Luxury Daily®

The News and Intelligence You Need on Luxury

EVENTS/CAUSES

Land Rover leverages tech and design mastery to reach new market

February 26, 2016

Land Rover BAR vehicle foiling off water

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

British automaker Land Rover is using its technological proficiency to conquer the seas.

For the first race of the America's Cup, sometimes referred to as "Formula 1 on water," Land Rover will participate in the race with a multihull catamaran going by the name R1. Land Rover frequently puts design and tech at the forefront of its marketing, but taking to the sea will solidify those values and possibly bring the brand to a new market segment.

"Land Rover is 'Title Partner; and 'Exclusive Innovation Partner' to Land Rover BAR (Ben Ainslie Racing), a partnership based on shared values of advanced engineering, design and technology," said Leah Watkins-Hall, national corporate & brand communications manager at Jaguar Land Rover North America. "The America's Cup is the world's oldest international sporting trophy and demands cutting edge technology.

"Land Rover has a long history in sailing, and this global partnership with BAR gives us the opportunity to showcase our world class expertise in advanced engineering and innovative technologies, which lie at the heart of everything Land Rover does," she said.

F1 on water

The America's Cup World Series begins in Muscat, Oman on Feb. 26, but the R1 will not launch until December 2016. However, Land Rover BAR, a commercial sporting team started in June 2014 with the goal of winning the America's Cup, will participate in the event.

Land Rover's R1 will be able to exceed 50 knots, or a speed of 57.5 mph, because of its foiling technique. Hydrofoils will propel the boat off the water entirely, reducing drag and thereby increasing speed.

Land Rover BAR T2 training boat

Land Rover BAR and the Land Rover Advanced Engineering team are working together on the boat, developing a series of prototypes with the aim of developing the fastest America's Cup Class boat.

"Land Rover is working closely with the Land Rover BAR design team to co-engineer the most technologically-advanced boat in America's Cup history and enhance the performance of Land Rover BAR during sailing," Ms. Watkins-Hall said. "Jaguar Land Rover Advanced Engineering team and Land Rover BAR have identified three main engineering work streams which will be the focus of the partnership until 2017: aerodynamics and CFD, crew power optimization and personalization and stability and performance.

Land Rover BAR T2

Land Rover notes that when designing for Formula 1 or Formula 1 on water, traditional ideas of design and methods of engineering cease to apply. Moreover, the rules of the race mandate that vehicles must not hold any stored power and that all power must by extension come from the wing and sailing team.

Because Land Rover has repeatedly positioned itself as a leader in terms of technology use and design, America's Cup is a perfect platform for the brand. It offers a chance for Land Rover to show that its design and tech expertise outpaces that of all its competitors.

Tony Harper, head of research at Jaguar Land Rover, said in a statement, "Since the birth of foiling, one of the

biggest challenges is understanding how to control these massively powerful machines whilst balancing on a comparatively small surface area.

"We have delved into our talent base at Jaguar Land Rover to identify the most skilled engineers within the fields of aerodynamics, machine learning and advanced data processing, which are an integral part of the workstreams with Land Rover BAR," he continued. "The ocean is new terrain for us and we plan to apply our findings into the final boat design across the next 11-months and ultimately back into our own research and development units."

Land Rover Defender

In building the boat, Land Rover will rely on human/machine interface technologies to develop displays and controls to monitor power outputs and, because the R1 will be off the water, in aerodynamics.

Bringing Land Rover and Land Rover BAR together will also help unify the brand and bring attention to its progress outside of automobile and land movement, creating a space in a new market in the long run.

New frontiers
Other automakers are also positioning themselves as reliable speedboat choices to reach a different group of consumers.

For example, last year German automaker Mercedes-Benz was the inspiration behind a new high-performance racing boat that made its debut at the Miami International Boat Show.

Mercedes-Benz worked with longtime partner Cigarette racing to help create a speedboat that was displayed next to the new Mercedes-Benz car at the show. The 2016 Mercedes-AMG GT S and the Cigarette Racing 50 Marauder GT S Concept represent two of the most powerful engines available today (see story).

Land Rover has loudly and consistently positioned itself as an innovator in technology and sought out new frontiers to conquer.

Recently, the automaker has been thinking galactic to put itself on the forefront of technological advancement.

Over the weekend of Feb. 20-21, a Range Rover Autobiography helped to reveal the Virgin Galactic SpaceShipTwo, officially christened VSS Unity at the naming ceremony. The Land Rover brand frequently positions itself as a leader or ally in the technology field, as the automotive sector is heavily dependent on technology (see story).

"Land Rover prides itself on being at the forefront of advanced engineering, cutting edge design, world-class innovations and technology solutions within its vehicles to give a superior performance for our customers," Ms. Watkins-Hall said.