



Premiere in January 1919

Press Information

One hundred years of Mercedes-Benz customer magazines

05 February 2019

The tradition of Mercedes-Benz customer magazines begins in January 1919: one hundred years ago, the first issue of the “Daimler-Zeitung” (Daimler Newspaper), with the famous Mercedes star in its title, appears. Today, this famous brand based in Stuttgart keeps its customers and friends informed through a wide range of media. The printed magazines include “Mercedes Me” and “Mercedes-Benz Classic”, and these are closely interlinked with comprehensive digital communication channels. Also in 1919, the history of internal communication within the company begins with the first “Daimler Werkzeitung” (Daimler Works Newspaper) and the “Daimler Werksnachrichten” (Daimler Works News) for the employees of Daimler-Motoren-Gesellschaft (DMG).

Stuttgart. The slim booklet published by Daimler-Motoren-Gesellschaft, Berlin-Marienfelde branch, in January 1919, testifies to courage and confidence in the future: this is the first edition of the “Daimler-Zeitung”. The customer magazine appears only two months after the end of the First World War against the backdrop of economically difficult and politically turbulent times.

The company aims to use this new medium to reach “customers and friends” of the brand, as the preface describes the target group. The idea of publishing a customer magazine is, even then, not entirely new: the authors explain that, for several years, there was the intention to issue “a regular magazine” with topics relating to the products manufactured by DMG. But then the First World War stopped the project in its tracks.

The Berlin-Marienfelde’s objective now is evidently to inform customers about the urgently needed business recovery using the customer magazine. This is how the first issue in January 1919 describes it: “Publishing this, the first issue of the Daimler-Zeitung, after the end of a struggle between nations and before

the political and economic situation in the new Germany has been completely clarified, is done with confidence that our economy, thanks to its healthy basis, will recover and flourish again in the not-too-distant future, in spite of all the heavy blows brought by the war and especially the last few weeks.”

But what topics are likely to interest customers as the content of such a publication? DMG decides, a hundred years ago, on a mixture of product-related reports, utility articles and information about the enterprise. For example, the main story of the first issue is a report entitled “Daimler trucks during the World War from 1914–1918 in Turkey and Persia”. It is even continued in the second issue in February 1919. Supply restrictions on rubber tyres and fuel are indicative of the current economic problems of the time. News of what is happening in the company is reflected in a report on the new fire engine for the DMG factory fire brigade at the Marienfelde plant (“Unsere Fabrik-Feuerspritze” – “Our Factory Fire Engine”).

The cover picture of the first issue underlines the focus on commercial vehicles in terms of content. It shows a view of a Daimler plant with trucks on the road in front of it. The exact publication date of the January issue is not documented. However, the 20-page magazine is accompanied by a loose piece of paper whose message testifies to the difficult conditions of its production: “Due to the difficulties caused by the Berlin riots and the lack of coal, the first issue of the ‘Daimler-Zeitung’ has been delayed.”

Despite the start being beset with difficulties, DMG continues to put faith in the customer magazine. The second issue appears in February 1919. The cover story is a report about marine engine building. It begins with Gottlieb Daimler’s 1886 motorboat and extends to the **1,250 kW** (1,700 hp) marine diesel engines currently in production.

Customer magazine for the entire company

The “Daimler-Zeitung” is significantly strengthened in its aim to be a customer magazine for the entire enterprise in the third issue (March/April 1919). Until that time, the Mercedes star carries the inscription “Daimler Berlin-Marienfelde” in its title. But now this is replaced with the brand name Mercedes. And where the magazine is first published by the Berlin-Marienfelde facility, from the third issue onwards it bears the note: “Published by Daimler-Motoren-Gesellschaft, Stuttgart-Untertürkheim and Berlin-Marienfelde.”

A total of seven issues of the “Daimler-Zeitung” are published in 1919. What would appear unusual to today’s readers is the fact that the pagination of the customer magazine is continued consecutively throughout the entire year over a total of 128 pages. At the end of that year, DMG discontinues regular publication of the magazine for reasons not handed down. Further issues are only issued to cover specific topics. In 1924, for example, a special issue on Mercedes racing victories in that year was published. The victories achieved in the race from Tacubaya to La Cima (Mexico), in the Corsa della Merluzza (Italy) hill-climb, the Prague Königsaal-Jilowisch (Czechoslovakia) hill-climb and the Targa Florio and Coppa Florio (Sicily) are described as outstanding successes.

One hundred years of customer communication

Although there is no seamless publication history from 1919 through to today, Mercedes-Benz keeps communicating with its customers through magazines. An important period in this chapter of the brand’s history begins in the mid-1950s with “Mercedes-Benz all around the world”. This new publication starts as the “Export News Service of Daimler-Benz AG” in 1953 and is initially aimed at the Mercedes-Benz sales organisation worldwide. Starting in 1954, the magazine concentrates on presenting travel photos that combine Mercedes-Benz products with typical landscapes and buildings from countries all over the world.

