

AUTOMOTIVE

Mercedes-Benz, ESPN team up for mobile docuseries

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For the first season of the new podcast, the mobile studio is hitting the road, landing at college football events around the U.S. to engage with fans. Image credit: Mercedes-Benz

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

German automaker **Mercedes-Benz** is joining forces with sports broadcasting network ESPN as football season begins.

The duo is launching "Sprinter Labs," a docuseries hosted from mobile podcast studios built into the vehicle manufacturer's very own vans. Working with ESPN on the first season of the show, additional fleets that have undergone transformations are getting decked out for tailgating the premier four episodes star college football reporter Jen Lada, director of product management and marketing at Mercedes-Benz Vans Iain Forsyth and host Faruq Tauheed, all of whom speak about the process of upcycling the luxury rides for the occasion.

"One van, endless vision every Sprinter that rolls off the line is engineered and equipped for maximum purpose," said Mr. Forsyth, in a statement.

"But the true magic happens when it's configured, as each new owner designs creative ways to unlock the van's true potential," he said. "And that's where Sprinter Labs comes in.

"We wanted to showcase the various potentials for up-fits, the detailed process that goes into the build-outs and most of all the personality and character that's behind these customized vans."

Head in the game

For the series, figures from ESPN join Mercedes-Benz leaders in the vehicular studio, discussing sporting events and the upgrading of the vans in which they sit.

A certified Mercedes-Benz eXpert Upfitter will also anchor each release, walking viewers and listeners through the customization process.

The episodes will showcase the collaboration at hand while outlining the start-to-finish journey of reimagining the vans.



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For the first season, the mobile studio is going on the road, hitting college football towns around the U.S. On-site at the games, experiential activities will take place, allowing fans to connect with both ESPN and Mercedes-Benz.

With the help of Greensboro-based manufacturer Matthews Specialty Vehicles, the vans are enabled with all-wheel-drive, high-end sound systems with microphones, Wi-Fi capabilities, acoustically-minded paneling, LED lighting, swivel interview seating, smart screens and a camera system that allows the sporting network to make engaging content from any stadium. The cars also boast solar-powered charging stations.

Fans can enjoy from the outside as well, as the exteriors are fitted with television screens, sound systems, sports tickers, underbody lighting, grills, snacks and refrigerators.

Other luxury auto brands have executed similarly, finding ways to connect with football game goers as of late ([see story](#)).

Season one aired on Sept. 7 across the van manufacturer's model-specific digital and social channels, Season two is currently underway.

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