

MULTICHANNEL

Mercedes drives CLA-class, charity via new Fashion Week campaign

February 12, 2013



By ERIN SHEA

Mercedes-Benz USA is driving awareness for the new CLA-class vehicle and its donations to the American Foundation for AIDS Research charity through a license plate display at New York Fashion Week and a Facebook contest.

[Sign up now](#)

Luxury Daily

The Fashion Plates display features a wall of custom license plates that were created by a group of designers and fashion insiders. The plates are on display in Lincoln Center during New York Fashion Week Feb. 7-14 and also are showcased through a Facebook contest.

“This initiative works to create a sense of community for all involved in Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week while also developing a creative way to introduce vehicles like the new CLA-class,” said Adam Paige, manager of brand public relations at Mercedes-Benz USA, Montvale, NJ.

“Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week brings together industry insiders, buyers, retailers, celebs, VIPs and media, all who place a high value on personal style and individualism, making it a perfect backdrop for our Fashion Plates initiative,” he said.

Creativity for charity

More than 30 designers and fashion industry influences have participated in the Fashion Plates initiative, including Anna Sui, Badgley Mischka, Betsey Johnson, Carmen Marc Valvo, Jenny Packham, Karlie Kloss, Derek Blasberg and Danielle Nachmani. Each of the plates hints at the creator's personality and style.

In addition, the new 2014 Mercedes CLA-class was given its own Fashion Plate that reads, "RDY2WEAR."

The display showed off the 40 custom plates on a white wall with a television screen in the middle that shows highlights from Fashion Week.



Display at Fashion Week

Since Fashion Week is a supporter of amfAR, Mercedes gave a donation to the organization on behalf of all of those who participated in creating a license plate for the display.

This creative initiative helped Mercedes push both a new product and its charitable side.

"Brand sponsorships today are more than just awareness and funding, they are a platform to promote a brand's various marketing strategies," said Nick Miller, strategist at [Siegel + Gale](#), Los Angeles.

"The CLA-class is a priority for Mercedes this year so the brand is using any opportunity to communicate the new product, and integrating the line with a charity shows Mercedes is not just promoting itself," he said.

"The CLA-class Mercedes attempt to attract younger consumers back to the brand and these consumers love brands that stand for social responsibility and a forward-thinking organization, such as amfAR, is a great partner to show how Mercedes cares."

No limitations

Many New York Fashion Week promotions and initiatives have been extended to a wider audience than just the attendees in New York.

Mercedes is including those who cannot be physically present at the show to see the Fashion Plates display in this initiative by engaging its Facebook fans in a contest.



Facebook post

Facebook users must unscramble the words in the plates that contain clues of whose plate it is. The images will be posted on the Mercedes-Benz USA Facebook account, where the first 100 users who unscramble and solve the clues will receive a Mercedes CAR2URE plate that is featured on the SLS AMG Black Series on display at Fashion Week.

Other luxury marketers have been tapping digital platforms to engage fans not attending fashion week.

For instance, Marc Jacobs Intl. is boosting viewership of its runway show live stream and encouraging consumers to sign up for its email list through an all-encompassing digital push for its New York Fashion Week presentation that was rescheduled for later this week.

The label announced Feb. 7 that it rescheduled both of its fall/winter 2013 New York Fashion Week presentations so that the Marc by Marc Jacobs show was yesterday at 8 p.m. and the Marc Jacobs show is Feb. 14 at 8 p.m.

This gave Marc Jacobs a few extra days to encourage email sign-ups with its biannual contest, increase viewership of its online show live stream and boost participation in its post-show Google+ hangout ([see story](#)).

Also, U.S. apparel and accessories label Michael Kors is bolstering its upcoming New York Fashion Week show by giving consumers complete access through a microsite ([see story](#)).

Pushing an event promotion past the physical space and into digital platforms can help boost the event and help marketers reach a much wider audience.

With the Fashion Plate initiative, Mercedes is reaping a benefit from the extended Fashion Week promotions.

“Extending the promotion through digital channels not only increases awareness, but also the ROI of the marketing spend by extending the initial investment,” Mr. Miller said. “It also allows Mercedes to drive extended loyalty through their Facebook strategy.

“Regular Facebook users feel a deeper connection to Mercedes and Fashion Week in

general, without traveling to New York,” he said.

Final take

Erin Shea, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: <http://www.youtube.com/embed/UwcgtYXzZfs>

© Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your **feedback** is welcome.