

AUTOMOTIVE

Lexus brings Black Panther comic film concept to life

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The Black Panther Inspired LC concept coupe is a celebration of the Black Panther and Wakanda. Image credit: Lexus.

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

Toyota Corp.'s Lexus is building on its relationship with comic book and film group Marvel by taking its collaboration to the next level with an inspired concept model.

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The automaker is celebrating its partnership with the superhero film "Black Panther" by creating two new vehicles that represent the film. A fictional material named Vibranium is the inspiration for the look of the reimagined LC Coupe, which sees the car glowing in a vibrant blue.

"The Inspiration Series takes our flagship products and makes them even more exclusive and distinguished," said Brian Bolain, general manager of marketing at Lexus. "Our collaboration with Marvel Studios' 'Black Panther' features a technologically advanced blue LC and was the perfect inspiration for the first car in the Series."

Lexus and the Black Panther

Lexus originally put a spotlight on the balance between human and machine in a previous campaign that took the automotive brand to the big screen.

Teaming up with Marvel, the auto brand first made an appearance in the actual Black Panther film. Coupled with special events and a special graphic novel, the campaign appealed to a wide range of superhero fans ([see more](#)).

But the automaker is taking it one step further this time and actually designing a car based on the film.

Lexus's concept model is theoretically "built" with Vibranium, which allows the vehicle to be bulletproof. Black Panther's suit is also made of the material, as well as the used by Captain America, another character from the Marvel Universe.

The fictional story behind the vehicle is that it has a brain-computer interface that creates a special relationship between driver and car and allows the driver to operate the car remotely. The exterior of the vehicle is also self healing.

Structural Blue, an iridescent color, will actually coat the exterior of the car to manifest the hue of the fictional

Vibranium. The special paint used for the car does not actually contain any blue pigment, but instead reflects blue light and manifests motion within the paint even when parked.

This Lexus Inspiration Series will see 100 manufactured and sold vehicles, keeping the special initiative exclusive.



Limited-edition 2018 Lexus LC Inspiration Series. Image credit: Lexus

Special features on the vehicle also include a carbon fiber scuff plate, bespoke white interior, 21-inch forged alloy wheels and a signature Barneys New York sommelier set. The set is a limited-edition collection of barware inspired by the initiative and vehicle design.

Luxury and comics

Comic book themes have been a trend lately with luxury brand initiatives, especially in the auto industry.

For instance, this week German automaker Mercedes-Benz integrated a few of its newer models into an expansive native marketing campaign centered on Warner Bros.' upcoming blockbuster, "Justice League."

In addition to television and digital video ads surrounding the movie, three of Mercedes-Benz's new models will play an integral role in the movie's plot itself. This level of native marketing in a blockbuster film shows a level of confidence from Mercedes-Benz that suggest further high-profile partnerships may be profitable for luxury brands ([see more](#)).

"With this vehicle," Mr. Bolain said. "We took the LC Inspiration Series vision one step further into a universe that defies reality."

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