

AUTOMOTIVE

Bentley CEO: Technology in isolation is not luxury

January 11, 2017



Bentley's rendering of an OLED screen on a wood veneer

By STAFF REPORTS

British automaker Bentley Motors sees the future of mobility as a joining of technology and craftsmanship.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

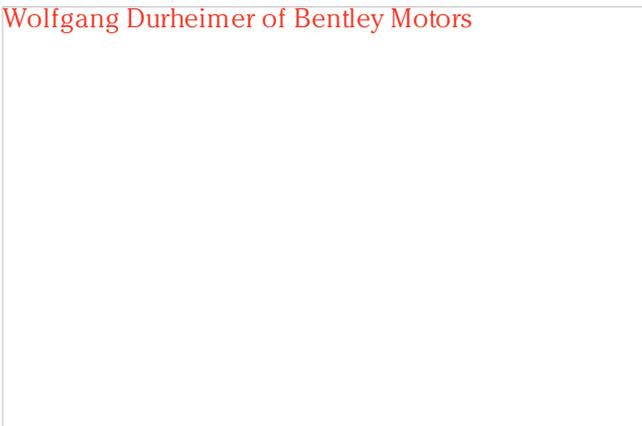
In an address at the Automotive News World Congress in Detroit, Bentley chairman/CEO Wolfgang Drheimer shared his projections, explaining how he expects the car buyer's needs to evolve over the next decade. From concierge services to a mobility club, the brand is thinking about what ownership means going forward.

Driving change

Mr. Drheimer noted that the luxury auto market will soon be adding millennials to its list of clients. Other changes to the sector's target audience include the incorporation of the new middle class in emerging markets and interest from Generation C, a grouping named to refer not to age but to a connected mindset.

"Our research tells us that they will, for example, demand instant, unobstructed access to technology, information and convenience; have an entirely different attitude towards vehicle ownership; and live in an increasingly urbanized world with all the mobility challenges and opportunities that this presents," Mr. Drheimer said. "At Bentley, we are embracing this change and we are taking a leading role in defining the future of luxury mobility."

Wolfgang Durheimer of Bentley Motors



Wolfgang Durheimer of Bentley Motors

Rather than focusing solely on technology, Bentley anticipates the future car buyer valuing both innovation and tradition, appreciating craftsmanship, heritage and design as well as the human touch. Another element that will be important to this set is sustainability.

"Our belief is that technology on its own is not enough," Mr. Drheimer said. "Technology in isolation is cold and can never be truly luxurious. We must never lose the human touch."

Delivering on this combination of high tech and high touch, Bentley is looking into the creation of a global club, which would give members access to a "mobility solution" in key cities. This would take their ownership beyond a single car.

Mr. Drheimer also brought up concierge-style services.

In terms of car design, one way to mix craftsmanship and modernity would be to install OLED screens on wood veneers. In theory, these would be imperceptible when not in-use but would allow riders to control air conditioning or audio.

Future mobility was a hot topic for automakers at CES, with both Mercedes and BMW laying out their ideas for what lies ahead.

German automaker BMW is looking to make the driving experience more personal and emotional as it designs further connectivity between owner and car.

For its fourth appearance at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, BMW released its idea of the future of mobility, showcasing both new integrations for its BMW Connected platform and its ideas for an automated vehicle. While fully autonomous driving from BMW is not planned to launch until 2021, the brand is enlightening CES attendees on what its vehicle may look like ([see story](#)).

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.