

MOBILE

## Mercedes leverages app update to secure technology authority

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By RACHEL LAMB

German automaker Mercedes-Benz is upping its mobile connectivity through an update of its mbrace application that allows consumers to control technology aspects in their car from their iPhone or Android devices.

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**Luxury Daily**

Introduced yesterday at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, the new aspects of mbrace – now called mbrace2 – works in and out of vehicles as an Internet hub and as a remote control to in-vehicle technology. The new app will launch this spring with the release of the MY 13 SL-Class.

“The phone is the new remote,” said Paul Farkas, president of Social.TV, New York. “As cars smarten and become connected, having technology for secure driver interactivity and infotainment will be key for sophisticated luxury car manufacturers.”

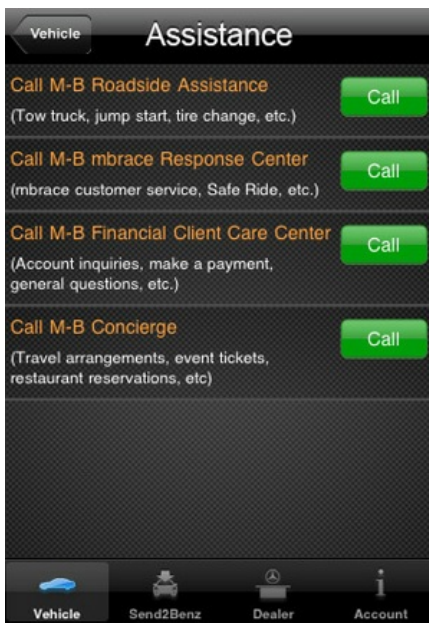
Mr. Farkas is not affiliated with Mercedes, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

**Mercedes** did not respond before press deadline.

Roadside skill

The most recent version of mbrace came out in March 2011.

Some features that Mercedes owners can use the app for is to lock and unlock vehicle doors, find the car on a map, contact the brand for roadside assistance and send directions to the vehicle's navigation system.



### *Roadside assistance feature*

The two main updates of mbrace2 are Internet and remote control capabilities.

For the Internet features, new aspects of the app include 3G network connectivity and integration with other vehicle networks.

Additionally, consumers can use the Internet-based Mercedes-Benz app which comprises Facebook, Google, open browsing, stocks, Yelp! and news headlines.

Remote access capabilities include travel zones, remote vehicle health diagnostics, curfew minder, driving journal, speed alerts, valet protect and remote horns and lights.

Current owners of mbrace are able to update the app in the spring using cloud technology, similar to other app updates.

Consumers can view videos and additional information at

<http://www.mbusa.com/mercedes/mbrace2>.



## *Mbrace2 Web site*

### Key drive

Mercedes has been trying to associate itself with a tech-savvy, younger crowd and the release of mbrace2 is likely another step.

The automaker has developed a plethora of apps, which it recently grouped together into one mega-app where consumers can download multiple lines to view images and watch videos ([see story](#)).

Lines inside the app include C-Class coupes, C-Class sedans, CL-Class, CLS-Class, E-Class coupes and cabriolets, E-Class sedans and wagons, GL-Class, GLK-Class, M-Class, R-Class, S-Class, SL-Class and SLK-Class.

Mercedes USA CEO Steve Cannon has said before that the automaker is making a conscious decision to reach a younger population via social media, and using these apps could be another way to do so ([see story](#)).

By offering something that not many cars have, the mbrace2 app gives Mercedes an edge that resonates with a younger crowd as well as gives the automaker a leg-up over competition.



### *Mbrace app*

Since affluent consumers generally want to be in-the-know when it comes to new technologies and the flashiest innovations, this update is probably a good move by Mercedes.

“Here, Mercedes-Benz keeps ahead of the pulse by allowing its customers to not only have more control and personalization, but to be more digitally-connected to a potential ecosystem stemming with its new digital accessories,” Mr. Farkas said.

“We are about to live in cities boasting smart grids full of an array of Internet of things [IOT] that sense and speak to one another,” he said. “Smart car apps will be part of the IOT movement.

“Even a .car domain extension may come out in the coming years for a host of contextually-related innovation in the sector.”

Final Take

*Rachel Lamb, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York*

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