

MOBILE

Mercedes boosts customer service with in-vehicle app

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By ERIN SHEA

Mercedes-Benz Financial Services is boosting its customer service by offering its mobile application in new vehicles to help owners manage their accounts on the go.

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Luxury Daily

The mobile app called My MBFS allows customers to manage their Mercedes-Benz account and finances from their mobile devices and now in their vehicles through the cloud-based infotainment system available in new models. Mercedes is likely looking to one-up its competitors to be the first auto finance company to offer this service in vehicles.

“[Mercedes-Benz Financial Services launched the app] to expand upon our mobile technology journey, which started in 2009 when we launched an account management app for the iPhone, followed by the launch of a mobile version of our Web site in early 2012,” said Jack Ferry, spokesman for [Mercedes-Benz Financial Services USA](#), Farmington Hills, MI.

“The same account management features we provide on our My MBFS smartphone app are now available in Mercedes-Benz vehicles,” he said.

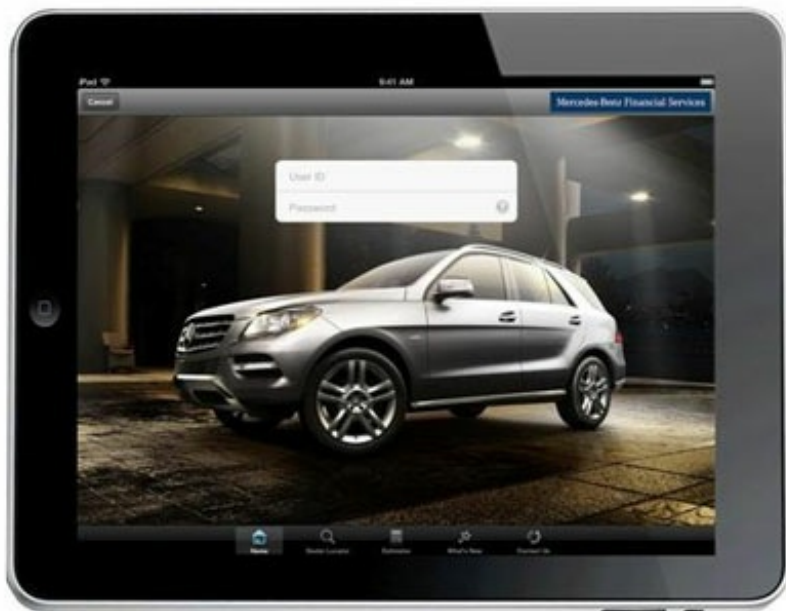
“We are the first auto finance company offering customers account management

capability through an in-vehicle app.”

The My MBFS app is available on the iPhone and iPad for free in the [App Store](#).

Touch of a button

Through the My MBFS app, customers can make monthly vehicle payments, view detailed account information, locate a dealership and read Mercedes-Benz Financial Services news.



My MBFS app on iPad

Now, Mercedes is allowing customers to do this through their own vehicles to increase the convenience of the app.

Starting on vehicles made in 2013 and beyond, the My MBFS app will be added to the infotainment system in the vehicles' Command Navigation system.

To use the app, customers must have a subscription to mbrace2, an in-vehicle technology and assistance service.

However, the automaker is preventing distracted driving since the app will disengage whenever the vehicle is in motion.



In-vehicle app

Mercedes is promoting the app's new offers through its Facebook and Twitter pages.



Tweet

Also, Mercedes created a short video that shows off the capabilities of the My MBFS app.

Embedded Video: http://www.multivu.com/mnr/61684-mercedes-benz-financial-services-mobile-technology-with-new-app/en_video_iframe_7852.html

My MBFS video

On the road

Mercedes has maintained its My MBFS app with constant updates.

The app was first released in 2010 and offered account management features for customers using either an iPhone, a Droid or a Blackberry device ([see story](#)).

Then, Mercedes released an iPad edition to be used in its U.S. dealerships ([see story](#)).

However, the brand has competition from other luxury automakers.

For example, Toyota Corp.'s Lexus introduced the myLFS application for the iPhone and iPod touch, which allows Lexus customers to pay bills, get in touch with the brand and stay up-to-date with special offers. It is free in Apple's App Store ([see story](#)).

However, Mercedes seems to be dedicated to constantly updating its app to make it more convenient for customers.

The automaker's customers are accustomed to using the mobile payment options and will likely use them in their vehicles when they are on the go.

“Since we launched the iPhone account management app in October 2009, we have received approximately \$150 million in payments via mobile channels,” Mr. Ferry said.

“More than 1,000 customers a day log-in with a mobile device to make a payment or access account information,” he said.

Final take

Erin Shea, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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