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Luxury automakers jostle for visibility at Goodwood

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Aston Martin Vantage GT12

By JOE MCCARTHY

Auto enthusiasts from around the world gather annually in Britain for the Goodwood Festival of Speed, expecting to marvel at the legacies and innovation of their favorite brands.



Although a brand can easily get submerged amid competition at Goodwood, the general atmosphere of excellence tends to have a collectively beneficial effect. This year's event June 25-29 has already generated ambitious commitments from luxury brands eager to woo potential customers.

"The Goodwood Festival of Speed, while a very British occasion, has now established a global audience and is a key date in our events calendar," said Matthew Clarke, PR and brand communications manager at Aston Martin The Americas, Irvine, CA.

"The crowd at The Festival is always extremely enthusiastic but also very knowledgeable and we hope with the likes of Vantage GT12 and the Lagonda Taraf making their first appearances, we will provide an exciting Aston Martin spectacle, including some surprises, that should keep fans of our brand and sports car in general, well entertained,"

he said.

Come one, come all

The Goodwood Festival of Speed was founded in 1993 and is scheduled to avoid clashing with the Formula One race season.

The event is primarily a celebration of auto history. Unlike other historic races, Goodwood is more of a pageantry combined with an auto show.

Hundreds of thousands of fans line up to see racing cars, iconic models, motorbikes and more climb a steep hill. The consumers also roam the event grounds, interacting with brands and experiencing rare cars.

Since competition is not explicitly factored into the event, brands celebrate the shared heritage of a wildly successful industry.

Nonetheless, brands still try to outdo one another.

Audi is bringing its fleet of vehicles including the latest Audi R8, RS 3 Sportback and Q7 etron quattro, as well as 35 highlight cars.



The #7 Audi R18 e-tron quattro

Brand ambassadors such as Le Mans drivers will join the brand and participate in events.

Also, interactive elements such as virtual reality technology aim to enhance the guest experience.

Aston Martin is corralling its "biggest ever presence" for the festival. Some new offers from the brand include the British debut of the Vantage GT12 and the global debut of the Lagonda Taraf super saloon.



Aston Martin Lagonda Taraf

Jaguar is debuting four cars at the festival including the Jaguar XJ, Jaguar XJR Rapid Response Vehicle, Jaguar XF and the Jaguar F-Type Project 7.

Visitors will be able to have a live track experience with a professional driver in the F-Type and also try out a Bloodhound SSC driving experience.



F-TYPE R Coupé version of Bloodhound SSC Rapid Response Vehicles

Jaguar Land Rover is part of a team trying to beat the current land speed record of 763mph, showing off its ingenuity in the process.

The automaker most recently tested a critical parachute deployment function with its F-Type R Coupé before affirming its use for the supersonic Bloodhound SSC vehicle. While speed is the ostensible goal of the mission, stopping afterwards will be just as vital (see story).

Standing out

To differentiate the experience from a regular showroom experience, brands have to find ways to incorporate technology.

Last year, Audi recruited mobile agency Somo to devise useful interaction tactics (see story).

Although luxury automakers receive immense traffic at auto shows, there are certain tactics that can meaningfully increase engagement.

The proximity of so many competitors can diminish the impact of a single brand. Consequently, automakers should incorporate unexpected activities or technologies into their display areas to generate new conversations (see story).

Final Take

Joe McCarthy, staff reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

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