This combination of interest in new vehicles and destinations that are, at this time, considered exotic, inspires the end customers of the company as the German “economic miracle” gets under way, whose attention is drawn to the magazine in the Mercedes-Benz branches and agencies all over the world. In this way, in the summer of 1956, the publication evolves under its new title “Mercedes-Benz all around the world. An export photo reportage by Daimler-Benz AG Stuttgart-Untertürkheim” into a real customer magazine. Starting with Issue 29, published for the first time with a colour cover picture, colour photos and journalistic articles, the magazine bears the subtitle “A photo reportage for friends of Daimler-Benz”. The magazine’s cosmopolitan focus is shown by Issue No. 40, amongst others, with a cover story about India. This issue is now on show in the permanent exhibition of the Mercedes-Benz Museum.

In 1992, the “Mercedes Magazine” replaces the traditional title “Mercedes-Benz all around the world”. With its journalistic content and high-quality layout, this

magazine sets a high standard. Ten years ago, in the spring of 2009, that magazine reaches readers in 113 countries worldwide. It is published in 38 languages and has a circulation of 3.1 million copies. The online presence of the brand is of increasing importance in the new millennium. In addition to various social media channels, the digital brand magazine “mercedes-benz.com”, in particular, underlines this approach.

One hundred years after the publication of Daimler’s first customer magazine, this medium is still strong and orientated towards the future. Among the numerous magazines, including those for commercial vehicles and innovation topics, there are above all four titles that follow the direct tradition of the “Mercedes Magazine”: they are the “Mercedes me Magazine” launched in 2017, the “Mercedes Classic” appearing since 2002 and the publications “She’s Mercedes Magazine” and “Circle of Excellence”, which were first published in 2018. “Mercedes me”, which devotes technological and social changes of our time, is to understand as the direct replacement for “Mercedes Magazine”. The magazine is aimed at international readers in currently 34 countries worldwide and achieve a total circulation of 2.4 million copies. In 2019 the four Mercedes-Benz magazines will reach a total of almost three million readers.

Internal communication is part of it

It is not only the history of Mercedes-Benz customer magazines that begins a hundred years ago at DMG, but also a tradition of employee media: in June 1919, the first issue of the “Daimler Werkzeitung” is published. Paul Riebensahm, a member of the Board of Directors of DMG, is the driving force behind this. The project is put into practice by the then young scholar Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy. The background to this ambitious medium is extremely serious: the end of the war is followed by an extensive wave of redundancies at the end of 1918. Within just ten weeks, the workforce at the Untertürkheim plant shrinks from 15,053 employees to only 8,833. After that, the convictions of the political extreme left are increasingly asserted in what has, until then, been a mostly moderate social democratic workforce.

Riebensahm’s objective in publishing this magazine is to promote a restrengthening of the dialogue between workers and the company. The content ranges from general educational essays on topics from industry, science and architecture to literary contributions. In research into corporate history, the publication, which was discontinued in 1920, is also said to have

“taken the form of a printed adult education centre”. The “Daimler-Werksnachrichten” newsletter, on the other hand, which appears parallel to the “Werkzeitung” from November 1919 on, is much more matter-of-fact.

Today, external and internal communication are characterised by digital channels: Mercedes-Benz and the other Daimler brands reach out to customers and employees flexibly, quickly and purposefully via YouTube, Facebook and other social media. The company’s own digital formats and websites are also important interfaces between the company, customers, fans and employees. The multimedia online magazine www.mercedes-benz.com, for example, corresponds to the concept of “owned media” with media formats produced by the company itself, and this is exactly the same principle that, one hundred years ago, the “Daimler-Zeitung”, “Daimler Werkzeitung” and “Daimler Werksnachrichten” followed.

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High-resolution photographs and more press releases:

<https://media.daimler.com>

Current film and photo material:

<https://mercedes-benz-archive.com/marsMuseum>

Multimedia archive and search system:

<https://mercedes-benz-publicarchive.com>

Captions:

19C0080_01

First issue of the “Daimler-Zeitung” published by Daimler-Motoren-Gesellschaft (DMG), January 1919, title page.

19C0080_02

Customer magazine “Daimler-Zeitung” published by Daimler-Motoren-Gesellschaft (DMG), Issue 4 from May/June 1919, advertisement on the back page.

19C0080_05

Customer magazine “Mercedes-Benz around the world”, Issue 29, title page.

19C0080_06

Customer magazine “Mercedes-Benz around the world”, Issue 40, title page.

19C0080_03

In 1965, Mercedes-Benz publishes a new employee magazine entitled “Information for Employees of Daimler-Benz AG”. In 1974, the title is modified to “Inside Daimler-Benz. Information for Employees of Daimler-Benz AG”. Title page of the first edition of 1965.

19C0080_07

Advertisement for the www.mercedes-magazin.com website, 2008: “All on one page. Your Mercedes Magazine online. Register now for fascinating reports, exciting portraits – plus videos, podcasts and downloads: www.mercedes-magazin.com”.

09A229

New layout of the customer magazine “Mercedes Magazine”, 2009, title page.

19C0080_04

Customer magazine “Mercedes-Benz Classic”, first issue of 2002, title page.

17C921_01

Customer magazine “Mercedes-Benz Classic”, Issue 3/2017, title page.