#SClass](#) [#drivesafely](#) pic.twitter.com/0fLPuiFpaa

Mercedes-Benz USA (@MercedesBenzUSA) June 1, 2021

S-Class sedans also feature 3D surround sound systems that offering immersive, personalized audio with a 4D option that integrates resonators into the seats for music that drivers and passengers can literally feel.

The campaign is an invitation to engage in a personalized driving experience with technological features that aim to consistently serve.

It is also an invitation to drive as sleekly as Mr. Thompson plays basketball.

"Drive through the streets, like my shot flies through the net," he says. "Swish."

NBA, the luxury way

Several NBA stars have recently taken on roles as ambassadors for coveted luxury brands.

Last month, Swiss watchmaker Tag Heuer added American professional basketball player Jimmy Butler to its roster of talented athletic ambassadors.

The Miami Heat forward embodies the brand's values of passion for action, high performance, mental strength and precision. Tag Heuer will accompany Mr. Butler through the remainder of this season and future seasons to come ([see story](#)).

In February, Hugo Boss teamed with the National Basketball Association on a capsule collection, assembling a new [#BossTeam](#). The lineup included three-time NBA champion and Golden State Warriors star Draymond Green, NBA G League player Isaiah "Zay" Todd, Grammy-nominated rapper Amin and jewelry designer Greg Yuna ([see story](#)).

"Using sports and sports stars is always a smart marketing move for an automaker or virtually any type of product really because sports are the great equalizer," said David Undercoffler, editor in chief at [Autolist.com](#), San Francisco. "You can attract the attention of a disparate group of people with just a single ad, across various income levels, ages, ethnicities and geographic regions.

"This ad does that by simultaneously making the new S-Class an aspirational product while also showing its practical abilities to the part of your audience that will appreciate that," he said.