AUTOMOTIVE

Lexus looks to conquer new markets

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Lexus ES 300H

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Toyota Motor Corp.'s Lexus is expanding further into the Asian market with a first-time presence in a potentially lucrative region as it competes against Germany's Mercedes-Benz and BMW.

Lexus is making its debut in India with a focus on hybrid vehicles to appeal to affluent consumers in this market. Lexus' RX 450h, ES 300h and LX450d models will be available to Indian consumers at showrooms in New Delhi, Gurgaon, Mumbai and Bangalore.

"How India experiences luxury is evolving with its affluence," said Akitoshi Takemura, senior vice president of Lexus, India at Toyota Motor Corp. "Lexus will be providing the Indian consumer with an amazing experience through our vehicles, our service and through any interaction with our brand.

"We are excited about what we can bring to the luxury market in India, where we see opportunities mapped to the remarkable growth the country is experiencing," he said. "This is just the beginning, we look forward to bringing more exciting products to India in the future."

Auto in India
The luxury sector is growing in India, especially in the auto industry.

Within the next few years, India is set to become the third largest consumer economy in the world. With the lion's share of this growth being pushed by a newly wealthy affluent consumer class, luxury appetites could soar in India by 2025 (see story).

Lexus' entrance in the Asian country will be joining luxury auto competition with Mercedes and BMW, who already have an established presence.

Launching with eco-friendly models is a bid to appeal to the Indian consumer right off the bat, a group who is known for their interest in environmentally friendly initiatives.

The vehicle inventory consists of two hybrid crossovers and mid-size sedan. The models run off an efficient combination of electricity and petrol, according to Lexus.

Lexus offered in India

While the vehicles may be eco-friendly, Lexus still works to keep its vehicles as luxurious as possible with high-end cabins, drive experience and amenities.

With India growing in potential, but heavy hitter markets such as the United States and Europe slowing in luxury auto purchases, Lexus is hoping to make up for the decline in these established areas.

Lexus available in India

Lexus debuted its Indian counterpart on March 24, but announced the strategy early this year. While launching its Indian sector, the new Lexus LS also made an appearance, which will be available in 2018.

Lexus strategy
Lexus also recently focused on what meets the eye in a secondhand look at its 2017 IS.

In a digital project, the automaker leveraged eye-tracking technology to provide a more instinctual look at the lines of the vehicle. Providing this interpretation of the vehicle through a visual surrogate may make consumers focus on design features previously overlooked in more traditional imagery (see more).

On top of technology and India, Japanese automaker Lexus also dove into the boating sector with a new sporting yacht concept, alluding to a future in new lifestyle markets.

Manufacturers are branching out into new areas that cater to overlapping audiences, and that is what Lexus is referring to with its new yacht. The automaker's metaphorical jump into boating starts with a sport yacht design with high-performance twin engines, not intended to be put into production (see more).

"The original LS rivaled the very best luxury vehicles," said Yoshihiro Sawa, Lexus International President at Toyota Motor Corp. "We had big dreams about what a luxury vehicle could be.

"Those dreams were realized with a vehicle and guest experience that disrupted the luxury automotive industry," he said.