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Lexus answers tough questions about LF-FC concept

November 2, 2015



Lexus LF-FC concept

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

Toyota Corp.'s Lexus is getting close to consumers with the reveal of its LF-FC concept model.

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The brand is using social media to solicit questions and post videos of the vehicle. By going directly to the consumer from the start, assuaging doubts and granting requests, Lexus helps build anticipation and loyalty early.

"Innovation features prominently in the concept," said Antoine Malin, social & account manager at **Saatchi & Saatchi Fallon Tokyo**, a communications and advertising agency working with **Lexus**. "At the heart of the LF-FC is a high output fuel cell power system that powers all four wheels. Technology in the interior is highlighted by an advanced human machine interface centered around a holographic image, while automated driving technologies help provide a safe and efficient driving experience."

Don't you worry 'bout a thing

The vehicle, which is the centerpiece of Lexus' booth at the Tokyo Motor Show, is being positioned as the brand's new flagship sedan.

"Lexus wants to surprise and evoke emotion with its distinctive design and forward-thinking technology," said Tokuo Fukuichi, president of Lexus International, in a brand statement. "For us, it is more than just a car, and we should exceed conventional imagination. The LF-FC expresses our progressive luxury and high-tech vision of a not so distant future."



Lexus LF-FC

The LF-FC beholds a number of design changes to both the interior and the exterior, with an emphasis on "passengers who enjoy being driven" manifesting in the form of extra head and knee space and reclining seats. Key performance upgrades include a hand-gesture operated entertainment system, a fuel cell-powered system that provides the car with all-wheel drive and automated driving technologies.

In addition to a reveal at the Tokyo Motor Show, the automobile was made visible to consumers everywhere through a reveal film.

Lexus LF-FC reveal film

The video begins with shots of the car in a sci-fi like environment, with lighting changes and patterns appearing on the car, and special effects shots of similarly futuristic, glowing, spherical contraptions. Throughout the video propulsive string section, synthesizer pulses and soprano vocals enhance the visionary feel.

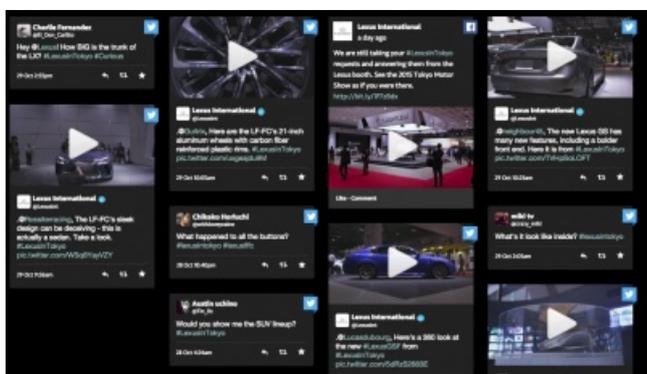
Lexus' model is also seen driving along a road with a variety of effects shots gradually coalescing into a human body. Similarly grandiose shots follow as the LF-FC speeds along a bridge into a city amidst a colorful array of visuals.

Another video focusing on the performance of the LF-FC is available on the brand's Web site and YouTube account.

The Lexus LF-FC Concept - Distinctive Design, Forward-Thinking Technology

Across Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, Lexus' various accounts are promoting the vehicle. Consumers are encouraged to ask questions with #LexusInTokyo. The brand is then responding to the questions and providing explanations, photos or even videos, for the LF-FC as well the new RX crossover, GS F and GS lines being showcased.

Corresponding directly with consumers has a number of advantages. Not only does it answer the questions and quell worries that may be difference-makers in a consumer's decision to track the car or purchase a Lexus, but it also shows that the brand is engaged with its fans and active on social media, a detail particularly important to younger consumers.



Lexus tagboard

The questions and responses with #LexusInTokyo are being aggregated on a tagboard on the brand's Web site, which compiles tweets and posts across multiple platforms. When consumers see their content or the content of other consumers on a brand site, it suggests that the brand is built in part by the consumer, providing significance to actions and fostering brand loyalty.

Into the future

Pioneering and futurism have proved popular themes for concept cars at the Tokyo Motor Show.

In another instance, German automaker Mercedes-Benz is looking beyond the millennial market with its "mobile club lounge."

The "Vision Tokyo" concept model is an electric-powered, autonomous driving vehicle aimed at the urban trendsetters of Generation Z. A variety of technological advances are presenting automakers with enormous opportunities to redefine the luxury automotive market ([see story](#)).

Lexus has shown in the past that it can be very creative with its marketing.

In August, the brand and rapper will.i.am to challenge conventional notions of technology, design and music in a unique experience as part of its Amazing in Motion campaign.

Using laser technology and a Lexus NX, the rapper collaborated with the automaker to create a remix of his famous song #thatPOWER. This unusual project likely captured consumers' attention and prompted discussion about the brand ([see story](#)).

"Regarding this specific campaign for the Tokyo Motor Show 2015, we wanted to recreate an offline experience, online in a premium and unique way," Mr. Malin said. "Obviously most of the Lexus fans will not be able to attend Tokyo Motor Show, we want them to have the opportunity to discover the motor show as if they were on the ground. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram audiences can submit their requests using #LexusInTokyo and Lexus will provide them a tailor-made experience of the 2015 Tokyo Motor Show based on their wishes.

"Content creation is the key to success on social media for brands," he said. It's not about feeding 'a monster' with content everyday, it's about finding the right balance and uniqueness in content in order to create engaging posts/tweets in the long term.

"A strong sense of community management and exclusive content through social media campaigns produce an ongoing journey, allow the community to influence the experience, introduce like minded people to each other (a reason in and of itself to be part of a community) and rewards them in such a way that they want to invite their friends to come and join."

Final Take

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